

The following content discusses our proposed changes to what was planned in Year 3 of our Long-term Plan. We invite your feedback on these key issues.

MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES

Horizons' science team monitor the Region's land, air, and water for state and trends, and complete a range of science and research to inform many of our work programmes. As with the last few years, Council proposes to increase investment in the management of the Region's natural resources through biosecurity and habitat protection, land management, freshwater and partnerships, and science and innovation programmes in 2017-18.

Council's science programme had a proposed increase of \$190,000 for Year 3 of the LTP. However for 2017-18 Council is proposing an increase of \$136,000. While this is a \$53,000 saving, funding will continue to provide increased monitoring of the Region's waterways by adding three new flow recorder sites and continuing the increased swim spot monitoring programme from 17 monitored sites to 80. Year 3's funding will allow us to better report and inform communities about the rivers, lakes, and beaches they swim at and advise actions to improve the water quality in our Region.

Horizons' freshwater programme is not proposing any increases in Year 3, as collectively our Region recently received \$2.5m central government funding towards Te Mana o Te Wai projects that commit over \$3 million to freshwater improvement in the Region. We will continue to support and work alongside iwi to help deliver these projects in the Manawātū, Rangitikei, Kai Iwi and Lake Horowhenua Catchments.

The LTP proposed a reduction of \$119,000 of SLUI funding in Year 3. Council now proposes to reduce this budget by \$173,000. This additional saving of \$54,000 reflects a lower demand for works related to forestry. The programme reduction should not affect the current levels of service, or the ability of Council to meet its contract targets for the central government funding component. The SLUI programme has been underway for 10 years and Landcare Research has assessed it as being on track to deliver approximately 30 per cent improvement in river sediment loads by 2043.

CHANGES TO TRANSPORT

As part of the Palmerston North Urban Bus Service Review carried out between 2013 and 2015, Council had agreed to allocate \$800,000 for bus improvements for 2017-18, with an additional \$800,000 to be provided by NZ Transport Agency (NZTA).

Working in collaboration with NZTA, Council has revisited, refined and reprioritised the proposed improvements, which will now be staged over a longer period. This staged process allows us to review uptake as new services and increased frequencies are offered, and determine whether they are adding value and can be rolled out to other areas.

Commencing in Year 3, Palmerston North buses operating throughout the city will have extended hours, operating until approximately 8pm on weekdays. There will also be increased frequencies during the weekends. Other improvements will be implemented in years that follow. The result of these combined

changes equates to a reduction of approximately \$400,000 of local share in 2017-18.

Our Region is one of the largest, and arguably the most diverse landscape in the country. Many of our communities are remote, where timely access to emergency services can mean the difference between life and death.

The Philips Search and Rescue Trust operate five helicopters via the 111 call system, throughout the Central North Island. The Trust has sought funding assistance from Horizons, and as a result of 2016-17 Annual Plan submissions, Council is proposing a \$30,000 contribution to the helicopter that services our Region. We are seeking feedback from the public on whether this is an activity Horizons should support, and if so should this be funded through the regional transport general rate. This would equate to approximately 30 cents per ratepayer in the 2017-18 period.

BIOSECURITY AND BIODIVERSITY

Over the next year, our new pest management plan and strategy will be put into place.

Council is proposing to increase funding by \$184,000 for the management of pest plants. This takes the proposed budgets in Year 3 of the LTP from \$1.5 million to \$1.68 million, and equates to a \$1.69 increase per ratepayer per annum across the biosecurity and environmental initiatives rates.

Increased funding will improve our ability to respond to enquiries, enhance surveillance for pest plants in the Region and undertake more public awareness work. This increased budget includes an provision for the activity to operate effectively. It also includes enhanced funding for biological control agents to manage pest plants which will assist with securing and releasing more agents in the Region, investing in potential new controls, and monitoring the ones we put in place.

In Year 3 of the LTP a biodiversity position was removed. This is proposed to be reinstated so that we can continue to service the current demand in this area. It has minimal rates impact overall (70 cents per ratepayer). Council also reversed the decision to remove \$50,000 funding towards the Tawata programme in Year 3. Both of these will be funded 50/50 through environmental initiatives and general rates in 2017-18.

