

Black, Fiona

REAL JOURNEYS LIMITED

6 Other Comments

Would you like to comment on any other aspect of this draft 10 Year Plan?

Real Journeys Background: In 1954 Les and Olive Hutchins began operating the Manapouri-Doubtful Sound Tourist Company, running four day excursions to and from Doubtful Sound. In 1966 Les and Olive acquired Fiordland Travel Ltd., with its Te Anau Glow-worm Caves and Milford Track Lake Transport operation and began trading as Fiordland Travel Limited. Continued expansion followed with the purchase of the vintage steamship "TSS Earnslaw" in Queenstown in 1969 and with the establishment of cruises in Milford Sound in 1970. Since 2002 Fiordland Travel Ltd has operated all its tourism excursions under the 'Real Journeys' brand and in 2006 changed its company name to Real Journeys Limited. Real Journeys is now the largest tourism operator in the region with operational bases in Milford Sound, Te Anau, Manapouri, Queenstown, and Stewart Island. The company offers a range of quality tourism excursions including: day time and overnight cruises on Milford and Doubtful Sounds (with daily coach connections from Te Anau and coach / flight connections from Queenstown); trips to Te Anau Glow-worm Caves; guided Milford Track day walks and in Queenstown, cruises on Lake Wakatipu aboard the "TSS Earnslaw", combined with Walter Peak High Country excursions and dining options at the Colonel's Walter Peak Homestead. Our Submission: 1. Real Journeys supports the building of an international standard convention centre at the lakeview site in downtown Queenstown. Our support is based on the understanding that the economic benefits to Queenstown as detailed in the economic impact reports by CBRE (July, 2013) and Insight Economics (Nov, 2014) will be delivered to the community. Real Journeys support for the current proposed rating model is given on the basis that the council's contribution is permanently capped at \$32.5M and that Council will actively investigate all alternative methods of funding before 2018 and will advise on the progress of these funding methods. We understand that there will be at least three Annual Plan and one 10 Year Plan processes before any rating model will be implemented and therefore the opportunity to make further submissions on this issue will be available. We support the Queenstown Chamber of Commerce in lobbying and assisting Council with pursuing alternative funding options in order to reduce the burden on ratepayers. 2. Real Journeys supports the QLDC's on going contributions to the funding of Destination Queenstown by way of a differential on the commercial rates. 3. With respect to roading funding Real Journeys requests that sufficient council funds be set aside for the duration of this plan to adequately maintain the Mount Nicolas Beach Bay Road, and the Mount Nicolas Road. Maintaining these roads to a good standard will become increasingly important when stage two of the Around the Mountain Cycle Trail is completed. We appreciate that the majority of the Around the Mountain trail is in Southland however both ends of this track terminate at Lake Wakatipu in the Queenstown Lakes District and visitors undertaking this cycle journey are likely to stay in Queenstown before commencing the cycle and at the end of this cycle. Hence it will be advantageous to Queenstown to ensure the Around the Mountain Cycle trail is a success. 4. Moreover regarding transport funding; Real Journeys requests the council allocates sufficient monies for the duration of this plan; to enable to the development and maintenance of water taxis services and associated infrastructure on Lake Wakatipu, as a means to elevate traffic congestion on the road into central Queenstown that is: State Highway 6 and 6A.