

# **Draft Annual Plan Submission**

## **Tawa Community Board**

The Tawa Community Board wishes to make the following submissions to the 2011-2012 Draft Annual Plan.

### **Proposed Rates Increase**

The Tawa Community Board (TCB) notes with concern that the residential sector will face a 6.2% rates increase. This is even more than last year's increase. This means that over the past two years rates have increased by around 12% which is way ahead of the rate of inflation. In view of the fact that the economic situation has not improved and that residents face increased fiscal pressures, we believe the increase is too high and is more than many householders can afford. It may be that Council needs to look at streamlining its own internal operation in an effort to cut costs.

We do agree with the following proposals which are designed to produce savings:

- A reduction in opening hours of the Begonia tea shop over winter
- A targeted approach to dog control that focuses primarily on problem areas

Areas that could be further explored in terms of cost cutting:

- 1.5 pages in the DominionPost every week
- Pushing for more joint ventures with other Councils
- Reduced art work/sculpture purchases
- Keeping a tight rein on funds being spent on Zealandia and the Zoo.

### **Artificial Turf**

The Tawa Community Board is pleased to see that artificial sportsfields will be in operation at three sites in 2011/12, and that an artificial turf has been approved for Tawa or Grenada North for 2014/15. The Board gives its full support to the establishment of an artificial turf in Tawa or Grenada North and would like to see it in place at an earlier date if at all possible.

## **Re-roofing of Tawa Pool**

The Board is supportive of the plan to renew the roof of the Tawa Pool as part of its five yearly maintenance closure, with this 6-month project scheduled to commence in October 2011. We anticipate that the water filtration system will be upgraded at the same time (as part of general maintenance).

The Tawa Pool is widely used as a training pool, not only for Learn to Swim, but also for competitive swimming, duathlon, triathlon, iron man, etc training, as well as for general fitness training for residents of all ages, not only from Tawa but also nearby towns and suburbs.

## **Tawa Shared Walkway**

The Tawa Shared Walkway project has the full support of the Tawa Community Board. It is heartening to see the progress already made. The completed walkway will provide a safer cycling route and will undoubtedly encourage more people to get about on foot or by bike. This is a valuable asset to the Tawa community, and it is pleasing to see Council officers working closely with both the local community and the Board on this project. We trust that progress on future sections of the project will be as much on target as they have been to date.

## **Public Toilet in Linden**

The Board believes there is a need for a public toilet block to be situated in Linden. Duncan Park has attracted many families, especially those with younger children to the playground, and it is unfortunate, and probably unhygienic, that their time at the Park is cut short, by the children being 'caught short'. As this area currently has no such facility, this needs to be addressed.

## **Hazardous Trees Removal**

Although the Board understands the Council's desire to reduce overall expenses, a reduction in the budget for the removal of hazardous trees may be cause for concern. Tawa has a number of "hazardous trees" on the western side of the Main Road near McLellan St. These will need to be dealt with appropriately as they are near to houses and a well-used walkway.

## **Supply of Plants from WCC**

The TCB confirms its desire to see the continuation of the supply of plants to volunteer groups for localised planting. The Friends of Tawa Bush Reserves group and Tawa Rotary have both recently used the opportunity of plant availability to beautify reserves in Tawa. This adds value to WCC reserves.

## **Graffiti Vandalism**

The Tawa Community Board supports the continuing emphasis upon the early eradication of graffiti. This is straight-out vandalism from which Tawa is not exempt. The Board applauds WCC attempts to stem graffiti by the ongoing funding of the flying squad.

## **Grenada to Petone Road**

The TCB sees this road as a significant road for the area we represent. Its construction will:

- strengthen Tawa/Grenada North as an important logistic hubs for Wellington. Grenada North is already a significant area housing large quantities of food and materials and employing a large number of people. The road will assist its growth.
- reduce the travel times for people who need to use their vehicles. This includes Tawa people working in the Hutt Valley and people working in Wellington City.

