



## **Section 2**

### **Informing our planning**

**Ngā Whakaarotau Rautaki**

# **Strategic Priorities**

**Community is at the centre of everything Council does.**

**The purpose of local government is to promote the economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing of its communities, both now and in the future.**

**We developed this strategic framework to reflect our local aspirations and priorities for the wellbeing of our community.**

**It's important to have this direction in place. It helps us to stay accountable, track our progress, and prioritise funding and resources to where it is needed the most. It also makes it all about us and keeps it local. This is about what we value the most based on our local characteristics and communities.**

# Strategic Framework

The strategic framework is made up of our community outcomes, strategic priorities and activity plans for each area of Council's operations.

## Community Outcomes

What we all want for our District

## Strategic Priorities

What Council will focus on for the next 3 - 10 years

## Activity Plans

What we do at an activity level to achieve our outcomes and priorities

## Our Community Outcomes

Community outcomes represent what our community has told us they want for the future of the Western Bay of Plenty District, based on community conversations held over the last 10 - 20 years. This was previously called the Council vision.

Our community outcomes are what we collectively aim to achieve to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of our district now and for the future:

- We can all enjoy a healthy and safe lifestyle.
- Our communities are vibrant and welcoming to all.
- Leaders are effective, informed and inclusive.
- Our environment is clean, green and valued.
- Our economy is thriving.
- We have authentic Te Tiriti based relationships with tangata whenua.

There are lots of different people and organisations responsible for achieving these outcomes, and Council is just one of them. The community outcomes are enduring in that they are things that we will collectively work towards achieving over time.

## Our Strategic Priorities

This is what we consider to be the most important issues facing our community, and are a key focus of our 2024-2034 Long Term Plan and other work we do.

- Enabling housing.
- Empowering communities.
- Growing authentic Te Tiriti based relationships.
- Providing well maintained, resilient and efficient infrastructure.
- Responding to climate change.

We can't do this alone. We need to work in partnership with tangata whenua and a range of organisations including Central Government, local authorities and community groups.

There is no hierarchy to these priorities; they are all important to each other, to an extent, with some consistent themes running across each one; such as community resilience.

The Financial Strategy is the key document we use to ensure these strategic priorities are achieved in an affordable way for our community.

We have developed a plan for each strategic priority to provide clarity on what we want to achieve, what Council's role is in this and what we are doing to make things happen.

# Enabling Housing

## Why this is a priority

Housing affects people's wellbeing in many ways. High mortgages and rents put households under financial pressure. Not having secure housing means households face disruptions if they have to move - affecting schooling, ability to get to work and being connected to a network of family and friends. A lack of supply of good quality housing means people accept living in cold and damp places that can affect their health.

Housing was already a major challenge in the District. Contrary to what may have been expected, COVID-19 accelerated housing demand where there was already a lack of supply, leading to house prices and rents continuing to rise to new highs. Sustained population growth is keeping up the pressure on the market.

As people are priced out of the private market, demand increases for social housing. Both the social housing register (people with very high housing needs who are on the waiting list for social housing) and emergency housing special needs grants have steadily increased over the last three years.

The housing sector is also a significant part of our local economy. Construction is the largest industry in Western Bay by GDP (contributing almost 10%) and by employment with rental, hiring and real estate services the fourth largest by GDP (contributing almost 8%). While not all construction activity is directly related to residential development, it is possible a downturn in house building activity (due to a lack of developable land) could have a significant impact on the Western Bay's economy.

Council is working closely with Tauranga City Council, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Tangata Whenua and Central Government (in particular the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Kainga Ora) on these housing challenges.

## What we want to achieve

Housing that is affordable, accessible, habitable with security of tenure, and appropriate to our life stages and differing needs.

## What we see our role being

- Leader - The lead agency for facilitating local housing strategies and action plans to deliver local housing outcomes.
- Enabler - Providing opportunities for housing through land use zoning, infrastructure to support housing development, accessing Central Government funding and streamlining the consent process.
- Provider - Specific housing projects delivered that align with community needs identified in local housing plans, and making use of opportunities Council can provide with its elder housing portfolio.



