



PAPAIOEA
PALMERSTON
NORTH
CITY

PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA

MINUTES ATTACHMENTS COUNCIL

**9.00AM - HEARINGS - ANNUAL BUDGET
2025/26, WEDNESDAY 30 APRIL 2025**

COUNCIL CHAMBER, FIRST FLOOR
CIVIC ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
32 THE SQUARE, PALMERSTON NORTH

COUNCIL MEETING

30 April 2025

9	Hearing of Submissions - Annual Budget 2025-26, Planning and Miscellaneous Services Fees & Charges 2025-26 and Te Motu o Poutoa Anzac Park Civic Marae & Cultural Centre Governance	
1.	Submitter 1 - Fees & Charges - Les Fugle	4
2.	Submitter 12 - Te Motu o Poutoa - Sharon Sandgathe	6
3.	Submitter 62 - Annual Budget - Pat Debney	9
4.	Submitter 70 - Annual Budget - MaLGRA	16
5.	Submitter 88 - Annual Budget - City to Sea Rail Trail – Manawatū	18
6.	Submitter 163 - Annual Budget - John Bent	33

Council fees & charges:

1. My name is Les Fugle. I am a local ratepayer and business owner; therefore, I have cause to interact with council staff, who frequently charge for that service.
2. My unease on this topic stems from the Council's underlying policy of charging an hourly rate for staff time and recovering 100% of the provided planning services. In a nutshell, I assert that the fees & charges are unfair, exceed market rates, are overly inflated, and obstruct growth.
3. The function of Council staff is not to profiteer but to proactively facilitate business and well-being services not dissimilar from a range of other community and social organisations; entities that typically operate on a non-profit basis, limiting, if not voluntary, to their actual overhead costs. I therefore question the rationale behind the Council's practice to charge for staff time at a rate significantly higher than their remuneration. To illustrate my point, a staff member working a standard 40-hour week and being charged out under the listed schedule rate for a planning officer at \$235p/h would bring in some \$460,000 in revenue for the Council annually.
4. Enlarging on the above, a fundamental purpose behind the collection of Rates is to avail that income towards the Council's operational costs, including that of staff salaries, thus raising concern why additional charges are imposed for staff time when their day-to-day work is paid from that source.
5. Further, a key component behind any charge is that elected members must be satisfied that staff are producing value-for-money service. There is a strong sentiment within the community that some staff, at times, are floundering, a view supported by the high level of complaints the Council receives. E.g. applications are regularly subject to requests for further information, which is often perceived by the applicant as not related to the matter and or the information has already been provided. There is also concern that processing staff constantly need to consult with colleagues and/or external consultants due to not having the necessary qualifications or experience, which causes process delay & escalation in costs. To highlight this point, it is noted that between July 2024 - March 2025 (a mere 8 months), staff expended \$921,000 on external consultants seeking assistance over planning matters.
6. Council staff are paid from out of the administration account, bankrolled from Rates that once including other income revenues, amount to approximately. \$196m – Council puts aside .47% of that intake (beckons why so little) towards operating the planning division, i.e. \$921k. I have no knowledge of staff numbers engaged under the planning umbrella, but say, unlikely those salaries collectively would match \$921k; however, if there is a shortfall in operating the planning division, then the put side percentage be increased.

Planning processing charges:

7. Section 150(4) of the Local Government Act 2002 explicitly restricts a Council from "recovering more than the reasonable costs incurred for the matter for which the fee is charged", while the RMA 1991 section 36AAA(3) sets out the criteria for fixing charges.
8. Council policy sets out to recover 100% of the planning matter cost, which of course, is predominantly made up of staff time. I say these charges ought to be removed in their entirety as staff are paid out of the administration account, and for hereafter reasons.
9. While acknowledging it may be simpler from an administration perspective to impose a starting charge, that is not what the legislation describes. The law restricts recovery to no more than the reasonable cost of processing the matter. A fixed charge, particularly at the described rates, fails to account that the actual cost can be less than the scheduled starting charge.

