

KORRA

KAIMAI OMANAWA
RURAL RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

2020 Community Plan





*A community plan
is an effective tool for
capturing and prioritising
the aspirations of our
community and
providing a roadmap
for the future.*

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INTRODUCTION

What gives a community its unique identity?

Our unique geology with the beautiful lakes and rivers, our rural environment separation from the main centre creates the foundation for our community. These regional attributes attract a specific type of people and family. Outdoor people that enjoy and respect the land. We connect with each other, through necessity and because life is easier and more enjoyable when connected. We are proud of our community and very fortunate to live in the Kaimai area.

For the Kaimai region, our unique identity is underpinned by our rural setting and unique history. With McLaren Falls, Omanawa Falls, and a picturesque 160-acre park, we are a significant tourist destination located close to the city of Tauranga, linked by our backbone: State Highway 29.

The creation of the Kaimai community plan generates the opportunity for community engagement. For ideas to be formulated, history to be uncovered. To recognise and pay homage to the families that have built the community before us, and to build upon that legacy for the future generations to come.

Used correctly, the community plan provides a platform for organisations, groups and neighbourhoods to become more engaged in the community. It creates a means to secure funding and better resources. The plan encapsulates our vision and provides the strategic direction for both the community and councils to use to enable a stronger and productive working relationship.

A community plan generates the motivation and the energy for progress. It will focus community efforts and galvanise people behind their plan. The outcome for this plan is for us to participate in building a stronger, happier and healthier place for us all to live.

Wayne Lowry

Chairman

Kaimai Omanawa Rural Ratepayers Association Inc

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OUR VISION

The Kaimai Omanawa Rural Ratepayers Association is an enthusiastic and motivated group of local ratepayers representing the Lower Kaimai region. The vision for our community is to be a thriving, safe, connected and beautiful place to live and raise our families. It will be easy and safe to commute, conduct business and the infrastructure will enhance the environment and our ability to enjoy it.

OUR PEOPLE

Chairman: Wayne Lowry

Treasurer: Graeme Mills (also representing Omanawa Rd)

Secretary: Lesley Pritchard

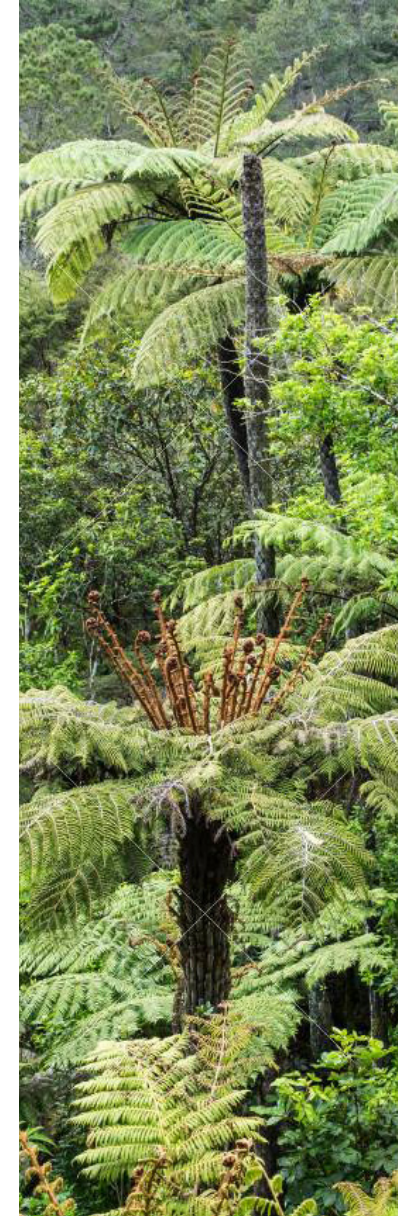
Committee members:

Bryan Patterson

Graham Dyer (representing Ruahihi Rd)

Bryan Smith (representing McLaren Falls Rd)

Jason Marra and Denise Kilgour (representing Kumikumi Rd)



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OUR REGION

The region covered by the Kaimai Omanawa Rural Ratepayers Association includes all roads along State Highway 29 from Belk Road to the summit of the Kaimai Range i.e. the following main roads (and all their side roads):

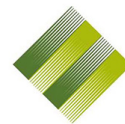
- Hanga Road
- Old Kaimai Rd
- Valley View Rd
- Soldiers Rd
- Ngamuwahine Rd
- Thorn Rd
- Poripori Rd
- McLaren Falls Rd
- Ruahihi Rd
- Omanawa Rd
- Peers Rd
- Belk Rd



