

**From:** Damian Sicely <Damian@tawagroup.co.nz>  
**Sent:** Friday, 17 May 2024 10:13 am  
**To:** haveyoursay  
**Cc:** Peter Crawford; Anna Crawford  
**Subject:** Submission for Waitomo LTP  
**Attachments:** 20240516 Waitomo District Council LTP submission.pdf

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Hi there,

I would like to submit the following letter and speak on behalf of our organisation on the 28<sup>th</sup> May, please contact me directly on 022 085 4626 or email [damian@tawagroup.co.nz](mailto:damian@tawagroup.co.nz) for timing.

This is a space that we are passionate about and would appreciate our say in the matter heard.

Regards



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*DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE IN ACCOMMODATION SERVICES*



16<sup>th</sup> May 2024

To Waitomo District Council Members:

We submit to the Waitomo District Long Term Plan requesting that funding for Hamilton Waikato Tourism (Regional Tourism Office) is maintained at the current funding level and not reduced.

Who are we? Tawa Limited owns two accommodation properties in the Waitomo Caves Village including the Waitomo Top 10 Holiday Park. We are a New Zealand family-owned company with 10 years of experience running accommodation properties in the North Island.

In the Waitomo Village our teams host over 40,000 guest nights per year. We currently employ 18 Waitomo/Otorohanga locals.

We partner with Hamilton Waikato Tourism to promote the Waitomo District to New Zealanders and the world. Promotion of an area to visitors is not something that any one tourism business can do on its own. Agencies like Hamilton Waikato Tourism are essential to help foster partnerships and utilize resources effectively in a competitive environment.

More than ever, we need to be promoting high quality New Zealand experiences to the world. Visitor numbers in Waitomo are not yet back at pre covid levels and other regions are fiercely competing for the same visitors we want. Tourism's importance cannot be overstated for regions like ours. We are all looking for short-term solutions to 'close the gap' and ways to supplement a loss in income from reduced (and falling) domestic travel.

As NZ's second-largest export earner and with tourism expenditure at 37.7 billion nationally for the year ending March 2023, the sector continues to perform as one of the nation's standouts, but we cannot take the winning of our share for granted. This demand represents an opportunity for the district to continue to grow financially and develop our people to compete at the top level.



Hamilton Waikato Tourism data shows that if our current market share should drop just half a percent, that would mean \$149 million less spent in the region per annum; or \$400,000 dollars less per day into our communities.”

The data suggests, on average, one job is created or sustained for every \$151,254 that visitors spend in our region. If our market share drops by that half a per cent then it potentially equates to 980 less jobs in the region.

In this time where individuals, the commercial sector and councils/ government are looking closely at what savings can be made, it is these established partnerships and pooling of resources that should be retained. No individual business or small community can do it alone, but the Waitomo district could continue to contribute to the larger, successful entity that is Hamilton Waikato Tourism.

We do hope that you reconsider your position on funding and note just how important tourism is to the Waitomo region.

Kind regards

Peter and Anna Crawford