10. Below is mere couple examples that highlight concerns with setting a standardize charge, but firstly, one needs to be mindful that an application is predominately prepared by a professional consultant whom retains wealth of expertise in such matters (council staff are effectively the peer reviewer) and that at times there is apprehension whether applications are appropriately managed and within a timely manner.

12. Council has fixed “non-notified” land use consent charge at \$5,000 albeit charge comes with ability to impose additional costs; thus indicates an officer would typically incur over a week processing the application if paid a generous wage of \$100 p/h; whereas, unless the application retains serious shortcomings, am advised by professionals, an application under this category ought to be capable of processing in a day or thereabouts.

13. Council has fixed “limited-notified” subdivision of up to 20 lots at a start charge of \$28,000 and, exceeding 20 lots, a start charge of \$48,000. With the bulk of the work undertaken by professionals outside of Council, the processing time for these applications ought not to exceed a few days; thus, such a charge is beyond the realms of reasonableness. I also question why the a huge difference between the two charges; a larger lot subdivision does not necessitate additional work, certainly to the extent the fee implies. Should it be advanced that a larger lot subdivision is more complex and time-consuming, that would be misleading. While larger lot subdivisions do require additional engineering drawings and more peer-review time, this phase of work is not undertaken at the planning permission stage. Planning approval involves a processing officer checking that the application satisfies the rules, policies and objectives; thus, the extent of work is all but the same regardless of the number of lots. Engineering drawing consideration and approval is a separate step thereafter.

14. While not directly a "planning charge," matter, it is worth noting that at the time of subdivision, the developer bears the entire cost of the subdivision, including road build, cost of installing services, that must strictly adhered to Council's specifications which includes pipes must have a service life of no less than “80-years”. Further, a developer having met that significant cost must also pay development levies (while the sum varies equates to many thousands per section); Thereafter, the developer must “gift” the road and land it sits upon to Council, who then further benefits by receiving ongoing Rates from each section created.

In summary;

- Council is empowered to recover 100% of the ‘reasonable cost’ to process the matter; however, a blanket charge approach inevitably exceeds the actual/reasonable cost of doing so.
- The charge out rate set for staff time are beyond reasonable. A fairer and safer recovery model is “charge-up” based on the actual cost (less any offset) thus eliminating the risk of overcharging.
- Planning/process charges, which consist largely of staff time, should be completely removed if for no other reason than the Council receives wider benefits, noted above, and the charges act to stymie development.
- An independent watchdog should be established to ensure staff transparency and restore public confidence.

I thank you for your time, and open to any questions.

Dated: 30 April 2025



Tēnā koutou

vaswcd.org/rain-garden/

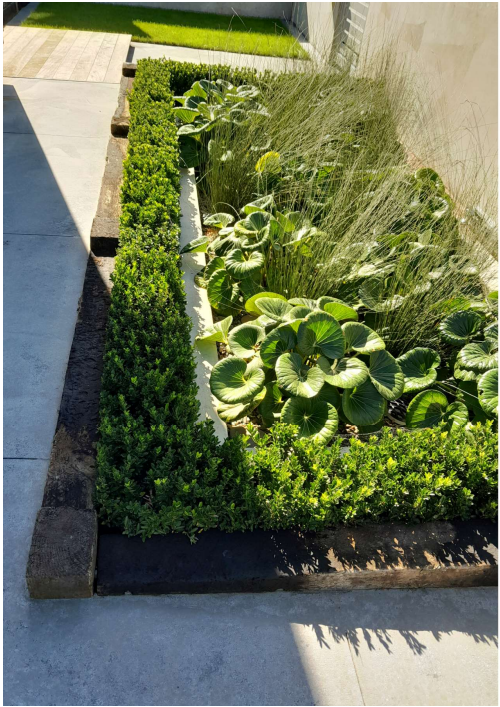
VIRGINIA'S SWCD
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

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Rain Garden

Rain Gardens will be reimbursed at 80% of total costs with a maximum payment of \$7,000.00. When pre-treatment is required, the pre-treatment costs are included in the cost of the practice.

