

5 March 2020

Stephen Town
Chief Executive
Auckland Council
35 Albert Street
Auckland

Dear Stephen

Draft Annual Plan (DAP) and Statutory Levy 2020/21 Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT)

As you are aware, MOTAT was created through the Museum of Transport and Technology Act 2000 (the Act). The Act sets out the objectives of the Museum, the DAP process and the levy mechanism for Auckland Council's contribution to MOTAT's funding.

Under the Act, the Museum is required to prepare and consult on the DAP. The MOTAT DAP has been published for public consultation as per the Act. Under the Advisory and Management Agreement between Auckland Council and Regional Facilities Auckland (RFA), we are required to consider the DAP, make a submission on the document and provide advice to Auckland Council on the levy.

A written submission to the DAP was made by RFA within the statutory timeframes for consultation. The MOTAT Board has considered the submissions it received, and the final draft DAP is attached for Auckland Council's consideration. The DAP sets out the activities MOTAT is looking to undertake during the plan year and over the next two years.

As advised last year, while MOTAT was not successful in obtaining funding through the previous Long Term Plan for the implementation of the MOTAT Athfield Masterplan (Masterplan). In 2019 they sought additional funds through the levy for the "Approach 2" projects – subsets of the Masterplan. This approach was supported by RFA and Auckland Council.

RFA continues to support this approach. One of the key projects is the development of the carpark at MOTAT2, where the Aviation Display Hall is located. The carpark will help provide parking for the precinct and is key to supporting Auckland Transport in developing the Meola Road cycleway. As part of this project we are taking the opportunity to work closely with MOTAT, along with our Auckland Zoo division, to support a variety of improvements to parking and accessibility in the precinct.

The Museum's reasoning for the levy amount is supported by the activities communicated in the plan. We note the core objectives in the DAP have been specifically linked to the Auckland Plan 2050 and to the Toi Whātikī Arts and Culture Strategic Action Plan.

We are aware that MOTAT has challenges in relation to the age of its infrastructure, and complexities in relation to the MOTAT2 site, which is on landfill. We continue to work with MOTAT on mitigating these issues and spreading the associated investment over several years to try and help smooth the amount of the levy required. They are also included in the cultural infrastructure investment work, given that RFA is a key advisor to Auckland Council in relation to MOTAT's funding.

A copy of RFA's submission to the DAP is attached. It outlines the following areas for the 2019/20 year:

1. **MOTAT Strategy:** the recommitment of the organisation to its vision of being the “must experience” museum that uses past, present and future kiwi technology and ingenuity to educate and inspire the next generation, is supported.
2. **Performance measures:** The performance measures in the plan are consistent with previous measures, while being refined to focus on specific outcomes, with MOTAT working to establish a methodology and baseline target for measuring impact.
3. **MOTAT Society:** We continue to see a positive and mutually supportive relationship developing between MOTAT and the MOTAT Society. This year RFA and the MOTAT Society will be running a joint board appointment process and we work closely with MOTAT in relation to this.
4. **Promote Māori outcomes:** MOTAT have several objectives within the plan that align with Māori outcomes and continue to include Te Reo where appropriate.
5. **Revenue sources:** MOTAT is continuing to investigate how it can increase revenue and has recently installed a digital sign which has added circa \$200,000 to its revenue stream. We also note MOTAT continues to look to generate additional funds to invest into specific projects through alternative mechanisms including the platform “Give a Little” and is working on a number of partnership opportunities that will enable MOTAT to increase the reach and impact of its STEM Cell initiative in the Auckland region.
6. **Auckland's Cultural Heritage Review:** working with RFA and Auckland Council in relation to the review.

It is also worth noting that MOTAT's strategy has led to a significant change in its audience over the last few years. Currently, 13% of visitors identify as Asian, 10% as Indian, 8% as Māori and 8% from the Pacific. There has also been a significant increase in visitors aged between 16 and 34.

MOTAT Funding

MOTAT is requesting \$17,087,900 in levy. The levy investment supports the flexible bank financing arrangement for the “Approach 2” projects which include, amongst other things, the car park and the refurbishment of Building 5 (i.e. MOTAT's main exhibition hall at its Great North Road site) and the development of the SciTech Centre.

The SciTech Centre will be housed in the refurbished Building 5 and will be a “step change” from MOTAT's traditional exhibitions. The SciTech Centre will be developed over two years and will meet the growing demand in Auckland for science, technology, engineering and maths experiences that not only educate and inspire but encourage a sustainable future.

The additional investment in the SciTech Centre is vital in enabling MOTAT to continue to support the heritage and technological focus of the museum as well as the STEM Cell initiative referred to above. So far as we are aware, combining science, technology and heritage objects in one experience

will be a unique offering in New Zealand. Further detail on the SciTech Centre is on page 14 of the attached DAP.

Our advice is that MOTAT's approach brings the right balance between capital and operational matters and takes a measured approach to dealing with the infrastructure issues MOTAT needs to address. Therefore, RFA supports the investment requested and recommends to Council the approval of the levy (which is under the MOTAT levy cap), however we are cognisant that the final decision in relation to the levy is a matter for consideration and agreement by Auckland Council.

RFA will continue to provide advice and support to the Mayor and Auckland Council as the process continues.

Yours sincerely



Chris Brooks
Chief Executive

Attachments:

- RFA Submission letter to DAP process dated 20 January 2020
- MOTAT Final Draft Annual Plan (DAP) 2020-2021

cc:

Alastair Cameron Manager, CCO Governance & External Partnerships
Edward Siddle Principal Adviser, CCO Governance & External Partnerships
Michael Frawley, Chief Executive, MOTAT