Horizons' possum control programme has been continuing to expand over the last 11 years. The LTP anticipated a \$169,000 increase in the management of possums for Year 3. Council is proposing a \$172,000 increase for the biosecurity animals area. This will consolidate and focus control efforts within the possum control programme's existing area - equating to over half of the Region. It will also contribute to increased possum monitoring and investigating options for management of land where OSPRI has signaled a phased withdrawal in areas that are declared TB free over the coming years. Additionally, some of this increase will be directed to further rabbit monitoring within the Region.

Demands on the Manawātū Gorge are growing. Our biodiversity and pest control work is to protect the very reasons why people visit and undertake recreational activities in our Region's unique and iconic scenic reserve. Working alongside local councils, Department of Conservation, iwi and landowners, Horizons are a member of the newly formed Te Apiti Gorge Governance Group. Council is proposing an additional \$65,000 towards building the project's capacity and helping to implement a 10 year vision. \$30,000 of this budget has been redirected from other biodiversity projects for the year 2017-18. This means a minimal rating impact of 32 cents per ratepayer across the Region.

STRATEGY AND POLICY

One of the Council's core statutory requirements is its regulatory business. In addition to considering applications for resource consents and ensuring consent holders are meeting the terms of their consents, our regulatory business builds community confidence that our resources are being sustainably managed, and that there is appropriate oversight of environmental matters within our Region.

Council is proposing to increase its capacity and capability levels in this area by approximately \$350,000 in comparison to Year 3 of the LTP. A portion of the increased cost is recoverable through direct charges to resource users either as a cost to applicants applying for consent, or through annual monitoring and compliance charges for those already holding consents.

This funding increase will assist with growing resource consenting and consent monitoring capacity, and build our capability to respond to an increasing demand for more complex consents, and central government's changes and reporting requirements as part of its Resource Management Act reform package.

The increased demand on Horizons' consents and compliance team reflects a large number of new consents, particularly for intensive agriculture, as a result of our One Plan regulations. The Region also has many municipal wastewater treatment plants that will need consenting in the next 1-5 years. These more complex consents often result in appeals to the Environment Court or High Court and additional resource has been budgeted to help Council finance our statutory involvement with these appeals.

The One Plan is the statutory document that informs resource use in the Region. It is a complex document and is subject to a rolling programme of evaluation, monitoring and potential revision. In Year 2 we recognised we needed additional resource in the policy area. While there is no impact on rates increase from Year 2 to Year 3, it is expected that the Plan will continue to need dedicated resource in 2017-18. This Year 3 LTP change will provide Council the ability to respond to central government's changing policies and regulations, while identifying areas for improvement and refining its delivery.

CITY REACH AND RURAL UPGRADE PROJECTS

The City Reach Project provides Palmerston North with flood defences designed to withstand a 1 in 500 year return period flood. Although the Project was scheduled to finish in the 2016-17 financial year, one last piece of work has been identified and proposed for inclusion in 2017-18. As part of the works programme, provision has been made for further bank protection to the Mangaone Stream downstream of Tremaine Avenue. While there is no immediate risk of failure, the existing works are a potential weak point in the network.

The works form part of Horizons' Lower Manawatu Scheme and, with the Flyers Line Spillway and Taonui Basin west of Palmerston North, serve to protect a substantial part of Palmerston North from Mangaone Stream flooding. An additional \$400,000 has been budgeted for this work, and will be repaid along with the

remaining debt attributable to the City Reach Project over the next 10 years.

Largely running in parallel to the City Reach Project, Horizons has also been delivering a \$40 million project that will lift the standard of flood protection to communities outside Palmerston North via the Rural Upgrade Project. The Project commenced in 2006 and is scheduled for completion in 2017-18. With such a significant and long-running project, inevitably, things change. Provision has been made to address particular issues in and around Feilding where urban growth has meant that existing flood protection infrastructure (primarily stopbanking) is now deemed unfit for purpose. As with the Mangaone work, it is intended that the cost of this additional work (estimated at \$140,000) is to be added to the borrowing required to deliver the Rural Upgrade Project.

FLOOD PROTECTION AND LAND DRAINAGE

Flood protection and land drainage are paramount to our role in keeping communities safe. Managing rivers through engineering works allows us to help limit flood damage and provide land drainage to an agreed level of service. Council proposes to continue its programme of maintenance, renewal and capital works identified in Year 3 of the LTP, as well as focus on the following key areas.

