



Clutha District Council

Draft Annual Plan 2011 – 2012

The Otago Chamber of Commerce would like
to speak to this submission

Submission prepared by:
Clutha Advisory Committee
Otago Chamber of Commerce Inc
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INTRODUCTION

Ultimately, local economies are about the people that work, visit and live in them. Economic downturns threaten the quality of life of people. And so for Clutha to remain healthy local leaders must listen to, communicate with, and craft and implement solutions to support people and businesses.

Good plans are not just about generating business or cutting rates; they are about enhancing a quality of life that will retain our community wealth and developing leadership that has intellectual ability to build our region in a positive way.

We believe enhanced community wealth and a higher quality of life comes as the result of a strong economic base built by a business community which generates employment opportunities.

The business community generates the wealth on which our region and its residents depend. It is for this reason that we make this submission. The Otago Chamber of Commerce is pleased to be able to present this submission on behalf of the 1300 Otago businesses.

The businesses that we represent are a broad cross-section of business demographics with regard to size, location and industry. Furthermore, these businesses are representative of the region's wealth generators as well as being owned, managed and staffed by the region's core residents. As such, the Chamber's members are large stakeholders in the economic, social and environmental future of the Otago Region.

The Chamber has submitted on and been involved in discussions on a number of issues relating to the Clutha District, and we thank Council for your open dialogue with us.

The Chamber continues to support you in helping to achieve your goals as a representative of business throughout the district.

SUBMISSION

4Trades Apprenticeships

The Chamber supports the For Trades Apprenticeship Training Trust (4Trades) in working with youth in the Clutha District. 4Trades currently has 8 apprentices in a range of trades. For the last 5/6 years this initiative has been funded by employers and the Trust. We understand the Trust is keen to continue this level of support and to grow the programme but is faced with increased costs of delivery. We recommend that the Council contribute \$20,000 per annum to this programme to provide an apprentice/trade pathway for their youth and a sustainable supply of skilled labour for their communities. The Trust would welcome an approach from the Council to discuss this matter further.

Industrial and Commercial Land

The Chamber is concerned with the severe lack of available designated industrial areas suitable for new industry coming into the area, and or existing business which may want to expand their operation. We feel that this is a major inhibiting factor to the future growth of industry within the Clutha district, and needs to be addressed if we are going to be able to move forward in the future. Council should look at this opportunity to work with both business owners and developers who see the opportunities.

Southern Scenic Route – Balclutha entrance

The Chamber commends the council on the improvements that have been made at the entranceway to Balclutha at High Street. It is nice to see that this area has been improved, given that it is the gateway to the Southern Scenic Route from the town. Now that the landscaping has been undertaken, it may encourage those businesses in the area to improve the appearance of their own buildings to ensure the look is one of a tidy, well-kept industrial area.

Balclutha Traffic Management Reference Group And Main Street Redevelopment

The Chamber has been involved with the Main Street Redevelopment and in particular the Balclutha Traffic Management Group for a while now. We look forward to being involved in both the decision on the placement of State Highway 1, and also the

redevelopment of the main shopping area. Although the Main Street's appearance has improved over the past decade, it is ready for further work. We are keen to be involved in this and hope that Council can continue the consultation with key groups soon.

District Development

We would like to support Enterprise Clutha as part of our submission. It is a sound organisation with good governance and management, and as such we continue to partner with them for local service delivery for a number of contracts that the Chamber holds. Your continued funding of Enterprise Clutha is a good investment for the local district and needs to be put on a more solid footing. We recognise that the development of the District requires a holistic approach combining economic and community development as provided by Enterprise Clutha. Council benefits from a vibrant sustainable community providing employment, creating income for the district, retaining services, retaining real estate values, and in turn attracting or retaining people in the District. We look forward to being part of the District Development Strategic Review and signal our commitment in representing the business community should any new structure result from this review.

Council support for Business

Council is a significant purchaser of products and services on behalf of the local community. The Chamber has been approached by several businesses asking for support to get people to buy and support local enterprises. This is always a difficult task to balance the best price on behalf of ratepayers who expect value for money, and we simply ask Council to consider buying from local suppliers where possible, and to encourage other locals to do likewise when they can.

Conclusion

The Chamber values the relationship it has with the Clutha District Council and looks forward to working with you in matters of economic development within the district and wider Otago region.