

SmartGrowth Newsletter #28, November 2008

When we think about the western Bay's growth some of the first things that spring to mind are more cars on the road or more rural land being swallowed up for new homes. However, another side effect of growth is the impact on health services.

I was therefore pleased at the last SmartGrowth meeting to hear of the newly established Bay of Plenty Clinical School. This is an exciting initiative and will support economic growth through the creation of job and educational opportunities in the SmartGrowth area and also the eastern Bay of Plenty. Read more about the project in this issue of SmartGrowth News.

It was also timely to hear about the wealth of educational opportunities being developed by the tertiary education partnership of the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and the University of Waikato. The two institutions will be sharing teaching of degree courses here in Tauranga, which will create more opportunities for our students to be able to study in the western Bay.

Our business community will be interested to know that an industrial land study looking at future needs post 2021 for business land was received at the last SmartGrowth meeting. The study looks at potential sites that could be developed into industrial estates or business parks. We will be discussing this report and further actions required at the next SmartGrowth meeting in December.

It is with regret that we farewelled Antoine Coffin, Tu Pukari Advisor – Technical, who has left us for a senior position with Auckland Museum. Antoine has worked with the Combined Tangata Whenua forum where he contributed some excellent work in achieving SmartGrowth goals with Tangata Whenua. Antoine's work has been of a very high standard. We wish Antoine well for the future.

The SmartGrowth partners would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Margaret Wilson MP for her considerable contribution to SmartGrowth. Margaret has been a strong supporter and instrumental in forging links between SmartGrowth and Wellington from the very beginning and helped considerably in the implementation of the SmartGrowth strategy. We wish her well in her new role as Professor of Law and Public Policy at the University of Waikato.

It is with great sadness that I would like to note the passing of Mayor Graeme Weld. Graeme was a member of the Joint Committee since its establishment in 2000 and of its successor, the SmartGrowth Implementation Committee. He was both an active and visionary participant, who made a significant contribution to both development and implementation of SmartGrowth. He often tempered the discussions if he felt it was moving beyond practical application with a favourite saying of "the winds of theory wrecked on the rocks of reality".

A particular passion of his involved the sourcing of funding for development of the transport infrastructure to support both, existing and future growth in the western Bay of Plenty sub-region. He was tireless in his endeavours to achieve what he regarded as the western Bay of Plenty's share of funds.

His presence, not always knowing what angle he was going to come from, and sense of humour, will be truly missed around the Implementation Committee table.

Our thoughts are with Graeme's wife Susan and family.

Bill Wasley
SmartGrowth Independent Chairman

Healthy outlook for clinical school

The growth and change in the western Bay's population (with its aging population and growing Maori population) will put increasing pressure on health services here.

The western Bay will need 100 extra GPs, 25 to 30 per cent more hospital clinical staff and an increase of 100 per cent in staff to care for the elderly within the next 10 years as we continue to grow at a rapid rate.

To meet these demands the Bay of Plenty District Health Board has established a clinical school. The school will provide clinical training and research opportunities that will attract students and encourage them to stay here in the region once they have qualified.

The inaugural head of the school is Dr Paul Malpass, who was previously chief medical director for the BOPDHB.

The school moved to the west wing of the old maternity annexe at Tauranga Hospital in June. Gaining this space has enabled the school to offer a range of clinical training activities to take place including student orientation, teaching activities and clinical skills development sessions. However, the short-term vision (from now until 2010) is to gain enough space for the school to provide revenue generating services.

The school has established formal working relationships with tertiary education providers, including the University of Waikato, to develop courses to meet the future health professional needs of the region.

The development of the school supports SmartGrowth's aim to make sure there is adequate provision of land and services to support primary and other health care.

Check out how we are meeting our SmartGrowth goals by looking for this symbol.



Top class partnership between BOP Polytech and University of Waikato

Bay of Plenty people will soon have more tertiary programmes to choose from as the University of Waikato and the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic strengthen their unique ties.

The two organisations, which already work together on some teaching and research, have spent the past two years discussing and designing extra research and tertiary programmes for Bay of Plenty people in a bid to meet the needs of a fast-growing region.

In 2009 more university students and staff will move to share the polytechnic's two sites – Windermere Campus and the Bongard Centre. There are also plans for a new building at Windermere to accommodate extra staff and students and shared campus facilities will mean students have seamless access to Polytechnic and University degree pathway programmes.

Together, the two institutions currently cater for the equivalent of 430 full time students in a range of partnership programmes. Extra courses will see that number potentially rise to almost 1000 full time students by 2012.

The Bay of Plenty Polytechnic Chief Executive, Dr Alan Hampton, believes that shared delivery plus academic and campus developments will offer significant advantages, with the two organisations well placed to achieve much more for the region.

"We're in a much better position to address regional skill shortages by creating a unique portfolio of tertiary programmes specifically matched to our region's needs and strengths," he said.

"This partnership will also ensure there's a research base which will assist in the development of new business opportunities as well as addressing the needs of existing businesses."