The Kaimai Omanawa region also includes:

- Two Community Halls
- Kaimai Primary School
- The Wairoa River
- McLaren Falls Park
- Omanawa Falls Park
- The Ruahihi Power Scheme
- The Omanawa Falls Power Station

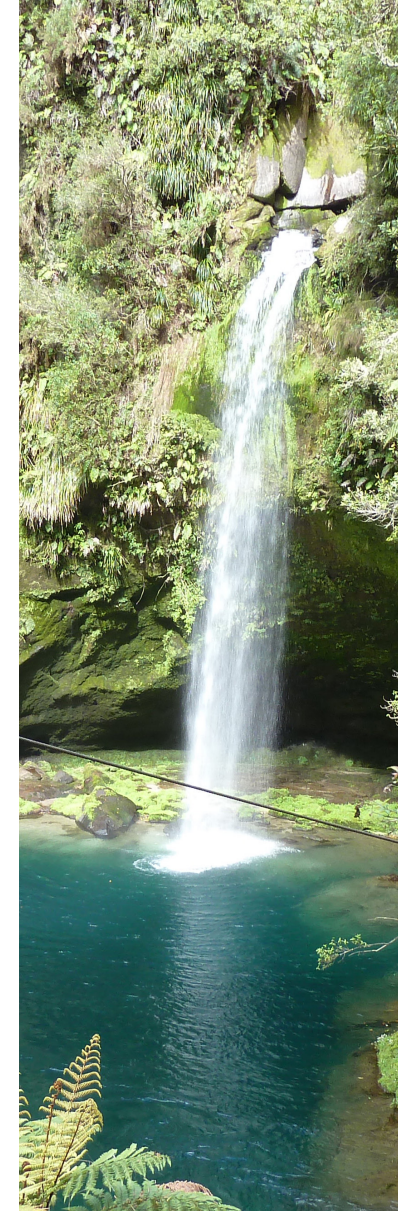
Within our region there is land owned and administered by both Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Tauranga City Council.



**Western Bay of Plenty
District Council**



Tauranga City



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OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS

1

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

*Supporting
local
businesses*

*Being
PROACTIVE
rather than
REACTIVE*

*Creating
a "Kaimai
Family"*



Keeping our community connected to each other, and to the wider world, is important for the wellbeing of all residents.

- State Highway 29 is a key freight route and is also the only route into Tauranga for residents in the Kaimai Omanawa Region. Increasing traffic volumes are causing an increase in travel times and also affect emergency services. An upgrade to the highway, including intersections with side roads is an increasingly urgent issue. Temporary plans to install traffic lights at Cambridge Rd and opening a bypass at Gargan Rd have been suggested as a short term solution.
- To enable all residents to work from home efficiently, conducting business online or studying, ultra-fast broadband should be available for all. Currently only Omanawa Rd as far as Peers Rd has fibre to the door.
- The setting up of Neighbourhood support groups will be encouraged.
- KORRA aims to promote community social activities in the region (e.g. Gala days and Local Produce Markets at McLaren Falls Park) and bring key stakeholder groups together. Providing information evenings for residents will help communication about issues in our region and improve the understanding of our unique challenges.
- Walkways, Cycleways and Dog exercising areas e.g around McLaren Lake
- Public Transport options - Bus service from the Lower Kaimais to Tauriko Business Estate and The Crossing
- Local History Archive - the preservation and updating of existing historical documents e.g. the Omanawa Settlers book.



OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS

2

ROADING ISSUES

Situation	Problem	Implication	Need
Kumikumi Road	Unsealed road, poorly maintained surface.	Health and safety issues associated with dust and corrugations.	A timeframe for tarsealing of the road.
Poripori Road	Narrow, hazardous bends. Parked cars at swimming hole add to the danger.	Emergency bypass route for SH29 and Port traffic - should be fit for purpose.	Widening of narrow sections of road. Parking solution at swimming hole.
Ruahihi Road	Dyer Straight is still unsealed.	Health and safety issues for Kiwifruit orchard businesses.	A timeframe for tarsealing the road.
Omanawa Road	Lack of warning signage for school buses and limited vision from Peers Road to 930 Omanawa Rd.	Increasing traffic volumes at speed is a danger for all, particularly for school children using buses.	Signage to be installed at suitable sites along Omanawa Road.
Belk Road	Increasing traffic at intersection with SH 29 due to expansion of the Tauriko Business Estate.	The intersection is dangerous and busy at present, and cannot handle any extra heavy traffic.	A clear plan for State Highway 29 from Omanawa Rd to the Lakes.
Rural Speed limits	Speed limit on all rural roads is currently 100 km/hr.	Proposed speed limit on Omanawa Rd reduced to 80km/hr.	McLaren Falls Rd and Peers Rd should be included in this proposal.
Roadside Maintenance	Litter along berms and stormwater culverts blocked.	Visual pollution and danger of flooded roads.	Instilling pride in the community to maintain roadsides.