A **Rain Garden** is a shallow landscaped depression that incorporates many pollutant removal mechanisms including temporarily ponding stormwater runoff 6 to 12 inches above a mulch layer that encourages the rain water to infiltrate into the underlying native soil within 48 hours. Rain gardens are an easy and effective tool that we can use to help reduce stormwater runoff from residential properties. These gardens are strategically placed to intercept pollutant laden stormwater runoff until it can be fully absorbed into the ground. Their design allows the rain garden to serve almost as a bowl that collects water from downspouts or overland flow across a property. The water is then able to slowly infiltrate into the underlying soil. Rain gardens can come in all different shapes and sizes but are best when planted with native plants that are indigenous to Virginia. These plants require less maintenance once established, have deep roots that soak up lots of water, provide food and habitat to wildlife, and are beautiful.





PNCC Rates Increases

Verbal submission against PNCC rates proposal within 2025 Annual Budget

Pat Debney – “Ratepayer”

30th April 2025

Background

- FM differential (0.2 - 5 hectares) needs full review i.e. the unpublished multipliers ↑
- FM category plots are often too small to be economic farms or commercial enterprises
- With transition to capital value mixed rating model, some reasonableness is still expected
- Rates are increasing well beyond levels of affordability – widespread defaults approaching
- Rates are not reflective of the services – no apparent nexus \$ to FM services
- Rural properties enjoy no street lights, footpaths, cycleways, water x 3 & have poorer roads
- Rural rates on Land Value not reflective of burden or consumption (CV includes plant)
- **Endured \$467.12/yr (28%) increase in 2024 - now seeking +\$819.12/yr (38%) increase or more**

Current Year

per pncc.govt.nz

2024/25 Rates Breakdown

DESCRIPTION	UNITS	FACTOR	TOTAL
General - Rural & Semi-Serviced FM (LV)	500000	0.00287	\$1,435.50
Uniform Annual General Charge	1	200	\$200.00
Capital Value Targeted Rate - FM	1410000	0.00033	\$462.60
Rubbish and Public Recycling	1	51	\$51.00
			\$2,149.10

DAI.MY®

Coming Year...?

per pncc.govt.nz

✓ Proposed 2025/26 Rates

The figures below are the provisional calculations for 2025/26 based on the new rateable values as at 1 September 2024 with property details as at 10 March 2025. They include the second stage of the progressive introduction over 3 years of a new targeted rate based on the capital value. The final calculations are scheduled for adoption on 4 June 2025.

DESCRIPTION	UNITS	PROPOSED 2026 RATES
General - Rural & Semi-Serviced FM	475000	\$1,495.30
Uniform Annual General Charge	1	\$300.00
Capital Value Targeted Rate - FM	1360000	\$1,097.52
Rubbish and Public Recycling	1	\$76.00
		\$2,968.82

PNCC Objections?

- "PNCC rates are lower than Council XYZ" – response... lead the change – be the lowest (top 30%)
- "PNCC need it to fund new developments" – response... cut cloth down to the true need
- "Rural ratepayers can afford it" – response... poor consideration for private debt & low burden
- "PNCC need it to fund new utility works" – response... use LT loans or user pays (nexus)
- "PNCC didn't charge full CV change last year" – response... ok so why the double increase this year
- "Rural ratepayers don't contribute enough" – response... incorrect, they pay for utilities+ privately
- "Rural rates are no higher than in town" – response... no, this example is above the PNCC average
- "Rural rates needed to fund roads" – response... rural have poorer roads w lower traffic/care
- "PNCC increases are not as high as insurance increases" – response... ok but that's an optional, risk based and competitively market driven model

RECAP - Why is all this unreasonable?