In June 2015 the Region was impacted by a severe storm. That event had particularly pronounced effects on Whanganui and other communities along the Region's western coastline. In response to that event, we are proposing to modify the scope of the Matarawa Scheme to include maintenance of the Matarawa Stream through the urban area at an estimated cost of \$340,000. Council is proposing that this new Year 3 funding for the two year programme commences in 2017-18. This work has been fully explained in a newsletter sent to affected ratepayers.

With parts of our Region experiencing significant growth, Horizons is also mindful of the need to adapt what we do operationally to changing needs. In particular, this includes looking more closely at land drainage between Palmerston North and the Oroua River – the area generally covered by the Manawatu Drainage Scheme. Although regulations exist to limit exposure to flood risk associated with residential development, good decisions inevitably rely on good information. Council is increasingly finding

that levels of service that would be considered adequate in a rural context are not so where land use is becoming more residential in nature. As a result, Council proposes an additional \$100,000 new funding in Year 3 for developing a numerical/computer model that will provide better, more robust solutions to current level of service issues, and also enhance our ability to keep pace with future changes. The \$100,000 estimated cost is intended to be split between the Manawatu Drainage and Lower Manawatu Schemes, with a \$20,000 general rate contribution.

Palmerston North City Council and Horizons are working collaboratively to encourage greater recreational use of the Manawātū River corridor, given it is likely to become a more integral part of the cityscape. For Horizons this involves some challenges, including balancing those amenity needs with flood protection requirements.

To make these judgements, Horizons relies on computer models to assess what level of river corridor modification can be accommodated. Technology has evolved considerably in this area and accordingly additional Year 3 provision has been made to significantly upgrade those models. This will enable Horizons to be more definitive about where enhancement of the river corridor is possible without compromising flood protection standards. The \$60,000 cost of this work is primarily funded through an additional Lower Manawātū Scheme targeted rate.

MANAGEMENT OF DAMS

A number of Horizons flood control schemes use detention dams to hold floodwater back, particularly around Marton and Hunterville. Those dams range in shape, size and location and often provide a much wider benefit than many people realise, particularly around Hunterville where 27 individual dams with a combined storage volume of 2.1 million cubic metres play an important role in keeping State Highway 1 free from flooding. We've been looking at the way we manage those dams and have identified a need for some improvements in order to adequately

manage the safety of those structures and provide for the programmed replacement of some key components such as spillways. The estimated \$152,000 cost is intended to be shared across the five schemes that look after those dams (Matarawa east of Whanganui, Tutaenui around and north of Marton, Porewa around Hunterville, Pakihi near Raethi and the Tawataia-Mangaone east of Eketahuna). As with all of Horizons river management activity 20 per cent of the cost will be funded from a common rate that extends across the Region.



Your Councillors

See horizons.govt.nz for your councillors' contact details



Bruce Gordon
Chairman,
Manawatu-Rangitikei



Paul Rieger
Deputy Chairman,
Palmerston North



Bruce Rollinson
Ruapehu



Colleen Sheldon
Horowhenua-Kairanga



David Cotton
Wanganui



Gordon McKellar
Manawatu-Rangitikei



John Barrow
Tararua



Lindsay Burnell
Horowhenua-Kairanga



Nicola Patrick
Wanganui



Pat Kelly
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Rachel Keedwell
Palmerston North



Wiremu Te Awe Awe
Palmerston North

Submission Form



11-15 Victoria Avenue,
Private Bag 11025, Manawatu Mail Centre,
Palmerston North 4442
T 0508 800 800 F 06 952 2929
www.horizons.govt.nz

We invite your feedback on these key issues. Have your say via the submission form on the back of this document or at www.horizons.govt.nz

Name _____ Phone _____ (home/mobile)
 Organisation _____ (business)
 Address _____
 Email _____
 Signature _____
 Postcode _____
 Date ____/____/____

I am happy to speak in support of my submission Yes No

Have your say on the key issues discussed inside. For more information, check out the supporting documentation online at www.horizons.govt.nz or at your nearest Horizons office. The 8th, 10th and 11th of May have been set aside for submission hearings, depending on the volume of submissions received.

Tick here if you would like to receive further information via email regarding the work Horizons Regional Council carries out on your behalf.

I support/oppose _____
 because _____
 An alternate option could be _____

The consultation document outlines the work Horizons Regional Council will do in the year ahead and what it will cost. We want to hear your feedback through the submission process.

Submission close Thursday 13 April 2017.

