

Waitara Community Board Plan
2026-2029

NPDC

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This Plan outlines the vision and aspirations for the Waitara Community Board area, reflecting what matters most to the local community. It helps guide New Plymouth District Council's decisions about where effort, investment and action are needed.

The Community Board sincerely thanks community members, Council officers and elected members who contributed their time, feedback and ideas during the development of this Plan.

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Message from the Chair

Kia ora koutou,

It is my pleasure to present the **Waitara Community Board Plan 2026–2029**.

This plan sets out our vision and priorities for the next three years. It reflects what we've heard from our community and provides a clear direction for the work we will champion and advocate for on behalf of Waitara.

Waitara is a town with a rich history, a strong identity, and a community that has always shown resilience in the face of change. While our past has shaped us, it is our people, our partnerships, and our shared aspirations that will define our future.

As a Community Board, our role is to listen, advocate, and connect. We are committed to ensuring that local voices continue to influence local decisions and that Waitara remains at the forefront of conversations about investment, growth, infrastructure, recreation, environmental stewardship, and community wellbeing.

This plan is more than a list of priorities - it is a commitment. A commitment to work alongside mana whenua, community organisations, businesses, volunteers, residents, and the New Plymouth District Council to achieve positive outcomes for our town. Strong communities are built through collaboration, and the best results come when we work together with a shared purpose.

Over the next three years, we want to see Waitara continue to grow as a place where people are proud to live, work, raise their families, and invest in the future. We will continue to advocate for projects that improve everyday life, celebrate our unique identity, and create opportunities for generations to come.

On behalf of the Waitara Community Board, I would like to thank everyone who contributed their ideas and aspirations during the development of this plan. Your feedback has helped shape the direction we have set, and we look forward to working alongside our community to bring it to life.
Waitara has always been defined by the strength of its people. Together, we can continue building a community that honours its heritage, embraces opportunity, and looks confidently towards the future.

Dale Michielsen
Chair
Waitara Community Board

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Meet the Board Members 2025-2028



Dale Michielsen
Chair

Phone: 027 340 6273
Email: dale.michielsen@npdc.govt.nz



Joe Rauner
Deputy Chair

Phone: 06 754 8263
Email: joe.rauner@npdc.govt.nz



Trevor Dodunski

Phone: 06 754 7157
Email: trevor.dodunski@npdc.govt.nz



Tiri Porter

Phone: 027 540 2370
Email: tiri.porter@npdc.govt.nz



Cr Te Waka McLeod
Appointed Te Purutanga Mauri Pūmanawa - Māori Ward Councillor

Phone: 021 024 44617
Email: tewaka.mcleod@npdc.govt.nz

The Waitara Community Board meets monthly on a Friday at 9.15am in the Waitara Library and Service Centre (or at an aternate venue in the Community Board Area.

These meetings are open to the public. Agendas and minutes for each meeting can be found on the Council's website at npdc.govt.nz/meetings

If you would like to speak at a Board meeting please contact NPDC's Governance Team by emailing governanceteam@npdc.govt or phoning 06 759 6060.

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About Community Boards

Community Boards play an important role in local decision-making. They are the main link between local communities and the New Plymouth District Council, helping ensure that local voices, issues, and ideas are heard.

There are five community boards in the New Plymouth District.

Community Board members and Councillors are elected every three years during local body elections. A ward councillors is appointed to each community board.

What Community Boards do

Community Boards focus on what matters to their local area. Their key responsibilities include:

- Representing and advocating for the interests of their community.
- Raising issues or reporting on matters referred to them by the Council, or anything of local interest.
- Keeping an overview of Council services in their area.
- Providing input into Council budgets by preparing an annual submission on local priorities.
- Connecting with community groups, organisations, and residents.
- Working directly with people in the community - listening, supporting, and helping raise matters with the Council.

How Community Boards fit within Council

Community Boards are not committees of Council. They are independent, unincorporated bodies that provide a strong voice for communities outside the New Plymouth city area.

Compared with Councillors, Community Board members typically spend more time on direct representation and local issues, and less on formal governance work.

Community Boards operate under the Local Government Act 2002, which sets out how they work and also places limits on what they can do, e.g. Community Boards cannot own or sell property, or appoint or manage staff.

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Community Board funding

There are several ways Community Board initiatives can be funded. Council makes decisions on major investments, such as new facilities or major upgrades, including any large projects proposed by Community Boards.

Some projects may also require external funding. Council officers can assist Community Boards with preparing applications to external funders.