- FM General rate described on PNCC website in 2024 as a 'Wealth Tax' !
- FM Targeted rate described on PNCC website in 2024 as 'needed to fund inground services'
- Targeted Rate line exceeds 30% of total rates per Section 21.1 of LG Ratings Act 2002 ?!
- Extrapolation of these increases means major default c2038 (re ave 7.7% = **3X** inflation)
- Council budgeting for a \$39M operating surplus in 2025/26 w 39% Admin cost (per FIS)
- **FM ratepayers enjoy near ZERO council services** (incl poor proximity to facilities)

Maximum revenue from certain rates

21 Certain rates must not exceed 30% of total rates revenue

- (1) The rates revenue sought by a local authority in any year from the rates described in subsection (2) must not exceed 30% of the total revenue from all rates sought by the local authority for that year.
- (2) The rates are—
 - (a) uniform annual general charges that are set in accordance with section 15; and
 - (b) targeted rates that are set on a uniform basis and are calculated in accordance with section 18(2) or clause 7 of Schedule 3.

Request

1. Publish the proposed rates differential multipliers (factors)
2. Cap Rural rates to reflect their low burden on PNCC
3. Reduce 2025/26 Targeted rate FM multipliers by 90%
4. Please remember where the \$ comes from

QUESTIONS?

Supplementary Update to MaLGRA's 2025–2026 Annual Plan Submission

Submitted by: Manawatū Lesbian & Gay Rights Association Inc. (MaLGRA)

Contact: Cam Jenkins – Secretary-Treasurer

- **CLIF Offer Acknowledgement and Caution:**

MaLGRA formally accepts the one-year CLIF funding offer, based on assurances from PNCC staff that our mahi is considered strategically important. However, we do so with caution. Our experience with the SPG process was not positive, and returning to the contestable, one-year CLIF model does not reflect the long-term security typically afforded to strategic partners. A multi-year SPG-style arrangement would be more aligned with the scale and consistency of our contribution to the city.

- **Rainbow Community Context:**

Palmerston North now ranks among the top five cities in Aotearoa for rainbow population (2023 Census): Wellington (11.3%), Dunedin (7.3%), Christchurch (6.0%), Palmerston North (5.8%), Hamilton (5.6%), Auckland (4.9%). This affirms Palmerston North as a regional hub for rainbow communities and reinforces the need for sustained, localised rainbow services.

- **Funding Request Amendment:**

We respectfully amend our original request to \$22,500 over three years (\$7,500 per year from 2025–2028), to secure and maintain a central office and drop-in space for the rainbow community—separate from any CLIF-funded activities. This represents the minimum viable amount for continued operation. MaLGRA has a consistent record of underspending, cost-efficiency, and responsible fund management across previous Council and external grants. While we would ideally seek a higher level of support reflective of actual need, we are mindful of the constrained funding environment and the important work of other

organisations—such as the Manawatū Tenants' Union (MTU), with whom we collaborate on rainbow housing matters.

* Our longer-term aspiration is to receive \$35,000 per year, which would reflect the Council's portion as our local funder, with the remaining budget met through national and philanthropic grants. This level of investment would allow MaLGRA to function as a professionally governed and sustainably operated rainbow organisation, no longer reliant on 100% volunteer labour for governance and delivery of critical services.

- **Rainbow Crossing Repainting – Please Prioritise:**

Finally, we again request that the rainbow crossing on George Street be repainted. Positive indications and timeframes have been given—November, December, “in the new year”—but it is now April. The crossing is well-loved, visually striking, and symbolic of the inclusive spirit our city aspires to. On sunny days, it genuinely lifts the mood of the street—and we're constantly told how much it means to people. Please let's give it the refresh it deserves.

Ngā manaakitanga,
Cam Jenkins
Secretary-Treasurer
Manawatū Lesbian & Gay Rights Association Inc. (MaLGRA)

CITY TO SEA RAIL TRAIL - MANAWATŪ



BAINESSE & DISTRICTS
Community Development Trust

DAIMY



OUR VISION

For the City to Sea Rail Trail to be a **great trail that enhances Manawatū's interconnecting off-road trail network**, increasing visitation and bringing benefit to communities and businesses.