To make a submission you can:

Fill out this form and post it to Freepost 217922, Horizons Regional Council,
Private Bag 11025, Manawatu Mail Centre, Palmerston North 4442

Write your submission as a normal letter and post to the same address as above.

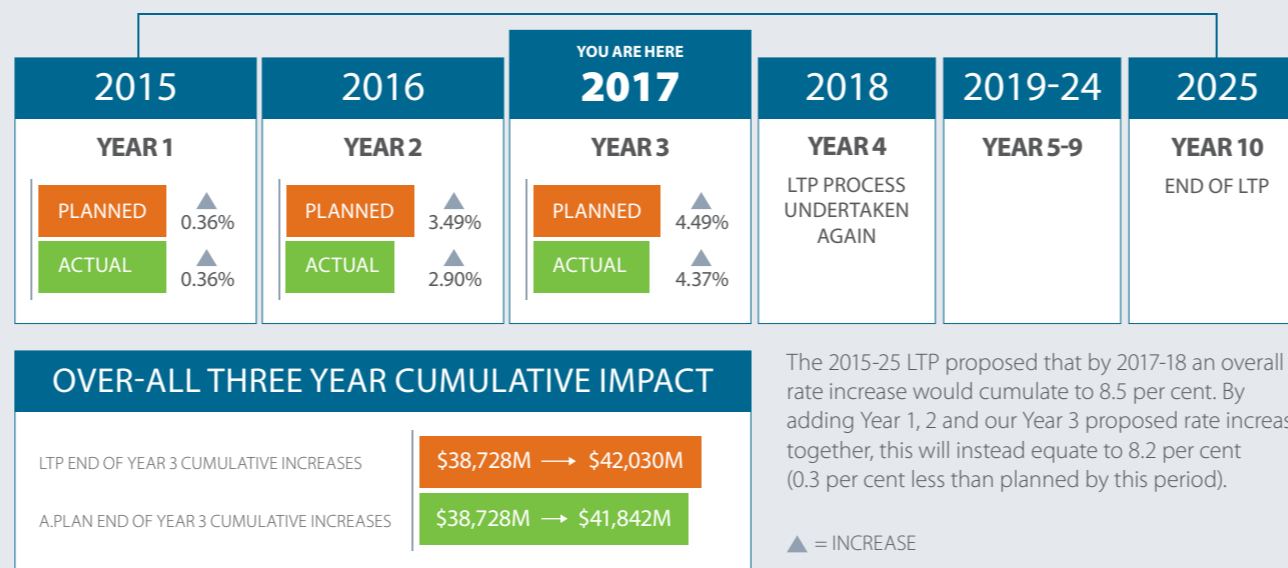
Make sure you include your name, main contact phone number, full address, postcode, email address and whether you want to speak to your submission. You can choose to speak to your submission at a Council submissions hearing as stated in the conditions above if you wish. Submissions hearings may be held at locations throughout the Region based on demand. Please note: all submissions received are considered public. Any contact details provided with your submission will be published in the resulting council report which will be made available to the general public.

Go to www.horizons.govt.nz and submit online.
 Email your submission to submissions@horizons.govt.nz
 Drop this form off at Horizons service centres

UNDERSTANDING THE LTP AND ANNUAL PLAN PROCESS

Horizons Long-term Plan (LTP) sets out how we plan on managing the Region's natural resources for the next 10 years. This includes identifying the activities we need to deliver and proposing what rate contribution is required to help cover the estimated costs for each year. Once a LTP is set, we touch base with it every year to see if we are on track with what we proposed via an Annual Plan process. Sometimes things change so we make adjustments and invite our community to provide feedback – this is one of those years. Essentially, in 2015 our LTP provided the 'big picture' for the period 2015-25, and this year's Annual Plan (Year 3 of the LTP) is the detail for 2017-18. While a LTP is set for 10 years, every three years it is revisited as changing circumstances, focus and efficiencies make it a necessary undertaking. The next LTP process will be undertaken again in 2018.

LTP 2015 - 2025 RATES YEAR BY YEAR



UNDERSTANDING THE PROPOSED RATE INCREASE

Horizons Regional Council is proposing an average rate increase of 4.37 per cent for 2017-18. After consultation with our communities, should this increase be adopted, your individual rate demand may differ to this percentage. This is because the proposed rate increase percentage is an average for the whole Region. It is important to note that each district has a different set of valuations on which your rates are calculated. For example:

- Your property may have had an increase or reduction in value.
- Specific district rating inputs, such as an urban passenger transport rate, or special river protection rates.

