



# TAUPO TOWN CENTRE PLACE MAKING ROAD MAP

Prepared by Village Well  
April 2009

# FOREWORD

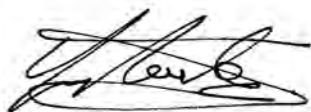
Town Centre Taupo and the Taupo District Council have opened Taupo to amazing possibilities through their open and collaborative working relationship, and their positive pro-active attitude to shaping the future of Taupo Town Centre.

The new ETA by-pass has afforded Taupo the opportunity to reassess their urban form, public spaces and their identity to ensure that Taupo remains a successful and prosperous Town Centre, and provides the best possible urban environment for locals and visitors alike.

This set against some of the most spectacular natural and cultural assets of any location in the world, Taupo can really set itself apart simply by telling its authentic local story and educating the wider community.

Village Well would like to thank the following:

Mayor Rick Cooper, Taupo District Council  
Gareth Green, Taupo District Council  
Kylie Cotter, Town Centre Taupo  
Chris Johnston, Town Centre Taupo and Destination Lake Taupo



Gilbert Rochecouste  
Managing Director, Village Well



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# 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1.1 Introduction

Town Centre Taupo & Taupo District Council engaged Village Well to develop a Place Making Roadmap to inform a concurrent Structure Planning Process. Village Well spent a week from 23rd - 27th February 2009 on the ground in Taupo, walking the beat and running workshops with traders, community members, Councillors, Council officers, property owners and key stakeholders. Village Well were truly inspired by the enthusiasm of the community and project team members.

The Place Making Roadmap summarises the outcomes of this consultation which is part of Village Well's Place Making Process.

The model allows us to consider all aspects of a project from global perspectives to individual values, across time and culture to deliver succinct and legible principles and recommendations for project owners to understand and implement.

This process includes a critical analysis of how places successfully operate from the five perspectives of People, Place, Product, Program and Planet, the 5 Ps of Place Making.

Our Place Making model is presented in a series of logical, informative and actionable reports that enable the project owners and stakeholders to deliver great places. These are summarised below;

### Lay of the Land

An analysis of the place and its stories including the physical and social background, global trends and community values. It provides a foundation and context for the Place Essence & Place Making Strategy.

### Place Making Strategy

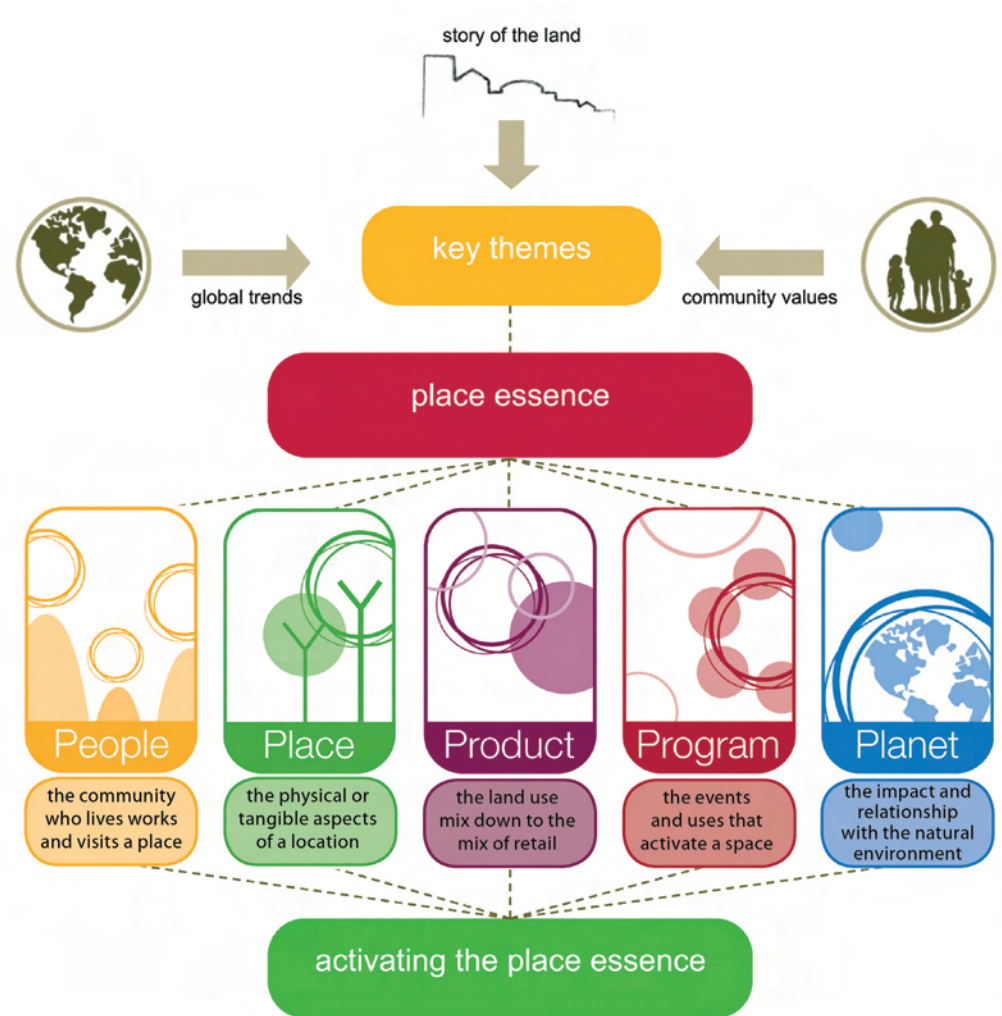
Develops a clear story for the place and its people from which the Place Essence is drawn. The strategy provides clear strategic project directions; Place Making Principles from which high-level recommendations under the 5Ps of Place Making are developed.

