

Reporting on Rodney

RDC making a positive difference

For more information on RDC go to www.rodney.govt.nz

On The Road

On Sunday 25th January, the NZ Transport Agency will open the Northern Motorway extension through to Puhoi.

It's a magnificent road. But it's also been a long hard one to get it to the point it is now. The Rodney District Council started lobbying for an alternative route to the exhausting and crash-prone Waiwera route more than a decade ago.

And now we have it—ahead of schedule and under budget, thanks to the men and women of the Northern Gateway Alliance (NGA), surely one of the notable success stories of New Zealand construction in recent years.

Along the road there have been interesting highlights. We can bring to mind the exhaustive measures NGA took to protect or replace the flora and fauna along the route. They did the same thing in protecting significant archaeological sites. Then there was the honour accorded Rodney's then deputy mayor David Steele who was asked to flick the switch on the huge tunnelling machine that produced not one but two tunnels in record time.

In more recent times, there was of course the Northern Gateway Toll Road Tunnel Charity Dinner, another spectacular success. We have just heard from the organisers that the dinner gathered \$100,000 for charity!

The NZ Transport Agency and its partners in the NGA have been great to have around. They have contributed a lot to the district, and they have been great neighbours. We're sorry to see them go, but we thank them for all they have done.

The Northern Gateway Alliance

- NZ Transport Agency
- Fulton Hogan
- Leighton Contractors
- URS New Zealand
- Tonkin & Taylor
- Boffa Miskell
- VSL
- United Group



No longer an extension. No longer a hope. Now a reality. The Northern Motorway looking south from Puhoi to Orewa. Photo: Northern Gateway Alliance.

Top Students Recognised By Council

Seven top local students will find it a little easier to fund their tertiary education in 2009, thanks to Rodney District Council.

Each of the students have been awarded scholarships valued at \$2,000 by Council. The scholarships were open to local students in the sixth and seventh forms who will be undertaking full-time tertiary study.

Applications were assessed against criteria relating to academic excellence and suitability for the course of study.

The successful students were:

- Arie Spyskma (Rodney College)
- Janine Kleingeld (Kingsway College)
- Jason Smith (Kaipara College)
- Laura de Haan (Mahurangi College)
- Tessa Evans (Mahurangi College)
- Russell Cooper (Orewa College)
- Sarah Paton (Orewa College)

In addition to their academic achievements, the scholarship recipients have also made an active contribution to school life and display a wide variety of talents.

Russell Cooper is described by his teachers at Orewa College as an "excellent all round citizen", and has been involved in a number of activities at the school, including the Senior Jazz Band, School Production, Stage Challenge and the 40 hour famine.



Four of the Rodney District Council Scholarship recipients: from left: Janine Kleingeld (Kingsway College), Laura de Haan (Mahurangi College), John Kirikiri, Rodney Deputy Mayor, Arie Spyskma (Rodney College) and Jason Smith (Kaipara College) Photo: Greg Kempthorne

Jason Smith was Deputy Head Boy in 2008 at Kaipara College and qualified for an ASB Bursary Award. Jason has an interest in sustainability issues and plans to study a conjoint Bachelor of the Arts and Science Degree.

Laura de Haan was the Head Girl of Mahurangi College in 2008 and was the winner of the Southern Zone Rotary Speech contest.

Janine Kleingeld of Kingsway College intends to study a Biomedical Degree at Auckland University. She would like to become a pediatrician and wants to use her talents to make a positive difference to the lives of children.

Four of the students attended a special ceremony at the Council meeting in December to receive their awards.

"It is fantastic to be able to recognise and support such outstanding young people who, I am sure, will go on to achieve great things and make a real contribution to society", said Rodney Deputy Mayor John Kirikiri, at the ceremony.

Development Contributions Public Workshops



Areas such as Helensville have experienced rapid growth in recent years, and the development contributions policy will help fund much needed infrastructure. Photo: RDC Planning Unit

Rodney District Council is working towards introducing a development contributions policy as part of the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) 2009-19.

This change is necessary to ensure Council receives sufficient funds to provide needed bulk infrastructure to areas designated for development. Details about development contributions are now available for viewing on our website www.rodney.govt.nz.

In addition, and as part of our commitment to public consultation on such important issues, we are arranging public meetings for you to learn more about what is proposed and to have your say on the proposals. Those meetings are

- Thursday 29th Jan 2009, 5 to 7pm, *Warkworth Masonic Hall*
- Monday 2nd Feb 2009, 5 to 7pm, *Helensville Service Centre*
- Tuesday 3rd Feb 2009, 5 to 7pm, *Orewa Offices – Council Chambers*

You are cordially invited to attend any or all of these meetings.

Rates for 2009 onwards

Rodney District Council is aiming to keep rate increases to the rate of inflation for at least the next three years.

Council made this decision at its last meeting in 2008, and instructions have gone out to staff to prune budgets accordingly.

The cost of inflation for the 2009/10 year has been estimated at 5.4%. This is based on a national estimate developed by BERL (Business and Economic Research Limited).

The 5.4% increase is slightly higher than last year's Consumer Price Index rate of 5.1%. The difference is due to the fact that the cost of goods used by the Council, such as roading material, pipes and other goods have increased more than household goods.

Council staff have also been asked to prepare budgets based on current levels of services.

As rates are also linked to the services ratepayers receive, location and property values, a rates increase will not have the same effect on every ratepayer. For example if an average 5.4% rates increase was adopted, some ratepayers would pay more and other ratepayers would pay less than this.

The Council will review its budgets in February, and Councillors may decide to change budgets at this time by adding or removing projects, or altering the levels of service being provided.

Budget decisions for the next ten years will come under public scrutiny when the Council's Long Term Council Community Plan goes out for public consultation in April this year.

Keep watching this space for updates about budgets.

Vegetation Control

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Notice is given that contractors will be carrying out chemical spraying in the month of **January 2009**, weather permitting.

This spraying is for the protection of the road asset and to enhance road safety. Areas will also be sprayed for targeted noxious weeds. Enquiries can be made to:

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| Hibiscus Coast Jeff McCauley Phone: 09 427 9384 Fax: 09 427 9382 | Rural and Townships Graham Andrew Phone: 09 427 9630 Fax: 09 427 9641 |
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upcoming Rodney District Council Meetings

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| Full Council..... | next meeting 26 th February |
| Infrastructure and Environment Committee | next meeting 29 th January |
| District Plan and Regulatory Committee..... | next meeting 28 th January |
| Strategy and Community Committee..... | next meeting 12 th February |

Meeting starting times

All meetings commence at 9.00 a.m. unless otherwise notified.

Meeting venues

Meetings are normally held in the Council Chambers, 50 Centreway Road, Orewa.