

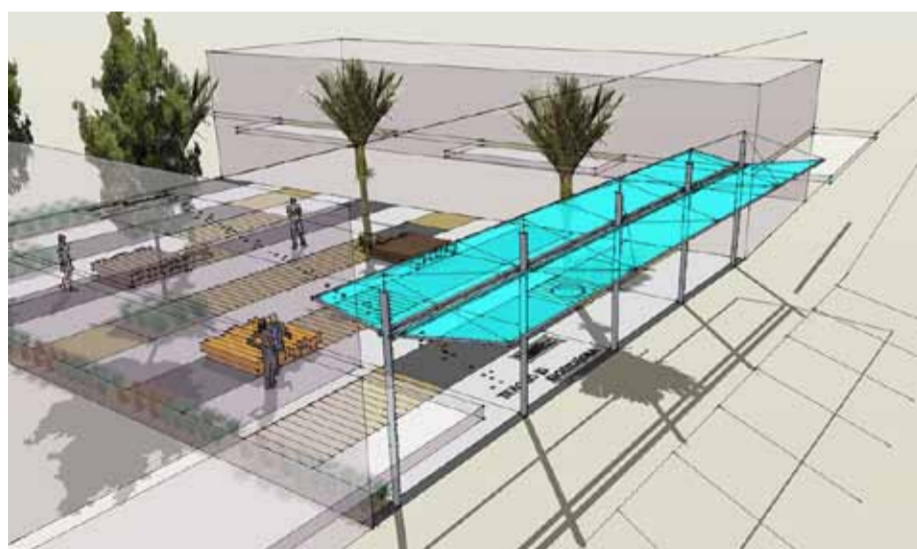
STRAND PLAZA DRAWS CLOSER

The first phase of the Strand Plaza Redevelopment has been completed with the demolition of three buildings from 132 to 142 The Strand. Two of the buildings have made way for a community space including seating (which can be removed to accommodate community events), decking, trees, bicycle stands and bollards. The plaza will also feature a covered walkway section along The Strand frontage.

One of the buildings, 132 to 134 The Strand, was privately-owned and will be rebuilt as retail space. Construction of the Plaza is set to begin soon and the entire project is expected to be completed by 1 October 2014.



Concept design of the Strand Plaza redevelopment



CREATIVE COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Are you planning an art or cultural project and need funding to make it happen? The Whakatāne District Council, in conjunction with Creative New Zealand, has funding available to assist with artistic and cultural projects that fit into one of the following three arts categories: Broad Community Involvement, Diversity or Young People.

Information and application forms are available from Council offices, libraries or on the website (www.whakatane.govt.nz), and should be completed and returned to the Council by 5pm on Friday, 30 May 2014.

COMMUNITY AWARDS NOMINATIONS OPEN

Volunteer groups and organisations play a vital role in our community, and the Trustpower Community Awards seeks to recognise their good work.

Run in conjunction with the Whakatāne District Council, the Awards have been held since 2012 and cover five categories: heritage and environment, health and wellbeing, arts and culture, sport and leisure, and educational and child/youth development. Category winners receive \$500, runners-up receive \$250, and the overall winner gets \$1,500 and an all-expenses paid trip to the National Community Awards in Wellington in March 2015. If there is a group or organisation that you want to see rewarded for their dedication, then pick up an entry form from any Council offices, or complete one on-line at trustpower.co.nz/community-awards. Entries close at 5pm on Friday, 13 June 2014.

INTEGRATED LIFESTYLE DEVELOPMENT AN ECONOMY-DRIVER

An economic impact assessment carried out on the proposed integrated lifestyle development at Bunyan Road has highlighted significant benefits for the Whakatāne District if the development goes ahead.

The assessment, by Market Economics Limited, one of New Zealand's leading independent consultancies, found that over the 20-year construction phase, the project could generate more than \$480 million in activity and numerous jobs, excluding any potential transfer effects.

The report also concluded that more than 80 percent of the benefits would be captured locally in the Eastern Bay of Plenty and that once fully-developed, the project would generate an ongoing economic stimulus of more than \$62 million a year with 900-plus additional jobs.

The proposed development would include a retirement village and residential housing, and in the longer-term a marine precinct providing canal-style housing, public boat ramp and neighbourhood retail facilities. The project was expected to result in a wide range of benefits, including a boost to Whakatāne's profile as a lifestyle destination.

The strengthening of the town's brand would be a wider, flow-on effect of the development, but a very important one says Whakatāne Mayor Tony Bonne. "It's critical that Whakatāne is positioned to attract its share of the baby boomer generation, who are now selling farms and businesses and relocating to warmer centres for their retirement years."

