

# 1.

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# Introduction

Kia ora,

Our vision for our rohe is to foster a thriving community where everyone enjoys a healthy and safe lifestyle in an environment that is clean, green, and valued.

We are committed to building vibrant and welcoming communities, led by effective, informed, and inclusive leaders, ensuring a prosperous economy for all.

Our Long Term Plan sets out how we will deliver on this commitment. It states our priorities for the next 10 years, including what we will do, how much it will cost and how we will pay for it.

We've received a great community response to our kaupapa, receiving over 32,000 pieces of feedback through this kōrero. This means our 10-year plan is a good reflection of the community and what we want to collectively achieve.

In this document you'll find details of the decisions we've made on key topics our communities raised during the various stages.

Kia ora,

Tā mātou nei wawata mō te rohe, kia tōnui te hapori hei nohoanga haumarū mō te iwi, ā, kia whai hauora te tangata me te taiao.

Kua ū mātou ki tēnei kaupapa hei ākina i te kotahitanga o te hapori me ngā āheitanga ō ngā Kaiarataki e whakapau kaha ana mō te tōnuitanga o te iwi.

He mea whakaraupapa tēnei Mahere Rae Roa me pēhea te whakawhanake i ō mātou whakataurangi ā ngā tau 10 ā mua – ā mātou mahi, ngā utu me ngā pūtea kia whakamahia.

Nui rawa ngā whakautu, ki tēnei kaupapa, i utua e te hapori – neke atu i te 32,000 ngā tākupu. Tēnā, he whakatinanatanga pai te Mahere nei mō ngā whāinga ā te hapori.

Ka kitea i roto nei ngā āhuatanga me ngā whakataunga e hāngai ana ki ngā kaupapa katoa i whakahua mai.



# Our plan. Together.

## Message from the Mayor

Kia ora.

There's so much to love and enjoy in this beautiful place we all call home.

That's why we're deeply committed to ensuring that our rohe thrives, not just for today, but for generations to come. Our Long Term Plan is more than a document – it's our picture of what we will strive to achieve for our community and the mahi needed to build a future we can all be proud of.

Our plan focuses on the essentials, striking a careful balance between delivering the critical infrastructure to ensure we all have things like clean drinking water and safe roads, and the things that make our District a place where we can build healthy communities where people can live good, fulfilling lives, such as libraries, swimming pools and playgrounds.

However, achieving this has required us to make some tough decisions in the light of the difficult economic conditions and rising costs.

Finding ways to cut costs without compromising services is always a challenge. Repairing damage from severe weather, upgrading our roads, adhering to higher legislated standards for water assets, and providing quality facilities all come at a significant cost.

We've had to reduce some key areas of what we do as a Council, such as big cuts to our cycleway budget and stopping the Town Centre Development Fund to prioritise what's most important. In the first year, these decisions mean a rates increase of 13.47 per cent,

which is largely driven by unavoidable increases in the cost of providing and maintaining our roading, water supply and wastewater activities, as well as other cost increases such as for insurance.

We are also committed to completing some significant, necessary and long-awaited infrastructure kaupapa like the permanent replacement for the bridge on No.4 Road in Te Puke, the new library, service centre and hub in Waihi Beach, upgrades to the Dave Hume Pool in Katikati to make it better for users and extend its life, and prioritised major stormwater upgrades in Waihi Beach.

Just like the images throughout this document of what people love about our rohe, this is our place too, and so we're always listening to you and making decisions that reflect our collective vision.

While this plan outlines our vision for the next decade, it's important to remember that this is not set in stone. We will review this plan in three years, and by then, the economic climate could be different – and hopefully more positive.

For now, our focus is on helping everyone out and keeping more money in your pockets.

We're committed to listening to our people and doing the right thing for the right reasons. During the consultation period, we received almost 600 submissions from individuals, organisations, and businesses.

Your feedback shaped the final plan, leading to significant changes that reflect your priorities and giving comfort to us as decision-makers that we were on the right track with our key proposals.

These included increasing the roading rate differential, continue the temporary ban on Te Puna Station Road (and progressing mitigation of the effects of this), pushing out the timing of the future Community Facilities Fund to enable more time for further community kōrero and stopping the Pukehina Development Rate.

Amid shifting government policies and evolving expectations – such as reforms in water management, resource management, climate change, and the future of local government – we are navigating these changes with financial prudence, and careful planning to ensure our District continues to prosper and grow.

There's always mahi to do, but we're confident that we have the potential and commitment to achieve great things through this plan.

Let's continue to work together to make our District an even better place for ourselves, our tamariki, and our future generations.

