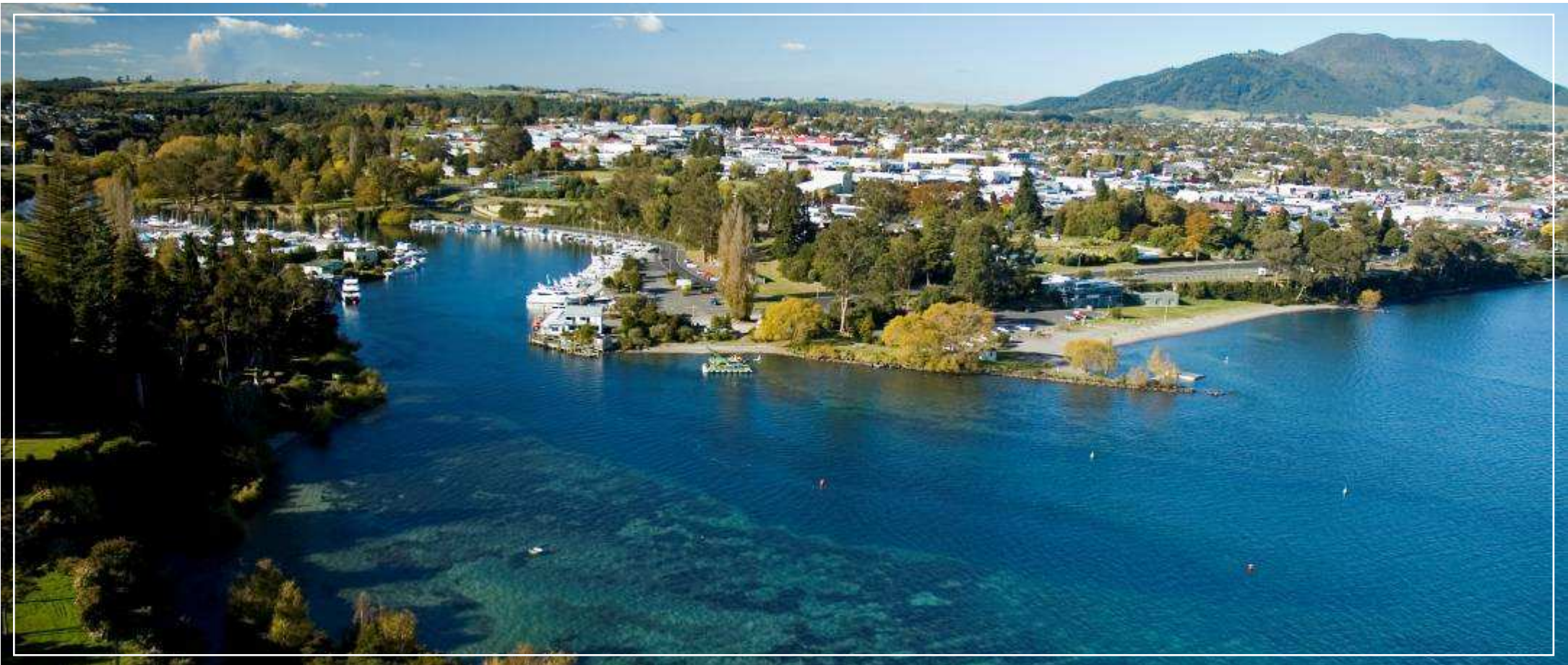


Taupō Urban Commercial and Industrial Structure Plan

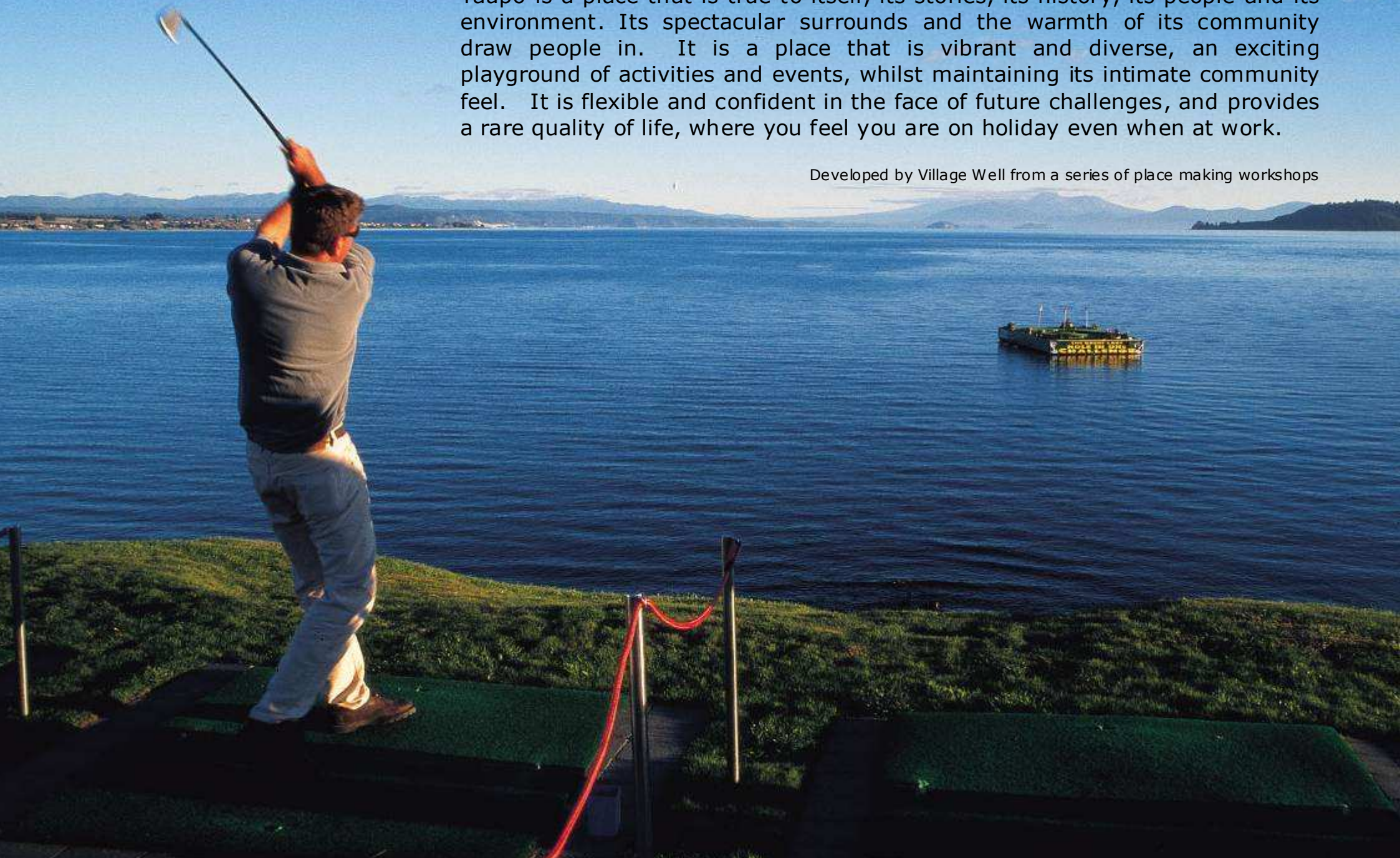
Adopted
25 January 2011



Taupō's place essence

Taupō 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.

Developed by Village Well from a series of place making workshops



Contents page

Part A Vision	7
Introduction	8
Commitment to quality design	10
A Vision for enhancement	12
Part B Implementation	15
Actions and priorities	16
Land use patterns (town centre and industrial)	18
Gateways and wayfinding	30
Traffic management	37
Streets as shared spaces	42
Tongariro Street	46
Laneways and service lanes	49
Roberts Street and the plaza	52
Civic Heart	53
Tongariro Domain	56
Town centre car parking	58
Public transport	61
Building height	62
Taupō Boat Harbour	64
Part C Background	65
Formation of this Plan	66
Background information	69
Industrial infrastructure overview	77
Bibliography	81
Glossary	82
Appendix	84



Part A Vision



GREAT LAKE CENTRE

Introduction

This Taupō Urban Commercial and Industrial Structure Plan (Structure Plan) is a planning document prepared under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA). It provides a vision for future planning of the Taupō town centre and new industrial areas. The Plan purposely provides direction over the next 20 years or so, which is imbedded in the Implementation section. Projects identified in the Implementation section have been given a priority, however the detailed planning and financial commitment will be programmed through the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) process.

The exact timing of the different implementation projects will change as funding permits, however it is critical that there is an overall plan to ensure that the different projects are undertaken in an integrated manner.

