

Council

**Wednesday, 27 June 2007
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD AT
WAITAKERE CENTRAL, 6 HENDERSON VALLEY ROAD, HENDERSON, WAITAKERE,
ON WEDNESDAY, 27 JUNE 2007, COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM**

PART B - REPORT OF THE MAYOR

Stop Press

I have just returned from a remarkable 10-day and three Chinese cities (Ningbo, Shanghai, Beijing) trip. We attended 20 full-on meetings with schools, colleges and universities and we promoted our film industry to 14 of the best and brightest in China, wonderfully arranged by Film Auckland and our Waitakere Enterprise people. It really was incredible, and while I am very keen to share all my experiences and the good news with you, I am up against the deadline for this report. A full report will appear in the July Mayoral Report.

Greening the Scene

This month I want to formally acknowledge and congratulate the city of San Francisco on its environmental efforts. I hope you have all watched the video clip I sent round, because it is an excellent representation of just how forward-thinking this Californian city is. And I think we can take a leaf from San Fran's green book. As we all know, Waitakere has been at the forefront of caring for the environment for many years. We were New Zealand's first Eco City. But we have to keep pushing the boundaries, and that's why I've been looking at San Francisco.

Leadership is the key there I think, as it is here in Waitakere. The city currently has its youngest mayor in 100 years - Gavin Newsom. He has brought fresh ideas and renewed energy to the city and county and has earned a reputation as an innovator on issues ranging from homelessness, to the environment, healthcare and education. In January 2004, Mayor Newsom took the bold step to further equality and justice in America when he directed the city's county clerk to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Early in his tenure, facing historic budget deficits, unemployment and office vacancies due to the dot.com bust and shock of 9/11, Mayor Newsom challenged the city to curb its spending and use fiscal restraint. In the first three years of his administration, San Francisco cut millions of dollars of waste from the budget, unemployment decreased by 2.6 percent, 57 companies located to the city and 925 convention groups were booked in 2005, breaking the city's previous records for tourism.

Striving to undertake the issues that affect us globally, Mayor Newsom elevated San Francisco's environmental stature. In 2004 he unveiled the Climate Action Plan, which aims to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions by more than 2.5 million tons by 2012 and curb global warming through strict goals that exceed the United Nations' Kyoto Protocols. The Mayor has also set a course for San Fran to have the cleanest public transportation fleet in the nation by the end of this year and transition the city's entire taxi fleet to hybrid, alternative fuel and green vehicles. Since the environment of the city rests not solely in the hands of the vehicles on the road, but also with pedestrians on sidewalks and children in parks, the Mayor has expanded his Livable City Initiative to green San Francisco's streets and help define the unique characteristics of each of its neighbourhoods. By securing \$8 million in federal and local funds (don't you wish we could do that?), the Mayor has implemented sweeping streetscape improvements across the city. As part of the Clean and Green Initiative, this Better Streets Programme is a coordinated city effort to repair existing roadways, to redesign streets for more efficient traffic flow and to beautify city streets with sustainable plantings, trees and community gardens. From planting trees to improving median strips to installing new trash bins, flower pots and newspaper racks, Mayor Newsom has demonstrated his commitment to a more livable urban environment.



Now, don't get me wrong, Waitakere is doing just as much, but San Francisco seems to have the edge. For example, in March 2006, Mayor Newsom joined the Public Initiatives Development Corporation and Enterprise at the grand opening celebration for Plaza Apartments, the first San Fran affordable housing built to the standards of the Green Communities Criteria. The nine-storey apartment building is home to 106 very low income people, many of whom were formerly homeless. The ground floor houses a reception area, offices, kitchen, community room, courtyard and retail space. It's all about providing and supporting healthy, energy-efficient apartments for people in need. Green features include energy-efficient appliances, light fixtures and a solar energy system, the use of recycled and recyclable materials such as steel framing, insulation, ultra low-flow plumbing fixtures, carpeting and tile flooring. Many other such developments are underway. The 4,300 homes in the Green Communities development pipeline will reduce costs and consumption compared to conventionally-built homes, including \$1.5 million in energy savings per year, more than 5000 tons in reduced greenhouse gas emissions per year and thirty million gallons in reduced water use per year.

Impressive isn't it? But San Francisco's success story doesn't stop there, and again leadership is the key. In November 2004, Ross Mirkarimi was elected supervisor of District 5. A resident of San Fran for 20 years, Mirkarimi had been a tireless force for progressive change. He led legislative efforts and campaigns to make City Hall more accountable to the people, worked to put underdog progressive candidates in elected office and stopped corporate abuse against seniors and low-income families. He also led the campaign to create the Department of the Environment. He was instrumental in the crusade to extend San Francisco's ban on smoking tobacco at bus shelters to the city's public golf courses.