### What are we doing in terms of systems, planning and processes

- Since 2001, Council has been involved in the SmartGrowth partnership with Tauranga City Council, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Tangata Whenua and central government agencies. The SmartGrowth Strategy sets out the growth plan for the subregion and the shared vision for a live, work play and learn community.
- Council is part of the development of the development of a sub-regional housing systems plan. The purpose of this plan is to set out the strategies needed to address housing needs from emergency and social housing through to affordable rental, through to private market housing. A network is in place to coordinate opportunities to deliver on these strategies, including central government agencies, tangata whenua representatives, and local community housing providers.
- Planning tools such as the District Plan, spatial plans and structure plans are key to enabling growth. They help to provide a comprehensive approach to how growth might be accommodated and what is required for our communities. Plan Change 92 Ōmokoroa and Te Puke Enabling Housing Supply means more houses can be built in existing residential areas with access to infrastructure that is already in place.
- Structure plans in key growth areas provide an overview of what needs to be delivered on the ground for planned growth such as roads, walkways, reserves, wastewater, water connections and stormwater services.
- The Te Puke Spatial Plan underway in 2024 will help Council and the community to understand what the

population growth of the town and wider area is likely to be over the next 30 years, and what land and infrastructure might be needed for housing and business development to support that population.

- Council is working directly with iwi authorities, hapū and Māori land trusts that have suitable land and aspirations for housing development. Council's role is to facilitate access to development planning, feasibility assessments and infrastructure funding to enable development of Papakāinga. Council is also reviewing its district plan provisions for Papakāinga to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- Council has a dedicated project structure and staff resources in place for housing including an operational project team focused on identifying time savings in the consenting process, removing barriers, and assisting people with the process.



Photo by Peter Drix capturing a seagull at Waihi Beach.

### What are we doing in terms of people and places ('on the ground' actions)

- Provision of elder housing to provide much needed affordable accommodation for older people in the district who have limited financial means.
- Development of Local Housing Action Plans with the community.
- Committed funding to the Katikati elder housing development.
- Part of the Te Arawa collective working on development plans for housing on Māori land. Committed funding to support this programme of work.
- Committed funding to support three communities with the highest priority housing needs, to develop marae based housing development plans.
- Part of 20 Degrees which is a collaborative healthy housing programme in the Bay of Plenty, dedicated to helping our community and our whānau achieve warmer, drier and healthier homes that can reach 20°C on a cold winters night.
- Infrastructure provision to provide capacity for housing development.



# Empowering Communities

## Why this is a priority

Recognising that communities are best placed to achieve their own aspirations; Council needs to structure the way we work and deliver our services in the best possible way to contribute to the communities aspirations.

## What we want to achieve

Empowering communities to grow stronger, embracing their differences and building on their strengths across the four wellbeings. In doing this we:

- Understand that some communities might be starting further behind others, and we may need to provide extra support and resources so they can advance (Oritetanga – equal opportunity), and
- Recognise that good relationships are the key to success in any project or initiative (Whakawhanaungatanga – relationships).

## What we see our role being

Enabler - Identifying the best ways for Council to support communities with their endeavours. This could be through a variety of roles including provider of infrastructure, funding support, facilitation, connections and advocacy to name a few.

## What are we already doing in terms of systems, planning and processes

- Partnerships and relationships with funders and key regional/district organisations.
- Partnerships and relationships with key local organisations who are working to improve economic, social, cultural, and environmental wellbeing.
- Using place-based planning and Tō wāhi local priorities to set priorities for council service and infrastructure delivery.
- Support with place based planning.
- Determining what is required for our organisational systems to better support community led outcomes e.g. role of Council in implementation of community plans.
- Levels of service in place to determine social infrastructure requirements for our community.
- Setting and collecting the community hall targeted rate and assisting community hall committees including coordinating building condition assessments.

## What are we already doing in terms of people and places ('on the ground' action)

- Tō wāhi place-based engagement to understand local community priorities.
- Mayors Taskforce for Jobs.
- Funding for implementation of local priorities.
- Community relationships and connections.
- Events delivery.
- Welcoming Communities programme.

- Safer Communities programme and crime prevention initiatives such as CCTV cameras.
- Community Matching Fund and Facilities in the Community Fund.
- Service Delivery Contracts with local organisations who are best placed to deliver in their community, across the four wellbeings and with specific deliverables to improve social cohesion, economic development, arts and culture and natural environment activities.
- Specific support for volunteer organisations operating and delivering on council land so they can successfully navigate council processes e.g. for events delivery, for community planting and pest control projects in reserves.
- Provision of social infrastructure such as libraries, swimming pools and parks to support existing and future communities.



