Submission to the Bay of Plenty Regional Council
Proposed Long Term Plan 2015-2025

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Medical Officer of Health
Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service

March 2015
Introduction – Toi Te Ora
Toi Te Ora\(^1\) – Public Health Service (Toi Te Ora) is funded by the Ministry of Health and is the public health unit for the Bay of Plenty and Lakes District Health Boards. Toi Te Ora’s goal is to improve and protect the health of the population in the Lakes and Bay of Plenty District Health Board districts, with a focus on reducing inequalities in health.

Many of the crucial underlying factors that contribute to population health and wellbeing are directly influenced by the decisions and activities of councils. For this reason, Toi Te Ora welcomes the opportunity to (a) provide feedback to the Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC) on its proposed long term plan for the region; and (b) assist the BOPRC to achieve its vision – “thriving together”, so that both the “environment and the people thrive”. The Bay of Plenty District Health Board’s vision of “healthy, thriving communities” is closely aligned to the BOPRC’s vision. \(\text{Please refer to Appendix 1 for Toi Te Ora’s Strategic Plan Overview.}\)

Four of the five Toi Te Ora goals have informed the scope and content of this submission:

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Social Determinants of Health
As a public health unit, Toi Te Ora places a great deal of emphasis on the social determinants of health, or what has been referred to as:

“…the social, economic and environmental conditions that influence the health of individuals and populations. They include the conditions of daily life and the structural influences upon them, themselves shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels. They determine the extent to which a person has the right physical, social and personal resources to achieve their goals, meet needs and deal with changes to their circumstances. There is a clear link between the social determinants of health and health inequalities…”\(^2\)

Essentially, health starts where we live, learn, work and play. Individuals often have little control over the social determinants of health, but these determinants can either constrain or support the choices we make, as well as the lifestyle we lead. The most effective illustration of this approach comes from the 1992 work of Dahlgren and Whitehead.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) Toi Te Ora represents the ideal of the ultimate and enduring wellbeing. ‘Toi’ is the name of a celebrated ancestor in the Eastern Bay of Plenty and ‘Ora’ is to be alive, well and healthy.

\(^2\) http://www.local.gov.uk/health/-/journal_content/56/10180/3511260/ARTICLE

\(^3\) http://www.local.gov.uk/health/-/journal_content/56/10180/3511260/ARTICLE
Local government has a great deal of influence over the determinants of health, which is why it is important we work together to make a difference. Toi Te Ora encourages the BOPRC to take a “health in all policies” approach[^4] that systematically takes into account the health implications of decisions, in order to improve population health and health equity.

Two specific priorities for the BOPRC which have a major impact on health outcomes for the population are climate change and public transport. These two issues are related to each other, as well as being excellent examples of the importance of our organisations collaborating to achieve similar outcomes. It is far preferable that together we use a preventive approach, building robust fences at the top of the cliff, rather than picking up the pieces at the bottom.

**This Submission**

For ease of reference, Toi Te Ora’s responses to the BOPRC’s *consultation document* for the proposed Long Term Plan 2015-2025, “Thriving Together” are linked to specific headings and page numbers in the following tables. Where details appear only in the Draft Activity Statement (DAS), the page reference is accompanied by “DAS”.

A symbol has been used to confirm Toi Te Ora’s position on each of the issues to which it has responded, as defined in the following key:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Toi Te Ora’s Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Support and endorse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>Recommend further consideration</td>
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<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<th>Topic and Details</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Water Quality and Quantity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Toi Te Ora commends the BOPRC’s achievements to date in improving the water quality of the Rotorua lakes. Improving water quality and reducing the frequency of potentially toxic algal blooms is a significant and positive outcome.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Toi Te Ora commends the BOPRC’s decision to make financial contributions to several community sewerage schemes.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Toi Te Ora supports the completion of the new coastal margin restoration work for Tauranga Harbour. This work will help to improve the microbiological quality of the harbour and its shellfish beds, and will have a positive impact on recreational use.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Toi Te Ora supports the planned remediation of the Kopeopeo Canal, and is closely engaged with this project.</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>Toi Te Ora supports the protection of water supply sources, particularly for municipal use, to ensure there is sufficient water of a treatable quality to meet the life supporting needs of current and future populations.</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>The BOPRC’s responsibility to set community agreed water limits for quality and quantity is recognised and we acknowledge the work the BOPRC intends to deliver in this area. In particular we support the gap analysis currently being undertaken.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying and monitoring all surface and ground water takes is necessary, irrespective of use and volume taken. While it is a permitted activity to take water at or below quantities of typical household use, we understand that the individual and collective quantity of water taken is currently unknown, and may be significant. Toi Te Ora encourages the BOPRC to identify and monitor all surface and ground water takes to assist in prioritising and efficiently allocating future applications.</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td><strong>Environmental Protection</strong></td>
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<td>Toi Te Ora supports the BOPRC’s proposed approach to improving air quality in Rotorua, specifically retaining the Hot Swap Scheme, increasing financial support to low income households to upgrade their old wood burners, introducing incentives for home insulation and setting more rules to move households to cleaner heating.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toi Te Ora supports the completion of Phase 2 of the National Rural Waste investigation project that will identify the extent of</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>✓</td>
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non-consented private landfills on rural land. This work quantifies risk from hazardous substances and enables planning to minimise this hazard.