Mirkarimi's ethnic and cultural background is Iranian and Russian-American. He was born in Chicago and grew up in Rhode Island. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from St Louis University, a Master's Degree in International Economics and Affairs from Golden Gate University and a Master of Science Degree in environmental science from the University of San Francisco.

In March this year, Mirkarimi, with the Mayor's support, introduced legislation to ban non-biodegradable plastic bags. As you can imagine, many supermarkets opposed the proposed legislation but it was passed 10-1, making San Fran the first city in America to ban such bags. At the time Mirkarimi said: "Instead of waiting for the federal government to do something about this country's oil dependence, environmental degradation or contribution to global warming, local governments can step up and do their part. The plastic bag ban is one small part of that."

Well, I couldn't agree more and I want to do the same thing here in Waitakere. It's working in San Fran and it's working closer to home - in Huskisson, Jervis Bay in New South Wales, Australia. After attending the ICLEI conference in Melbourne, I visited the area (on a bit of a pilgrimage I must say) and the man who is the coordinator of the new no-plastic-bags campaign, Matt Cross - indeed the man who is committed to making the whole of Australia plastic bag free.

What a guy! Huskisson was not the first community in the nation to rid itself of plastic shopping bags - that honour goes to Coles Bay in Tasmania - but with 92 retail outlets, it is by far the biggest. The entire village agreed on a unified stand against the environmental problem of plastic waste. Every resident, including children, was issued with two calico bags. "This is an education of the public about how to shop," says Matt Cross. "When you go shopping in Huskisson now, you have to remember to take your phone, wallet and your bags. It's back to the days when the consumer was responsible for bringing their bags rather than the shopkeeper having to put everything in plastic."



M1-M2 Other towns and areas around Huskisson are considering following its lead. I have attached at pages M1-M2, photos of Matt and his shops displaying 'no plastic bag' signs.

Here in New Zealand the movement has certainly begun. DIY giant Bunnings is now charging 10c for its plastic bags and is aiming to be plastic bag free by the end of the year. The Kapiti District Council is making paper rubbish bags available for people who want to take a more sustainable approach. The bags are more expensive than the plastic ones but the council negotiated a deal and believes many people will feel it worthwhile to spend the extra 25 cents per bag to gain the greater environmental acceptability of paper.

The South Island's Collingwood (Golden Bay) has been plastic bag free for two years. I have been in touch with the woman behind the campaign there, Nicola Basham, and she has given me some very good information about how they did it. It wasn't easy by any means but they succeeded and Nicola says persistence and patience paid off.

The tide has turned and I think we, as this country's first Eco City, should be in the first wave of this movement. Councillor Lawley has already mooted in her Titirangi Tatler column, that she would like to see Green Bay do away with plastic bags and I commend her for her thinking. But I think we should aim just a little bit higher and do Green Bay and Titirangi. I have already spoken to the local residents and ratepayer groups about this and have decided to be part of a Tidy Village Campaign, which will involve a Mayoral Cup and a \$250 prize for the tidiest shop. Councillor Hulse and I are working with Greg Presland and the local shopkeepers and restaurateurs to get this off the ground. I have also said we will provide a dumpster so local residents can rid themselves of ginger. Long term, we need to work out the best options to spread this campaign across the whole City and we also need to consult with people. To that end I am recommending the following:

RECOMMENDATION

That the Chief Executive Officer report to Council on what options are available to move towards banning plastic bags in Green Bay and Titirangi as part of the Tidy Village campaign, with a view to extending the ban to cover all of Waitakere.

Civic Square

When we made the very smart decision to move from Waipareira Avenue to our own building in Henderson, to rejuvenate this City's Commercial Business District (CBD), I think we all had high hopes as to its success. Well I think we can relax. We made the right call. The transport hub has become a reality, business is improving in Great North Road and gradually our residents and ratepayers are becoming aware of the facilities we provide. And I'm not just talking about Council services. I'm talking about the Japanese Garden and the Civic Square. It is just so good to see people enjoying these spaces, and I thought it was just great when I saw so many staff gathered to listen to our very own comedian, Ewen Gilmour. Having entertainment at lunch time like that is very much about what a town centre should be - vibrant and with things going on. It's great. And I hope we continue to organise and hold these kinds of events. My thanks to the public affairs' team for this and I look forward to many more.

Indeed, I am going to make more use of the square myself. I've decided to take a leaf out of Christchurch Mayor Garry Moore's book and do a 'Bob on a chair in the square' gig. Once a fortnight I am going to sit in the square for an hour or so and anyone can come and talk to me if they so desire. I also plan to do this on a regular basis in Catherine Mall, so I can get a better handle on some of the issues being faced by business people in the area and indeed our youth issues.



