

June 2016

# COMMITTED TO GROWING OUR REGION



Welcome to the latest Accelerate25 newsletter. Recently a number of people have asked me about the connection between Accelerate25 and the Regional Growth Study. The Regional Growth Study was produced by Government back in July 2015 and identified a number of opportunities to grow our regional prosperity.

Since the launch of the growth study, business, iwi, local and central government have been working together to develop an action plan to unlock the opportunities. That action plan is being developed under the banner of Accelerate25 which aims to grow our regional prosperity between now and 2025. The programme Board is known as the Lead Team.

We are expecting to launch the Region's Action Plan in August 2016.

## Recent funding announcements

Government has recently partnered with regional organisations to fund two pieces of work in the region. The first area of funding enabled an expert in community based quality aged care, aged care innovation and planning to work with the Accelerate 25 project team focussed on quality lifestyles for older people. This

has helped to develop a robust and exciting Action Plan.

The second area of funding has allowed the development of a business case for building a mountain bike track through the hugely popular Manawatū Gorge/ Te Apiti. This area is already used by around 70,000 walkers a year and will provide increasing opportunities for places like Woodville and Ashhurst.

### **Progress with the action plan**

A draft Action Plan covering the eight opportunities listed in the Growth Study is nearly complete. Further work is underway on three key enablers of growth – transport and distribution, skills and talent, growing small business.

With a draft action plan in place, discussions are underway with government and across the region on how we can support implementation of the plan.

### **Developing a Māori Economic Strategy**

Dr Jason Mika from GHA consultants has been commissioned to work with Māori in the region to produce a Māori Economic Strategy. The work will produce a stand alone strategy (expected in October) and will also identify opportunities for Māori in the draft Action Plan. Jason has been to around 20 Hui, all around the Horizons region and is producing some exciting results and prospective opportunities. This work has been supported by staff and funding from Te Puni Kokiri.

### **What can you do?**

To succeed, the programme will need the whole region behind it. Accelerate25 is about realising a short and long-term vision now and through to 2025 – a vision for a prosperous, strong and vibrant Manawatū-Whanganui region.

By working together to achieve and exceed the expectations flowing from the identified opportunities, we can realise overarching benefits that will lift the region as a whole. By supporting Accelerate25 initiatives and getting involved in the programme, especially once the Action Plan is confirmed, you can make and shape the success of the programme for the region.

So right now – keep up to date with the progress of the Accelerate25 team by monitoring these emails and engaging with the programme whenever the opportunity arises. Once the plan is launched – have a good read through the Action Plan, get excited, and most importantly, get involved.

**Michael McCartney**

Accelerate25 Lead Team Facilitator

**ONE REGION  
ONE TEAM**



## Funding for Regional Growth Programme

Budget 2016 has now been released, with \$44 million over the next four years to be provided for the Government's Regional Growth Programme. This funding will assist programmes such as Accelerate25 in the implementation phase of the soon to be released Action Plan, enabling greater and quicker progress to be made on initiatives. While the detail of this initial funding is yet to be released, it signifies a commitment by Central Government to economic growth in the regions. It also highlights the importance of building a partnership between central and local government and the business community.

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## Whanganui a Top 10 destination

Great news! A recent Experience Oz annual survey has named Whanganui a Top 10 destination, as voted by nearly 7000 respondents.

The Australia-based travel provider listed Whanganui in eighth place behind the likes of Fiordland, Queenstown and Taupo.

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## New partnership for FoodHQ and Proliant

A new partnership between FoodHQ and Proliant will involve a Proliant employee working full time with FoodHQ to progress nearly two million dollars' worth of research proposals that have been developed over the past two years.

The new partnership involves a Proliant employee working full time with FoodHQ to progress nearly two million dollars' worth of research proposals that have been developed over the past two years, including projects centred on extracting and processing high-value biological by-products and continued improvement at Proliant's new production plant.

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