Mā tō tātou iwi. For our people.

Ngā mihi nui,

Mayor James Denyer



# Strategic Priorities

The 'nuts and bolts' of a Council are to provide key infrastructure, like clean drinking water, rubbish and recycling services, roads, playgrounds, libraries and swimming pools.

We pride ourselves on doing this well, however we know that communities are so much more than that.

We are focused on building and supporting happy, healthy communities where people can live good, fulfilling lives.

Our Community Outcomes and Strategic Priorities are our commitment to you, both now and into the future.

They will guide how we prioritise investment and resources, over the next 10 years.

## Our Community Outcomes

- 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 Tiriri based relationships with Tangata Whenua.

## Our Strategic Priorities



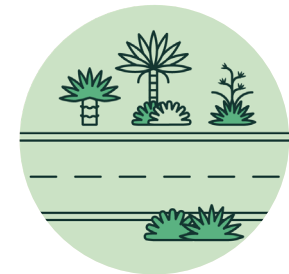
Enabling Housing



Empowering Communities



Growing authentic Te Tiriri based relationships



Providing well maintained, resilient and effective infrastructure



Responding to climate change

# Together we developed our 10-year plan

## Initial kōrero

30 May to 30 June 2023

Our rohe broken down into 12 communities.

Four key topics set by key community leaders in each community. Plus, 6-7 Council-specific topics.

### We focused on the following topics:

- Climate change
- Economic development
- Waste minimisation
- Speed management
- Transportation
- Representation
- Dog exercise areas

### Our 12 communities wanted to kōrero on a range of topics including:

- Sustainable housing
- Community facilities
- Growth
- Natural environment
- Rural internet
- Road safety and public transport
- Community resilience
- Food safety
- Supporting local

### How we connected with our community:

- Your place | Tō wāhi website
- 12 community events
- Email to community groups and stakeholders
- Electronic newsletter
- Antenno posts
- Print and digital advertising
- Social media comments
- Quick polls on community-specific questions via 12 community Facebook groups
- Radio advertising.

**31,663**

Pieces of feedback received across all topics.

## Formal consultation

17 May to 17 June 2024

24 speakers in Council Chambers.

We also encouraged and collected 500+ social media comments, noting the digital landscape many of our community interact in. This feedback would be used to provide indicated sentiment not as formal submissions.

### We produce the following documents to support this phase's kōrero:

- Strategic Assumptions
- Financial Strategy
- Infrastructure Strategy
- Activities (includes projects by activity)
- Financials
- Policies, Summaries and Statements
- Project list by ward.

### We also asked for feedback on:

- Revenue and Financing Policy
- Water Rates Remission Policy
- Remission of Rates Penalties Policy.

### How we connected with our community:

- Picture This | Whakaarohia tēnei website
- 12 community events
- Email to community groups and stakeholders
- Electronic newsletter
- Antenno post
- Print and digital advertising
- Social media comments via Council's channels and 12 community Facebook groups
- Radio advertising
- Roadside signage.

**588**

Pieces of feedback received with 3884 individual submission points.

### Our seven key questions were:

- We need to spend less on some roading and walkway/cycleway projects to reduce the impact on rates - What do you think?
- We need to change the timing of some projects to reduce the impact on rates - What do you think?
- Heavy vehicles have a greater impact on our roads and users need to pay more towards their maintenance - What do you think?
- We want to permanently stop collecting the District Wide Town Centre Development Fund - What do you think?
- We want to change the way we fund community facilities - What do you think?
- We want to permanently stop collecting the Pukehina Development Rate - What do you think?
- We want to consider permanently closing Te Puna Station Road - What do you think?



## Ā mātou i rongō ai What we have heard

The following section summarises the engagement on the Long Term Plan 2024-34, the feedback we received, and the decisions adopted by Council.

We have built this with help from our community.

In the past 18-months we have conducted specific Long Term Plan engagements on community outcomes and priorities in May - June 2023, and a final formal consultation phase in May - June 2024.

Our formal consultation went live on Friday 17 May and ran until 5pm Monday 17 June.

People could provide feedback via our Have Your Say Western Bay website, through posted or emailed feedback forms, or email to [haveyoursay@westernbay.govt.nz](mailto:haveyoursay@westernbay.govt.nz).

### Formal consultation

- 588 total submissions
- 24 in person hearing requests
- 304 online surveys completed
- 4853 unique visitors to the LTP website

The aim was to accept feedback in as many forms as possible for as many audiences as possible.

We attend 12 community events right across our rohe and sent direct emails to 518 people, including community organisations and te ao Māori organisations.