MILESTONES

Tragedy

It's been a sad couple of weeks in terms of accidents. There wasn't a dry eye at Hoani Waititi Marae on the afternoon little Louis Schmidt-Peke was crushed by an unsafe gate. Everyone was absolutely grief stricken and I was no exception. The little boy's death was an absolute tragedy and it will be a very long time of mourning. My thanks to Councillor Penny Hulse and Rewi Spraggon for attending the tangi (sadly I was in China and couldn't make it) in Paeroa and then the burial at Te Rangaiti Marae, Waharoa Ngati Haua. Our deepest sympathies are with Louis' parents and his whānau.

Just a few days later, Michael Hetaraka was tragically killed in an industrial accident at Pinepac's timberyard in Whenuapai. Staff were shocked and saddened by the accident, which is being investigated by Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), and many attended the tangi up north. Michael was the nephew of local Massey kaumātua, Wiremu Hetaraka, whose son Charles died several years ago of cancer. Charles was a pupil at Massey High and Michael has other children at the school. Michael was buried at Waipaua Marae, Arapaoa.

Hobsonville

Our Hobsonville announcement on May 30 2007, regarding the purchase of 15 hectares of land to expand the marine cluster, was particularly well received. Both TVOne and TV3 attended the media conference, along with many other media representatives, and the channels covered the story by focusing on the positives the purchase would bring. We've spent a fair bit of money on buying the land, but I am sure you will agree it's going to be worth it and I think the return on our investment will be outstanding and will leave any doubters quite embarrassed. The aim is to make Hobsonville the Southern Hemisphere capital of superyacht building. We want to create a cluster of marine industries and a centre of excellence at Hobsonville to enable New Zealand to better compete with new facilities in Australia, trying to muscle in on the lucrative international market for building, outfitting and maintaining superyachts.

As you all know, we have identified film and boat building as two industries which we wish to foster; to make these industries in our City internationally competitive and create employment and wealth. Creating local employment is a fundamental principle of our sustainable development strategy. We've already achieved spectacular success through fostering the film studio and this is the opportunity to take a major step forward in fostering our marine precinct. The land will be developed on a commercial basis by Waitakere Properties Limited, which will make land available to new entrants to the Hobsonville cluster. Here's to Hobsonville and all who set sail from her!

West Coast Gets Warning

Since the Boxing Day tsunami in 2004, officials in Waitakere have been concerned about the likelihood of another disaster closer to home. The recent Solomon Islands' quake had that potential, however, it turned into a mere ripple. But that doesn't mean we can be complacent. As you know my colleague, North Shore Mayor George Wood, and I have been pushing for a better and more efficient tsunami alert system.

Well it happened. On Monday, 21 May 2007, at 2.30 pm, in front of a select group of invited officials and guests, including Mike O'Leary, the National Civil Defence Controller and Mayors Wood and Harvey, a new signal device designed by Meerkat Alert Systems Limited was sounded.



Already trialled in the Far North, Whakatane and the Bay of Plenty, the signal blasted from four giant speakers and a large horn mounted on a sample pole in the Karekare carpark, into the valley and down the beach. It was operated from outside the City by Vector and can be turned on by that company and/or Civil Defence when a tsunami is predicted.

Unlike the American tornado sound, this is a unique system known as a Zulu Code. Its strong, air-piercing 'dash dash dot dot' sequence makes it unmistakable as an emergency alert. When sounded to the Auckland region's public, the message will be very clear - get out of the water, leave the beach, take to high ground and tune into a radio station.

The system was devised by South African-born New Zealand resident Wilfried Roding, the director of Meerkat, who told those gathered that this was a state of the art signal. The test was better than I expected in such a large area, and the system has now been subsequently approved by Council for erection on towers on the beach or at surf clubs at Whatipu, Karekare, Piha and Te Henga on the west coast and at locations on our eastern coast as well. It's a great outcome and I just hope the system never has to be used for real.

Congratulations # 1

On your behalf, I have written to say congratulations to those local residents who received Queen's Birthday Honours, including a couple of 'out of towners' with strong Waitakere connections. I also want to acknowledge them, their hard work and their accolades here:

- Reverend Monsignor James Cornelius Shanahan (formerly of Henderson and Te Atatu parishes), NZOM for services to the community;
- Dr Graham William Arthur Bush (former Waitemata City Councillor), QSO for services to historical research, notably local government;
- Professor Carol Cardno (former Waitakere College principal), QSO for services to educational administration and management;
- Bruce James Harvey (Titirangi), QSM for services to conservation and the community;
- Dr Catherine Frances Harvey (Titirangi), QSM for services to conservation and the community;
- Henry Arthur Hubbert (Te Atatu South), QSM for services to the community;
- Colin Wilson Smithies (Glen Eden), QSM for services to the New Zealand Fire Service;
- Victor Andrew Talyancich JP (Henderson), QSM for services to business and the Croatian community.