### Place Making Overlay

Utilises findings from the Place Making Strategy and builds on high-level 5Ps recommendations to provide detailed recommendations that support the project team to deliver on and activate the Place Essence.

### Implementation

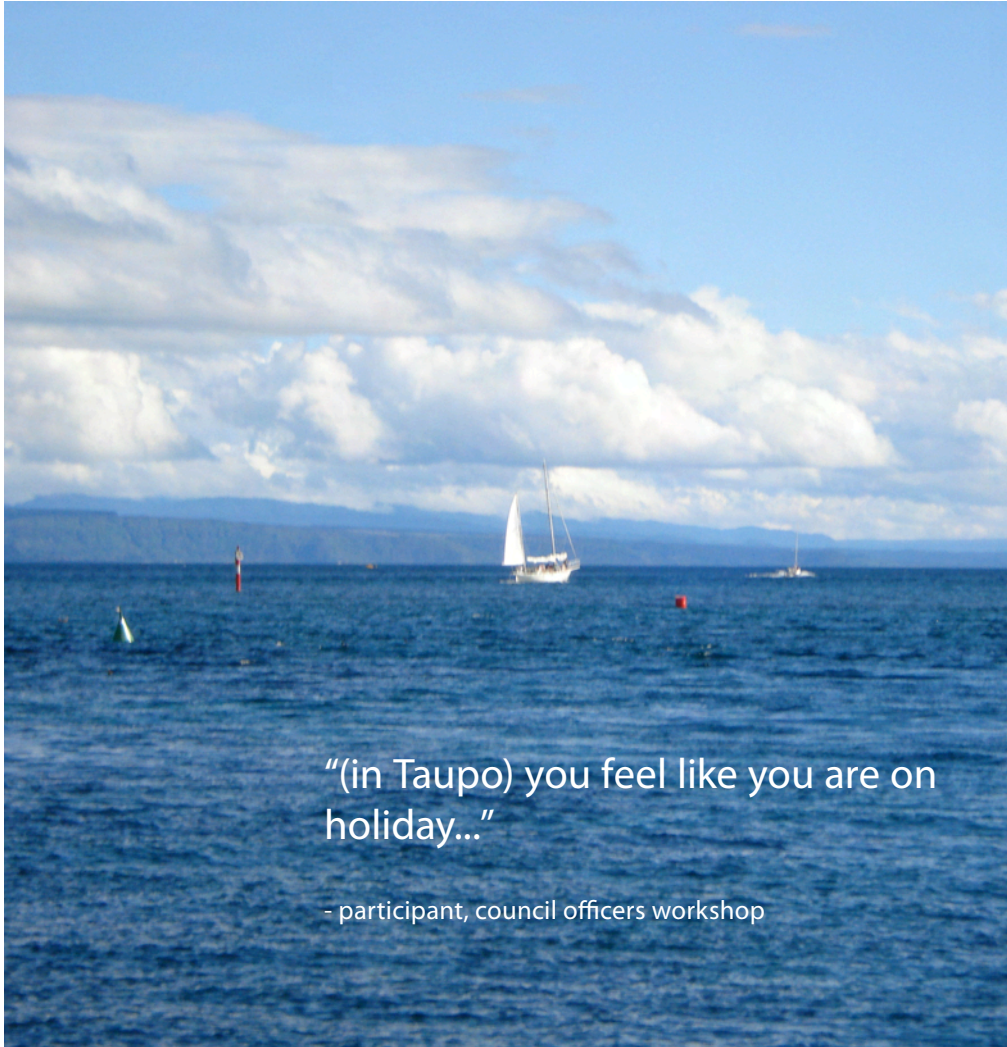
Village Well provides a range of creative support services to support activation of the Place Essence including public art, place branding, event management and community art projects





# 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1.2 Taupo Town Centre Vision



“(in Taupo) you feel like you are on holiday...”

- participant, council officers workshop

The following Place Essence for Taupo Town Centre was developed by Village Well based on visioning exercises undertaken by workshop participants.

### *Taupo Place Essence*

*Taupo is a place that is true to itself, its stories, its history, its people and its environment.*

*Its spectacular surrounds and the warmth of its community draw people in.*

*It is a place that is vibrant and diverse, an exciting playground of activities and events, whilst maintaining its intimate community feel.*

*It is flexible and confident in the face of future challenges, and provides a rare quality of life, where you feel you are on holiday even when at work.*



## 1.2 Taupo Town Centre Vision

The following Place Character for Taupo Town Centre was developed by Village Well based on visioning exercises undertaken by workshop participants.

### Place Character – Taupo Town Centre

**Quirky** – a sense of surprise and special moments – our laneways, plazas and pocket sanctuaries

**Authentic urban environment** – design and colour palettes of buildings and architecture reflect the natural landscapes

**Authentic community feel** - the local community knows each other and has a sense of ownership and care for each other and their town centre

**Connected** – walkable, compact, it is mixed use

**Alive** – it has a 7 day pulse and active and healthy evening economy

### Positioning Town Centre Taupo

The following statements aim to articulate possible positioning statements that could be applied to Town Centre Taupo as a marketing tool:

- New Zealand's premier events destination
- The most 'liveable', beautiful and sustainable town in New Zealand
- 'Our home' – a place we are proud to live, work, play and invite others to share and experience our special place
- The cultural capital of New Zealand
- The best of New Zealand's outdoors



(right image) [www.flickr.com/photos/rak/2309866490/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/rak/2309866490/)

## 1.3 Key principles

The following principles have been developed based on findings from Place Making workshops facilitated by Village Well.

