



Media Release

Friday 28 August 2015

Selwyn Mayor backs focus on infrastructure in Mayoral Forum's economic development strategy

Selwyn Mayor, Kelvin Coe, supports a focus on infrastructure in the Mayoral Forum's Canterbury Regional Economic Development Strategy.

The development of the strategy is the first time since the earthquakes that all the region's mayors and the chair of Environment Canterbury have worked together to set a new economic direction for the region. It was launched by Minister for Economic Development Steven Joyce on 28 August.

Through the strategy, the Mayoral Forum wants to maximise the region's economic growth and position it for long-term, sustainable growth as the earthquake rebuild levels off.

"Canterbury's mayors are acting now to build on the current momentum and ensure the long-term economic prosperity and social wellbeing of the region. Providing one strong voice for Canterbury, to advocate for the region with central government, is critical to the strategy and each of its work programmes," Mayor Coe said.

"When we look at what local government can do, infrastructure is an obvious place to start. Selwyn District Council has taken a lead and is working with Waimakariri Council and Environment Canterbury to collate and analyse 30-year infrastructure strategies prepared by Canterbury local authorities as part of our 2015-25 Long-Term Plans," he said.

"We will use this analysis to identify opportunities for efficiency in developing and maintaining our infrastructure across the region, particularly roading and water management.

"Selwyn is also very interested in the extension and uptake of fast broadband across our district, and we will be supporting the development of a regional visitor strategy," Mayor Coe added.

Three of the seven work programmes focus on infrastructure: transport, digital connectivity and water management. These are enablers for the other four work programmes.

In February 2015, the Mayoral Forum agreed seven priority work programmes to achieve this objective, with a lead mayor and council for each work programme. Lead mayors are supported by their colleagues, with groups of councils working together around specific actions.

The seven work programmes are:

- integrated regional transport planning and infrastructure investment
- digital connectivity (extension and uptake of fast broadband in rural areas)
- freshwater management and irrigation infrastructure
- value-added production

- education and training for a skilled workforce
- newcomer and migrant settlement support (skilled workers, cohesive communities)
- regional visitor strategy.

The strategy represents the work of the 11 local authorities in the region – city, district and regional councils – with significant contributions from Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, the Canterbury Development Corporation (CDC), the Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce and the Committee for Canterbury. The farming, transport, tourism, immigration, tertiary education and telecommunications sectors have also been involved.

At the quarterly Mayoral Forum meetings, performance against agreed actions will be reviewed. The Mayoral Forum is working with the Canterbury Development Corporation to develop indicators to monitor progress and to help identify further actions required.

Some of the Mayoral Forum's other recent actions include:

- a workshop with road and rail transport, airport and sea port operators to explore how the region can better align transport planning and investment, and link transport modes, thereby driving economic growth
- a regional workshop in June 2015 with industry representatives to discuss the benefits to Canterbury of mobile data connectivity
- a newcomers and migrants settlement support workshop, to share information, ideas and resources to help settle newcomers and migrants in each district
- a workshop to establish a Canterbury tourism forum involving all the councils, through the Mayoral Forum and the tourism sector, to develop a regional visitor strategy and advocate for the fast recovery of Christchurch as the primary gateway to the Canterbury region and wider South Island
- two meetings with the region's tertiary education providers – universities, technical institutes and private training providers – to develop transition plans for students moving into the workforce, create new specialist courses, and prepare a region-wide marketing plan to attract more domestic and international students to Canterbury.

For more information visit www.ecan.govt.nz/CREDS.

Ends

For media enquiries please contact:

Allanah Jarman
 Selwyn District Council
 Phone 03 347 2807
Allanah.jarman@selwyn.govt.nz