Toi Te Ora supports the introduction of external Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to risk screening of sites on the Hazardous Activity and Industry List (HAIL), and recommends the BOPRC explore options for making HAIL site information more available to the public.

Toi Te Ora supports waste minimisation, so long as disposal practices are carried out in a manner which does not pose a nuisance or increase the health risk.

Resilience and Safety
Toi Te Ora supports the BOPRC’s intention to manage the effects of climate change. Climate change affects the fundamental requirements for health – clean air, safe drinking water, sufficient food, and secure shelter caused by the effects of extreme weather events - storms, floods, heatwaves and droughts. The pathways by which climate change affects human health are depicted below:

[Diagram of pathways by which climate change affects human health]

As well as responding to the impact of climate change, Toi Te Ora encourages the BOPRC to look at initiatives designed to reduce the magnitude of climate change, ie mitigation. Many of the things we need to do to mitigate climate change have co-benefits.

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<td>for health. Mitigating, as well as managing and adapting, is a far more sustainable approach to the environmental impact of climate change. Improving the existing network, and patronage, of public transport is one example of a mitigation strategy <em>(see also Public Transport below).</em> Toi Te Ora recommends the BOPRC develops a Climate Change Mitigation Strategy for the region. Toi Te Ora is keen to work with the BOPRC to identify steps it can take to mitigate climate change and cites the Wellington Regional Council’s Draft Climate Change Strategy as a possible starting point.⁶</td>
<td>14</td>
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| Toi Te Ora does not support the proposal to curtail research on the regional hazard scape. This work is important as it will help to:  
  ▪ confirm the relative priority of different natural hazards;  
  ▪ identify measures that can be taken to reduce the risk; and  
  ▪ build resilience and preparedness for each identified hazard. | 33 DAS   | X   |

### Regional Collaboration and Leadership

*Stop work on Invest Bay of Plenty;*
*Reduce funding for SmartGrowth and Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Planning;*

Toi Te Ora disagrees and recommends that the BOPRC continues to support both entities at the same level. Toi Te Ora’s reasoning is as follows:

- It is important to have a coordinated and integrated approach to planning, and population growth in the Western Bay must be proactively managed.
- A reduction and/or cessation of funding would destabilise the existing SmartGrowth partnership.
- SmartGrowth supports the principles of compact urban design. Compact urban design minimises the negative impacts of development on the physical environment, reduces the local population’s carbon footprint, facilitates effective and accessible active and public transport infrastructure, and maximises the likelihood of creating connected vibrant communities.

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7 “SmartGrowth sets the strategic vision and direction for the growth and development of the Western Bay, on key issues across the spectrum of social, environmental, economic and cultural objectives.”
Economic Development - Public Transport

*Increased passenger services in LTP Y1:*

Public transport is an important health issue. People who use public transport walk further than when they use private transport, by walking to the departure bus stop and also from the arrival bus stop to their destination. To encourage the community to become more active, it is not a question of individuals running a marathon, but rather by increasing their walking distance by a couple of hundred metres per day. Large scale change occurs when lots of people change just a little.

Achieving greater use of public transport will also reduce the region’s overall carbon footprint, help to alleviate traffic congestion and also improve road safety, as well as reduce parking issues in urban areas. Improving the public transport network will be of greatest advantage for the young and old, as well as those who struggle to afford a car or who have just decided not to have one.

Toi Te Ora supports the BOPRC’s provision of public transport options throughout the region, and recommends that the BOPRC set a specific, aspirational and time bound goal. For example, “increase public transport patronage to more than x% by mode share by month/year”.

Currently the KPI for trips by travel mode\(^8\) share is to “increase above the previous year’s statistics”. The most recently available NZTA\(^9\) data shows only two percent of the mode share of trips in the Bay of Plenty for the 2013/14 year were taken by public transport compared with 82% by car/van as either a passenger or driver. Active transport modes account for 15% and is separated between pedestrians at 13% and cyclists at two percent.\(^10\)

Toi Te Ora recommends the BOPRC reconsiders its proposal to increase fares by five percent. Increasing fares will deter people from using the service and the benefits described above from increasing the use of public transport will be lost. Toi Te Ora recommends the BOPRC investigates initiatives to increase patronage. Greater passenger volumes will result in higher revenue. For instance Toi Te Ora recommends that the intended proposal to have bike racks on buses in Rotorua be extended to all bus services throughout the region.

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\(^8\) Travel mode: The method of travel – it includes light 4-wheel vehicle driver, light 4-wheel vehicle passenger, pedestrian, cyclist, motorcycle rider or passenger, bus or train passenger and ferry or airplane passenger.

\(^9\) New Zealand Transport Agency.

\(^10\) http://www.transport.govt.nz/ourwork/tmif/travelpatterns/tp002/
Major network review to be undertaken in LTP Y2:
Toi Te Ora supports the BOPRC’s work in reviewing the current passenger transport system in Year Two of the LTP. Toi Te Ora welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback and input into this process when it commences.

