

# Greetings from the Mayor

October is here, marking 12 months since the new Council was elected. While we have faced setbacks from the extreme weather events, we have also made good headway on a number of key projects and initiatives.

Among them:

- Getting on with connectivity improvements; constructed and opened another section of the Mangawhai shared path including the boardwalk over the estuary (work which has been, for the most part, externally funded). In Dargaville we have kicked off the Kaipara Cycle Network Connections project with comprehensive community engagement to complete the design. As we go to print this fully externally funded project is with NZTA for final approvals to start construction.
- Continued construction on Poutō wharf, with the wharf planned to be open and in use by Christmas.
- Progressed the District Plan Review, with a working party appointed to finalise development of the Proposed District Plan (on track for consultation in 2024), and another working group set up to nail down the Engineering Standards and ensure they are an appropriate fit for the district.
- Completed renewal and improvement projects for our waste and water networks; extended the wastewater treatment system along Spring Street in Dargaville, relined the wastewater pipes in Kaiwaka, replaced ageing watermain pipes in Maungaturoto, doubled water storage in Ruawai with the completion of a new water storage tank, and constructed a balance tank for the Mangawhai wastewater treatment plant.
- Distributed funding back to our communities through the Kaipara District Mayoral Relief Fund, Community Grants, Reserve Contributions Contestable Fund, as well as Rural Travel Fund and Creative Communities Scheme.

- Investigated options for a waste to energy plant, a modern solution for rubbish and waste disposal. Investigations continue to make good progress with our partners in this space.

We've also been working closely with senior staff to simplify the processes for resource and building consent applications.

Not just getting on with work, but also looking for efficiencies and trimming budgets. We have made some significant savings already. This includes around \$48,000 saved by stopping our Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) membership. Most notably though, the decision that came with the biggest saving was our recent approval for a shortened Long Term Plan with a focus on recovery. And with no requirement to audit the Long Term Plan, the unanimous decision to take up the emergency recovery order will also see Council save around \$250,000.

Planning for three years, rather than ten, gives us the breathing space to prioritise the important business of recovery and remediation for the district. Frankly, the extreme weather events knocked us for six, and we are now dealing with long-lasting damage that we had not provisioned for.

Alongside this, we're looking at how we deliver roading to ensure it is fit for purpose for our communities. We're working hard with our contractors to deliver the most effective and efficient service.



**Craig Jepson**  
*Kaipara District Mayor*



## Road repairs on track

It's roadwork season and you can get used to seeing road cones dotted about the district. They're a sign that our teams are ramping up activity around roading improvements and road renewal programmes.

During the extreme weather events earlier this year, five years worth of normal road wear and tear occurred over just two weeks. There were 109 road closures throughout Kaipara and we are left with major road damage that is expected to take two to three years to address.

Temporary fixes can now be permanently repaired. Funding from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) has enabled us to get started, with approximately \$10.5 million worth of works completed as of the end of September.

While recovering from road damage, our teams are also getting on with the maintenance they already had planned for this year. Every month our roading teams inspect around 90% of the network and plan routine maintenance such as pothole repair and grading. During August alone they graded 18% of the unsealed road network, filled 11,500 potholes and cleared 7km of drains.

While the extremely wet summer of 2022/2023 only allowed crews five clear weeks of road construction, a clearer forecast for this year should allow crews to undertake an uninterrupted stretch of critical work across the Kaipara roading network.

## Building resilience

Where possible, we are building greater resilience into the network. NZTA has provided over \$4 million to repair and increase resilience on the Papanoa-Oakleigh and Kaiwaka/Cove Road detour routes.

As part of the Kaipara KickStart programme approximately 10% of Kaipara's unsealed network was reconstructed and finished with a harder-wearing pavement. These roads performed well during the weather events and the team is incrementally applying that methodology across the network.

Bob Taylor Road in Tangiteroria is on the move, away from the scouring caused by the storms. The cut material will raise the road above the major flood zone.



Slip-prone hillsides are being benched which involves flattening areas above and/or below the roads to provide a stable base for fill.

## Major slip and bridge repair

We'll soon complete most of the minor (less than \$100,000) slip repairs. Fifteen complex slips will require detailed design and funding to repair. These will be prioritised and work planned over the next two or three years.

Work on the Devich Road bridge in Mangawhai starts soon and we plan to complete it by Christmas.

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## Tree clearing

Ngā Manga Atawhai is a new collaborative project funded by government to remove dangerous and fallen trees. This will improve the resilience of the roading and power networks and general safety for people at risk from falling trees. Felled trees will be processed and provided to low-income families as firewood.






## Stay up to date

A new searchable database will soon be available that shows when road inspections were done and what repairs are planned. Go to [kaipara.govt.nz/road-repairs](http://kaipara.govt.nz/road-repairs) to find out more.

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