While we are highly supportive of public transport we must also be mindful of people who must use their vehicles for work.

## **Middleton Road Cycle and Walkway**

Tawa residents are high users of public transport but are also high users of roads as vehicle drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. The only route for cyclists and pedestrians to areas south of Tawa is Willowbank/Middleton Road. This route is narrow and was never designed for non-motorised use. It is thus dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians as there is insufficient room on either side of the road to safely accommodate both them and vehicles.

The Council appears to have made no progress in enabling Tawa residents and those from further north a safe cycling and walking route from Tawa to Wellington. If “cost benefits” in upgrading Willowbank/ Middleton Road are a concern, it should be noted that these are improved when the above proposal is linked in with the proposed Grenada-Petone connection (mentioned above).

The TCB requests that funding for the Middleton Road Cycle and Walkway should be a high priority for the Council.

### **Inner City Parking**

Central Wellington is the entertainment hub for greater Wellington. However existing parking fees are already, by international standards, at the top end.

- Increasing the fees payable from \$4 per hour to \$5 an hour will have a significant impact on the number of people who will want to come into Wellington. Whilst the intent may be to drive people onto public transport, it is more likely to drive Tawa people to suburban malls where parking is free.
- The TCB is totally opposed to increasing the hours of payment by two hours each evening. Additional parking costs would invariably provide a strong deterrent to Tawa people and others from travelling to the CBD for dining purposes or to other venues at which they might spend their hard-earned dollars.

The TCB supports the continuation of free on-street parking during the weekends. Any move away from this would affect the vibrancy of central Wellington by discouraging people from the city centre.

### **Commuter Traffic**

The increasing traffic congestion from Tawa to Wellington City and the Hutt Valley is of concern to the Board. We acknowledge that some of this could be exacerbated by the current higher use of road transport against rail. However traffic on SH1 is slow and frequently stopped from 7.00am through 8.30am and in the evening from 4.00pm through to 6.00pm. We look forward to a positive resolution from the various transport studies over recent years.

## **Park and Ride**

Increased bus and train usage is being promulgated to reduce the number of cars using State Highway 1 and reduce congestion in the city. Whilst not a direct responsibility of WCC there is concern that there are insufficient Park and Ride facilities in Tawa, in particular at Takapu Road station. This car park is full before 8.00am most weekdays, and hence adds to road congestion, as people drive on through to the city. More space needs to be allowed for Park and Ride, and included in any new developments. WCC must work with Greater Wellington to ensure that this happens.

In the short term we suggest that car parking spaces are marked along the length of Boscobel Lane to maximise what room is currently available.

## **Deep Water Pool complex**

In the current economic climate the Board does not agree with proposed expenditure of up to \$20m on a deep water pool at the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre, and the associated cost of \$650,000 for a feasibility study. It is our view that by spending \$650,000 the decision on proceeding will be all but made. Any costs associated with this project should not further increase swimming pool charges across the city.

In the current economic climate we recommend that the feasibility study be deferred for several years.

## **Swimming Pool Fees for Children**

The TCB would like the Council to reconsider increasing child swimming fees for the coming year. An increase in child drownings over recent times may be due in part to (parents of) children being unable to afford swimming lessons. The Council should at least contain any fees for younger children learning to swim.

## **Environment (Water)**

The TCB believes that the Council should do more to encourage the re-use of grey water to residents. A supply to householders of storage bins that could be connected to drainpipes could potentially save significant water usage if residents were able to use this for watering plants, etc.

## **Dog Control**

The Tawa Community Board feels more user-pays could be introduced in fees for dog control in respect of impound fees. This aspect could have more significant increases that would only affect owners who do not have adequate control of their dogs causing public disruption and costs to Council.

## **Tawa Community Board**

Malcolm Sparrow (Chair)

Graeme Hansen

Margaret Lucas

Chris Reading

Alistair Sutton

Robert Tredger