

02 May 2024

Rotorua Lakes District Council

Via email: letstalk@rotorualc.nz

Re. Rotorua Lakes District Council Draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034

Dear Rotorua Lakes District Council,

We are writing to provide comment on your Draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034. It is vital that Rotorua Lakes District Council implements a Long Term Plan that is financially responsible whilst continuing to invest in the critical services that the Rotorua Lakes District needs.

As you may know, Property Council New Zealand (“Property Council”) is the leading not-for-profit advocate for New Zealand’s most significant industry, property.

Property Council sympathizes with the financial challenges facing Rotorua Lakes District Council and acknowledges that there is upward pressure on rates or debt. As such, Property Council is broadly comfortable of the direction of this Long Term Plan.

We support the proposed approach by Rotorua Lakes District Council to operational expenditure set out in the ‘Operating within our limits’ proposal. It is important to ensure that local authorities are operating efficiently and delivering value to ratepayers.

With regards to consultation on ‘Building our reputation and our economy’, Property Council favours the adoption of ‘Option 2: Go Faster’. Improving, at pace, the inner city of Rotorua as well as investing in promoting Rotorua as a destination to visit and do business, is critical for the long term outlook of the city.

Property Council supports capital expenditure towards the revitalisation of civic amenities across Rotorua. This investment can help encourage city centre revitalisation as well as helping improve social, economic and development outcomes. On that basis, we support the proposed upgrade the Rotorua Aquatic Centre. We favour Option 3 in the consultation document, which would see the Stage 3 upgrades completed.

However, we recommend that Rotorua Lakes District Council considers funding these initiatives, and others in the Long Term Plan, through the use of alternative funding and financing tools. Example of these include such as targeted rates, public-private-partnerships, or Special Purpose Vehicles (“SPVs”) as enabled under the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act.

For example, SPVs are an important tool for funding and financing infrastructure in a fair and equitable manner. SPVs are advantageous as they sit off a Council’s balance sheet and do not impact debt levels. Property Council has previously supported Tauranga City Council’s use of SPVs for the Transport System Plan and Civic Precinct project, as well Wellington City Council’s use of SPVs for the Moa Point sludge minimisation project.

Property Council also acknowledges the proposed changes to development contributions associated with the ‘Going for Growth’ proposal. At this time, we are comfortable with the proposed changes to development contributions. However, we would also stress the ongoing importance of ensuring that development contributions remain affordable in the future as well as considering supplementing development contributions with alternative funding tools. This is critical for ensuring the long term provision of housing supply, particularly that of affordable housing, across the Rotorua Lakes District.

With regards to consultation on transportation infrastructure, Property Council considers that investment in improving existing sealed roading connections around the district is a necessity and needs to be at the forefront of the Rotorua Lakes District Council maintenance programme.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034. For any further enquiries, please contact Sarah Rundstrom, Central Regional Manager via email: Sarah@propertynz.co.nz.

Yours sincerely,



Morgan Jones
Central Region Committee Chair
Property Council New Zealand