### Renew:

- Renew our faith and confidence in what we can be
- Renew our spirits and belief in a new chapter and compelling vision for Taupo

### Refresh:

- Refresh our image and identity
- Refresh and update our retail, commercial, entertainment, civic and cultural product and experience

### Reconnect:

- Reconnect our city centre to its heart and waterfront
- Reconnect and activate our laneways to increase walkability and connection
- Reconnect our town with the international stage



## 1.4 Community values

The following community values for Taupo Town Centre have been developed based on findings from Place Making workshops facilitated by Village Well.

### Authenticity

- True to ourselves
- Real sense of community
- Authentic communications of stories and heritage

### Sense of belonging and community

- We care and look out for each other
- We work together for the common good
- A 'can do' community, we work together to make things happen

### Natural assets

- We celebrate nature and protect our unique natural assets for future and current generations

### Taupo lifestyle

- A great place to live work and play

# 1.5 Taupo Town Centre positioning

## What makes Taupo special?

- **Our lake; globally unique, our heart**
- **Our mountains; sense of awe and wonder**
- **Our river; secret and hidden, waiting to be discovered**
- **Our people; sense of pride of place**
- **Our lifestyle; on holiday even when at work**

## Our wow factors

### Now

- Lake
- Mountains
- River
- Events

### Future

- Nightlife and entertainment
- Restaurants
- Laneways experiences
- Urban products

## Our target markets

Our town centre is first and foremost a great place for our local community who live, work and play there. The town centre is their ‘third place’ - a place people spend their time when they are not at home or at work, a place they take care, protect and celebrate, where everyone still says hi and knows your name. It is:

- Affordable to all
- Accessible and walkable
- Convenient
- Beautiful and quirky
- Authentically Taupo

### Other target markets:

- Families
- Youth
- SINKS and DINKS
- Adventure sports
- Cultural creatives (key future target market)
- Overseas and New Zealand tourists

### What do they look for?

- Warm, friendly customer service
- Unique products, services and experiences
- Urban products such as quality boutique retail, cafe culture, cultural events, business services and laneway experiences in a contemporary country setting

# Creating an urban lifestyle experience

Taupo Town Centre has the bones and grid structure, community social capital and unique natural assets to be one of the world’s great urban places and destinations.

The pillars to support the creation of a great urban centre experience for Taupo:

1. Have a compelling vision and story (owned and celebrated by the community)
2. The vision is professionally managed and delivered with a collaborative partnership approach
3. Has great connected and loved public spaces
4. Is well programmed, there is always something happening, and it reflects the character and stories of the place
5. Urban edges are activated, such as laneways and pathways etc
6. Planned for people first, not cars first. Create a variety and diversity of people friendly places
7. Mixed-use development, residential, commercial, civic and retail
8. Establish compelling anchors that are well connected; retail; cultural; civic; social; entertainment

### Key threats

- The impact of the ETA on the town centre, potential for visitors, tourist and through travellers to bypass Taupo in their travel planning
- The establishment of ‘big box’ retail out of the town centre area
- Lack of vision, leadership and delivery in the next 2-3 year window of opportunity





## 1.6 Key opportunities

1. A new vision and brand (owned and celebrated by the community)
2. A new civic heart in front of the Great Lake Centre
3. A civic, arts, culture and heritage centre on the Domain, as part of the civic heart
4. Reconnect town centre to waterfront – punch access to create views – and create a great civic space/piazza on the waterfront
5. Create new opportunities for larger footprint retail such as quality furniture and homewares precinct as a catalyst project. Target quality New Zealand fashion brands
6. Activate laneways for new retail/commercial/cultural opportunities – enhance walkability and wellbeing
7. Mixed-use opportunities, shop-top living, live work and play opportunities etc
8. Create beautiful pockets – civic sanctuaries/rooms clustered along the north/south laneways
9. Create a great boat harbour experience – create a small village hub; restaurants, cafés, boat building
10. Create an icon walking and cycling bridge over the River
11. Connect Domain to boat harbour and lake front
12. Become a green town – climate friendly/ carbon neutral
13. Work with land owners to enhance existing private built form to reflect the identity and palette consistent with the Town Centre vision
14. Telling the story of Tangata Whenua
15. Wayfinding strategy and public transport options



Taupo Boat Harbour

## 1.7 Recommendations checklist

The following recommendations can be broken down to create an action plan for Town Centre Taupo (TCT) and Taupo District Council (TDC) and other supporting groups.

Strategy	Recommendation	Lead responsibility
<b>Built and urban form</b>		
Town centre wide	Incorporation greenery within the town centre that connects with recreation and garden areas	TDC
Waterfront	Multi-level mixed use that builds up towards the centre of town will maximise access to views	TDC
	Provide a small waterfront piazza space - designed to tell the stories of the lake and mountain	TDC
	Provide a way to connect with the water	TDC + Tuwharetoa
Boulevard (Tongariro St)	Build out footpaths – open up to café seating with views to the lake	TDC
	Reduce carparks on retail side to remove blockages of views to the lake	TDC
	Create traffic calming elements that also beautify and connect precincts	TDC
Civic heart	Take some space from the road to give a larger civic space in front of the Great Lake Centre	TDC
Boat harbour	Provide a sanctuary for viewing the harbour	TDC, Internal Affairs, DOC, Tuwharetoa
Industrial/commercial	Work with light industrial/commercial operators to provide shop front activation to the street	TCT
Recreation & garden	Integrate the civic heart with recreation and garden areas	TDC (SP implementation)
Education	Redesign entries to connect more strongly with the town centre	TDC + Taupo Primary
<b>Wayfinding</b>		
Town centre wide	Develop and implement a comprehensive wayfinding strategy that reflects the stories and identity of Taupo Town Centre	TDC
	Provide information regarding the current street names on signage - their origin, and interesting facts	TDC
Civic heart	Indication the location of hidden secrets and key attractions such as skydiving, the mountain, boating	TDC
Boat harbour	Create an entry statement, let people know they've arrived at a destination	TDC, Internal Affairs, DOC, Tuwharetoa
Education	Signage that reflects a community hub and provides info about its services	TDC + Taupo Primary
<b>Amenities</b>		
Boat harbour	Bbq areas and seating	TDC
Rest areas	Provide comfortable sheltered seating that is connected to pedestrian links and wayfinding	TDC