Planning for economic wellbeing

The Council has responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2002 to help provide for the social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing of the community. There are similar obligations under the Resource Management Act 1991 governing how the Council manages natural and physical resources in the District.

Community wellbeing can be achieved through a range of different ways, with this Structure Plan being one. While social and environmental goals form part of this Structure Plan, the primary focus is on promoting economic wellbeing.

Council has a leadership role in facilitating economic wellbeing. This is through Council's ownership of land, as a planning authority and as a provider of infrastructure such as roads, utility pipes, parks, and community facilities.



Cloak of Tia sculpture in the civic heart



Town centre study area (refer to page 20 for the industrial study areas)

Reconnecting the town

Completion of the East Taupō Arterial (ETA) will remove heavy traffic from town. This has the potential to create an economic challenge with less overall traffic passing through the town centre. However, it also allows for improved amenity along the lakefront and through the town centre, and opportunities to better connect the commercial areas with the Lake, River and Tongariro Domain.

At present Tongariro Street acts as a barrier between the commercial area and the Domain. Similarly, Lake Terrace cuts between the town centre and the lakefront. Addressing these connections is a critical part of the Structure Plan direction.

The redevelopment of the Roberts Street area will be a crucial part of this overall reconnection. An attractive meeting and entertainment place connected to the Lake will create a destination attracting and keeping people in the town centre.

