

MAYORAL COLUMN



Mayor Craig Little

SUPPORT OUR TOWN'S SOCIAL EVENTS

Council is continuing to support the Wairoa Racing Club in a bid to have racing back at the Te Kupenga course. In fact, with the Poverty Bay Turf Club deciding to cease racing completely at their Makaraka venue, I can see the potential for Wairoa to become the heart of racing on the East Coast.

Paul Toothill and his team have not given up their campaign to retain local racing and I take my hat off to the determination that is being shown.

For Wairoa the races are more than horses and gambling. It is a family focussed fun event which has significant economic and wellbeing spin-offs for the district.

This year the Wairoa Races will be held at the Hastings Racing Club on February 21 with free buses running from Wairoa.

Let's hope the next Wairoa Races will be back at home.

OUR POPULATION IS GROWING AND IT IS IMPORTANT WE HAVE MORE SOCIAL EVENTS FOR OUR PEOPLE, NOT LESS.

The recent A&P Show was another example of hard work and commitment.

The Show is a major event in our district's calendar and put together by an enthusiastic group of local people led by Show president Ian Denton. This group donate an incredible amount of time and energy to ensure the show goes on.

This post COVID-19 period created further challenges for show organisers, and I admire the resilience and ability of the volunteers to organise and host a show for our town.

The recent Waitangi Day celebrations were a further example of a small group of people putting in a huge effort for the people in our district.

I hope more and more of our locals continue to support all the events that are held in Wairoa and where possible lend a hand, become a volunteer, and help ensure our social events continue to grow.

DRAFT REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT PLAN

The Hawke's Bay Regional Council is currently seeking feedback on strategic transport needs for the region for the next 10-years through its draft Regional Land Transport Plan 2021-2028.



Major priorities in the draft plan are safety on our roads, providing better, sustainable transport choices for people, and ensuring we have an efficient and reliable transport network, particularly for freight.

While we support the priorities of the plan, we are also very aware it is a regional strategy so what fits one area of Hawke's Bay, will not necessarily align with the rest of the region.

Wairoa people have to travel for more than an hour and a half to get to a bigger centre to access more specialised services, such as health.

Safer roading and reducing the number of deaths and injuries on our region's roads is paramount.

In this era of an increasing population, and more vehicles and faster vehicles on the roads, I actually commend our roading authorities for their efforts in keeping our roads as safe as possible.

The high amount of product, such as logs, being transported through our district also needs to be considered within the strategy.

We also advocate alternative transport options such as a rail passenger service and encouraging people to bike or walk rather than always driving a vehicle.

As well as addressing strategic transport needs for Hawke's Bay for the next 10-years, the plan also identifies specific transport activities which Waka Kotahi (NZTA) and Councils in the region are seeking national funding on for the next three years.

A summary of the plan and how to make a submission can be found at www.hbrc.govt.nz or phone 06 835 9200.

Consultation is now open and closes on February 28.

THE EAST COAST FARMING EXPO

The East Coast Farming Expo is another example of local people putting our town on the map.

This year will be the sixth round of innovation, interaction and excellence offered to sheep and beef farmers on the East Coast.

The expo offers two days of interactive exhibits and seminars, providing a rare opportunity for East Coast and Hawke's Bay farming communities to interact face-to-face with industry innovators and experts.

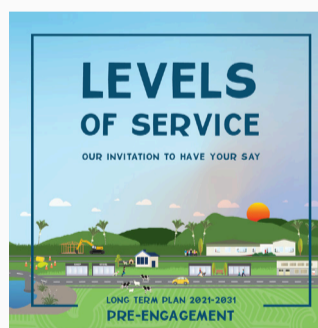
The expo will be held on February 24 and 25 at the Wairoa A and P showgrounds.

WAIROA'S LONG TERM PLAN

The first pre-engagement stage of the Council's Long-Term Plan has now taken place. This is just a start and there will be plenty more opportunities for people to engage and share their thoughts.

Every three-years Council develops a 10-year Long-Term Plan which describes its activities and the community outcomes it hopes to achieve.

The pre-engagement stage was aimed at setting the groundwork that will provide a foundation for us to work from for when we go out for further consultation in April.



COVID-19 RESURGENCE PLANNING

New Zealand continues to be winning its battle against COVID-19, but that situation could change at any time. There is a lot of talk and planning around a COVID resurgence and how our country will respond.

In March last year, when the reality of COVID-19 began to bite, Wairoa took control with our NGO's, iwi, Civil Defence and essential services all stepping in to make sure everyone in our community was looked after. We did it in true Wairoa style, where the focus was on community wellbeing and looking after our vulnerable.

We are all hopeful New Zealand will avoid community transmission, but it is also important we are prepared for the worst-case scenario.

Now is the time to take our learnings from the 2020 lockdowns and use that information to be even better prepared if there is a resurgence.

It's a good idea to build up a bit of a stockpile of non-perishable food. Plan for how you would live without heading to the shops every day. Also keep up the handwashing and sanitising and most importantly use the COVID tracer app. As we have seen contact tracing is a really important tool in fighting this virus.

FOR YOUR DIARY

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

MATANGIRAU RESERVES BOARD

Mon, 15 February: 3.30pm

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tue, 16 February: 1.30pm



CONTACT US

Wairoa District Council
Queen St, Wairoa
info@wairoadc.govt.nz
(06) 838 7309

2021-2031 LONG TERM PLAN PRE-ENGAGEMENT

Council is consulting on its Revenue & Financing Policy and Rates Remission Policies. Join us at one of the community meetings to find out more and to let us know what you think.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Thur, 18th Feb, 5.30pm
War Memorial Hall

Tue, 23rd Feb, 6.30pm
Mokotahi Hall

To make a submission visit www.consultations.nz/wdc or pick up a submission form from our Council office.

Consultation is now open and closes on 12th March.

