

COUNCIL VOTES TO INTRODUCE MĀORI WARDS



AT AN EXTRAORDINARY meeting held on Monday 23 November, council voted 7-3 in favour of introducing Māori wards for the 2022 and 2025 local body elections, with Mayor David Trewavas calling it a landmark decision.

As part of the decision, staff were also directed to continue to work in collaboration with Māori/iwi to further analyse and develop the package of specific actions Council could undertake to improve Māori representation in Council decision-making.

The Local Government Act 2002 requires councils to establish and maintain processes to ensure Māori contribute to local government decision making. Under the Act, Council must also review its representation arrangements every six years. Council brought this decision forward, to ensure a decision on Māori wards would be made, in time for the 2022 election.

Taupō District Mayor David Trewavas said the decision was about strengthening relationships and furthering council's commitment to Māori representation in council decision-making.

"This process has been an evolving one, with ongoing discussions and hui held to identify ways to improve Māori representation, including a decision to establish representatives on council committees in 2019.

"This is one of the steps we are taking to enable more Māori to participate in decision-making and to ensure council is more representative of our district as a whole.

"Māori make up 30 per cent of our district and it is important we are working in partnership to help engage our community and improve opportunities for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making processes.

"I am immensely proud of being part of a council that has made this decision for the good of our community and showing leadership where it matters," Mr Trewavas said.

Enrolled electors now have the right to demand a poll to countermand the decision, with five per cent of enrolled electors or 1241 people needed to demand a poll by 22 February 2021.

If a valid demand for a poll is received by 22 February 2021, a poll will then be held by 21 May 2021. This poll will be binding for six years.

If council's resolution is not revoked by a poll, council will need to carry out a Representation Review to determine the number of councillors, how the councillors are elected, the number and location of Māori wards, and the continuation of existing wards and community boards.

WAIRAKEI DRIVE TO BE RESEALED NEXT WEEK

WAIRAKEI DRIVE, ONE of our main entrances into town, will be resealed with a waterproof layer added next week, to make it safer for road users.

The work will be undertaken from Monday November 30 until Friday December 4, weather permitting, and will cover a 2.5km section from the top of Control Gates Hill to the Loop Road rest area at a cost of \$150,000.

The area will have traffic management in place with reduced speed through the roadworks.

Infrastructure manager Denis Lewis said it was a busy section of road so motorists needed to slow down to keep contractors and themselves safe during the work.

"We appreciate your patience and understanding while we carry out this important work," he said. "It will mean a safer road surface for both our community and our visitors."



INTERSECTION UPGRADE NOW UNDERWAY

WORK HAS BEEN brought forward for the upgrade of the Horomatangi and Ruapehu intersection, with contractors Camex starting on preparatory work for the installation of a roundabout and pedestrian crossings this week.

The intersection is being upgraded as part of the Taupō Town Centre Transformation project which received \$20.6 million in government funding earlier in the year, with the aim of creating an attractive, people-friendly town centre.

The roads will continue to remain open during the day this week, with a revised schedule of road closures for the rest of the project available at taupo.govt.nz/towncentrereformation.

We have asked the contractors to keep the roads open as much as possible, with a lot of night work to be completed. The roundabout and pedestrian crossings are expected to be complete by Wednesday December 23 with contractors then returning on January 6 to complete the landscaping and repaving for each corner.



HELP CLEAN UP AND GET FREE PANCAKES!

IF YOU'RE LOOKING for a way to help out the community and get a bellyful of tasty pancakes at the same time – we have the solution for you!

We're running another one of our litter clean up days on the Taupō lakefront this Saturday, and we'd love for you to join us!

We supply the gloves, bin bags and tools for picking up the litter – we just need the many hands of the community to make light work for everyone.

Although the lakefront may look clean from a distance, up close you'll see there are lots of cigarette butts, bottle caps, microplastics and other detritus messing up our environment. We'll cover the space along the beach near Lake Taupō Hole

in One, along Lake Terrace toward the town centre and near the water treatment plant. When we're finished, everyone can tuck into some free pancakes on us!

You won't have to look hard to find us – a big tent and a sign will be set up on the lakefront reserve across from the mini golf, near Lake Taupō Hole in One.

So come down this Saturday and help us out and help us eat these pancakes!

When: 9am-noon, Saturday November 28

Where: Tent on the Lakefront Reserve across from the mini golf, near the Lake Taupō Hole in One.

Why: To keep our district looking beautiful (and eat pancakes)!

