



NEXT STEP FOR INTERSECTION UPGRADE



LOOKING AFTER THE PLACE
we love

Planning for the next intersection upgrade in the central business district is underway, with the busy lakefront intersection of Roberts and Ruapehu streets marked for a revamp.

The intersection is an important entry point into town and serves as the gateway from the lakefront to the town centre.

We are working hard to make sure our town centre looks good, address security concerns around overgrown vegetation and encourage people to linger longer in the area.

The four corners at Roberts and Ruapehu streets will be the fourth intersection to be upgraded recently, with work carried out on three

major intersections last year.

The intersections of Tamamutu and Gascoigne streets, Tamamutu and Ruapehu streets and Tongariro and Horomatangi streets have new, modern gardens, improved visibility and better mobility access.

Safety concerns had been raised about overgrown gardens obstructing motorists' views, and the new gardens feature lower, less intrusive planted areas and a modern timber, stone and concrete design.

We hope to be calling for tenders for the work in July, with a tentative start date of September. The work is expected to be completed by Christmas.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON KINLOCH LAKEFRONT RESERVE

Kinloch Lakefront Reserve users are being encouraged to have their say on a proposal that would see vehicle access maintained and the road extended.

A new design for the reserve has been released to the community after we sought community feedback last year on issues affecting the area.

At the time there was clear feedback that maintaining vehicle access to the reserve was important, so this has been incorporated into the new draft design.

It proposes the removal of current bollards and chains and extension of the sealed road to a turnaround point at the edge of the reserve.

It also allows for barriers to prevent driving and parking directly

under notable trees, as required by the Taupō District Plan, and further planting of trees and landscaping.

We feel the design will help to ensure access continues but also keep it safe for pedestrians and other reserve users.

You can give feedback online at www.taupo.govt.nz/consultation or by emailing jridd@taupo.govt.nz. Feedback closes at 4pm on Friday, July 1.



IT'S A WRAP!



It's hard to believe this is the last Mayoral column I will write before the local body elections in October. There are some strict guidelines about what myself and councillors can and cannot do with council-funded resources in the lead up to the elections so today the curtain comes down on this weekly column until voting has taken place. It certainly has been an honour and a privilege to

lead this district over the past term and the councillors and I are proud of what we have achieved.

Later this month we will adopt the Annual Plan for the 2016/17 year. Having considered all of the submissions we received this week, I can confirm we are still on track to deliver one of the lowest average rates increases ever. We are also proposing to start the 2016/17 financial year with \$10 million less debt than originally forecast in the Long-term Plan, which I believe is testament to the strong focus we have put on our financial strategy.

There has been lots said over the years about council debt and it is often the first thing to create headlines. As a council we took a long hard look at our financial strategy when we adopted our Long-term Plan last year and I am pleased to report that in terms of debt reduction we are ahead of schedule. We have managed to further reduce our debt from the \$150 million we ended the 2014/15 year with and that has allowed us to make some significant savings in interest costs for the coming year. That means we don't need to collect as much in rates next year – in fact 80 per cent of residential ratepayers are set to get a decrease!

Encouraging economic development has been our other major focus. Having just returned from leading an 18-person trade delegation from our district to China, I can tell you our district is held in high regard. Our visit certainly bore fruit in terms of strengthening economic ties with the country's second largest trading partner, and I believe the Taupō District will benefit from the relationships forged for years to come.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all of those people who I have had contact with over the past three years. The common thread between us all, is that we love this district and have its future at the forefront of everything we do. There is no doubt we live in a fantastic community.

David

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TAUPŌ SCHOOLS MAKE CHINESE CONNECTIONS



St Patrick's student Ryan Carroll, Han Yu and principal Danny Nicholls

Taupō school children are the latest to benefit from the district's strengthening ties with China, with memorandums of understanding signed to foster cultural experiences.

During a trade delegation led by Mayor David Trewavas last month, St Patrick's Catholic School became a friendship school with Suzhou Middle School Number One. Te Kura o Waitahanui did the same with The Primary School of China's Textile City in Shaoxing.

Mr Trewavas said the relationships would improve understanding and respect for each other's cultures.

"It's an exciting opportunity to teach the next generation about the importance of China to the Taupō District, its economy and the mutual benefits we can achieve," he said.

St Patrick's Catholic School and Suzhou Middle School Number One took part in a Skype session to celebrate the signing of the agreement. St Patrick's Catholic School's visiting Chinese language and culture tutor, Han Yu, helped translate.

St Patrick's Catholic School principal Danny Nicholls said it was a great opportunity to broaden the curriculum, which may lead to exchanges of teaching resources and ideas.

"We have a responsibility to prepare our students for 21st Century citizenship in New Zealand, and we believe that familiarity and forming friendships with Asia is an important strategy to achieving this", he said.

Te Kura o Waitahanui principal Maria Rahui and Board of Trustees chairperson Janice Wall were on the delegation in China and visited The Primary School of China's Textile City for the signing.

"It's a great opportunity to form a collaborative relationship between two cultures with a focus on learning and culture," Ms Rahui said.

What's on?

- 10 June** Avalanche City: The Little Fire Tour, Great Lake Centre
- 11 June** The Big Bike Film Night, Wairakei Resort
- 12 June** Craters Classic, Craters of the Moon
- 12 June** Kelvin Cruickshank – Soul Food, Great Lake Centre
- Until June 13** Mua Ki Muri – Looking Back to the Future exhibition, Taupō Museum

For more information on Taupō District events visit www.GreatLakeTaupo.com