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OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS

3

OMANAWA RD AREA

Situation	Problem	Implication	Need
Omanawa Falls	The Falls are closed but trespassing is common and this is an increasing problem in the summer months.	Parked cars blocking road and driveways, destruction of the environment, littering, danger to emergency crews during rescues.	Better deterrents/fines for trespassers and illegal parking. More information about plans for the future to open up the Falls.
Omanawa Community Hall Building	Ongoing maintenance and repair issues	Funds may be available from the Provincial Growth fund to carry out essential work on the building.	• Painting the interior, including replacement GIB and plastering. • Installing a heat pump and upgrading the lights to LED • Eliminating any borer beetle • Upgrading the water filtration system
Omanawa Hall Land	The paddock behind the Hall is presently rented out for grazing and baleage.	The land has the potential to be used for other purposes. This may require significant project management to organise and fund.	Proposals include: • A passive recreational area planted by locals with trees and a walkway • A commercial grade playground, costing around \$25,000 - \$30,000.



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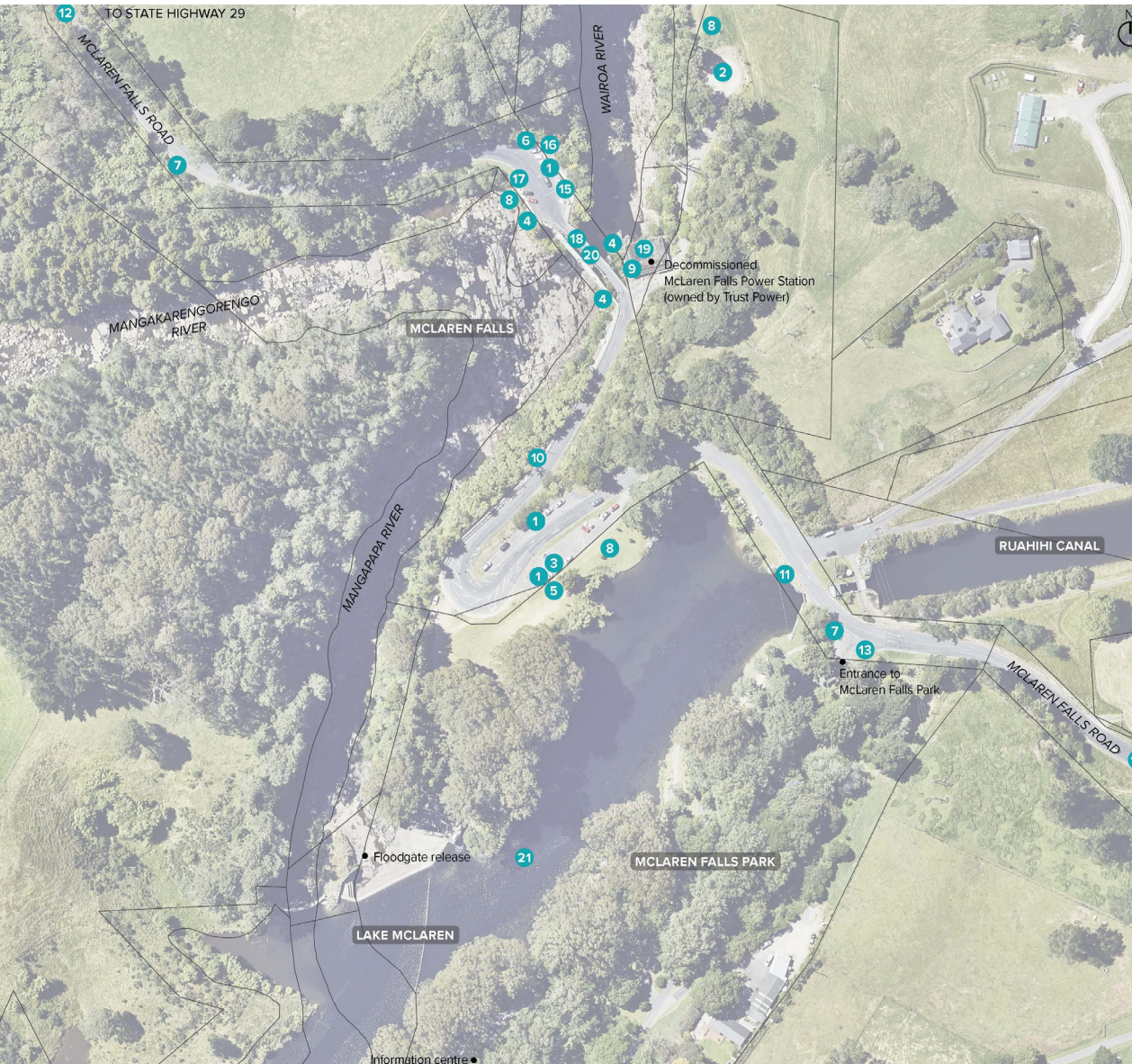
MCLAREN FALLS REGION

