

MEDIA RELEASE

5 June 2009

**The people speak:
POLL SHOWS MAJORITY OPPOSE SUPERCITY PLANS**

Polls made public this week reinforce what communities like Papakura have been trying to tell the Government for weeks, according to Papakura Mayor Calum Penrose: the Supercity model is not working and will not work.

A survey of over 2000 people commissioned by the New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development found more Aucklanders oppose the city than support it and 63 percent of those polled said consultation on plans to reform Auckland's governance has been inadequate, with just 13 per cent believing it to be adequate.

“The poll tells us what we already know: that the people of Auckland hate this idea, that they haven't been adequately consulted and that the Government aren't listening.”

Mr Penrose said he thought the Royal Commission's report had far more going for it than the Government's proposal, “and they at least bothered to ask people what they wanted.”

Another recent survey also showed more Aucklanders were opposed to the Government's Supercity proposal than were supporting it.

The Research New Zealand poll found 41 per cent of people living in Auckland supported the Super City idea and 45 per cent did not.

“Only one per cent of Auckland respondents did not have an opinion on the issue, which is pretty extraordinary. It shows Auckland is divided.

For people in communities such as Papakura, the polls underline the critical need to make submissions and have a say in the future of the region.

“The Royal Commission got 3,500 submissions from a region of 1.4 million people. We need to do better than that if we are to win a voice for our community in the new Auckland Council.”

There are less than two weeks for people to make their submissions, and Mr Penrose says he supports moves to help residents make submissions. The savepapakura.com group is holding a series of workshops in the town to help people with their submissions, and details of how to make submissions are on the group's web site, www.savepapakura.com and also on www.papakura.govt.nz

MEDIA RELEASE

Public submissions are now open and close on June 26.

“Our message to the community is simple: make your submission now, and make it count. There won’t be another chance. It is absolutely essential that people stand up on this issue. We are already seeing what the new Auckland will be like if we don’t. Communities like Papakura will be left powerless and ignored.”

The Government’s model for a Supercity proposes up to 30 community boards to replace local councils and have a focus on local matters without any direct funding or independent powers.

Mr Penrose says there is a real risk that the community boards will be small, powerless and ineffective.

“The Government’s new model is likely to cost more, be more complex, and be more difficult to understand than the current arrangements. I think people are right to be worried about this.”

Public submissions are now open and close on June 26.

In the end, Mr Penrose says, the loss of democracy under a Supercity means places like Papakura will be marginalised and ignored, with political power concentrated in central Auckland and spending likewise focussed on a few suppliers of services and materials.

“All these things mean it is absolutely critical that people make the effort to have their say through the select committee submissions process. For those who need help, we will certainly offer assistance in making those submissions.”

-End-

Note from the Parliamentary web site on the submission process and the purpose of the Bill:

Local Government (Auckland Council) Bill

Public submissions are now being invited on the Local Government (Auckland Council) Bill.

The closing date for submissions is Friday, 26 June 2009. No extensions to this deadline will be granted.

The bill provides for the governance structure of the Auckland Council, including the high level framework (structure, functions, powers, duties and membership), and the powers and functions for the Local Government Commission to determine the names and boundaries of the wards and local boards, the number of local boards and number of members, and to develop a reorganisation scheme for the division of the Franklin District, and its council, between the Auckland Council and

MEDIA RELEASE

the Waikato District Council. It also proposes amendments to two local government Acts to allow remuneration, allowances and expenses payable to be determined by the Remuneration Authority, and for the Auckland Transition Agency to approve a process for, and oversee, the planning and management of the integration of Auckland's water supply and wastewater services by Watercare Services Limited.

The bill is available for download from the `Related documents` panel. Print copies can be ordered online from Bennetts Government Bookshops.

The committee requests that submissions address specifically the matters raised in the bill, as it will not be considering any other issues. Submissions can either be emailed to AGL@parliament.govt.nz or mailed in paper form. If you send your submission via email please do not also send paper copies. Two copies are required of submissions sent in paper form.

For further information please contact:

Mark Baker

Communications Advisor

Papakura District Council

Telephone: 09 295 1300

Mobile: 027 442 3044

Email: mbaker@papakura.govt.nz