## 1.7 Recommendations checklist

Access		
Town centre wide	Utilise wayfinding to provide 'walking times' (length of time in minutes it takes to walk between destinations) to encourage more pedestrian connections between destinations	TDC + TCT
	Ensure clearly defined pedestrian connections that prioritise people over cars	TDC
	Install new clear pedestrian crossings in key locations, they can be fun and quirky	TDC
	Provide clearly defined cycling paths throughout the town centre	TDC + Bike Taupo
	Provide bicycle hire for visitors located close to the civic heart and key drop off area for tourist buses	TDC + TCT
	Park and walk/ride strategies	TDC + TCT
	Provide cycling (length of time in minutes it takes to cycle between destinations) times to key destinations with the town centre & beyond	TDC, TCT, Bike Taupo
	Provide creative bicycle parking areas	TDC, TCT, Bike Taupo
Boat harbour		
	Create a beautiful walk through the Domain to the boat harbour	TDC
Laneways		
	Create intimate, connected and safe active pedestrian network to support walkability	TDC
Recreation/green area		
	Ensure a strong connection between the Domain and the town centre	TDC
	Embark on an education program on walking & cycling to encourage less vehicles in the Town Centre	TDC
Public art		
Civic heart	Potential for water feature and/or a paving over the road which is in the shape of the lake as a the civic heart	TDC & Sculptures Trust
Laneways	Provide artist installation spaces	TDC & Sculptures Trust
Events & programming		
Town centre wide	Events calendar and promotions	TCT (+ Destination Taupo, TDC)
	Utilise strong volunteer base for local events, not just the big ticket events	TCT + DLT
	Provide activities for youth, they feel there is not enough to do in town - engaging and skill based such as battle of the bands	TCT + DLT
	Involve youth in the organisation of events for their age groups	TCT + DLT
	Encourage busking, creative and musical	TCT + DLT
	Engage with Tuwharetoa on the most appropriate and effective events and sculptural installations to tell the stories of Tangata Whenua	TDC
Parking		
	Look for innovative parking strategies	TCT + TDC
Laneways		
	Create laneway markets for local produce and arts	TCT + TDC
	Arts installations (including those that utilise laneways)	TCT



## 1.7 Recommendations checklist

Events & programming		
Recreation/green area	Summer concerts in the Domain	TCT
Bar & restaurant area	Refresh landscaping to reflect the hospitality and entertainment focus of the area for dining and evening economy	TDC
	Consider lighting strategies for evening economy to create an entertainment 'atmosphere' such as strings of fairy lights	TCT (in collaboration with TDC)
Civic heart	Provide cultural activities that educate visitors and locals about the past origins of Taupo, both from European and Tuwharetoa accounts	TDC (in collaboration with TCT)
Recreation/green area	Promote areas that are not well used currently such as the Rose Garden, let people know it is there	TDC
Education	Utilise school as a destination for community groups and events and night classes	TDC + Taupo Primary
	Consider approaching U3A - University of the 3rd Age to provide education to the elderly	TDC + Wairiki Polytechnic
Retail mix		
Town centre wide	Develop and implement a leasing strategy to support precincts identified in the Structure Plan and Place Making Roadmap	TCT (in collaboration with TDC)
	Ensure core conveniences and services to serve local needs are provided	TCT
	Encourage boutique fashion and café pockets	TCT
	New retail expansion areas - department stores and boutique fashion - provide opportunities for appropriate larger format retail	TDC
	Catalyst project developments targeted at new industry products and experiences that will ensure that we remain the playground of NZ	TDC
Civic heart	Include Council Head Office into the civic heart	TDC
	Investigate a new arts/heritage/cultural centre as part of the civic heart	TDC
Laneways	Create incubator spaces with lower rentals for young emerging designers, retailers and cafes	TCT
Bar/entertainment	Aim to extend the bar/entertainment area - be open to the possibility of moving existing retail to other sites nearer to the retail core	TDC
Fresh food	Promote and aim to attract local and organic product from the region and New Zealand	TCT
	Markets expansion - promotion as a key food event within the region	TCT
Recreation & gardens	Create an adventure playground	TDC
Parking	Investigate multi-deck car parking integrated with a retail facility - attract destination large format national retailers	TDC + Enterprise Lake Taupo
Education	Investigate opportunities to integrate child care and community facilities with school services	TDC + Taupo Primary

## 2.0 COMMUNITY VALUES

### 2.1 Key issues

Participants were asked to write down on post-it notes what their top issues they saw for Taupo Town Centre. The following collates their responses under key themes.

#### Lack of identity, theme, brand and vision

There is a general feeling that Taupo lacks a clear vision, theme or identity that would inform branding, development and support the integration of Taupo 'character' into the place, events and programming. The perception is that many groups are doing good work but heading in different directions. This is linked to the issues related to the need to 'work together and change mindsets' through strong 'leadership' and direction.

