

FOREWORD FROM THE MAYOR



Kia ora.

Our inaugural Long Term Council Community Plan (The Ten Year Plan) represents a defining moment for the Rotorua community. This is the most important and far reaching strategic document we have prepared. It sets the district on a clearly defined path towards future growth and progress for the next ten years – the path to **Destination Rotorua**.

It belongs to all of us in this community and therefore we all had a responsibility to consider submitting our thoughts and comments to the Council. This was a vital part of the process. I am delighted that nearly 1,200 residents and ratepayers took the opportunity to make submissions.

The Ten year Plan looks far into the future. It takes into account the aspirations of residents as told to Council during the recent *Bright Future Rotorua* consultation programme which identified community outcomes. Therefore it represents the community's collective vision for the District and it sets out to determine the role Rotorua District Council can play in achieving that vision.

Under new legislative requirements we no longer focus our planning primarily on just the coming year's activities – it is now a detailed ten year focus. It means coming to grips with careful planning, detailed forecasting, costing future needs and identifying funding issues for well into the future. Of course it also means some big dollar figures when we start thinking about the next decade, but we should not be afraid of that. It is important that we all have the courage to address the long term issues for this community and its future.

I believe that Council has made some very responsible yet progressive decisions in this Ten Year Plan. We have had to carefully consider the need for our community to grow and to make real progress, and

balance this with the community's ability to pay for our future needs. It means some brave decisions have had to be made and I know that councillors have been sensitive to the funding limitations of our community.

This is the last of the long term planning processes that I will personally be involved in as I will be standing down from the mayoralty later in 2004. I feel very confident that this council has set in place a well planned strategy to ensure this community grows into the future.

We are in a period of excellent economic growth with sound tourism development and increasing employment levels. We have excellent action plans underway to secure the future of our lakes and we are planning a much needed upgrade of our airport. In partnership with the Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust we are developing a new multi-purpose indoor events centre on the site of the current Sportsdrome. These are just a few of the things happening right now and so we have every reason to feel proud about this very special part of New Zealand.

These are exciting times. I will leave the mayoralty with every confidence that the future of this district is a well planned one and there is a clear path to **Destination Rotorua**.

Grahame Hall, QSO JP
Mayor