There are 147,000 people in Western Bay of Plenty now, estimated to reach 198,000 by 2021 and 286,000 by 2051. Government data says the region lags well behind the national average of 14.2% of people who have bachelor-degree level qualifications or higher. This low tertiary qualification rate means skills shortages in the region which impacts on its ability to support its own economic growth.

Courses in areas such as health management, computer science, marine studies, agri-business and graphic design, are being developed. Next year finance papers and a Bachelor of Social Work will also be available in Tauranga.

Let's get down to business

A study into land in the western Bay of Plenty suitable for business parks or industrial sites is complete and will be debated at the next SmartGrowth meeting.

This study follows a report that indicated there is a 300-hectare shortfall of industrial land in the western Bay of Plenty. The study, by Beca, looked at where that shortage is and the best sites for future development.

Forty eight sites were assessed then ranked in terms of constraints like geography. The study then looked at what sites were practical in terms of key infrastructure like roads and power.

The best six sites were chosen and the cost of adding infrastructure was calculated. These six sites included Rangiuuru North (near Paengaroa), Te Puke North and Bluehaven (Papamoa).

Of all the sites, the 250-hectare Rangiuuru site, near Paengaroa, is seen as the best site for development. However, that still leaves a 50-hectare shortfall of industrial land.

The study was handed out at the last SmartGrowth meeting and it will be discussed at the next meeting in December. Among the topics for discussion are whether to develop 300 hectares at Rangiuuru, if that is practical and if not what is the best alternative site.

Planning for the development of industrial land is important to SmartGrowth if we are to attract new business and industry to the area, as well as take advantage of having the Port of Tauranga located in our area.

The industrial land study also helps SmartGrowth meet its goal of completing a study to determine the future locations and demands for business land in the western Bay of Plenty.

The study was a collaborative approach by the SmartGrowth partnership and Rotorua District Council. This approach supports the twin city initiative which is part of the SmartGrowth strategy.

SmartGrowth goal – complete a study to determine the future locations and demands for business land in the western Bay of Plenty.



SmartGrowth goal – investigate future business land demands needs and locations.



Free off-peak travel for SuperGold Card holders

More than 40,000 older people in the Bay of Plenty are now eligible for free travel on off-peak public transport services.

Environment Bay of Plenty is being funded to provide SuperGold Card holders with free off-peak travel on scheduled public transport services.

Transport Committee Chairman Andrew von Dadelszen said the free travel would enable mature residents to explore the beautiful region and maintain their independence.

"Sixties are the new forties. Many of our 65-year-old-plus residents and visitors are still fit, active and work part-time or undertake voluntary work. Now they can commute outside of peak hours for free and experience the difference this makes to their bank balance and the environment," Mr von Dadelszen said.

Off peak hours in the Bay of Plenty are from 9am to 3pm and from 6:30pm to the end of service on weekdays, and any time on weekends and public holidays.

In Tauranga passenger figures increased from 8405 seniors in total in September to 14,877 in October. This was made up of more than 13,185 SuperGold card holders.

SmartGrowth goal – increase use of public transport



Green light for sustainable economic development funding

The Bay of Plenty's aquaculture, food and beverage, and marine industries gained a boost last month thanks to a \$360,000 Central Government grant.

The food sector will use the grant to develop its ability in the Bay of Plenty to produce and process food, as well as develop new value-added products and high value exports.

The grant will also be used to develop the region's aquaculture industry. This includes developing a strategy to look at things like the best species to grow in the region, the best technology to use and working successfully with iwi.

Meanwhile the marine industry will use its share of the grant to examine whether it is feasible to develop a dedicated marine business park, called the Harbour Central Marine Precinct, on a site beside Tauranga's harbour bridge. If the results are positive work could start as early as February next year.

An economic study on the Harbour Central Marine Precinct has forecast that it will create 520 jobs and inject more than \$100 million into the local economy.

Aquaculture, food and beverage and the Harbour Marine Precinct are three of the key focus areas for the Bay of Plenty's Regional Economic Development Strategy.

The strategy has been developed by the Regional Governance Group, which is made up of representatives from business, the economic development agencies and local councils.

Regional Governance Group Chairman John Cronin said he was delighted to hear the news.

"It gives me real pleasure to announce that we have received this funding and can now look at how we can maximise our natural resources and advantages for the economic benefit of the region," Chairman Cronin said.

The Regional Economic Development Strategy was launched in Tauranga in November 2008.

SmartGrowth goal – provide for increased business and employment opportunities.



Shaded box: Who is the Regional Governance Group?

Frank Aldridge	ABN Ambro Craigs, Tauranga
Rick Vallance	Ngati Whakaue Tribal Lands
Sandra Kai Fong	Bright Economy Advisory Board, Rotorua
Anthony Olsen	Toi EDA – Whakatane
Tony Hawken	EastPak Limited
Murray Davies	Priority One
John Cronin (Interim Chairman)	Environment Bay of Plenty

Aquaculture flexes its mussels

A forum on aquaculture was held in Tauranga in November. The event follows a decision by the Environment Court and the Minister of Conservation which has paved the way for the largest marine farm in New Zealand to be developed in the eastern Bay of Plenty.