#### Pedestrian connections/walkability and access

Access to and from, and within the Town Centre for pedestrians is an issue. Pedestrian access and links to the lake, the domain, civic centre and boat harbour/river and other amenities. This issue is linked with parking and traffic as much of the Town Centre streets and planning are geared to serve these, rather than pedestrians.

#### Parking and traffic

There is a feeling that there is not enough parking around the Town Centre and that traffic was an issue for pedestrians as it tends to dominate the streets, however there was also discussion about a culture of driving and parking between destinations that were within easy walking distance.

#### Perception mind sets and apathy

Many are concerned about a portion of the community having a traditional mind set that is not open to change. There is a degree of apathy regarding the capacity for change in Taupo, and many traders feel that we are not working well together and supporting each other.

#### Retail offer, CBD mix and big box retailers

Fear from Town Centre Traders that 'big box' retail may take trade from the town centre That 'big box' retail should remain close to town and be a smaller format than what is found on the outskirts of many cities in New Zealand. Retail offer needs to be attractive enough for tourists but also provide variety for locals - many are still going elsewhere for things.

Key issues (mentioned by at least 2 participants)	Traders	Community	Council officers	Councillors	Stakeholders	Property owners
Cost/ high rent/ ownership	✓					
Retail offer /cbd mix/big box	✓			✓		✓
Perception/mind sets/apathy	✓			✓	✓	
Not working together/priorities and differing opinion	✓		✓			
Identity/theme/brand/vision	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Connection with the lake					✓	
Traffic	✓			✓	✓	
Pedestrian Connections/walkability access and linkages		✓	✓		✓	✓
Heart/civic centre				✓	✓	
Funding/cost			✓		✓	
Events					✓	
Connection with park/domain				✓	✓	
Council Blocks/governance					✓	
Lack of Leadership/commitment and buy-in		✓	✓	✓		
Training and education						✓
Accommodation options (no motorhome/camping)						✓
Trading policies (ie. liquor licensing)						✓
Delivery/implementation			✓			
Tourism	✓					
Parking	✓			✓	✓	
Safety/crime	✓				✓	
Customer service/opening hours	✓			✓		
Youth	✓					
Maintenance	✓				✓	
Council bureaucracy	✓					
Poor design/ future planning	✓				✓	
Hospitality retail space	✓					
Transport	✓					
CBD development					✓	
Public amenity				✓		
Laneways				✓		

## 2.2 Key opportunities

Participants were asked to write down on post-it notes what their top opportunities they were for Taupo Town Centre. The following collates their responses under key themes.

### Identity, theme, brand and vision

Just as strong an issue as an opportunity, creating a vision, brand and identity for Taupo is seen as a way to unite many projects being undertaken for the betterment of Taupo, as well as create a sense of place that is uniquely Taupo which will attract visitors and reflect the local.

### Pedestrian connections/ walkability and access

Improving connections, walkability and access is seen as a great opportunity, this is strongly linked with the opportunity identified to review **traffic management** in the wake of the **ETA construction**.

### Heart and civic centre

A strong need for a civic heart was articulated by participants, the need for a place to gather a 'town square' to meet people and as an introduction point to Taupo for visitors. This was linked to the need for a **clear vision and identity** which could be embodied by the civic heart.

### Laneway activation

The large back alleyways within the town centre were seen as an opportunity to expand retail offer, and potentially provide introductory retail spaces/markets for operators that are just starting to establish themselves. Improvements such as pedestrian connects and art installations were also suggested to activate laneways, and address safety issues.

### Connection to the lake, river, park, domain

There is a strong longing to be reconnected to the natural and green assets that surround the town centre, including the lake, the river, the park and the domain.

Key opportunities (mentioned by at least 2 participants)	Traders	Community	Council officers	Councillors	Stakeholders	Property owners
Tourism	✓				✓	
Unique retail offer/food outlets /cbd mix POD	✓			✓		
Urban form/ streetscape improvements						✓
Wayfinding						✓
Identity/theme/brand/vision	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Connection with boat harbour/marina					✓	
ETA/ traffic management	✓				✓	
Pedestrian Connections/walkability access and linkages		✓	✓	✓		✓
Heart/civic centre	✓		✓	✓	✓	
CBD development/investment				✓	✓	
Creativity		✓				
Connection with park/domain	✓			✓		
Connection with the lake/river	✓			✓	✓	
Gardens beauty and amenity		✓				✓
Location		✓				
Laneway activation				✓	✓	✓
Leadership						✓
Environmental sustainability/clean and green	✓					✓
Natural environment	✓					
Creating a 'destination'/new destinations	✓					
Parking	✓			✓		
Global/international opportunity	✓					
Local traders	✓					
Youth activities	✓				✓	
Family friendly	✓					
Events	✓				✓	
Space and rest areas	✓					
Customer service/trading hours	✓				✓	
Town planning and design					✓	
Pride/bringing people together/changing mindsets				✓		
Ownership				✓		
Tongariro St and Lake Terrace				✓		
Tuwharetoa representation				✓		



## 2.3 Taupo Personality Now...

Workshop participants were asked to think of Taupo Town Centre as a person and the characteristics it would have 'now'. The following summarises the most common responses across all groups.

