

Chairperson and Committee Members

**ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**17 MARCH 2011**

Meeting Status: Public

Purpose of Report: For Decision

**RATIFICATION OF THE PROCESS LEADING TO THE  
ERECTION OF NEW WELCOME SIGNS**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To seek approval for the process leading to the erection of new welcome signs on SH1 at the District's northern and southern boundary.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF DECISION**

2. Council's significance policy is not triggered by this report.

**BACKGROUND**

3. At present, there are two District welcome signs on SH1. The one in the south stands on the west side of SH1 just south of Fisherman's Restaurant and faces north-bound traffic. The one in the north is on the east side of SH1 on a grassy knoll just north of Otāki. It faces south-bound traffic.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

4. There are a wide variety of welcome signs around New Zealand. Some simply say "Welcome". Others reflect the character of the area, or a distinctive feature (such as a mountain or beach). Some seek to stimulate economic activity, such as attract tourists, short term visitors or investment.
5. There are several issues surrounding our current welcome signs. They are too small, and certainly smaller than the maximum size set by NZTA.
6. The south sign is partly hidden by a large speed sign that was erected after the welcome sign was put in place. (See Appendix 1). Consideration is being given to moving the south sign to a new location at the edge of a grassed area at the north end of the car park that runs parallel to SH1 at Fisherman's Restaurant. There are overhead lights in the area that would provide 24 hour visibility for a new welcome sign.
7. The dual reference to Kāpiti Coast and Nature Coast leads to brand confusion. Kāpiti Coast is a distinctive and well known reference point. The name Kāpiti Coast appears on maps, tourist literature, and in peoples' speech. This "brand recognition" for Kāpiti Coast is reinforced nightly on nation-wide television

during the weather round-up. “Nature Coast” does not have the same name recognition outside the District.

8. Nature Coast Enterprise staff have made clear to Council officers that they have no objection to the Nature Coast reference being removed from future boundary signs.
9. Readers should note that Nature Coast Enterprise currently has a summer promotion underway based on mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century British Railway company posters that promote a holiday adventure away from home. (See Appendix 2 for examples).
10. There is a clear need to have new signs in place to promote the District in the run up to the Rugby World Cup in September. Significant airport developments should also be taken into account.

### **A WAY FORWARD**

11. Welcome signs must trigger a resonance with residents. When they see the sign they should say “wow”, feel the hairs tingle on the nape of their necks, and feel proud. To achieve these sorts of results, professional communicators hold focus groups designed to capture people’s raw feelings about the area in which they live.
12. The focus groups are designed to capture key words, phrases and imagery. The material gathered is used to form a perception pyramid. At the top of the pyramid is the “single-minded proposition”, the absolute essence of what people think an area stands for.
13. Welcome signs based on the outcome of this kind of exercise are more likely to attract community support because the imagery reflects the needs, wants and aspirations of the community, and not the needs, wants and aspirations of an individual.
14. It is proposed that three focus groups be held to help establish a brand framework. One focus group should involve Council staff, another business/tourism/café and hospitality operators, and the third, residents. Te Whakaminenga should also be used as a sounding board.
15. The Communications Unit will be responsible for running the sessions, which should take no more than 90 minutes each. Focus groups work best if they are short and sharp. An outside contractor may be involved. The material generated by the focus groups will help form a “brand pyramid”.
16. We will then seek expressions of interest from local sign designers. They will have access to the “brand pyramid” material. A designer will be selected by the Communications Unit based on price estimate and experience. This company will be asked to produce three design options based on the “brand pyramid” perception guide. These design options will be referred to the ECD Committee for comment.

**Financial Considerations**

This project can be funded from within the existing Communications budget.

**Legal Considerations**

There are no legal considerations.

**Delegation**

The ECD Committee has delegation to consider this matter under Section B.1:

*7.1 Policy Development*

*Authority to develop (within any wider existing strategic framework) policies and work programmes that support the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the community. This authority encompasses the power to recommend to the Council for adoption policies relating to District image and promotion and public relations activities.*

**Publicity Considerations**

Council should state it is reviewing signage before the Rugby World Cup in October.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the ECD Committee recommends to Council:

- 17. That Council approves three separate focus group sessions being held involving staff, members of the local hospitality trade, and residents; and
- 18. That the material generated by the focus groups is used to form a brand pyramid and that this is used as a design guide for a new welcome sign; and
- 19. That three draft design options are presented to ECD Committee for comment at the April 28 meeting; and
- 20. Confirm the removal of the Nature Coast branding on future signs.

**Report prepared by:**

**Approved for submission by:**

**Roger Foley**  
**Strategic Communications Manager**

**Bernie Goedhart**  
**Group Manager, Corporate Services**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

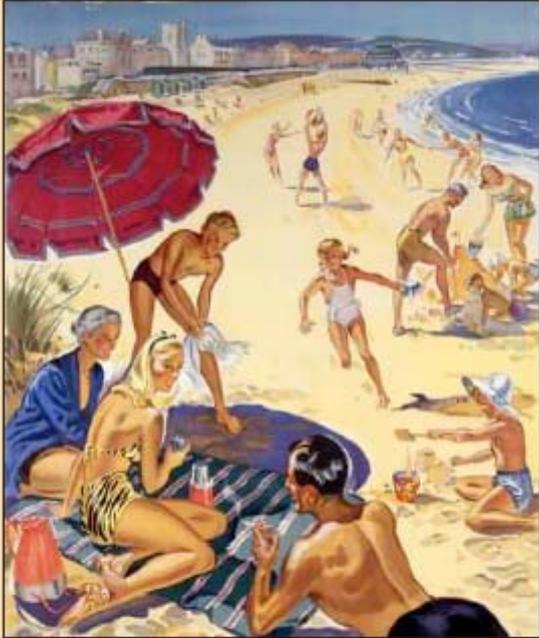
**Appendix 1: Southern Boundary Welcome Sign**

**Appendix 2: Nature Coast Enterprise Summer Campaign Signage Example**

Appendix 1



Appendix 2



**PAEKAKARIKI TO FOXTON**  
Over 46 sunny kilometers of  
**TAKE IT EASY**      **UNSPOILED BEACHES**      **KAPITI AND HOROWHENUA**



**RAUMATI BEACH**  
the perfect place  
TO PICNIC  
**TAKE IT EASY**      **KAPITI AND HOROWHENUA**