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Porirua Draft Growth Strategy 2048

Submission from Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour and Catchment Community Trust

General

1 We **strongly support** the concept of a harbour centred growth strategy and, with it, selective and carefully planned diverse, inclusive and environmentally sustainable development as proposed in **Principle 01**.

2 In particular we **strongly support** and **submit** that all new and regenerated development, and especially intensified development, should be water neutral and water sensitive. Design techniques and mechanisms that ensure all run off water is absorbed and treated before it enters watercourses and/or the harbour should be standard. These would use mechanisms such as swales, water gardens, wetlands and related absorption and treatment systems using natural features. This approach not only provides for better and healthier water management but provides a more attractive and user friendly environment.

Principle 02 A Harbour Centered City

3 We **strongly support** all the Directions set out in Principle 02 and note and **endorse** the emphasis here on water quality and implementing water sensitive urban design.

4 While we support the Direction of ensuring the water quality of the harbour is safe to swim in, we submit that this is not, by itself, a sufficient Direction. Harbour quality should be the overall driver of this Direction.

5 We **submit**, therefore, that this growth strategy Direction should cover more than having water quality that is safe to swim in. We **propose** a wider rewording of this Direction definition such as:

“Collaborate with stakeholders and our community to ensure the water quality of our harbour:

- *Is safe to swim in;*
- *Provides safe kai moana;*
- *Is free from adverse effects caused by physical, chemical or biological pollutants and contaminants; and*
- *Maintains or enhances its ecological diversity.*

6 A key issue that will affect all the directions of a harbour centred city is that of climate change. This, in turn will have direct effects on the low-lying urban settlements in the city and on their water run off, treatment and disposal and other infrastructure such as roading.

7 We note and **support** the proposed actions in **Principle 06 A Resilient City** but submit that climate change related risks are likely to affect many of the existing low level settlement areas such as Pauatahanui Village, Motukaraka Point, parts of Paremata and Mana, the Plimmerton and Pukerua Bay foreshore areas and parts of the CBD. We **submit** that any new and, especially, any more intensive development and infrastructure in these areas needs to be either prohibited or subject to specific design requirements to limit problems caused by sea level rise and related storm issues and its effects on water run off and harbour quality.

8 Another matter affected by climate change is likely to be septic tank use in low lying rural areas. Increased rain events and sea level rise effects may severely compromise septic tank use in such areas. Examples where this risk applies are Pauatahanui Village surrounds, Motukaraka Point and Grays Road where subdivisions down to 1 -2 hectares may occur. The results may force the Council to provide extended, reticulated sewerage systems.

Principle 03 A Compact and Liveable City

9 We **support** the Directions in **Principle 03**, especially the second Direction to *“ensure sufficient land is available to meet the need for regeneration and for developing new communities in a way that works with and enhances the health of our natural environment.* We submit, however, that this should be amended to say:

“...do this in a way that works with and enhances the health of our natural environment and its fresh and marine water quality.”

10 We **support** the proposal to increase housing density near railway stations, neighbourhood centres and the city centre, but note this must be **constrained** in situations where climate change related risks are manifest.

11 We **support** consolidation and regeneration **provided** that this is accompanied by water neutral and water sensitive urban design not only of buildings and structures but of all infrastructure, especially transport infrastructure.

12 We consider that the proposed residential, rural-residential and industrial development in the Northern and Judgeford areas risks having adverse consequential impacts on water quality, including runoff from roads in these locations. Other consequential impacts affecting water quality include run-off from new properties (stormwater, septic tanks), swimming pool drainage and construction work, the impact of using various seal types (where does the excess chip go?) on the environmental integrity of roads where they drain into the harbour. The council's current policy on road sealing does not appear to consider this point.

13 The streams and watercourses in these areas all eventually flow into the Porirua Harbour and will have an impact on harbour water quality.

14 Increased subdivision and traffic on the main arterial routes will see increased use of rural roads, for example Airlie, Murphy's, Moonshine and Belmont Roads. This increased use will likely result in additional oil and other vehicle-related material flowing into streams. These roads and, in particular, the latter two, follow defined streams and watercourses and will be affected by increased vehicle traffic and sediment from roading and subdivision construction work.

15 There should be no further development in any of these identified areas unless and until all water run off, water quality and related environmental and ecosystem issues and problems are clearly identified and resolved.

Principle 04 A Connected and Active City

16 The Growth Strategy describes the value and importance of a connected city and the place of walkways and cycleways. We support these initiatives but **submit** that they can have an environmental impact which is not always considered or readily alleviated. For example, the new pathway along Grays Road extending west from Motukaraka Point, now allows road run-off to be directly channelled into the inlet. Previously it was mitigated by the shoreline salt marsh. But mitigation planting does not appear possible with the new wider path design.

17 There are conflicts within the Strategy's different principles as illustrated in this example where issues such as walkway and cycleway design can have adverse effects on water and harbour quality. Such conflicts should be identified and resolved before design solutions are approved and built.

Principle 05 A City of Opportunities and Prosperity

18 The strategy includes a Direction "*to leverage the investment in the Transmission Gully Motorway interchanges*". This raises the issue of future management of SH58/ Haywards Hill-Paremata which is of importance to the Trust as SH58 crosses Pauatahanui Stream many times and drains into it. The highway can expect increased use once Transmission Gully is completed and we **submit** that the Growth Strategy consider how the environmental impacts of its use will be managed. For example, carefully designed water run off points, treatment mechanisms and related mitigation planting should be installed along affected streams.

19 The Growth Strategy provides very general boundaries for the proposed industrial area at Judgeford. We **submit** that the exact area should not be decided upon until there is experience in managing the flood plain at Lanes Flat following a big flood. Construction works will have already influenced how the area will respond in flood conditions and the exact effects need to be experienced before any further development proceeds. Climate change will have an impact here too.

20 Previously, flood waters would be able to fan out across the entire Lanes Flat and up into Pauatahanui before flowing into the Inlet. Transmission Gully construction at Lanes Flat has resulted in several bunds placed at right angles to the water flow and, despite the channelling being put in place, it is likely that any excess water will simply back up even more than it already does (before the narrow gorge where Pauatahanui Stream flows alongside the sawmill and the other industries) and then flow over the road. This would mean the water would flood out even more than it does now at the Flightys Road/SH58 intersection and up through the golf course.

21 Wherever the proposed industrial area is sited, it will drain into Pauatahanui Stream and will, given its purpose, be a large hard surface area with a high likelihood of volatile contaminant materials discharging into the waterways (oils, fuel, chemicals, dust). We **submit** that the Growth Strategy discusses the environmental impact of this development and emphasises the need for well designed and effective contaminant mitigation and stormwater neutral mechanisms in the industrial area.

22 We **submit** that the Growth Strategy should include and/or require a discussion and consideration of the financial impact of growth in the above areas on existing roads and the investment required to ensure that they can manage the expected increase in use and consequential environmental , water run off and related fresh and marine water quality impacts.