

Newsletter No 14, *May 2006*

One of the challenges facing the SmartGrowth team is keeping people in the western Bay of Plenty informed about the implementation of the Integrated Growth Management Strategy. While there has been strong community awareness for the development and the need for the strategy, there hasn't necessarily been the same awareness of the various implementation actions.

Many actions have either been completed or are underway since the launch of the strategy in May 2004. Many of these actions are referred to in this newsletter.

This newsletter is one of the ways that we keep nearly 2,000 stakeholders up-to-date with key events in the implementation calendar. Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty and Tangata Whenua also keep their community members informed and updated on the actions that they are particularly involved with.

We hope you find this fourteenth newsletter informative and interesting.

Bill Wasley
Independent Chairman

New Zealand Landcare Trust

New Zealand Landcare Trust's Robyn Skelton recently explained the workings and objectives of the New Zealand Landcare Trust. Robyn works mainly with private landowners and groups throughout the Bay of Plenty and sees real benefits in enhancing the relationship with SmartGrowth to help achieve some of the SmartGrowth land related objectives.

Travel demand management

Tauranga City people are well aware of the congestion problems facing the urban areas in particular but also outlying areas of the city. The term 'travel demand management' refers to the process of working out ways of reducing that congestion by building better roads. It also ensures that people are able to walk and bike safely and have easy access to public transport.

SmartGrowth and ten year plans

Each of the partner councils has included actions in its ten year plan to ensure that the SmartGrowth Strategy will be implemented as agreed. The councils have worked separately and together to ensure that their Ten Year Plans align with and support strategy implementation.

Review of SmartGrowth strategy actions

The Strategy adopted in May 2004 is at a stage now where we need to review the actions in terms of achievement, current relevance, and whether there should be any new actions to fill gaps or deal with initiatives that have arisen since May 2004. The implementation committee will consider any changes before consulting with the public using the Local Government Act 2002 special consultative procedure. In addition, Strategic Partners and the Combined Tangata Whenua Forum will also be involved in the action review.

This review is only focussed on the SmartGrowth actions and not the 'strategy'.

Local government bill

The Local Government Law Reform Bill (No. 3) was first read in Parliament at the end of March and has been referred to the Local Government and Environment Select Committee. It is due to report back to the house before 11 June 2006. We had hoped that the bill would contain provisions amending the Local Government Act 2002 on the issue of development contributions, particularly Section 203 dealing with reserves. Currently in high growth areas such as the western Bay of Plenty the cap on the value of reserves contributions means that insufficient land can be taken to provide an adequate level of reserves especially in future areas of high densities.

We will be submitting to the select committee on this issue.

Government engagement

Engaging with central government over the SmartGrowth approach has been a particular strength noted by several ministers over the past few years. We briefed the Minister of Transport in February on the transport strategy, transport noise standards, rail duplication, the rail strategy, funding of rail and policy development. We are proposing to meet in June/July with other relevant Ministers.

Rail study

The Bay of Plenty Rail Strategy adopted in November 2005 included an action to complete a strategic corridor/route study. SmartGrowth is interested in this work given the growth pressures in Tauranga and the need to protect the rail corridor into the future. This study covers off a study of rail routes and looks at the future of rail and will become a key element of the reviewed Regional Land Transport Strategy, which is to be completed later this year.

Eastern corridor

The purpose of the eastern corridor work is to complete an integrated land use and transportation study of the SmartGrowth eastern corridor. This stretches from State Highway 2 to the coast and from Paengaroa to the Te Maunga intersection. The project is a joint SmartGrowth and Transit New Zealand initiative. We are aiming for the work to be a lead into the development of an integrated funding

package for all transport requirements in the corridor. We commissioned Beca to undertake the work in September 2005 and it is due for completion by June. A draft report has been produced but there is still much to be done particularly on the land use side of the study. The final report needs to be drafted and will include land use information for the corridor.