Our promotional campaigns on Council social media channels had 84,408 reach, 154,520 impressions, 10,800 engagements, and 3784 link clicks to the LTP website. Digital advertising had 294,180 impressions.



Katikati Library and Service Centre - The Centre, Pātuki Manawa.



## What was decided

Deliberations were held 26 August 2024.

Decisions and adoption of the final Long Term Plan 2024-34 took place on 26 September 2024.

### Project timing and rates affordability

We decided to change the timing of some projects to spread the cost over future years and reduce the immediate rates impact. This decision aims to strike a balance between affordability and ensuring our District keeps moving forward.

A breakdown of the impacted projects is provided in our decisions document.

### Roading and walkway/cycleway projects

We decided to spend less on specific roading and walkway/cycleways projects to reduce the impact on rates. We looked at where we could pause some upgrades for a year, use existing reserves or reduce investment and slow the timing of delivery.

This decision means for the first year of the Long Term Plan, the budget for Community Board roading funds, public transport infrastructure and minor upgrades of rural roads is reduced to \$0. This reverts back to planned funding arrangements from year two onwards. This decision does not impact the reserve funds held by community boards to spend on roading projects.

Seal extensions and walking and cycling budgets have been reduced for the entirety of the 10 year plan. Submissions regarding seal extensions for specific roads will be investigated following our Seal Extension Prioritisation Policy.

### Heavy vehicles have a greater impact on our roads and users need to pay more towards their maintenance

In our District, different types of properties contribute to road-related expenses at different rates, we call these differentials.

We recognise that those properties in the commercial, industrial and post harvest zoned are likely to use heavy vehicles and have a greater impact on our roads.

As a result, we decided to increase the roading rate differential for properties zoned in these areas from 2.0 to 4.0. This will mean that other zones will pay less toward the roading rate, reflecting the lesser impact they have on the roading network.



## Future community facilities fund

To make sure community facilities have enough money to be built and taken care of, we need a good plan for funding. When community groups receive Council funding towards their facilities, it makes it easier for them to access additional funding from other sources.

We have decided to create a fixed fee per property to help fund these projects. This is introduced at \$25 in year three of the Long Term Plan and will increase to \$50 per property from year four. We will use years one and two to develop the criteria of the fund, to ensure we make fair decisions that will fund facilities for everyone to enjoy. Decisions on community facilities during the interim period will be made on a case-by-case basis.



Photo by Jo Jones capturing the Ōmokoroa waterfront.

## Town centre development fund

The Town Centre Development Fund is a pool of money shared between the four major towns in our District - Waihi Beach, Katikati, Ōmokoroa and Te Puke. It is built up by collecting \$10 annually from every property in the District.

We decided to permanently stop collection of the town centre development fund, as we want to ensure we are funding these projects in the fairest way possible.

## Pukehina development rate

We decided to permanently stop collecting the Pukehina Development Rate, which had been collected to fund a potential future wastewater scheme that is not currently planned to be progressed.

We decided to repurpose the money collected for existing projects in the Pukehina community that need funding, and will work with the local community to determine what these projects will be.

## Te Puna Station Road

The closure to vehicles on Te Puna Station Road will continue while Council continues to assess the most appropriate solution for the long-term future. This will still allow access for pedestrians and cyclists, as we will relocate the shared path to the western side away from the riverbank as well as maintain optionality for the future of the road.

In response to concerns relating to the impact of heavy vehicles using Clarke Road, we will prioritise considering ways this can be addressed through a review of the Traffic and Parking Enforcement Bylaw 2019.



Tō tātou Takiwā, tō tātou Iwi

# Our District, Our People

Western Bay of Plenty District stretches from Waihi Beach to Otamarakau, covering 195,000 hectares of coastal, rural and urban areas.

It is one of New Zealand's fastest growing areas, with many people from other regions and countries choosing the Western Bay as a place to settle for family, retirement and business reasons.

High growth in the 5 years to 2018 saw the population swell to an estimated 53,400 people.

# Our District at a glance

Western Bay of Plenty District is a largely rural area, surrounding the main urban centres of Waihi Beach, Katikati, Ōmokoroa and Te Puke.

Small but growing harbourside settlements to the west are Te Puna, Minden, Aongatete and Pahoia.

To the west is the rugged bush-covered Kaimai Range from which many streams flow to the coastal lowlands and into the estuaries and mudflats of Tauranga Harbour.

Ethnic diversity is increasing over time. 81% of people identify as European, 19% as Māori, 6% as Asian and 3% as Pacific.

Of around 22,000 private dwellings, 53% of residents own or partially own their home. Average house value was \$985,760 in 2023.