Congratulations # 2

None of us will ever forget the Mt Erebus air disaster and most of us can only imagine how traumatic it would have been to be working on the recovery of the bodies. But Councillor Ross Dallow does know. He was one of several police officers stationed or living in the West called in to assist with the mortuary operation and recently, and quite rightly so, received a special service medal for his part in the exercise to identify victims of flight 901 who remains were retrieved from the snow after their plane crashed on 28 November 1979. Congratulations Ross. I am sure you will never forget the experience, and the medal and accolade is very worthy.



Congratulations # 3

Congratulations to Dr Pita Sharples, who was recently named the Public Relations Institute of New Zealand (PRINZ), Communicator of the Year 2007.

The award, reinstated this year after a 10-year lapse, recognises excellence in personal communication skills, and also a sector leader who espouses open and honest communications within his or her organisation. Previous winners include Dame Catherine Tizard, Alan Duff and the late Sir Peter Blake.

Maori Party co-leader and local kaumātua, Dr Sharples was selected by a vote of PRINZ's College of Fellows. The initial list of nominations was developed from submissions open to all members of the institute and included business leaders, high-profile spokespeople and politicians.

In announcing the Award, outgoing PRINZ President, Lisa Finucane, said Dr Sharples, renowned for his honest and direct communication style, encapsulated the qualities the Institute wanted to recognise. "As well as honouring an outstanding communicator, PRINZ was looking for an award recipient who reflected the communication values it and our PR practitioner members aspire to. These include honesty, two-way communication - hearing as well as telling - and, while acting as advocate for a particular group or organisation, always bearing in mind the greater public good," she said.

"Certainly Dr Sharples has made a huge contribution to increased understanding of Maori issues among non-Maori, but importantly he challenges both communities to shun rhetoric in favour of hard solutions and effective dialogue."

Titirangi Residents and Ratepayers Association Annual General Meeting (AGM)

I was pleased to attend the Titirangi Residents and Ratepayers AGM on 15 June 2007 and congratulate the following on their election: Greg Presland (president), Marguerite Laing (secretary); Paul Wilton (treasurer); John Geddes, Anne Iosefa, Bill Adams, Tom Mahoney, Mel Boulton, Margaret Spencer and Eanna Doyle (committee members).

Sign of the Times

We are all justifiably proud of our magnificent civic buildings - libraries, community centres, the stadium and the new civic centre. They are beautiful, functional, award-winning and have a myriad of sustainable features. And now even our signs are getting noticed (well, I guess they are supposed to!!)

M3 Attached at page M3 is a small article from Prodesign Magazine, which I have put in the Councillors' lounge. The magazine features the very best in product and graphic design and commercial fit-outs, and the article highlights the functional way-finding signs that are outside the Henderson library. They are designed by the same company which provided wayfinding around the civic centre site.

Human Rights

I was disappointed we didn't get more media pick up about our decision to hang the Declaration of Human Rights in our Council Chamber foyer, however, it was good to receive this from the Human Rights Commission.



On the Bright Side: Paenga Hihiko Haratua / May 2007

Kia ora. Anei te mihi ō te Kaihautu Whakawhanaunga ä Iwi, mo ngä mahi nui, mahi whakamana i te tangata i roto i ngä kaupapa Whakawhanaunga ä Iwi i Aotearoa.

Here are this month's acknowledgments from the Race Relations Commissioner for positive contributions to race relations in New Zealand.

Waitakere City Council

For placing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in its Council Chambers building, May 2007.

Waitakere City has become the first council in the country to place the full text of the United Nations (in both Māori and English) in its Council building, acknowledging the importance of human rights alongside the importance of the Treaty of Waitangi, which is also prominently displayed. The text was unveiled on two large plaques at a citizenship ceremony in May. The UDHR was agreed almost 60 years ago, following the Second World War, and provides a common understanding of the rights and freedoms to which all people are entitled. Chief Human Rights Commissioner, Rosslyn Noonan, has challenged other councils to follow Waitakere's example in promoting the importance of both the Treaty and the UDHR in local communities.

International Acclaim

M4-M6 In last month's Mayoral Report, I brought you a travel article on Waitakere from an Indonesian newspaper. This month we're a little closer to home. Attached at pages M4-M6 is another, unsolicited, plug for the region - this time from Brisbane's Courier Mail. It's most satisfying when the beach capital of Australia talks about how beautiful our west coast is!

RECOMMENDATION

That the Report of the Mayor be received.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP
MAYOR OF WAITAKERE