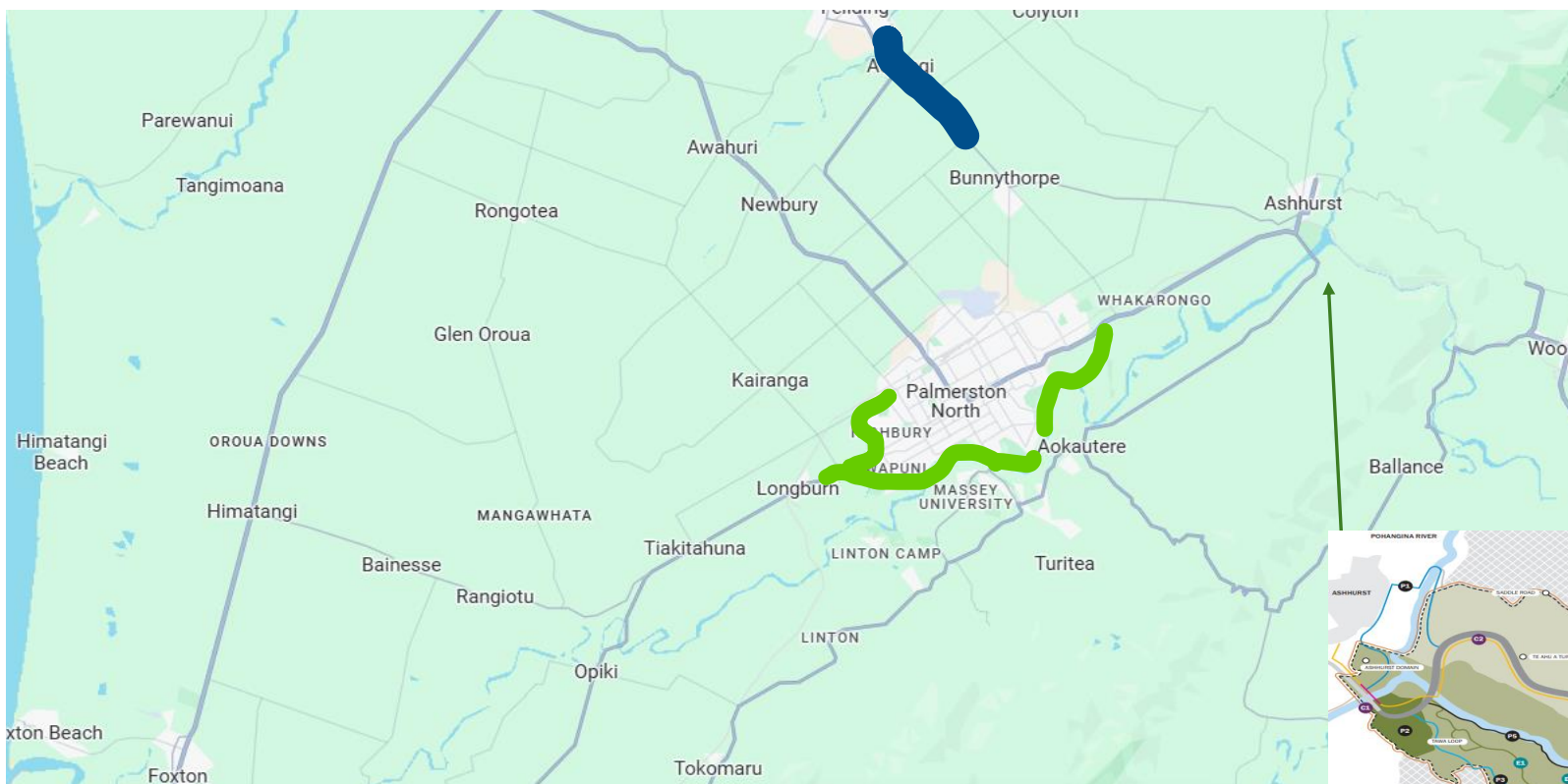


THE WHO ...