Each Community Board is allocated $150,000 per year of discretionary funding in line with the Community Boards Discretionary Funding Framework, to support minor local projects and initiatives.

Upcoming representation review

Every council must review its representation arrangements at least once every six years. New Plymouth District Council last completed its review in 2021, and the next review will take place before the 2028 local elections.

The review looks at how Councillors and Community Board members are elected, including decisions on:

- Whether Community Boards should exist.
- The boundaries of each Community Board area.
- The number of members on each board.
- Whether Community Board areas should be subdivided, similar to electoral wards.

The review helps ensure fair and effective representation for all communities in the district.

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Developing our Plan

Our draft Community Board Plan was shaped through careful consideration of your feedback. During May and June 2026, we sought your views on whether the draft plan reflected your needs and aspirations for the next three years, and how well the vision, key focus areas, priorities and advocacy topics aligned with what matters to you.

We engaged with individuals, groups and organisations across the community board area. The issues and aspirations you raised through conversations, workshops and submissions have helped us refine and finalise this plan.

We thank everyone who contributed their time, ideas and local knowledge. Your input has been essential in shaping a plan that reflects our community.

Carrying out our Plan

Delivering this plan requires many people working together – our communities, the Community Board, and the wider Council whānau. To bring the plan to life, we will:

- Prioritise budgets to focus on the initiatives in the plan.
- Make the best use of our local assets.
- Provide direction to Council staff who deliver projects and services.
- Work alongside community groups, partners and stakeholders to support delivery.

Where important projects fall outside the Community Board's available funding or decision-making powers, we will advocate on behalf of our community to the appropriate decision-makers, ensuring community views are clearly heard and supported.

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Waitara Community Board area

The Waitara Community Board is part of the North Ward. Its geographic area extends from north of the New Plymouth Airport to Lepperton and across the eastern boundary of the Waitara urban area.

The iwi and hapū within this rohe are Te Atiawa, Manukorihi Hapū (Manukorihi Pā, Owae Marae), Otaraua Hapū (Mangaemiemi Marae) and Pukerangiora Hapū (Kairau Marae).



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Key statistics

This section provides an overview of key statistics for the Waitara Community Board area. Data is sourced from Census 2023, Regional Economic Profile 2025 and Real Estate NZ 2025 Data.

(Figures in grey are for the New Plymouth District as a comparison)

Population:

9,405

11% of District

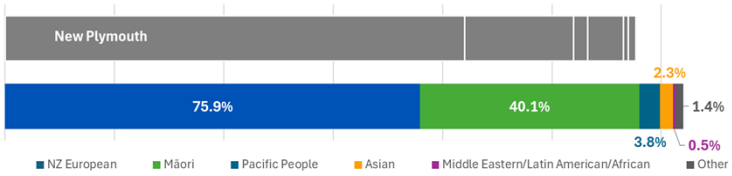
672

More people Since 2018

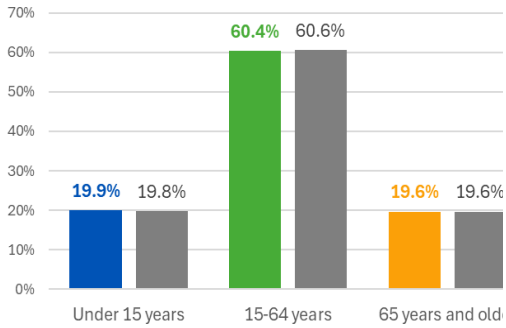
Median Age:

38.8 40.7

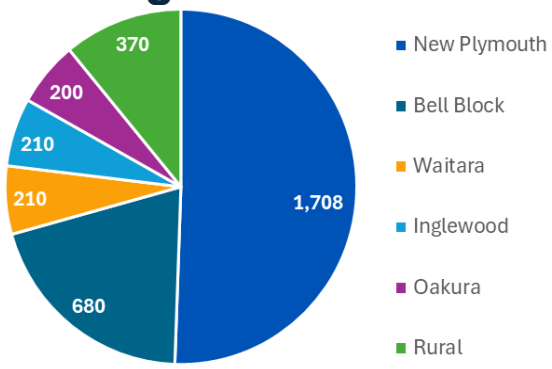
Ethnicity:



Age Profile:



Dwelling Growth next 10 Years:



