



Ōpōtiki District Council
STRONG COMMUNITY STRONG FUTURE

Pānui

Issue 84 // January 2021



Keeping you up to date with Ōpōtiki District Council

From the Mayor

The year past has been a truly unusual one and as a community we have been through a lot. When I was writing my New Year message just 12 months ago, I certainly had no idea what 2020 would hold!

While we have been through a lot, we have also achieved an incredible amount. I think we will look back on this year and see that in many ways, this was the turning point for our district. We got a hard-won green light and central government funding for our Harbour Development. And we were ready – we are already out on site, hiring locals, training apprentices, stock-piling rock, testing the ground, building roads and pouring concrete. You can read more about progress in this Panui.

COVID and the economic stimulus that has flowed from the pandemic has given the district a huge boost on many of our projects that we have always planned for but had to chip away at slowly to reduce impact on rates. But we now have footpaths throughout the town and in Te Kaha, Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi rising above street level, a new (and busy) digital hub, refurbished infrastructure (particularly our sewer network), plans for a revitalised town centre and a new-look skatepark, rose gardens and bike trails. A new housing development is being built on the old Sale Yards site, the mussel processing factory is nearing completion, and work on the marina is in the wings. Ōpōtiki looks and feels very different to a year ago!

And we did all this in the midst of a global pandemic.

I hope that this summer, you and your whānau have been able to enjoy a well-earned break. Especially staff at council who have worked hard all year – essential workers who made sure that everything kept working through the lockdown, dealt with the extra workload of emergency management through a pandemic, funding applications, audits, and even the Long Term Plan.

I'd also like to thank my fellow elected members for picking up such a responsibility during a year I am sure none of us expected. I appreciate that, as new councillors, many of you have had a lot of new information, systems and processes to learn so thank you for your willingness to go the extra mile. In addition, in this unusual year we have needed to work with new technology (new for many of us, but perhaps not our younger Councillors!) and adapt to working remotely. All credit to our Council for managing so well.

I think Ōpōtiki has shown its resilience this year and we should be proud of all that we have achieved. I hope you continue to enjoy a safe and happy summer and let's face the challenges and opportunities of 2021 together.

Lyn Riesterer, Mayor



Aerial view of Christmas in the Park



Maurua group from Ōpōtiki College performing at Christmas in the Park



Lolly scramble at Christmas in the Park



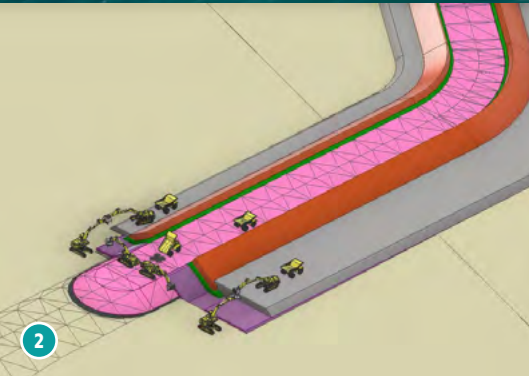
Movie Night - The Greatest Showman



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Harbour development making progress

It has been a very busy few months on construction of Ōpōtiki's new harbour entrance. There are more trucks coming and going on the new and extended Snell Road. You may have heard the ground testing and dynamic compaction near the river mouth. There are new wave buoys keeping track of our unique sea conditions off the beach. Amazing hanbar moulds are being made locally by Charlie Hayes and those are being used by Eastern Bay Concrete to start the huge job of producing around 14,000 concrete hanbars to strengthen the seawalls. There are new jobs in these industries and apprentices are learning new trades.



2

In sister projects, the mussel farm is going from strength to strength and the processing factory is taking shape. You may have even heard a little more about the marina planned for the western side of Ōpōtiki Harbour. Council's Workforce Development team continues to work with all these industries to understand current and future employment needs so that there are strong pathways for local people to have the right skills and training to join the workforce in new roles in these areas.



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PHOTOS:

1. Conceptual image of harbour entrance when complete
2. Indication of the scale of the seawalls
3. Compaction testing near the river mouth
4. Concrete hanbar cast by Eastern Bay Concrete
5. Wave buoys monitoring sea conditions off the coast
6. Hikoi to welcome contractors to site back in June



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IN BRIEF

Council's hard-working **gardening team** have the town looking beautiful this summer. The roses seem to love their new location on Forsyth Street and the new paths through the park on Nelson Street have made those gardens much more accessible too. There has been a lot of feedback on the plans for the old rose gardens on Church and Ford Street and that public space will start taking shape early this year.

Congratulations to the winners drawn from entries into **Ngā Whetu o Te Mangoroa / Stars of the Community** - Thornton Park Rest Home and Takapau Flavell. There were so many amazing entries into the awards and really special stories of kindness shown during the COVID-19 lockdown last year.

