

SUBMISSION
on the
DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2013/2014
from
The Oratia District Ratepayers' and Residents' Association Inc.

The Oratia Ratepayers' and Residents' Association would like to make a submission on the following Draft Annual Plan items that particularly affect our community. We wish to speak in support of this submission at a public hearing.

Capital projects for 2013/2014 (Draft Annual Plan, Volume 1, p172)

At its meeting on Wednesday 12th December 2012 the Waitakere Ranges Local Board approved expenditure of \$40,000 for documenting Oratia's historical and cultural heritage and designing improvements to enhance its public spaces.

The project includes a landscape design for the rural village of Oratia as outlined in policy P18 of the Oratia Local Plan, and as further defined in Plan Change 35 which became operative in October 2012.

We would like to thank the Local Board for approving this expenditure. The Oratia R&R has since had joint discussions with Claire Liousse (Planner, North West Planning, Auckland Council), Mica Plowman (Heritage Advisor, Auckland Council) and David Harre and Sharon Walker (Oratia Folk Museum Inc.).

We request that Auckland Council continue to fund the following aspect of this ongoing project.

(a) Enhancement of the rural village of Oratia

Becoming the worlds most liveable city is going to involve high density living and all it has to offer, but it is equally important to protect our rural and green spaces, the buffer zone to the Waitakeres. In the future, picking apples from a tree will be lost to many inner city children. We urge Council to value Oratia as we who live here do, and to preserve it as a special place for all of Auckland.

In other parts of Auckland, preserving the specialness of our rural villages has created thriving communities, recreational opportunities and economic and tourist opportunities for townships like Clevedon, Hobsonville Point and Matakana.

The heritage of Oratia is a strongly bonded and social community with a great rural tradition. This heritage is being continually eroded. Being right on the edge of the Metropolitan Urban Limit, Oratia is especially vulnerable. Oratia has

traditionally consisted of green spaces, open places, and fruit production. Without a strong village centre we are seeing a change towards high speed traffic and a clutter of traffic and commercial signage - some of it large and imposing.

Oratia needs:

- a village square; somewhere to gather, in the area of the current domain and the attendant buildings (the Settlers Hall and the Small Hall), the car park, the playground and the school;
- signage to mark the entry points to the rural village of Oratia and to create a village threshold;
- raised crossings to create traffic calming and slowing in the area of the school and kindergarten.

An increase in traffic and its attendant signage on West Coast Road, has given our rural thoroughfare the look and feel of a motorway.

West Coast Road (withing the Oratia area) needs:

- low-height roadside planting to separate the vehicle zone from the pedestrian zone and to create a narrower look to the road, thus encouraging calmer traffic flow;
- fewer road signs to reduce the "motorway look."

We intend for these requirements to be incorporated into the design improvements which will result from the current heritage and design project for which the Local Board approved funding. We propose that the implementation of this design be broken down into stages.

We request that the Council reserve funds from the Capital Projects for 2013/2014 budget to put towards the first stage of implementing this design.

We suggest funds may be drawn from budget heading "Economic Development," (Vol 1, p172) sub-heading "Local economic development," budget line "Town Centre revitalisation," for which an amount of \$1,088,000 is labelled "Other (unallocated)."

We request that an amount no less than the largest other allocated amount, be ringfenced for the implementation of the design for the rural village of Oratia.

(b) Twin Streams Cycleway

We support and applaud Council's action in making the Twin Streams restoration project a key project in the Draft Annual Plan (p18).

We ask Council to consider extending the cycle and pedestrian path which currently runs from Sunnyvale Station to the Northern Side of Parr's Cross Road at Oratia Bridge so that it continues from the Southern side of Parrs Cross Road and follows the Oratia Stream past the vineyards of Artisan Wines then up the hill to the Oratia Domain and Halls on West Coast Road. The community can then further enjoy the stream environment and our village can be connected with our Farmers Market and with the public transport system (Sunnyvale Train Station).

This is in accordance with action A16 of the Oratia LAP: "Negotiate public access routes and construct trails to highlight heritage features and provide access from the village to Parr's Cross Road (at Oratia Bridge), along Oratia and Cochrane Streams, and connecting with Arataki."

We request that Council reserve funds from the Capital Projects for 2013/2014 budget for the construction of this cycle and pedestrian path.

We note in the budget under the heading "Transport," sub-heading "Roads and footpaths", budget line "Cycleway development and construction" that \$10,277,000 is allocated for this purpose (Vol 1, p179). We request that a cycleway from Oratia bridge to the vicinity of the Oratia Domain and halls be funded from this amount.

(c) Oratia Folk Museum

The establishment of Oratia Folk museum was driven by long-term local resident and committed historian Mr David Harre and his family, and gifted to the people of Oratia. It is tended by the Oratia Folk Museum Incorporated. David Harre also relocated the Jewish Prayer House to Oratia cemetery, and continues to maintain it.

David Harre has expressed concerns about what will happen to these special places in the future as the commitment is too much for one family.

We request that that annual funding support of \$5,000 be given to Oratia Folk Museum Inc. to continue the work Mr Harre has done. We note on p134 of the Draft Annual Plan Vol 1, under Local Community Services, that one "level of service" descriptor is

"Provide local community resources, funds and programmes that build community wellbeing."

We also note on p135 that \$18,350,000 is allocated to this. We request that the amount requested for the Oratia Folk Museum be drawn from this.

(d) Signage

We request that budget is allocated from Auckland Transport to create a design guideline for appropriate signage in Rural and Heritage areas. We request that all signs be of an appropriate size, scale, and have a sensitivity of placement. In line with overseas work, we request that signage that creates a sense of place, will create better communities and also improved road safety.

We cite as an example:

http://www.kentdowns.org.uk/uploads/documents/Rural_Streets_and_Lanes.pdf

We note in the budget under the heading "Transport," sub-heading "Roads and footpaths", there are budget lines named "Local Board Initiatives," "Other road projects" and "Other footpath projects." (Vol 1, p179). We request that the creation of rural and heritage signage guidelines and the implementation of these guidelines be funded from this amount.

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