# Growing authentic Te Tiriti based relationships

## Why this is a priority

We recognise the importance and special place of Tangata Whenua within our communities and the need to have effective, enduring and trusted partnerships with iwi, hapū and whānau. Additionally the Local Government Act requires us to develop the capacity of Māori to take part in local government decision-making processes. Equally, we acknowledge the journey that is required to develop positive and purposeful relationships with Tangata Whenua that can sustain us into the future.

## What we want to achieve

We need to understand what this means for us and how we can best work with Māori to achieve an authentic Te Tiriti based relationship.

## What we see our role being

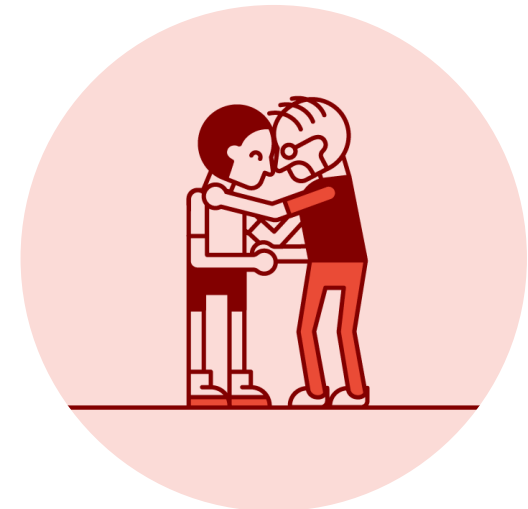
Council is committed to the importance of this kaupapa, and need to determine how we give effect to it. Continue to work with iwi and hapū to review and improve our systems and processes to ensure that these provide for their aspirations.

## What are we already doing in terms of systems, planning and processes

- Tangata Whenua Partnership Forums - Te Lhu o te Waka o Te Arawa and Te Kahui Mana Whenua o Tauranga Moana with Mauri Ora and Te Ara Mua o te Kāhui Mana Whenua o Tauranga Moana setting the respective work programmes for these forums.
- Relationship agreements with iwi and hapū. Two are currently in place with a number in train. All reflect the same desire from iwi and hapū to have a close working relationship with Council and to be clear about what this looks like in practice.
- Te Keteparaha Mo Nga Papakāinga - Māori Housing Toolkit to assist Māori to develop papakainga proposals on multiple owned Māori land.
- Support for Papakainga housing development.
- Supporting tangata whenua to engage and input into policy development and projects.
- A dedicated Kaupapa Māori Team to improve the confidence and capability to engage with each other in an effective and valued way.
- He Rauru - a kaupapa Māori framework that will drive organisational capacity and capability to deliver on our work in partnership with Tangata Whenua.
- He Rangapū - Tangata Whenua Partnership Protocols have been developed to assist staff in engaging with Tangata Whenua
- Rates Remission on Māori Freehold Land Policy.
- Financial Contribution reductions for Papakainga developments subject to criteria.

## What are we already doing in terms of people and places ('on the ground' action)

- Funding support to assist with Marae sustainability.
- Funding and support for iwi and hapū management plan development and implementation
- Relationships and ongoing engagement in the work we do.
- Building staff and political capacity and understanding of Māori e.g. He Rauru Māori (The Kaupapa Māori Framework for Western Bay of Plenty District Council), Treaty training, The Wall Walk.



# Providing well maintained, resilient and efficient infrastructure

## Why this is a priority

The infrastructure in our communities underpins much of our wellbeing – social, economic, environmental and cultural. The decisions we make as a community on infrastructure investment have a huge influence on shaping the future of our District.

Infrastructure is a core part of what Council provides to the community. Council spends on average \$97 million (capital expenditure) every year on infrastructure and looks after over \$1.8 billion worth of assets. It is not possible to do everything, and choices are made on how Council will manage infrastructure investment.

## What we want to achieve

Infrastructure that responds to community needs, is fit for purpose and future proofed.

## What we see our role being

- Provider – stormwater, water supply and wastewater, transportation, solid waste, recreation and open space, cemeteries, community infrastructure (libraries and service centres, land and support for community halls, community buildings).
- Manage assets with an aim to minimise whole of life cost while providing agreed levels of service.
- Review of Transport Activity. Council is in the process of signing up new roading service provider(s), seeking to work closer with local suppliers and businesses to deliver high-quality roading services that meet the needs and expectations of the community.