Cross harbour corridors

The Regional Land Transport Strategy 2004 contains an action to investigate the potential for an alternative rail bridge crossing from Mount Maunganui to Tauranga central business district that does not compromise the Harbour Link Project. Tauranga City Council have progressed a study to consider the various options. Two proposals coming from that study are:

- Tauranga City Road and Rail concentrating on the Matapihi transport corridor with:
 - » Relocation of the rail line across the harbour and construction of a rail bridge adjacent to the existing harbour bridge
 - » The reutilisation of the existing rail bridge as a road access both into the heart of the city and as the transiting State Highway 2
 - » Long-term development of the Tauranga waterfront
- City Link. This is similar to the Tauranga Road and Rail proposal but with a Tauranga central city focus on:
 - » Relocation of the rail line across the harbour
 - » The reutilisation of the existing rail bridge as a road access

Even though there are significant engineering, planning, community and environmental considerations for such a project, the long-term benefits to the city make this worthy of further investigation. A Working Group is to be established of relevant parties is to consider this matter further.

Key implementation actions

What follows is a sample of the key actions being undertaken by the SmartGrowth partners.

- Environment Bay of Plenty:
 - » Review of 2004 Regional Land Transport Strategy
 - » Regional Settlement Strategy
 - » Water Sustainability Strategy
- Tangata Whenua
 - » Iwi and Hapu management plans
 - » Tangata Whenua development areas
- Tauranga City Council
 - » Greenfields residential development
 - » SmartLiving Places
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council:
 - » Residential development
 - » Business land provision
 - » Structure planning in areas experiencing growth pressures, for example Omokoroa

Summary of SmartGrowth action achievement and initiatives to date

Since the adoption of the Strategy in May 2004, the following key implementation actions have been completed (as at June 2006):

- Adoption of Regional Land Transport Strategy 2004
- Adoption of Regional Rail Strategy (2005)
- Adoption of an Urban Design Strategy (TCC)
- Plan Changes for Pyes Pa residential, Katikati and Waihi Beach
- Preparation of Draft Long Term Council Community Plans incorporating the actions and financial implications arising from the implementation of SmartGrowth (TCC, WBOPDC and EBOP).
- Regional Airport Study – EBOP (completion in May 2006)
- Transportation Joint Officials Priority Projects and Funding Report (JOG)
- SmartEconomy Strategy (2004)
- SmartTourism Strategy (2006)

- Deed of Co-operation signed between University of Waikato and Bay of Plenty Polytechnic (with SmartGrowth representation on governance board)

The following key implementation actions are well underway as at June 2006:

- Change to the Regional Policy Statement with hearings in May/ June (EBOP)
- Plan changes for business land in Tauriko and Rangiuru
- Plan changes for residential and business land in Papamoa (Wairakei), Omokoroa, West Bethlehem and Te Puke
- Te Puna structure plan
- Eastern transportation corridor study
- Rail strategy implementation with a focus on the WBOP rail corridor capacity and long term options
- Review of Regional Land Transport Strategy (to be completed October 2006)
- Inter-regional Transportation Corridor Investigation
- Commencement of implementation of increased levels of service for bus transportation with commuter focus
- Joint working party established to investigate school bus service delivery arrangements

Legislative and national changes impacting on SmartGrowth since adoption include:

- RMA amendment Act 2005
- Local Government Law Reform Act 2006
- Establishment of On Track
- Completion of National Rail Strategy
- Rooding Surface Pricing Study
- Transit Policy Manual
- Acknowledgement of national deficit of available funds for transportation

Smart Living Places

Tauranga City Council planners are preparing a draft strategy action plan for discussion with councillors and the communities in Mount Maunganui and Tauranga central – Te Papa on how the residential intensification (higher density housing and mixed use development) part of the SmartGrowth Strategy can be implemented in these areas. The plan will focus on the opportunities in and around the main shopping centres identified on the SmartGrowth

Strategy map for intensification. This discussion will take place from about July to October 2006. Planners will be contacting residents and business owners in these areas to arrange local meetings.

This work is the first part of the two part Smart Living Places project that is looking at the potential in and around all established shopping centres in the city. It is in line with the SmartGrowth aim that the Mount and Tauranga central peninsulas be the priority focus.

The SmartGrowth Strategy and Implementation Plan provides councils, the community and investors with a wealth of information for informed decision making. In the years to come their decisions and actions will largely determine the quality of life for those who call the western Bay of Plenty home.

SmartGrowth contact details

For more information on SmartGrowth or for a free CD containing the full 50 Year Strategy and Implementation Plan, background and research papers, maps and other supporting documents contact:

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