Situation	Problem	Implication	Need
Improve visitor amenity The McLaren Falls Bridge area is a unique tourist attraction in its own right. The area has been neglected for a number of years and now looks very tired. To improve the tourist experience, work needs to be undertaken to create a better end user experience.	The many tourists feel that they are entering the McLaren Falls Park once they turn off SH29. Perception is reality. McLaren Falls Road is the gateway to the park and needs enhancing to the same standard as McLaren Falls Park.	People often go past the park entrance, or misunderstand the attractions and only stop at the falls. This degrades the quality of the experience and reduces referrals to other tourists. Once the experience is improved, we need tourists to have easy access to social media to further promote the area. The car park areas require overhauling and uplifted to "tourist quality".	• Formalise carparking in three identified areas. • Formalise overflow carparking or drop off area for groups or events. • Provide overflow camping space for freedom campers. • Improve access and circulation around Falls to help disperse crowds at popular areas. • Provide a new toilet near the freedom camping area. • Relocate or replace the toilet near the entrance of the Falls to a more suitable location. • Increase wayfinding and information signage at McLaren Falls Park entrance and at the gateway to McLaren Falls. • Potential picnic area improvements. • Provide public wifi from power station building around Falls area.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS

Situation	Problem	Implication	Need
Improve wider connections and circulation	There is no connectivity between attractions. Attractions should naturally flow from one to the other. Currently, that connectivity is missing,	People want to experience the area. Once at the McLaren Falls bridge, there needs to be a natural pathway to the McLaren Falls Park and then on to Omanawa Falls. Without this connectivity, the end user only has a partial and degraded experience.	• Repair or replace pedestrian access up-hill to carparks. • Improve connections between McLaren Falls and McLaren Falls Park for families and visitors. • Wayfinding needed to McLaren Falls Park from SH29. • Wayfinding needed at McLaren Falls Park entrance. • Opportunity to link Omanawa Falls and McLaren Falls as future tourist destinations
Increase safety	McLaren Falls has experienced a number of serious crimes in its recent past. Antisocial behaviour is still an ongoing problem. This is costly to the community, reflects poorly on our image and discourages people from visiting. We need to take proactive steps to discourage antisocial behaviour and improve the image.	Tourist attractions play a key role not only tracking tourists to the area but in keeping them in the area for extended periods of time. This is very important for our economy specially at the moment. Any negative sentiment regarding the attraction discourages visitors and the revenue they generate.	• Provide lighting in carparking areas to encourage increased safety outcomes. • Install CCTV around carparking and power station areas. • Increase activation at night through lighting and activity. • Traffic calming opportunities around pedestrian and traffic bridges.
Upgrade/repurpose of decommissioned power station	Power station is progressively deteriorating. It was once an impressive building and an important part of our local history. Building needs to be given a new lease of life.	Visitors to a new area like to understand the history what makes the region unique. The electricity industry is an important part of our history. Power station building is an important part of that story. It needs to be restored and repurposed so that future generations can appreciate the history it represents.	• Provide utility (power, water, internet) connections to the building. Future use, external paint colour scheme, feature lighting and rooftop viewing deck to be discussed.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS



Improve visitor amenity

1. Formalise carparking in three identified areas.
2. Formalise overflow carparking or drop off area for groups or events.
3. Provide overflow camping space for freedom campers.
4. Improve access and circulation around Falls to help disperse crowds at popular areas.
5. Provide a new toilet near the freedom camping area.
6. Relocate or replace the toilet near the entrance of the Falls to a more suitable location.
7. Increase wayfinding and information signage at McLaren Falls Park entrance and at the gateway to McLaren Falls.
8. Potential picnic area improvements.
9. Provide public wifi from power station building around Falls area.