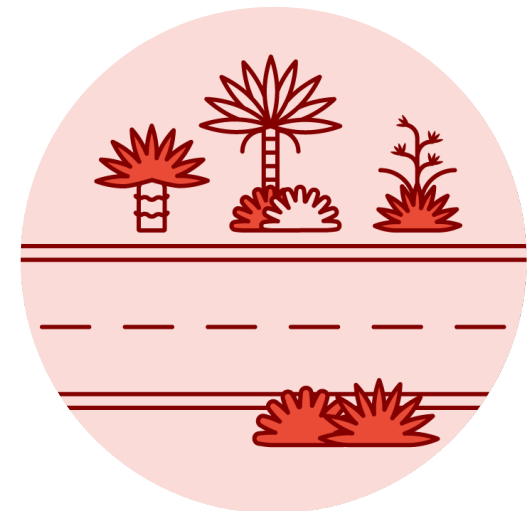
- Exposure and risk assessments for our assets.
- Regular condition assessments, renewals and upgrades are undertaken to ensure infrastructure continues to meet the needs of our community.
- Joint transport planning with Tauranga City Council and Bay of Plenty Regional Council.
- Asset revaluations.

## What are we already doing in terms of systems, planning and processes

- The Infrastructure Strategy provides a comprehensive overview of the infrastructure services Council will deliver to the community over the next 30 years, and the considerations, opportunities and challenges we will face in doing this.
- A Strategic Asset Management Plan outlines overall asset management objectives and principles. It demonstrates an organisational approach to the coordination of asset management outcomes across asset portfolios.
- Activity Asset Management Plans have been prepared based on standard industry practice and are used to forecast expenditure needed to operate, maintain and renew assets.
- Development of Structure Plans for growth areas.
- Accessing funding to support infrastructure delivery.
- Using the Financial Strategy to balance what we need to do from an affordability perspective.
- Financial contributions so that growth pays for growth infrastructure.

## What are we already doing in terms of people and places ('on the ground' action)

- The Long Term Plan determines where, when and what infrastructure we provide and maintain.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant advisory and alternative options groups.
- Travel Safe.



# Responding to climate change

## Why this is a priority

As a result of climate change, the Western Bay of Plenty can expect to see more hot days, milder autumns and winters, wetter winters, decreasing summer rainfall but with heavier downpours, fewer cold nights and frosts and rising sea levels.

We know climate change will impact on our business; however, the exact nature, extent and timing of the impacts is difficult to predict. The major chronic impacts of climate change are expected outside of the 10-year planning period. However, failure to respond now, and ensure a level of preparedness for future impacts, may lead to greater challenges and costs in later years.

## What we want to achieve

To work with communities to build understanding and knowledge and decide together how to respond. We know climate change will have significant social, economic, environmental and cultural consequences. But when and how these changes will affect us is difficult to predict and plan for.

We want to build community resilience across all our strategic priorities, so that the community is in a better position to adapt and manage the impacts of any changes.

## What we see our role being

- Leader – as a large organisation in the district, demonstrate our approach to organisational greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and wider climate change mitigation and adaptation actions.

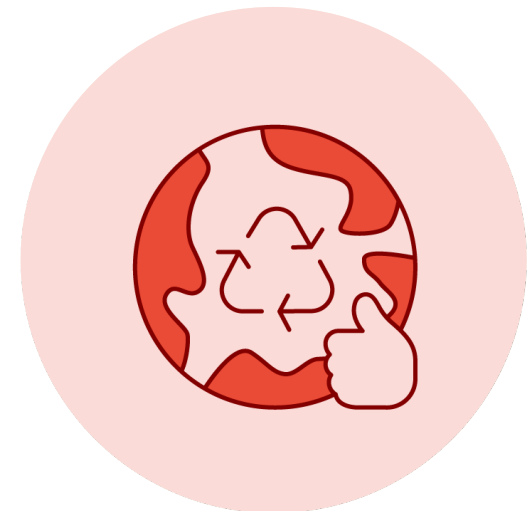
- Empowering communities - work with the community to build understanding and knowledge.
- Enabler - be agile and responsive to climate change impacts in our community.
- Emergency preparedness and Civil Defence.
- Building in climate change considerations as part of project design as a business as usual or standard practice on how we do things.