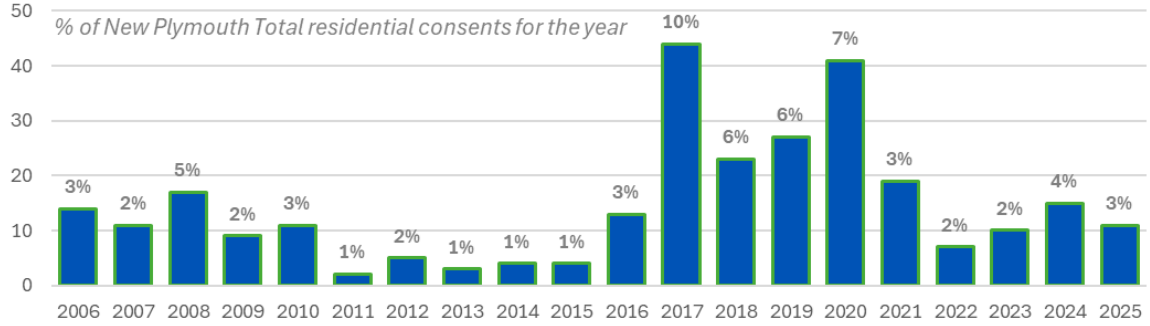
Median House Price:

$505,000 $680,083

Median Rent Price:

$520pw $557pw

Residential Building Consents last 20 years:



Median Household Income:

$93,700

$86,400

Top 3 Business Units by Industry:

19% Construction

13% Other services

10% Rental, hiring and real estate services

19% Rental, hiring and real estate services
13% agriculture, forestry and fishing
12% Construction

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New Plymouth District Council's Strategic Framework

NPDC's Strategic Framework outlines the Council's vision, mission and goals, which together represent the community outcomes. It is widely used across the organisation and is a key foundation for developing the Long-Term Plan 2027-2037. Community Board projects and initiatives are therefore expected to align with the Strategic Framework.

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Thriving Today, Resilient Tomorrow
Matomato i te ao, Manawaroa i te pō

Goals (Community Outcomes)
Ngā whāinga (Ngā putanga mō te hapori)



People live well, now and into the future

Needs are met and people feel physically, socially and economically secure

Ka ora pai te iwi ināianei ā, haere ake nei

E whakatutuki ana ngā hiahia kia ora ai te taha tinana, te taha hapori me te ōhangatanga hoki



Core infrastructure is reliable and fit for purpose

Essential services are efficient, resilient and future-ready

He kaha, ā e hāngai ana ngā hanganga matua ki te pūtake

He rawe, he aumangea ngā ratonga matua haere nei te wā, haere nei te wā



A strong, diverse economy that is agile in a changing world

Employment, innovation, private sector partnerships and enterprise support people and businesses to thrive

He ōhanga kanorau e moruki ana i te ao hurihuri

Nā te mahi, te auahatanga, ngā hinonga me te rāngai tūmataiti, e ora ai te tāngata me ngā pakihi



Communities are connected, heard, and proud to live here

Our decisions reflect community voices, strong partnerships, and care for people, place and the natural environment

E honohono ana, e rangona ana, e whakahīhī hoki ana ngā hapori o te rohe

Ka whakaata ngā whakataunga i te reo o te hapori, ngā ara tūhonohono me te manaakitanga o te tangata, te whenua me te taiao

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Our Vision and what we're focusing on

This section outlines Waitara Community Board's vision for the future and the key focus areas that will guide our work over the next three years. Each focus area includes a short description, the opportunities and challenges that influence progress, the Board's priorities, areas of advocacy, and potential projects that may be supported through discretionary funding. Together, these provide a clear picture of where the Board intends to focus its efforts to achieve positive outcomes for the community. The Board focus areas below align with Tiritiri o Mātangi – the Waitara Spatial Plan and support the community values outlined in the Spatial Plan.

"Waitara District is a thriving, resilient and connected community"

Focus Area 1: Improve infrastructure	
Waitara District is served by well-functioning physical and social infrastructure.	
Opportunities	• Kerb and channelling – Waitara township. • Wastewater – Waitara township. • Footpaths – Waitara township. • Support local procurement.
Challenges	• Tackling ongoing issues that have been part of the Board Plan for many years.
Priorities for the next three years	**Priority 1: Footpath Renewal Programme.** • Deliver a community-led footpath improvement program. • Prioritise routes identified through public consultation. • Improve accessibility around school, shopping areas and community facilities. **Priority 2: Essential Infrastructure Advocacy.** • Continue advocating for wastewater, stormwater, road and kerb upgrades throughout Waitara township. • Ensure the Waitara District receives infrastructure investment.
Advocacy Areas (Council/Government/Partners)	• Wastewater upgrades. • Stormwater resilience. • Kerb and channel renewal. • Road resurfacing. • Safe pedestrian crossings. • Improved accessibility infrastructure, and address slippery footpaths. • Public transport improvements. • Manutahi Park toilet block reinstatement.
Discretionary Fund Projects	• Accessibility improvements (Taranaki Trails Trust).