Ōpōtiki district has a new operative **District Plan**. The Plan provides the district with a blueprint for land use so that we grow and develop sustainably, protecting the natural environment and preparing for changes like more housing and new industry through the harbour development.

Council will be consulting on the **Revenue and Financing Policy** from 26 January to 23 February. This Policy determines who benefits from the activities that we provide and how they are funded. As always, we aim to get external funding where possible and the remainder needs to be funded locally. We want to know whether you think the funding principles for each of the activities that Council provides is appropriate. The full policy can be found on our website.

Buzz around town

Ōpōtiki's CBD and surrounds will look very different in a year or so. We are working together with business owners, residents, iwi and technical specialists to make sure our town centre is a vibrant place that brings together what makes us unique – our past, present and future communities.

Government funding has allowed us to move much more quickly with all sorts of projects - town centre revitalisation, footpaths, park upgrades, improvements to club facilities, cycleways and horse trails.

TE TĀHUHU O TE RANGI

Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi, the new technology hub and library facility, is rising above the foundations and work is progressing really well. Foundation works are complete and pre cast walls and columns have gone in over the Christmas period.

While this large-scale construction is underway, we are also working with our arts planning group to make sure we have amazing local artwork inside and outside the building. Council successfully applied for Creative NZ funding (\$149,700) through Ngā Toi ā Rohe - Arts in the Regions for a series of Toi Māori so Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi reflects our community and our history inside and out.

Photo below: Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi is starting to take shape on the corner of King and Church Streets.



SKATE PARK DESIGN

The new shape and look of Ōpōtiki's skate park has attracted heaps of great feedback from current users of the space and those who would like to use it more. There were many great ideas like barbeques, seating, shade areas, art and sculptures, parking and water fountains. All this feedback is being incorporated into a draft design and we hope to be sharing that early this year.

Funding for the skate park upgrade is part of the \$11.9 million earmarked for projects to revitalise the CBD announced by the deputy Prime Minister in 2020. Other upgrades will include a new look and feel for the town centre and improvements to historic entrances and verandas, signage, upgrades to currently vacant buildings and green spaces and a central playground at the Rose Gardens.



ŌPŌTIKI'S DIGITAL HUB

Ōpōtiki's digital hub was launched in November and provides a wealth of new opportunities for individuals, community groups, and small businesses to access high quality digital access and technology.

Council has been working on the establishment of the digital hub with a \$400,000 grant from the Provincial Growth Fund's digital connectivity funding package. The hub will move into Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi, just a few doors down, when the building is complete.

Over summer, take a moment to pop in and explore some of the hangarau mathiko (digital technologies) at the hub.

Photo right: Mayor Riesterer getting a taste of Virtual Reality at the Hub.



ŌPŌTIKI WHAT'S ON



Our events team have again delivered and supported an outstanding collection of family-friendly events for an action-packed summer!

Hundreds of locals and visitors alike have enjoyed a community-led Christmas in the Park and Parade, the Ōpōtiki Rodeo, fishing competitions, outdoor movies, live music, beach games and races and of course the famous Lantern Festival at the end of this month.

If you haven't already been making the most of these events, it is not too late! Grab a full calendar of events at the i-SITE.

MOUTOHORA ŌHIWA EVENING MARKET

21 January, 4pm – 7pm

SLIMS BAR FAMILY FISHING COMPETITION

22–24 January

ŌPŌTIKI LANTERN FESTIVAL

30 January, 3pm – 9pm

EASTERN BAY TRIMMING AND MULCHING ŌPŌTIKI SHOW JUMPING AND SHOW HUNTER 2021

6–7 February, 8:30am onwards

ŌPŌTIKI COASTGUARD SHOW AND SHINE

20 February, 9am onwards

Race the tide – Teams building their sand structures to fight off the incoming tide



It's all happening at the library

The Ōpōtiki library continues to be a bustling hub of activity. There's a swag of Arts on Tour events booked for 2021, kicking off with the "Gypsy Jazz Duo" in February, followed by "My Secret Life: Peter Sinclair" in March. The first of two PechaKucha evenings is scheduled for mid-year (plenty of time to put your name down to be a presenter!). The unique 20-slides-of-20-seconds format has introduced the community to the fascinating, informative, famous and just plain weird side of life in the Eastern Bay. Tickets always sell out fast so keep an eye out when they are available.

It is also well-worth signing up to the semi-regular email from the library, keep an eye on the library's web page or like the Ōpōtiki library Facebook page so you have all the latest on events, new resources and books, news and reviews.

Keep up with the news at www.odc.govt.nz
or follow us on facebook @OpotikiDistrictCouncil

This newsletter is produced quarterly by:



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