Taupo Town Centre today is described as:

- A bit tired and scruffy
- A place that lacks fashion sense and needs more style and guidance
- A place with a split personality, it can be busy, it can be quiet
- Unsure of itself and still coming of age
- Conservative in its thinking
- **A place that lacks an overall vision or sense of character**
- **A bit 'tipsy' after house, a party person or a binge drinker**
- **A place with a strong sense of community, small enough to care with a family focus**
- **Fragmented, it is trying to do too many things and needs consistency**

Taupo Personality Now Description	Community	Council officers	Councillors	Stake-holders	Property owners
Scruffy in places; Tired; Cheaply clad; Grey and dull; scruffy	✓		✓	✓	✓
Lack of vision, Lacks character, Utilitarian	✓			✓	✓
No fashion sense; Failed cosmetic surgery; Wants to be attractive; Needs more style; Dowdy; Lack of palette/guidelines	✓		✓	✓	✓
'Tipsy' after hours, Party person; Binge drinker	✓	✓		✓	
Sense of community; Small enough to care; Family focused		✓	✓	✓	
Split personality; Can be busy – can be quiet; Cross-dresser – doesn't know what it is!; Schizophrenic; Grizzly bear – hibernates; Holiday mode; Bi-polar	✓		✓	✓	✓
Climate influence – happy on the sunny side				✓	
Small, Accessible				✓	
Fragmented; Trying to do lots of things; Fragmented- opening hours		✓		✓	✓
Under-developed, Lacks a wow factor				✓	
Independent thinking; No establishment; Independent			✓		✓
Bit scared at night; Badly lit; Bit dangerous; Noisy at night; Bit unruly, Anti-family			✓		✓
Wow factors – lake			✓		
Artistic			✓		
Too serious/paranoid; Mid life crisis; Nutters			✓		
Adolescent; Finding itself; Culturally immature; Unsure of itself; Teenage or direction – Pre-puberty – Not sure; Experimenting; Un-artistic to date, Very young and old	✓	✓	✓		✓
Great views; Great open space; Aware of its natural beauty, Greening	✓		✓		
Friendly – but poor service; Friendly, Welcoming	✓				✓
Diverse (in some respects)	✓				
Car dominated; Not pedestrian friendly	✓				
Conservative; Scared of change Bit timid; (Very) Traditional; Caught in a time capsule; Wants change but some parts don't; Mid life crisis; Apathetic, Needs more community spirit, Introverted, Mono cultural	✓	✓	✓		✓
Increasingly future conscious	✓				
Likes to shop, Needs more space to hang	✓				
Mature	✓				
Money-focussed and hungry; Retires with wealth	✓	✓			
Optimistic; Passionate; Bit adventurous; Good bones, Pride in civic events	✓				✓
Home and free					✓
Paunchy, round					✓

## 2.4 Taupo Personality Future...

Workshop participants were asked to think of Taupo Town Centre as a person and the characteristics it would have 'in the future'. The following summarises the most common responses across all groups.

Taupo will be:

- A place that is beautiful and stylish
- A place with a strong sense of identity, character and communication of our stories
- Vibrant, exciting, diverse, and fun
- **A place that owns a wonderful public heart**
- **Small, intimate**
- **A place that provides a new style of living and freedom**

The Taupo community will be:

- A flexible and adaptable community that is open minded, confident and dares to be different
- **Strong united community that is positive and works well with others**

Taupo Personality Future Description	Community	Council officers	Councillors	Stake-holders	Property owners
Welcoming	✓			✓	
Beautiful, stylish, well accessorised	✓		✓	✓	✓
Feel/identity, Distinctive, Boutique/POD, Local, Clear sense of identity, Consistent message, Good communicator, Integrity and authenticity, More stories, More obvious, True to our culture, Taupo colour, brand and identity, not a mishmash, Uniquely special, Strong sense of the local, Cultural authenticity, both ancient heritage - Maori, geology and landform & provincial, Know who we are - matured, Retains roots	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vibrant, Exciting and fun, Busy with choice, Full of action, Extroverted, Dynamic, Diversity	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Quirky, Surprising, Bit quirky, break out	✓		✓	✓	
Wow-factor, On the map! – well-known, Everyone knows us – wants to visit & live with us, Envied by others		✓		✓	
Name changed – Lake Taupo				✓	
Connection with natural features, lakeside, connected to lake/river, Natural ability			✓	✓	✓
Cultural, Arty, Worldly, Musical/buskers, Artistic and cultural, Creative and inclusive	✓		✓	✓	
Has a heart, Public heart – wonderful, Has heart, will love	✓		✓	✓	
Small, intimate	✓		✓	✓	
Proud, Community & pride, 'Real' civic pride, Sense of ownership			✓		✓
Safe, safe and peaceful	✓		✓		
Heritage, Historical			✓		
2nd living room, Peoples place (not cars)			✓		
Works well with others, United, Wants to be liked, Positive	✓	✓	✓		
Integrated			✓		
New style of living, Freedom, Live, work and play		✓	✓		✓
Green	✓				
Fit, Healthy- access to needed care, especially for elderly, Needs a workout	✓				✓
Lean and mean, doesn't over do it	✓				
Has shelter	✓				
Flexible & Adoptable – people ready for change, Open minded, More confident & extroverted, Dares to be different		✓	✓	✓	✓

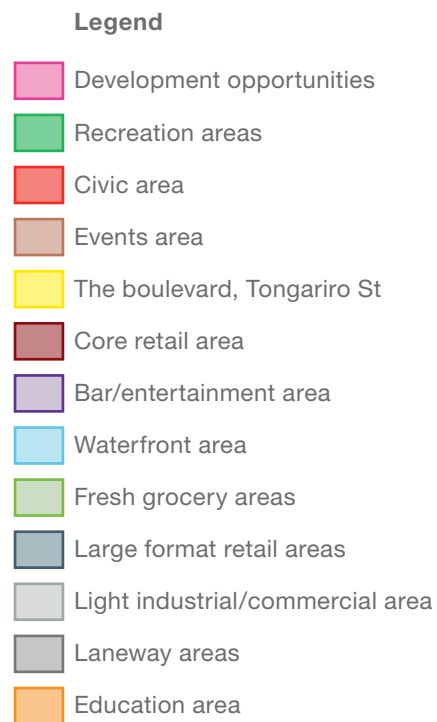
# 3.0 KEY EMERGING AREAS

## Town Centre opportunities

The following mapping is indicative of key emerging areas that Village Well identified through the 'walk the beat' of Taupo Town Centre and consultation with the Taupo community.