The view across the Whakatāne River to the Council-owned land proposed for development at Bunyan Road



ROAD SAFETY WEEK

Road safety affects everyone. Think of a time you've let a pedestrian cross the road, avoided a wandering animal, put a seatbelt on or made sure your children were strapped in. You were doing your bit to keep yourself and other road users safe. Well done.

But we have to keep up the good work. May 19-26 is road safety week and a good time to celebrate the safety measures most people take. It's also a chance to step up and help make Eastern Bay roads safer for everyone.

Organised by Brake New Zealand, road safety week highlights the effects of fatal and serious road crashes. From 2009-2013 there were 1519 crashes in the Eastern Bay involving 43 fatalities and 146 serious injuries. So far this year, seven people have been killed on our roads.

It is a sad truth that most crashes are preventable.

Road safety week is a chance for you to make a difference, and the Eastern Bay road safety team urges you to contribute. Schools, kindergartens and early childhood centres can plan activities or competitions for children and teens. Drivers can participate in short surveys or quizzes to learn more about road dangers and road safety advocates or community groups can use Brake's resources to promote messages about dangers specific to their local roads.

Do you have something planned for the week? Tell Brake NZ and have your activities featured on its website and in e-bulletins. Visit www.brake.org.nz/roadsafetyweek for more information or to register your activity.



YOUNG WOMEN 'TAKE THE LEAD'

Young women across the Eastern Bay of Plenty recently had the opportunity to try some new sports, test their leadership skills and meet a real Olympian, thanks to the Take the Lead initiative which launched in schools earlier this year.

The three-year programme aims to provide opportunities for leadership development in sport and recreation for young women aged between 13 and 20. The project is jointly supported by Sport New Zealand, Sport Bay of Plenty, and the Whakatāne, Kawerau and Ōpōtiki District Councils.

A recent workshop at Ōhope involved the participating schools in paddle-boarding, quitoes, puzzles, kayaking, and other activities that had them thinking and acting as teams. Heelan Tompkins from the Olympic Ambassadors Programme was guest speaker.

Students from Edgecumbe College, Ōpōtiki College, Te Whānau-a-Apanui Area School, Tarawera High School, Murupara Area School and Te Wharekura O Rūātōki were the first to be involved in the programme, while Whakatāne and Trident High Schools will be involved from Term Three.

For more information, contact Paula Chapman at the Whakatāne District Council (ph. 306 0500 or email Paula.Chapman@whakatane.govt.nz).



MUTTONBIRDS TAKE FLIGHT

The Whakatāne District Council's Moutohora Muttonbirds team has been announced as the winner of the 2014 New Zealand Local Government Management Challenge.

The challenge sees teams from local government organisations throughout the country compete in problem-solving exercises addressing real industry themes. The competition tests a broad range of management skills with a Local Government focus and culminates with a challenge day, which is a pressure cooker environment where teams are required to deliver on a number of tasks.

Henry Pipkin, the Council's Human Resources Manager and mentor to the Muttonbirds, says the challenge is an excellent way to hone leadership skills and for staff to gain practical experience focussed on issues and challenges that local authorities face. "This is the first time that Whakatāne has entered a team," Mr Pipkin said, "and for us to win the event is very rewarding and an indicator of the hard work our staff put in."

Having trumped the opposition in New Zealand, the Muttonbirds are now set to compete against the winners from each of the Australian states in June.



YOUTH COUNCIL

2014 Kaunihera Taiohi – the Whakatāne Youth Council – is underway.

The Youth Council is a vehicle allowing young people to participate in local government planning and decision-making. The purpose is to give a 'voice' to citizens aged 12 - 24 years who live in the Whakatāne District.

This year, members of the Youth Council will be asked to decide the operational purpose and practice of their current and future Youth Councils. This is a 'first step' in a review of the Youth Council operational structure.

Current coordination goals are:

- To build consistent district-wide representation;
- To ensure a diverse range of young people are given a voice and thereby the opportunity to influence Council decision-making;
- To establish the Youth Council as a key advisory group for all future Council social policy development;
- To facilitate direct engagement with Council decision-making processes; and
- To lessen the focus on organising events, while increasing members' contributions to existing community programmes.

In an effort to strengthen district-wide representation, this year's recruitment process prioritised applicants' 'home' communities. In addition to required secondary school positions, each area school was allocated a position.

Priority for additional members was also given to young people attending alternative or tertiary education facilities, or who were in paid or unpaid employment.

Members recently met with representatives of the Rotorua Youth Council to learn how they operated their Kaunihera Taiohi, as a first step in developing the organisation of the Whakatāne Youth Council. As a result, they have allocated specific positions of responsibility and agreed to meet on a fortnightly basis.