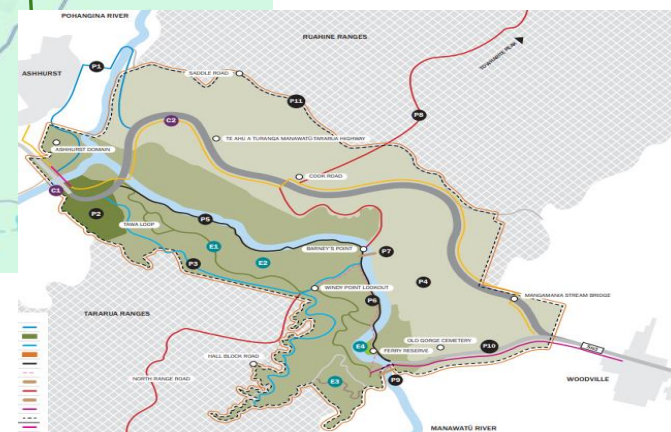
Who is it for

- Manawatū's visitor market is over **80% domestic market** strong overnight visitation
 - Top domestic markets are Wellington, Auckland, Waikato, Hawke's Bay and wider Horizons Region.
- Key international markets are Australia, UK, Germany and USA
- Travellers come for more than one reason and take part in a range of activities while here.
- **They are seeking vocational and leisure activities.** Current top destinations are **Palmy, Feilding, Foxton, and Hīmatangi**

Providing safe off-road travel throughout the region for locals and visitors alike.



Presently off-road cycle options
look like this



Hinomonga Matuatua
Te Apiti Gorge development

Long term planning is required ...

Bike Taupo - October 2002

- A total of at least **55,000 visitors** to the Taupō district in 2022 can be attributed to off-road recreational cycling.
- These visitors collectively stayed more than 80,000 nights in the District and spent almost **\$19 million** in total, with an average of \$340 spent pp per visit.

Otago rail trail - Feb 2000

- Queenstown Trial Network saw **402,544 users** hit the trials during the 23-24 period, a 12.5% YoY increase
- The average bike visitor stays 3.4 nights and spends **\$262 per day**,

To create economic growth via cycle tourism

THE WHY ...

Why is it good?

- Our population is fast growing
- Our largest visitor market is currently Wellington, with plenty of room to grow!
- The new roads from Wellington has the potential to increase our visitor economy even more!
- **Manawatū 's visitor economy was worth more than \$582 million in the year to March 2023**
- **Cycling tourism will drive regional economic growth.**
- Improved social connections
- Connects rural communities

THE POTENTIAL FOR OUR ECONOMY

Along with the traditional 'tourism' expenditure tourism brings in a much wider economic benefit.
E.G.

Hospitality and retail is a core foundation of our visitor sector. Increasing ...

- beds being needed,
- Heighten food demand
- new bed and breakfasts,
- Entertainment
- Attending events, shows, tourist spots
- expansion of services or
- new hospitality establishments.
- more coffee being made and
- more retail demand overall.

Visitors need

- chemists, petrol, and cycle & vehicle services so the benefit is spread wide throughout our communities .

THE POTENTIAL

Hauraki Rail Trail Comparison

Hauraki Rail Trail

- 160km trail
- Grade 1-2 trail
- Annual Walkers – 27,692
- Annual Cyclists – 44,177

City to Sea Rail Trail

- 28-34km trail
- Grade 1 trail
- Annual Walkers – 5,538
- Annual Cyclists – 8,835

The City to Sea Rail Trail is flatter than the Hauraki Rail Trail, therefore easier – potentially opening it up to a similar or higher number of users.

DID YOU KNOW?

Cycling is New Zealand's

3rd most popular activity

According to Sport New Zealand, more than 2 out of 10 adults (24.8%) participated in cycling or mountain biking at least once in the past year!