In 2002 Environment Bay of Plenty granted consent to Eastern Seafarms Limited to create a mussel farm off the Opotiki coast. The decision then went to the Environment Court which upheld the regional council's decision and this week the final approval on the last remaining aspect of the proposal was received from the Minister of Conservation Steve Chadwick.

The 3,800-hectare farm will be built in stages and will be located about 8.5km off the Opotiki coast.

The ruling is expected to bring a boost to the Bay of Plenty economy.

Interest for marine farming in the Bay of Plenty is high because of the region's good growing conditions and infrastructure.

One of SmartGrowth's actions is to identify Aquaculture Management Areas (AMAs). These are defined areas, mapped and described in the regional coastal plan. In considering AMAs, councils must consider the effects of aquaculture on the environment, fisheries resources, fishing interests and other uses of the coastal marine area.

The marine farm off Opotiki will be developed in an aquaculture management area.

This has prompted the regional governance group, which is made up of representatives from business, the economic development agencies and local councils, to develop an aquaculture strategy to look at what we need to do to make sure aquaculture develops successfully and sustainably in the region.

The first stage of the strategy was to hold an aquaculture forum in November in Tauranga. For more information on aquaculture visit www.envbop.govt.nz and click on the coast section on the homepage.

SmartGrowth goal – provide for increased business and employment opportunities.



SmartGrowth goal – identify Aquaculture Management Areas.



SmartGrowth Snippets

Katicoach improvements

The dramatic rise in petrol prices has led to unprecedented demand for bus services.

The Katicoach, between Katikati and Tauranga via Omokoroa, now has more than double the amount of passengers it had before Christmas at peak times.

Environment Bay of Plenty has a temporary solution in place that will enable the driver to call for a shuttle bus to pick up people who have been unable to get on the Katicoach.

Long term there are several options available to Environment Bay of Plenty, which funds the bus service, and staff are working on them now.

SmartGrowth goal – increase use of public transport



Bigger buses in Tauranga

Tauranga's busiest routes got bigger buses in October.

Bus passengers have been experiencing overcrowding on routes serving, Brookfield/Matua (route 5), Papamoa (route 6) and Brookfield/Bethlehem (route 10) over the past few months.

As a result, Environment Bay of Plenty, which funds the buses, and Tauranga City Council are funding larger buses with more seats on these services.

This will mean an extra 900 seats in total a day.

One of SmartGrowth's aims is to increase the use of public transport as well as enhance public transport. Bigger buses on key routes help achieve that goal.

SmartGrowth goal – increase use of public transport



Thank you Margaret Wilson

The SmartGrowth team recognised the hard work of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Margaret Wilson MP at a function last month. Margaret has worked effectively and often behind the scenes to gain transport funding and progress other initiatives for SmartGrowth. Her ability to open doors in Wellington has been much appreciated. In 2009 she will return as the founding Dean of the Waikato School of Law at The University of Waikato Hamilton. Margaret established this school of law as New Zealand's most modern law school in 1990. She will return as a Professor of Law and Public Policy at the University.

Hāere i runga i te rāngimarie Antoine

With great regret SmartGrowth staff and the Combined Tangata Whenua Forum farewelled Antoine Coffin in October. Antoine's role as Tu Pakiri (Technical) Advisor was to strengthen relationships with Tangata Whenua and to increase the understanding of Tangata Whenua growth management issues. He played an important role in SmartGrowth in ensuring that Maori culture and heritage are protected and celebrated as part of the western Bay of Plenty's growth management strategy. We wish him well in his new position as the Maori partnership and development executive (or kaitakawaenga) which is a new position at Auckland Museum. Antoine, wife - Shirley Marie, and their two children Te Rina and Jean Luc - Ma te Atua koutou e tiaki e manaaki i ngā wā katoa.

Farewell Mayor Weld

The SmartGrowth team would like to acknowledge the work of the late Western Bay of Plenty District Council Mayor Graeme Weld, who passed away on Saturday 15 November.

Mayor Weld made an active contribution to SmartGrowth meetings and never failed to battle for the rights of the people of Western Bay of Plenty.

Our thoughts are with Mayor Weld's wife Susan, his four children and grandchildren.

Graeme Weld, 70, was in his third term as Mayor of the Western Bay of Plenty District Council, a position he had held since November 2001.



SmartGrowth

Building blocks to a better future

For more information on SmartGrowth contact:

Mail: P O Box 13231

Tauranga

Phone: 07 577 1996

Fax: 07 577 1997

Website: www.smartgrowthbop.org.nz

Please forward this newsletter on to others who may be interested. Check out the website or send us a message to register your interest in receiving SmartGrowth updates if you are not on the mailing list.