This represents the existing context, and identifies key locations and connections that could be supported through the Taupo Town Centre Structure Plan. Highlighted in white are the key opportunities identified by community members and Village Well.

The following details the positioning and opportunities for the Town Centre that was developed through the consultation process, and Village Well experience in the creation of great town centres.





## 3.1 The waterfront area

### Our Verandah – people’s place

A beautiful civic space and sanctuary for locals and visitors to enjoy, it provides access and views to the ‘wow’ factor lake and mountains. A place to sit, rest and celebrate. It has become a mini piazza with small rooms/spaces for different user groups. Free of commercial pressure, it celebrates and reflects the indigenous Tuwharetoa stories in subtle ways. The views are accessed by punching through view lines by purchasing chosen buildings. Access to the water could be experienced via a small pier onto the lake, or other methods to bring visitors and locals closer to the water. The Main Road is now diverted allowing full access to the waterfront, a window into the spiritual magnetic views of the Lake.

#### Key points:

- Provide a mix is predominantly cafés and restaurants to utilise Lake and Mountain views
- Multi-level mixed use urban from that builds up towards the centre of town will maximise access to views
- Provide a small waterfront piazza space - designed to tell the stories of the Lake and Mountain
- Provide a way to connect with the water

## 3.2 The boulevard, Tongariro st

### A new boulevard

With the bypass, the street can be repositioned as a boulevard with traffic reduced to 2 lanes. Strongly connected to the civic heart and the Lake

#### Key points:

- Build out footpaths – open up to café seating with views to the Lake
- Reduce carparks on retail side to remove blockages of views to the Lake
- Create traffic calming elements that also beautify and connect the precincts
- Mix includes cafés, restaurants, entertainment, gift ware, visitors products and services



Image captions to come...

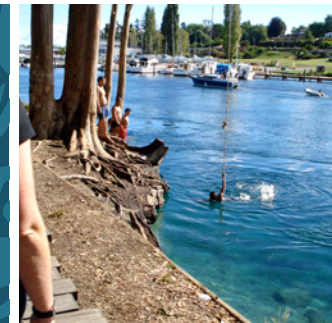
## 3.3 Civic heart

### Our heart

Just as Lake Taupo is known as the heart of the north island, this space is known as the heart of the Taupo Town Centre. This civic heart provides the starting point to visitors travels to Taupo, and is a core meeting place for local residents from day to day and for key civic events and celebrations. It is strongly connected to the boulevard

#### Key elements:

- Potential for water feature and/or a paving over the road which is in the shape of the lake as a the civic heart
- Indication the location of hidden secrets such as the boat harbour as the Lakes major artery - utilise the stories of the creation of the lake (story of Ngatoro-irangi climbing Mount Tauhara, uprooting a totara tree and throwing it down the mountain - other versions say he threw his spear or kuwha - a dry basin was pierced where it fell, which then filled with water to become Lake Taupo) and the creation of fish (said to have been generated from huia feathers or strands from Ngatoro-rangi's cloak).
- Indicate surrounding attractions marked on it such as skydiving, the mountain, boating through artistic representation and wayfinding signage
- Take some space from the road taken to give a larger civic space in front of the Great Lake Centre
- Inclusion of Council Head Office into the civic heart to further activate the civic heart and provide positive activity for adjacent core retail areas
- Possibly a new arts/heritage/cultural centre also forming part of the civic heart



## 3.4 Boat Harbour

### Taupo's hidden secret, a quaint harbour village atmosphere

This hidden secret is one of the most beautiful destinations within Taupo. It is a place to relax and enjoy the natural features of the river, go for a swim and to learn about the maritime history of Lake Taupo and the Harbour.

#### Key points:

- Create an entry statement, let people know they've arrived at a destinations
- 2-3 cafés, restaurants, boat builders, gift shop
- A beautiful walk through the Domain to the harbour
- Way finding signage through the precincts indicating the boat harbour village location
- Sanctuary for view
- Bbq areas and seating

## 3.5 Laneway areas

### Surprise and special moments of Taupo

Taupo, like Melbourne, has an abundance of back of house laneways that present a wonderful opportunity to provide incubators for new retailers, artist and creative spaces, for markets and for safe active pedestrian links that support the walkability of the town centre experience. Workshop participants identified this as a key opportunity for Taupo, and suggested activation would be a positive solution to safety issues.

#### Key points:

- Incubator for young designers, retailers and cafes
- Artist installation spaces
- Intimate, connected and safe active pedestrian network supporting walkability
- Laneway markets

## 3.6 Rest areas

### Moments of pause and sanctuary

Provide a place to sit and pause amongst the town centre shopping experience. These will become meeting places, places for buskers to perform and creatives spaces for public art.

#### Key points:

- Comfortable
- Sheltered
- Green
- Connected to pedestrian links and wayfinding



(far left) Hardware Lane, Melbourne (left) Rose St Market, Coburg



## 3.7 Culture and entertainment

### The pulse of Taupo Town Centre

A key part of Taupo's economic base and culture is a love of events and entertainment. Events and tourism were identified by participants as opportunities for the Town Centre to build on. Activities for family and youth, sporting and cultural entertainment that reflects the Taupo community lifestyle and stories will engage the local population and attract visitors.

