

4 February 2010

Kapiti Coast District Council
Private Bag 60601
PARAPARAUMU 5254

SUBMISSION ON 'WATER MATTERS' PROJECT

Dear Kapiti Coast District Council,

Introduction

The Kapiti coast Chamber of Commerce welcomes the opportunity to make a contribution to the Water Project. It strongly supports the Council's approach to making progress on the critical issue of water as it impacts on the opportunity for the future economic development of Kapiti.

The Chamber's interest in business and economic development is clear. However, our comments below mainly address some high level concerns about factors to consider overall decision making process and to highlight some of the risks that we see as you move through the water project to select an option. We have not attempted to highlight criteria such as cultural issues which will no doubt be canvassed by others.

Comments

1. We note that where water services are perceived to be "free" there are few real drivers to conserve. The Chamber has grave concerns about the assumption of 400 litres of water per person per day peak consumption when the current peak is more like 650 litres per day. The implications of both peak and average consumption on sizing of the capacity solutions available may lead to a solution that has a much shorter life than anticipated. This could be particularly critical for storage options and less so for run of river options. That is, if this project uses the wrong numbers now, our community will be faced with looking for yet another 'solution' to water far earlier than it should have to. Let's do it once and do it right. With this in mind, how will the project allow for the possibility that consumption assumptions may be wrong?
2. Aside from all the other conservation tools available to the Council, it seems to the Chamber that the introduction of charges for water based on actual household and business usage could be invaluable in helping to achieve the 400 litre per person target. The seeming exclusion of a mechanism that would allow for charging is an omission from the terms of reference and the Chamber believes it should be actively considered and costed as part of the project.
3. As business growth in the area could be expected to increase ahead of population growth it would be useful to consider the possible implications for water usage as a result of this. If

there are more jobs created in the area and less people travelling outside the district what are the implications for water usage over and above what might be normally expected?

4. The Chamber also regards considering cross catchment water supply as being high on the list of essential criteria. This is of particular importance where there are clear economic benefits (both in terms of capital and/or operational costs) of a cross catchment solution over limiting solutions to particular catchments. Such an approach also reduces overall supply risks by introducing some diversity into capacity.
5. The above comment on price also stands on its own. There should be consideration given to the balance between initial capital and ongoing operational costs and the relative impact on rates.
6. Finally, water quality needs to be considered particularly in relation to costs. For example storage ponds can suffer from algal blooms and bores from issues around dissolved minerals. Mitigating these factors will dictate costs as well as influencing how useful the water actually is.

The Chamber would be pleased to explain any of the above comments and would very much like to continue to be involved in the Water Project as it moves to the next stage.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Ternent
Chairperson
Kapiti Coast Chamber of Commerce