Economic value

City to Sea Rail Trail

City to Sea Rail Trail

2.6 days @ \$262.00 pd

- 28-34km trail
- Grade 1 trail
- Annual Walkers – 5,538
- Annual Cyclists – 8,835

Annual Walkers
= \$3,772,485.6

Annual Cyclists
= \$6,018,402.00

The City to Sea Rail Trail is flatter than the Hauraki Rail Trail, therefore easier – potentially opening it up to a similar or higher number of users.



THE MANY BENEFITS



What's already here:

- Keen volunteers
- Tons of history
- Beautiful landscapes
- Endorsement
 - PNCC and MDC councils
- Rangitane O Manawatū support.
- Foxton support

A strong vision and
opportunity





What we need:

- Council partners to help navigate the requirements.
- Project support e.g., marketing, raising funds, planting, websites and more
- Business support.
- Long term support from Council.
- To be on NZTA's RTLP



What economic possibilities does the City to Seal Rail Trail development present for you?

City to Sea Rail Trail - Manawatū



Draft ANNUAL PLAN 2025-26HEARING SUBMISSION

To :- Palmerston North City Council

By :- John Bent

Address :- 7(2)(a) Privacy

I wish to speak to my submission on :- Thursday 1 May afternoon

John Bent
17 April 2025.

My submission is as follows.

1. This follows from my Local Waters hearing submission.
2. A new multi-use facility at the Central Energy Trust Arena can be delayed. ¹ (p7)
3. A civic marae and cultural centre at Anzac Park should be abandoned. (p7)
4. Infrastructure for future growth is opposed as population growth is a foundational driver of "self-evident climate instability". (p7)
5. Upgrades to some community facilities can be delayed. (p7)
6. The reduction in capital expenditure is supported. (p9)

	PROGRAM	OPERATIONAL \$,000	CAPITAL \$,000
<u>7.</u>	1613	154	
	2433	204	
	2433	255	
	180	408	
	1459		511
	These are taxpayer responsibilities.		
<u>8.</u>	2054	250	
	1330		9
	Both unnecessary		

¹ I note that no costing are given

<u>9.</u>	1344	245	
	1480	67	
	2749	77	
	2446	402	
	2448	22	
	2522	295	
	2525	20	
	1753		51
	1933		33
	All are unnecessary		
<u>10.</u>	181		53
	Should be delayed		
	2371		106
	2373		106
	2383		18
	Remainder unnecessary		
<u>11.</u>	2477	380	
	2533	61	
	Long standing staff delusions		
<u>12.</u>	201		3,000
	1681		3060
	Urban growth is unnecessary		
	2456		3,723
	Marae is unnecessary		
<u>13.</u>	2519	434	
	1051		511
	Should be delayed		
	1242		1,188
	1194		8,168
	Unnecessary		

<u>14.</u>	1539	75
	Unnecessary	
<u>15.</u>	2450	235
	Taxpayer responsibility	
<u>16.</u>	2343	400
	Unnecessary, no reason given	
<u>17.</u>	1895	5,651
	2239	1,224
	Unnecessary and unwanted	
<u>18.</u>	657	92
	Unnecessary	
<u>19.</u>	1888	1,026
	1924	153
	Won't make any difference locally	
<u>20.</u>	246	308
	1004	718
	Urban growth unnecessary	
	1388	77
	Metering resolves no issue	
	2301	1,428
<u>21.</u>	2511	308
	Urban growth unnecessary	

<u>22.</u>	51		308
	1704		3,053
	1708		428
	2324		140
	Urban growth unnecessary		
<u>23.</u>	2241	146	
	Unnecessary		
<u>TOTALS</u>		<u>3,730</u>	<u>31,881</u>

25. 1401
- The foregoing amounts will now be available to give effect to this programme and in so doing enable discharge to land at reasonable cost of wastewater by reducing the need for storage and subsequent irrigation of the inflow and infiltration over the colder and wetter times of the year and in so doing reduce the discharge of nutrients/contaminates rto the Manawatu River and groiundwater.