#### Events; our celebration place with fun, family, arts, community and sports

Key points:

- Arts installations (including those that utilise laneways)
- Summer concerts in the Domain
- Events calendar and promotions
- Utilise strong volunteer base for local events, not just the big ticket events
- Provide activities for youth, they feel there is not enough to do in town - engaging and skill based such as battle of the bands
- Involve youth in the organisation of events for their age groups

#### Entertainment/evening economy; eat, meet, play

Key points:

- Build on the existing evening entertainment area provided by bars and restaurants
- Refresh landscaping to reflect the hospitality focus for streetside dining and evening economy
- Consider lighting strategies for evening economy to create an entertainment 'atmosphere' such as strings of fairy lights
- Aim to extend the bar and entertainment area - be open to the possibility of moving existing retail to other sites more appropriate to the retail core
- Encourage busking, creative and musical

#### Cultural centre; celebrates our past, present and future

Key points:

- Provide cultural activities that education visitors and locals about the past origins of Taupo, both from European and Tuwharetoa accounts
- Engage with the Tuwharetoa on the most appropriate and effective events and sculptural installations that tell the stories of Tangata Whenua



## 3.8 Retail core

### Our town, something for everyone

Workshop participants indicated that there is a lack of adequate retail mix in the current Town Centre. It is important to ensure that the needs of the local community are met, and this will in turn meet the base needs of visitors. In addition urban offerings, unique local product and destinational boutique retail and dining experiences will be attractors for visitors and provide variety of quality goods for locals.

#### Key points:

- Core conveniences and services to serve local needs
- Boutique fashion
- Café pockets

#### Beyond the retail core:

- New retail expansion areas - department stores and boutique fashion
- Catalyst project developments - targeted at new industry products and experiences that will ensure that we remain the playground of New Zealand

## 3.9 Fresh food offer

### Our regional food story

Taupo has the capacity to build on its current fresh food offer provided by supermarkets and occasional farmers market. Boutique delis, fruit shops, organics are already starting to emerge in Taupo between the 2 supermarket destinations. There is opportunity to provide fresh food markets in the space between (see map p.16), or expand on the current market to reflect the local foods and produce unique to New Zealand and Taupo. This will be an attractor to visitors and locals alike.

#### Key points:

- Taupo has the opportunity to expand on current fresh food offer
- Local and organic product from the region and New Zealand
- Markets expansion - promotion as a key food event within the region



(far left) Plateau, Tuwharetoa St (left) boutique retail (right) Yum deli, Scenic Cellars (far right) Organics Queen Vic Market



## 3.10 Recreation and garden areas

### Our lungs - gardens for active and passive recreation

Workshop participants highlighted the need for the Town Centre to reconnect with recreation areas such as parks and the Domain and the civic heart of Taupo. Creating an environment where recreation and garden areas feel truly part of the Town Centre will enhance its atmosphere and improve activation of public spaces and retail adjacent.

#### Key points:

- Ensure a strong connection between the Domain and the Town Centre
- Integrate the civic heart with recreation and garden areas
- Incorporation greenery within the town centre that connects with recreation and garden areas
- Promote areas that are not well used currently such as the Rose Garden, let people know it is there
- Create 'pleasure gardens' - active and passive spaces
- Adventure playground



## 3.11 Light industrial/commercial

### Innovative and entrepreneurial

A place for light industry, destination warehouse direct retail and larger format retail. Big box retail outside the town centre was identified as an issue for traders who had businesses in the Town Centre.

#### Key points:

- Work with light industrial/commercial operators to provide shop front activation to the street
- Providing opportunities for larger format retail will ensure regional big box threat is somewhat mitigated

## 3.12 Wayfinding and access

### Convenience and ease of access for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists

Ease of access is key to a pleasurable experience of any Town Centre. Providing wayfinding that makes your trip easy, but also tells the story of Taupo will go a long way to achieving this. Education programs for the community about alternative modes of transport such as walking and cycling will help mitigate traffic and parking issues which were identified by workshop participants.

#### Wayfinding strategy

Key points:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive wayfinding strategy that reflects the stories and identity of Taupo Town Centre.
- Provide information regarding the current street names on signage - their origin, and interesting facts such as streets named after 'people' run east to west, and 'places' north to south
- Utilise wayfinding to provide 'walking times' (time in minutes to walk from one destination to another) to encourage more pedestrian connections between destinations

#### Pedestrian connections

Key points:

- Ensure clearly defined pedestrian connections that prioritise people over cars
- Install new clear pedestrian crossings in key locations, they can be fun and quirky

#### Cycling

Key points:

- Park and walk/ride strategies
- Provide clearly defined cycling paths throughout the town centre
- Provide 'cycling times' (time in minutes to cycle from one destination to another) to key destinations with the town centre and beyond
- Provide bicycle hire for visitors located close to the civic heart and key drop off area for tourist buses
- Provide creative bicycle parking areas

#### Parking & traffic

Key points:

- Look for innovative parking strategies
- Embark on an education program on walking to encourage less vehicles in the Town Centre
- Investigate multi-deck car parking integrated with retail facility to attract destinational large format national retailers to combat the threat of regional big box centres



## 3.13 21st Century school

### Place of learning for the whole community, a 21st century school

Loved and celebrated schools that can be used by learners at all ages from pre-school through to old age. Utilised by community groups for events and activities, the school is connected to and provide community services such as child care and youth activities.

Key points:

- Redesign entries to connect more strongly with the Town Centre
- Signage that reflects a community hub and provides info about its services
- Destinations for community groups and events
- U3A - University of the 3rd Age - provides short courses and other useful resources for older people to further their education or artistic skills
- Night classes
- Child care