Improve wider connections and circulation

10. Repair or replace pedestrian access up-hill to carparks.
11. Improve connections between McLaren Falls and McLaren Falls Park for families and visitors.
12. Wayfinding needed to McLaren Falls Park from SH29.
13. Wayfinding needed at McLaren Falls Park entrance.
14. Opportunity to link Omanawa Falls and McLaren Falls as future tourist destinations

Increase safety

15. Provide lighting in carparking areas to encourage increased safety outcomes.
16. Install CCTV around carparking and power station areas.
17. Increase activation at night through lighting and activity.
18. Traffic calming opportunities around pedestrian and traffic bridges.

Upgrade/repurpose of decommissioned power station

19. Provide utility (power, water, internet) connections to the building. Future use, external paint colour scheme, feature lighting and rooftop viewing deck to be discussed.



*"Setting goals is
the first step
to turning the
invisible into the
visible."*

SUMMARY

Neglected. If there was one word that summarises where we are as a community today, it is neglected. This may stem from a misunderstanding between the needs of the urban and rural communities. The urban community is a "fully serviced" environment. Recycling, fresh water, wastewater, storm water, footpaths, street lights, broadband, security cameras, even boat ramps. It's all laid on. In comparison, the rural community, by and large, is a self serviced community. It provides its own drinking water, wastewater, recycling. It is all self service. Thousands of dollars are incurred installing water tanks, plumbing, electricity, pumps to supply drinking water to the house. Thousands more spent on wastewater treatment. Even more money is spent on maintaining and updating these systems. These are costs that the council doesn't incur. Significant costs.

We often see cases where the cost of providing a service to the urban community is deemed to be high and therefore spread across all of the ratepayers. The reality is that the rural community incurs even more costs to support the urban community. The same doesn't seem to work in reverse. Is it any wonder we feel neglected?

Our community plan represents the first steps in the local community taking responsibility for protecting and preserving our unique identity, ensuring the area is correctly maintained and instigating a development program for the future.

The area is an important economic driver for the wider Bay of Plenty area. The economic power of McLaren Falls Park, McLaren Falls, and Omanawa Falls's tourist attractions cannot

be overstated, attracting significant numbers of domestic and international tourists to the area. Developing this area is a key component of our current development plan.

The development begins by getting the fundamentals right. Safety and security for both the tourists and the local community is by far the highest priority. Over the years, the area has been subjected to unwanted criminal activity. We need to put in place deterrents such security camera's to prevent re-occurrence of this activity. Once the deterrents are in place, we can begin to build for the future.

McLaren Falls Road from State Highway 29 to the McLaren Falls Park is the gateway to the park. It is the first impression that tourists have of our area and it needs to be of the highest quality. With the assistance of Beca Consulting we have created a multipoint development plan to be implemented over the next few years.

State Highway 29 continues to be a major concern for all residents. Even minor incidents on the highway result in significant traffic delays. In some instances, the traffic is backed up past PoriPori Road. The intersection of Cambridge Road and State Highway 29 continues to be the single point of significance, contributing to much of this delay. Traffic lights are desperately needed to improve intersection safety and address traffic congestion.

The Belk Road intersection is poorly engineered especially for traffic turning right off state Highway 29 into Belk Road. As construction increases in the area, this situation will be exacerbated. Our very real concern is that lives may be lost.

There are several roads in our area which require sealing. Whilst this is can be relatively expensive, these are investments in our future. We believe it is important the well-being of the residence on these roads must be considered and sealing undertaken as soon as possible.

The Kaimai community plan 2020 mirrors the current level of engagement from the local Kaimai residents. At the moment there is a level of apathy. Visible signs of progress will give them confidence that the process works. That the councils are interested in the rural community and have a genuine desire to support and implement the actions necessary to improve our region. Investing in the Kaimai region will provide significant economic benefits to the wider Bay of Plenty area and a return on investment for the council.