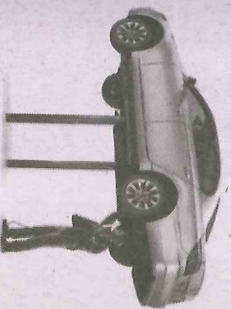


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Council may have to inject more funds

By NICHOLAS BOYACK

Hutt City Council will likely have to put up more money itself to get progress on the Taita Community Centre project, which includes the Walter Nash Stadium upgrade.

Mayor Ray Wallace says the council is committed to the project and the time has come to find a way to proceed.

"Times are still hard but this project will have a significant benefit for the Taita community and the city as a whole. I will be supporting the project to get it under way as quickly as possible."

"Far from being in a pickle, council has a clear sense of direction and will be getting on with the job."

City councillors this week sit down to agree on the annual plan and the biggest decision will revolve around the future of the Taita project and Fraser Park Sportsville.

In a report to be discussed at

tomorrow's meeting, community services manager Matt Reid says the two projects face a funding shortfall of between \$9 million and \$12 million.

The stadium upgrade is part of a larger \$12 million project to build a new library and associated community facilities in Taita.

Mr Reid suggests there is concern as to whether the project meets "the wider needs and aspirations" of the Taita community.

He advises councillors that the Fraser Park and Taita projects need to be looked at together. The success of both is "heavily dependent" on community grants and corporate sponsorship and, in a best case scenario, the council "might" be able to raise \$6.5 million.

Based on current plans, that would leave a shortfall of up to \$12 million for both projects over the next five years.

Given the financial shortfall, he suggests the council is

"unlikely" to be able to build the Taita community project by 2014/15.

Options for the council to proceed include increasing the council contribution, increasing debt, delaying the Taita project to 2017 and Fraser Park to 2022, and scaling back the projects.

In a separate report, Mr Reid suggests the Taita rebuild could be funded by increasing the council contribution from \$4 million to \$6 million. That will reduce the amount of outside funding required but he notes the new funding target is still "ambitious" and cannot be guaranteed.

Mr Reid told *Hutt News* he is recommending increasing the council contribution to the Taita project "to secure" its future and get construction under way as soon as possible.

"Our desire is to secure the funding to kick start the project and work hard to achieve the wider community needs and aspirations."

Police seeking the River Trail flasher

A man who flashed a woman on the Hutt River Trail could be connected to a similar incident in April, police say. Senior

walking under Ava rail bridge on the Hutt River Trail when a man approached her from behind some bushes and

European aged about 30, "of solid build, but not overweight" in a black singlet and black

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