So what does this all mean? Your rates bill is likely to differ to that of your neighbour's and to that of your neighbouring districts. If you wish to get an idea of what the rates may look like for your area, please check out the rates section on our website.

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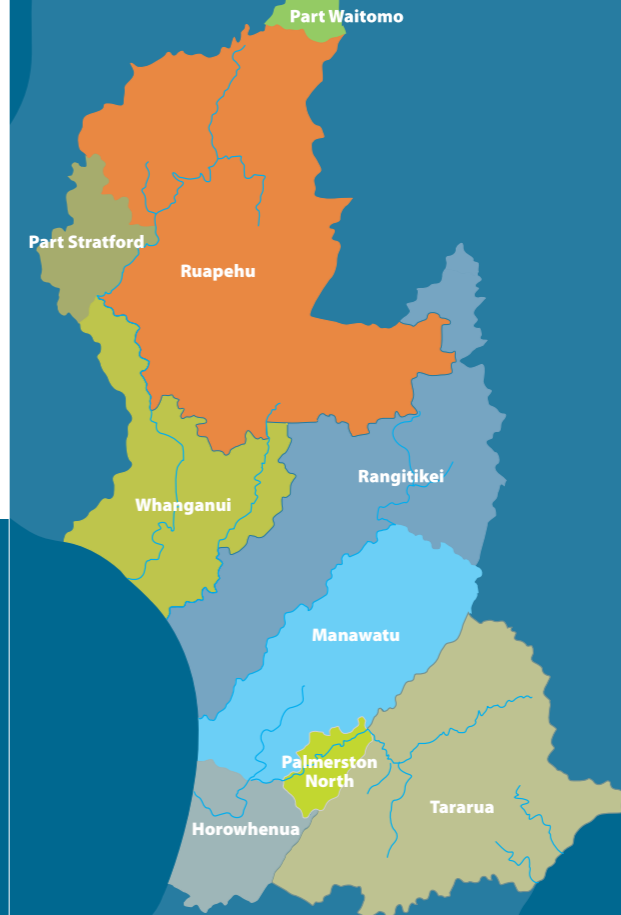
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2017/EXT/1510



OUR ROLE

The Horizons Region extends from Ruapehu in the north and Horowhenua in the south, to Whanganui in the west and Taranaki in the east. As your Regional Council, our role differs from that of cities and districts. We are responsible for managing the Region's land, air and water resources on behalf of the communities we serve. We also contract passenger transport services, play an important role in road safety education, work to reduce the risk and impact of flooding, and lead the planning for and response to emergencies to help keep people and properties safe.

2017-18 ANNUAL PLAN

HAVE YOUR SAY



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



From managing animal and plant pests, completing river management projects and improving the resilience of some of our schemes affected by the June 2015 flood, to reviewing and improving policies and programmes such as the One Plan - our work has a direct impact on how you live, work and play in the Manawatu-Whanganui Region.

Each year, through our Annual Plan process, Council determines our identified work programme for the next 12 months and proposes what rate contribution is required to help cover the delivery costs.

This document is to signal to you what our priority areas are for 2017-18 and how they differ to those listed for Year 3 in our 2015-25 Long-term Plan (LTP). While we are not proposing significant changes, we do invite your feedback on the detail inside.

For 2017-18 we have identified a need to increase expenditure for some of our work programmes. This increase will be kept to a minimum thanks to ongoing low interest rates on loans and keeping the Emergency Insurance Reserves at their current level as opposed to an additional \$100,000 as originally planned in the LTP for Year 3.

In 2015 our LTP proposed a 4.49 per cent increase for Year 3. Council has worked hard to keep this down to a 4.37 per cent average rate increase for 2017-18.

The proposed changes to Year 3 of the LTP in this document, are exactly that – proposed changes. If Council receives significant feedback from our ratepayers asking us not to implement some or all of these changes, our work will be business as usual under the original LTP work plan for 2017-2018.

Having your say on how we manage the Region's natural resources really can make a difference. I encourage you to fill in the submission form found on the back of this brochure and let us know your thoughts. Forms can also be found online, along with supporting documentation, at www.horizons.govt.nz as well as at your nearest Horizons' office.

Bruce Gordon, Chairman.