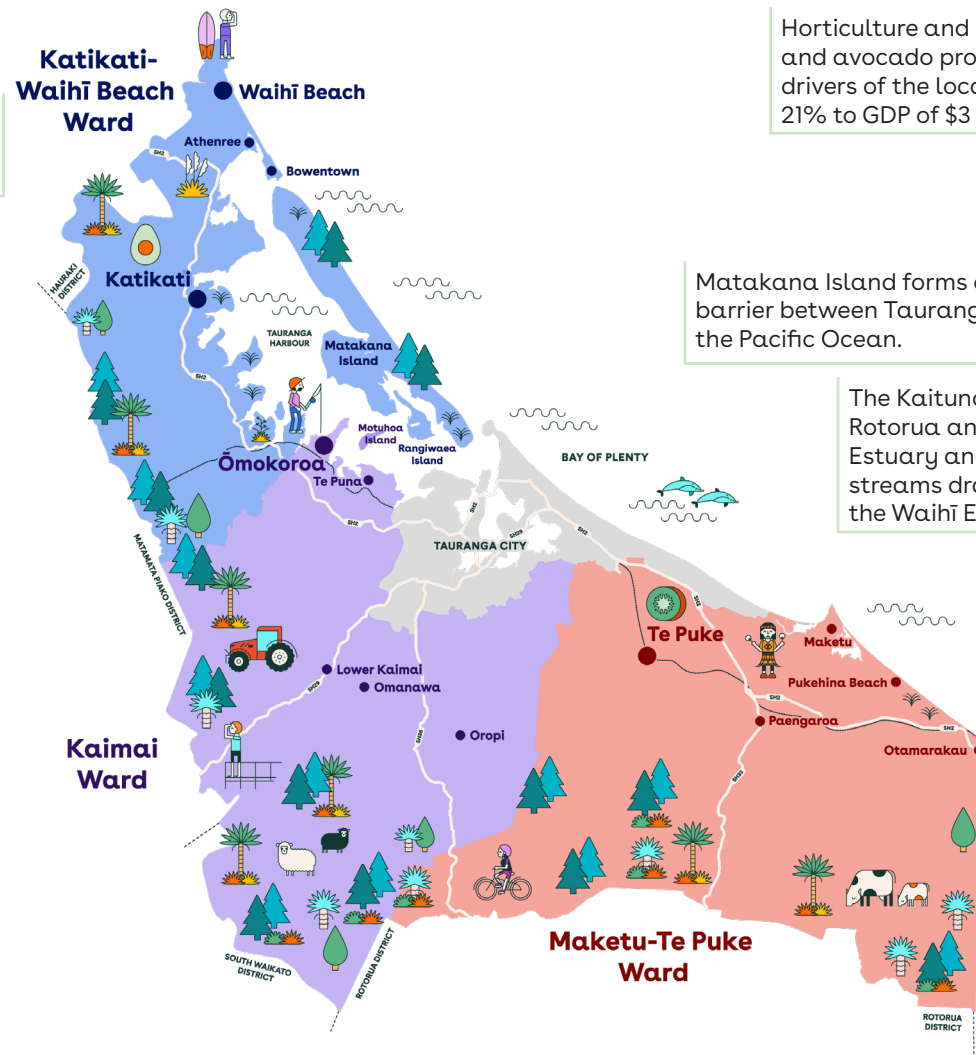
The Western Bay population tends to be older than New Zealand as a whole, with a median age of 45.2 years.

Horticulture and agriculture (mainly kiwifruit and avocado production) are the biggest drivers of the local economy, contributing 21% to GDP of \$3 billion in 2023.

Matakana Island forms a natural barrier between Tauranga Harbour and the Pacific Ocean.

The Kaituna River drains the lakes of Rotorua and Rotoiti into the Maketu Estuary and out to sea, while smaller streams drain the eastern district into the Waihi Estuary.

Rural settlements to the east are Maketu, Paengaroa, Pongakawa, and Pukehina.



Source: Census 2018, Infometrics Western Bay of Plenty District Economic Profile 2023

# Tōu Koromatua me Ngā Kaikauniwhera a Rohe Your Mayor and Councillors

## Mayor



**James Denyer** (Mayor)

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## Katikati / Waihi Beach Ward Councillors



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**Rodney Joyce**

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**Allan Sole**

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## Maketu / Te Puke Ward Councillors



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**Laura Rae\***  
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*\*Laura was sworn in as Councillor on 15 August 2024 following the passing of Councillor Richard Crawford in March 2024.*

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## Kaimai Ward Councillors



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