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	• Community beautification. • Small infrastructure projects that improve public spaces (hanging baskets). • Explore external funding support for annually funded projects.

Focus Area 2: Celebrate identity

Waitara District's culture, identity and history, including sporting culture and legacy, is **visible** and **celebrated**. This focus area supports projects which enhance and celebrate local identity.

Opportunities	• Make Māori cultural and social history (including sporting culture and history) more visible through signage, wayfinding (pou, storyboards, toi Māori), artwork, heritage trails, place naming development initiatives.
Challenges	• Funding. • Protecting heritage while encouraging growth. • Co-ordinating multiple organisations. • Ensuring Waitara District is allocated funds from NPDC. • Recognising sporting history.
Priorities for the next three years	**Priority 1: Waitara District Stories Project.** • Install storyboards, heritage signage and public art. • Celebrate shared Māori and European history. • Explore industrial history. **Priority 2: Celebrate Community Achievement.** • Recognise sporting legends, volunteers, community leaders and significant local events. • Develop permanent displays throughout the district.
Advocacy Areas (Council/Government/Partners)	• Heritage funding. • Māori cultural partnerships. • Arts and heritage grants. • Tourism promotion.
Discretionary Fund Projects	• Murals (floodwall mural). • Storyboards. • Community events. (Christmas night markets). • Heritage signs. • Local art installations. • Explore external funding for annually funded projects.

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Focus Area 3: Revitalise Waitara's Town Centre

Waitara's town centre is a **safe** space for everyone, providing a **diverse** range of businesses and services. This focus area includes work with building owners and catalyst projects to bring life back into the town centre.

Opportunities	• Investigate opportunities for catalyst projects to encourage further private investment and development including: – Upgrade of the library. – Investigate potential of short term and/or pop-up retail opportunities. – Explore feasibility of purchase and re-purpose of vacant buildings and land in the town centre. – Connect Council with investors to help navigate the consenting pathways for projects. • Investigate new and promote existing financial incentives to improve the standard and encourage adaptive re-use of buildings in the town centre. • Heritage funding for buildings.
Challenges	• Vacant buildings. • Private ownership of deteriorating buildings. • Attracting new investment. • Economic uncertainty.
Priorities for the next three years	**Priority 1: Improve the look and feel of the town centre.** • Beautification projects. • Landscaping. • Public seating. • Seasonal display (Christmas lights). **Priority 2: Encourage Business Growth.** • Work with Council and investors. • Support redevelopment opportunities. • Encourage new business into vacant buildings. • Investigate heritage funding.
Advocacy Areas (Council/Government/Partners)	• Completion of Te Pae of te Rangi / Coastal Walkway extension. • Development of a Council policy on requirement for maintenance or demolition of deteriorating buildings. • Library redevelopment. • Financial incentives for building upgrades. • Improved parking and town centre accessibility.
Discretionary Fund Projects	• Community activation events.

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Focus Area 4: Future growth and housing

Waitara District has housing options that are located outside hazard zones and destined to meet the needs of the community.

Opportunities	• Work with iwi/hapū trusts, social housing providers and developers to undertake a study/investigation to understand barriers to house delivery in Waitara.
Challenges	• Flood hazards. • Infrastructure capacity. • Housing affordability. • Land availability.
Priorities for the next three years	**Priority 1: Enable Sustainable Housing Growth.** • Support investigations in to housing barriers. • Encourage diverse housing options. • Promote affordable housing developments. **Priority 2: Plan for Waitara's Future.** • Ensure infrastructure keeps pace with growth. • Protect green spaces while enabling development. • Support employment opportunities that encourage people to stay in Waitara.
Advocacy Areas (Council/Government/Partners)	• Affordable housing initiatives. • Government housing investment. • Flood mitigation. • Infrastructure funding. • Public transport. • Education and health services to support growth.
Discretionary Funding Projects	• Urban lead design initiatives. • Community-led planning projects.

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Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu
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