

## **BAY OF CONNECTIONS BACKGROUND AND PROJECTS UPDATE**

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The Bay of Connections is an economic development partnership between the Bay of Plenty's Economic Development Agencies (EDAs), Councils, business people and communities. The Bay of Plenty Regional Council plays a leading role in assisting the Governance Group of business leaders from across the Bay of Plenty, and the region's Economic Development Agencies to deliver on the regional economic development strategy developed in 2009.

The Bay of Connections encompasses both traditional and emerging industries, including Forestry, Food, Niche Manufacturing, Supply Chain and Logistics, Broadband and Communications, Tertiary Education and Research, Labour and Skills, Energy, Tourism, Maori Economic Development and Land Use, Marine, ICT and Aquaculture

In three years specific economic strategies are already being implemented to support Aquaculture, and Food and Beverage, while work is underway on the Energy Forestry and Supply Chain and Logistics strategies.

### **AQUACULTURE**

The Aquaculture strategy was completed in 2009 with the goal being export sales of \$250m by 2025. Key areas of focus- are supporting the Regional Aquaculture Organisation (RAO) to implement the action plan, and supporting the Opotiki Harbour Development business case. There is likely to be an application to the BOPRC grant fund.

A RSF project is underway to better understand the AQ infrastructure needs. This document will be used by domestic and offshore investors to understand the requirements of establishing in BOP.

Toi-EDA involvement – support at Governance and Management Group. Anthony Olsen is a member of the RAO. John Galbraith is involved in some of the planning work around infrastructure for the Opotiki Harbour project.

### **ENERGY**

A Technical background report forms the basis of the Energy Strategy. An Energy Advisory Group (EAG) has been set up and has met twice to develop a strategy and action plan that is both domestic and export focussed. Key goal is to sell the Bay as having a real point of difference compared to other regions e.g. geothermal and bio-energy. A Forum held at the end of April focussed on developing the Action Plan.

Toi-EDA involvement – support at Governance and Management Group. Anthony Olsen Chair of the EAG, Mary Hermanson and Su Cammell attended forum

### **FORESTRY**

The same model is being used to develop a Forestry and Wood Processing strategy as for the Aquaculture and Energy strategies. John Galbraith is employed by Bay of Connections to draft the forest industry strategy for a June 2011 industry Forum and reported to the initial forum held at end of April. The

strategy is fully consistent and supportive of the Kawerau project and provides a wider forum to promote that project.

Toi-EDA involvement – support at Governance and Management Group. John Galbraith is involved in strategy development

### **SUPPLY CHAIN AND LOGISTICS**

BOP Polytechnic is playing a leading role in this project. An Advisory Group has been set up and first met in March 2011 under the chairmanship of Tony Hawken. An RFP has been sent out to consultants to carry out Stage 1 of the strategy. Proposals are being evaluated.

Toi-EDA involvement – support at Governance and Management Group. Mary Hermanson involved in the drafting of RFP.

### **STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT**

Update of the Bay of Connections strategy which was developed in 2008. BERL are carrying out Stage One which is an economic quantitative and qualitative analysis of the region and sub-regions. They will then use the information to develop new action plans and priorities.

Toi-EDA involvement – support at Governance and Management Group. Mary Hermanson involved in assessing proposals and has assisted BERL with EBOP contacts.

### **TERTIARY**

A BOP Tertiary Partnership has been set up to improve the linkages between tertiary education providers and provide a university campus experience to students in BOP.

Toi-EDA involvement – support at Governance and Management Group.

### **BROADBAND**

Ultra fast broadband is an important economic development enabler. Bay of Connections partners have been kept informed throughout the process of approving the urban and rural providers.

Toi-EDA involvement – support at Governance and Management Group.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE**

This project has come out of the national infrastructure project and is a stock take of where the pressure points for economic growth will occur.

Toi-EDA involvement – support at Governance and Management Group.

<http://www.bayofconnections.com/>