

A message from the Mayor

As we head into April and the new financial year approaches, I want to thank you for your continued interest in what council is delivering for our district.

Elected members and staff are working through the final preparations for the Annual Plan for 2026/2027, which sets out our priorities, projects and budget for the year ahead. One of the biggest issues raised with council is the condition of our roads. Our community has been absolutely clear that dependable roading is a priority, and that remains a strong area of focus for our council.

At the same time, we've taken a hard look at every part of the budget to make sure we're keeping rates increases as low as we reasonably can. At a recent council meeting, elected members agreed to a proposed rates increase of 7.9% (after growth), which is less than the budgeted Long Term Plan increase of 8.3% (after growth). There is still work to do before the Annual Plan is adopted in June, but I'm pleased we have been able to reduce the proposed increase. Elected members are very aware of the cost-of-living pressures our communities are facing, as well as ongoing and transportation cost escalation for council, and are working carefully to balance affordability with the continued delivery of essential services, particularly roading.

Alongside regular roading maintenance, we continue to make steady progress repairing slips and damage caused by past severe weather events. This work takes time and

careful planning, but over the past year we have seen major gains, with full access restored and resilience strengthened on multiple routes. I want to acknowledge the patience shown by residents and to thank our roading team and contractors who are often working in challenging conditions.

Strong governance oversight also remains a priority. In March, council announced the appointment of Bruce Robertson, the new independent chair for our Audit, Risk and Finance Committee. Bruce brings considerable experience and a valuable independent perspective, helping ensure strong financial stewardship and accountability on behalf of the Kaipara community.

Progress on Northland Water Done Well continues. Kaipara has recently reaffirmed its commitment in principle to establishing a Northland-wide council-controlled organisation to deliver drinking water and wastewater services from July 2027. Our focus remains on ensuring Kaipara's views and ratepayer interests are clearly represented as plans progress.



Jonathan Larsen
Mayor of Kaipara District



What's been happening in Kaipara

Solutions for Tinopai wharf

We've been working on a solution for Tinopai wharf, an important community asset which has been closed for some time. Last month, council staff, elected members, and representatives from the Tinopai Wharf Committee met to continue discussions, including reviewing early design information and high level cost estimates. We are looking at possible pathways forward for the wharf, including what options there are for external funding.



Slip repairs across the district

The multi-year, multi-million dollar Kaipara slip remediation programme has continued in full swing over the last twelve months, with roading crews and contractors working across multiple sites at once.

Roads where major slip repairs have been completed since June 2025 include Tinopai, Lawrence, Pahi, Tangowahine, and Bickerstaffe.

These repairs are not just fixing immediate damage but are also strengthening the roading network for the long term. Network inspections after last year's storms showed that earlier investment in repairing significant slips, as well as upgraded culverts, rock armouring, and improved drainage, has already reduced new damage across the district.

Seawall for Insley Street

Insley Street in Mangawhai is being widened and strengthened as part of the district's roading resilience programme, aimed at protecting our shoreline and roads from future storm damage. The project will see a three metre wide revetment and rock armouring to provide road support and enable safer walking and access.

A fresh set of pipes

We're replacing ageing water pipes in several towns to improve reliability. In Maungatūroto, 825 metres of watermain are being replaced between Griffin Road and Matai Drive. In Dargaville, about 2.4 km of watermains are being renewed between the treatment plant on Hokianga Road and Logan Street, along with an extra 300 metres at Hokianga Road. New pumps were also installed at Rotu and Parore West in March as part of regular network maintenance.

In Ruawai, a new bore is providing a second water source, to improve the town's water supply security.

The tale of two floodgates

Two floodgates have recently been upgraded to reduce flood risk and improve waterway resilience.

In Dargaville, a new, larger floodgate and culvert at Beach Road will better cope with heavy rain and reduce flooding. South of Te Kopūru, the Owairangi floodgate has been replaced, with stopbanks raised and the outlet stabilised after issues with the old culvert.



New fees and charges for 2026/2027

Feedback is now open for our proposed fees and charges for the coming year. These fees help fund services used by the community and are paid by users rather than through rates.

Most fees are proposed to increase by three percent to reflect inflation, while some have changed or decreased, and others are set by statute.

Have your say at kaipara.govt.nz/fees-charges. Submissions close 4 May 2026.

Thanks for your feedback

We recently heard from around 750 people during the Long Term Plan 2027–2037 engagement. You gave us valuable input on everything from roads and solid waste to parks, open spaces and facilities and more. We're only at the start of building the Long Term Plan for 2027–2037, and we're looking forward to keeping the conversation going with communities across the district over the coming year. Formal consultation will take place next year.