## What are we already doing in terms of systems, planning and processes

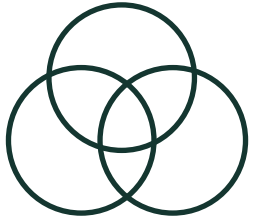
- Strategic assumption on climate change to inform our planning.
- Incorporation of climate change as a key challenge in our Infrastructure Strategy and Asset Management Plans.
- Providing capacity in our budgets to respond to unforeseen events.
- Measuring our operational emissions and setting corporate emission reduction targets for Council to assist with climate change mitigation.
- Infrastructure exposure and risk assessments for our assets (see Figure 1 on the following page) to inform climate change adaptation actions as a next step.
- Sub-regional collaboration through our Natural Hazards Programme with Tauranga City and Bay of Plenty Regional Council, which includes looking at different scenarios for climate change, the impacts of these scenarios and how they will affect natural hazards.

## What are we already doing in terms of people and places ('on the ground' action)

- Support development of local climate change action plans.
- Immediate and ongoing response to local extreme events such as the recent flooding in Waihi Beach, in collaboration with local response networks.
- Deliver services in a way that supports people and businesses to make choices that reduce emissions e.g. accessible walking and cycling networks.
- Funding for coastal erosion protection in accordance with our Coastal Erosion Response Policy.







# Climate change adaptation

## Managing the risks of climate change impacts

### To manage the risks, we need to think about:

- Where we build
- How we build
- What can be done with existing infrastructure to protect it, or make it more resilient through upgrades.

It's hard to know when changes may need to be made and what needs to happen first. But a step-by-step guide is:

Understand the science and the hazards. We already have a lot of this information.

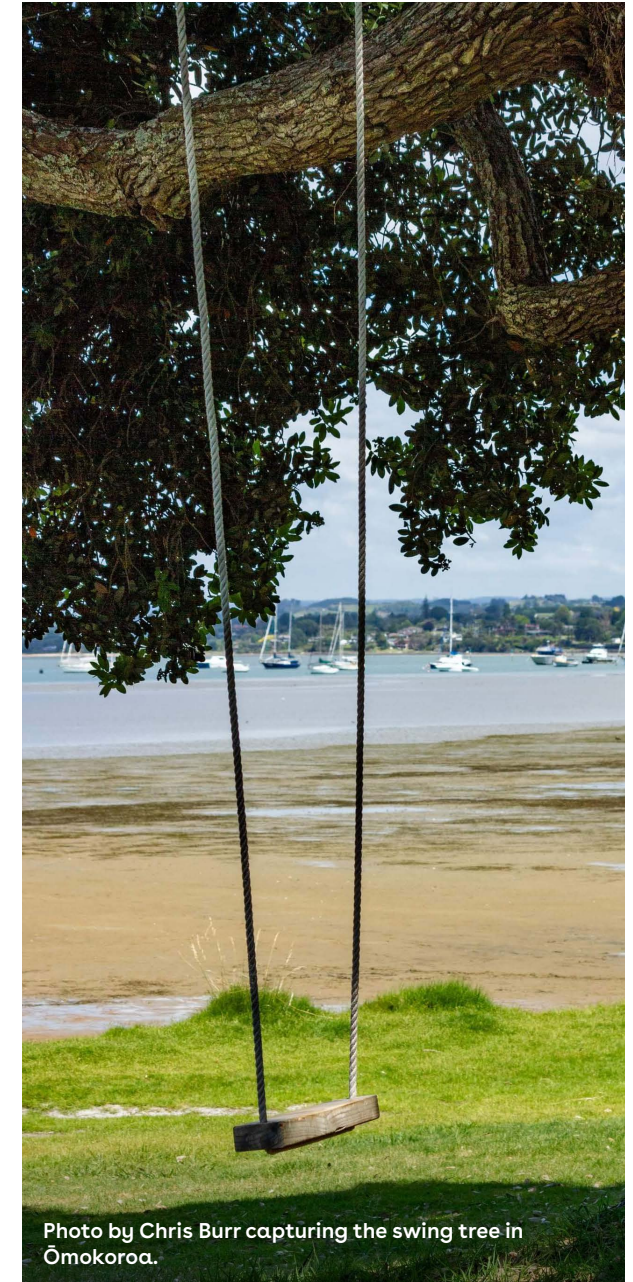


Photo by Chris Burr capturing the swing tree in Ōmokoroa.





Council staff preparing for a working bee competition where community groups, schools, clubs and not-for-profits could enter the competition to put WBOPDC staff to work for a day.