Regional Parks
No change in the activity budget or the level of service within the Regional Parks Activity compared to the TY14/15 baseline:
Toi Te Ora supports the continued level of service of the Papamoa Hills and Onekawa Te Mawhai Regional Parks, as these facilities provide the community with the opportunity to participate in leisure and recreational activities which have positive health outcomes.

Toi Te Ora recommends that the management plans for both parks include a commitment to the parks being smokefree.

Further Information and Oral Submissions
If the BOPRC requires any further information on this submission, please contact Robyn Woods, Management Support Officer, Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service who will direct any enquiry to the most appropriate person. Robyn’s contact details are as follows:

Email: Robyn.Woods@bopdhb.govt.nz
Ph: 07 577 3769

Toi Te Ora thanks the BOPRC for the opportunity to provide feedback on its proposed long term plan, and confirms it wishes to present by way of oral submissions during the hearings on 15 - 17 April 2015.

Dr Phil Shoemack

Dr Phil Shoemack
Medical Officer of Health
Appendix 1: Toi Te Ora’s Strategic Plan Overview

PURPOSE
“Improve and protect the health of the population in the Lakes and Bay of Plenty District Health Board districts with a focus on reducing inequalities in health.”

VISION
Bay of Plenty District Health Board,
Healthy Thriving Communities - Kia Momoho Te Hapori Oranga
Lakes District Health Board;
Healthy Communities – Mauriora

GOALS

- To reduce childhood admission to hospital from acute rheumatic fever, respiratory infections and skin infections, each by 2/3 in five years.*
- To reduce childhood obesity by 1/3 in 10 years.*
- To reduce the proportion of year 10 students smoking by 2/3 in five years.*
- Toi Te Ora will deliver on its contractual and statutory responsibilities within a quality framework.
- Toi Te Ora will rate within the top 5% of staff satisfaction results within the Bay of Plenty DHB.

VALUES
C - Compassion – show compassion
A - Attitude – have a "will-do" attitude
R - Responsiveness – be responsive
E - Excellence – strive for excellence with diligence

PRIORITY POPULATIONS
Maori, Children (including maternal health), and Youth

*From 2013
Appendix 2: Toi Te Ora’s Position Statement – Waste Management and Minimisation

Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service is committed to improving and protecting the health of the communities in the Bay of Plenty and Lakes districts.

Position Statement – Waste Management and Minimisation

Waste disposal and waste minimisation practices have a significant effect on the health of communities.

Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service supports and advocates for waste management practices which are protective of health and for waste minimisation practices which do not increase the risk to health.

Waste management includes waste minimisation, treatment and disposal. Waste minimisation is the reduction of waste and the reuse, recycling, and recovery of waste and any material diverted from landfill sites.

Waste is anything disposed of or discarded. This includes a type of waste that is defined by its composition or source (for example, organic, electronic, construction or demolition waste) and includes any material or component.

Waste that is not properly disposed of can contaminate land, water and air. This can then be a health hazard for communicable disease, chemical poisoning and physical injury. Improperly disposed of waste may cause blockages in stormwater management systems, create odour and visual pollution, encourage vermin and may create fly and mosquito breeding habitats. It is therefore very important that waste is disposed of properly to reduce the risk of disease and to minimise aesthetic and environmental impacts of waste.

Waste minimisation practices promote the effective and efficient use of resources by reducing, reusing, recycling, recovering waste and diverting material. Waste minimisation practices can reduce the health hazards of waste by reducing the amount of waste generated and therefore disposed, and by encouraging resource sustainability practices.

Waste minimisation practices such as reduction, reuse, recycling, recovery, treatment, and disposal practices must be carried out in a manner which do not increase the health risk or pose a nuisance to the public. For example, composting that involves human or animal excreta and grey water reuse practices need to be managed to reduce the risk of disease and nuisance.

Good waste management and minimisation practices reduce the occurrence of environmental contamination and the need for remediation, and safeguard the health of existing and future populations. Contaminated sites are a legacy of past waste management practices which have resulted in the contamination of land with substances which are potentially hazardous to human health. Human exposure may occur through contact with contaminated soil, dust, food and water.

1 Nuisance is defined in Section 20 of the New Zealand Health Act 1956
Tol Te Ora – Public Health Service advocates and supports the following:

- Waste disposal practices which minimise the risks to health
- The provision of accessible and affordable waste disposal including the safe transport of such waste
- Waste minimisation practices which do not increase the health risk or pose a nuisance to the health of the public
- The New Zealand Waste Strategy (2010) which aims to reduce the harmful effects of waste and to improve the efficiency of resource use
- Initiatives which support the implementation of the Waste Minimisation and Health Acts
- Identification and implementation of waste management and minimisation practices at all levels of Council planning
- Active administration of relevant legislation, policies and bylaws by local government in the Bay of Plenty and Lakes districts
- Initiatives by businesses and industries to minimise the creation of waste at source
- Implementation of waste management and minimisation initiatives by resource users.

References and Further Information


New Zealand Health Act 1956.
