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**Sent:** Thursday, 16 May 2024 12:51 pm  
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**Subject:** Submission to the LTP on behalf of Waitomo Caves Museum Society

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## Submission to the LTP on behalf of Waitomo Caves Museum Society

Monica Clark  
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It is important that Waitomo District Council (WDC) provides equitable and affordable services to all residents and rate payers. If we wish our Council to support a prosperous and resilient district, the key industries of pastoral farming, forestry and tourism all need to be recognised and appropriately supported by Council.

Tourism is a significant contributor to the Waitomo District economy and needs to be more consistently factored into Waitomo District Council planning. In addition to the maintenance costs created by heavy traffic (referred to in the LTP), there are significant safety issues arising from heavy machinery on WDC roads, especially those roads with high volumes of tourist traffic. The Waitomo Museum submits that WDC should work with tourism and community bodies to improve road safety for locals and tourists alike.

The Waitomo Village community gets very little council support for the services and infrastructure requirements which in most communities are provided by Council. This includes services such as water treatment and supply, sewage services and community halls. The water treatment and waste water management in Waitomo is at a critical point as far as capacity is concerned. This system will certainly need to be upgraded in the next 10yrs to cope with the growing demands made by tourism and the community. The Waitomo Museum is regularly used for community meetings and meets many of the needs which are met by Council supported halls in other communities. Halls play an important role in maintaining community connectedness. The Waitomo Caves Museum holds taonga incredibly significant to our area.

We acknowledge (and are grateful for) the proposed commitment of \$50,000 for upgrading public toilets at the Waitomo Museum but note that this is supporting one specific community need and not the wider costs which Council traditionally supports with other halls and community centres.

In the past WDC has supported the Waitomo Catchment Trust Board which has played a key role in building and maintaining a resilient and viable farming and tourism-based community at Waitomo. We strongly urge the WDC to continue to provide support for this multi-faceted approach to maintaining sustainable communities, at Waitomo, and across the Waitomo District.

The proposed targeted or differential roading rate to cover additional costs caused by forestry activities appears reasonable but, if adopted, will need to be implemented fairly. It would be disappointing if ratepayer funding is needed to support litigation arising from challenges by the forest industry.

## **Submission No. 055**

Some forest owners in Waitomo District already get very little service, including road maintenance services, from Council. The forest industry and other organisations already cover 100% of the maintenance costs of some roads which are administered by the Waitomo District Council.