Creating quality places

Communities need to have vibrant, attractive, liveable places to attract a skilled workforce. Taupō is blessed with outstanding natural assets but these need to be balanced with a quality urban environment. Good community infrastructure along with quality commercial activity all contribute to what is sometimes referred to as the “look and feel” of the community. This balance of natural assets and a quality town centre is important when it comes to attracting permanent residents, and encouraging visitors to stay longer in Taupō.

The streets and lanes that connect the town centre provide the places where people meet to do business and enjoy the atmosphere of the town centre. Turning them into quality places is a critical part of attracting people to spend time in the town centre with the associated social and economic benefits.

Similarly, providing community spaces is an important element in a quality town centre. However, simply providing parks, squares and plazas is not enough, they need to be well designed and complemented by a mix of activities that will attract all sorts of people to use them. There is no point providing a beautifully landscaped square if there is no surrounding activity to attract people and activate the space.

Commitment to quality design

Building resilient communities

At the core of the concept of sustainability is meeting the social, cultural, economic and environmental needs of today's communities without compromising those of future generations.

At present, there are elements of the way we are living that are not sustainable, like the heavy dependence on fossil fuels and the generation of greenhouse gases. If we carry on as we are, natural resources and physical systems will continue to be damaged and depleted. This will have serious consequences for the ability of people to produce enough food, while changes in climate could displace millions of people and destroy the livelihoods of others.

The problems we face in achieving sustainability are large, but they can be overcome. We will require new ways of thinking about how we live our lives – how we work, how we do business, how we eat, shop, travel and participate in our communities.

This is important in the context of the Structure Plan because the ongoing implementation will offer the Council opportunities to reduce negative impacts on the environment, build a stronger sense of community, and make the community more resilient to environmental and economic change.

The benefits to be gained through actions like maintaining a compact town centre, creating community gathering places, and promoting walking, cycling and public transport may not be seen overnight, but it is important that they are undertaken for the long term.



Lake Terrace looking west toward the town centre

Environmentally sustainable design

When Council comes to undertake specific projects to implement this Structure Plan it will do so in a way that shows its commitment to good quality design. This is based on the premise that negative environmental and social effects can be mitigated or avoided through skilful and sensitive design.

There are a range of different design disciplines which contribute toward achieving this.

- Low Impact Design comprises design and development practices that utilise natural systems and low impact technologies. Key elements include working with nature, avoiding or minimising impervious surfaces, minimising earthworks in construction, utilising vegetation to assist in trapping sediment and pollutants.
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design focuses on reducing crime and the potential for crime through better design and management of the built environment. Application of this approach is particularly relevant in Taupō given the town's accreditation as an International Safe Community by the World Health Organisation.
- Urban Design is a more holistic approach to the design and development of built environments. The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol embodies the basic urban design principles, and as a signatory, Council has committed to applying those principles as a way of creating more liveable communities.

The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol

The Urban Design Protocol identifies seven essential design qualities that create quality urban design:

Context: Seeing that buildings, places and spaces are part of the whole town or city

Character: Reflecting and enhancing the distinctive character, heritage and identity of our urban environment

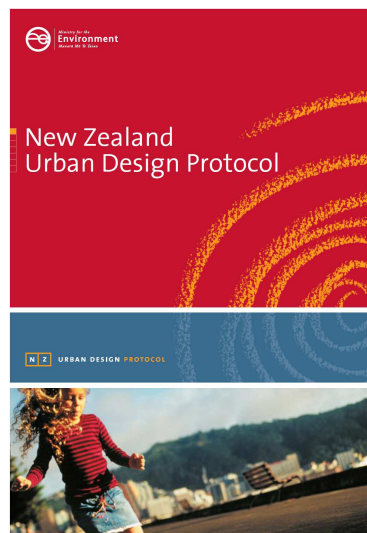
Choice: Ensuring diversity and choice for people

Connections: Enhancing how different networks link together for people

Creativity: Encouraging innovative and imaginative solutions

Custodianship: Ensuring design is environmentally sustainable, safe and healthy

Collaboration: Communicating and sharing knowledge across sectors, professions and with communities.



Taupō District Council became a signatory to the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol on 28 October 2008

A Vision for enhancement

The economy is constantly changing, and the needs of the community, including visitors, alter over time. Nationally, people are very mobile in this day and age, and choices are available to them when it comes to deciding where to live, start businesses and go on holiday.

This Structure Plan is about making sure that Taupō has a competitive advantage when it comes to securing business growth, attracting a skilled work force and promoting ongoing economic growth.

The key is to build on the strengths that Taupō currently has. These are the things which have brought people to live and work in this community, and have enticed visitors to come and stay. It is vital that these strengths are not undermined, but instead enhanced by future commercial and industrial growth.

Change is inevitable, and without a vision for enhancement, change can bring with it many negative elements. Leadership and action by Council can help prevent economic and environmental decline.

The Structure Plan vision for enhancement is to build on existing strengths to create a quality urban environment. This will allow the commercial sector to grow, and provide for the economic and social wellbeing of the wider community.

Council can achieve many goals through enhancement to the public realm (streets, parks and squares), but partnership with, and investment by the private sector will be required to create a truly vibrant, exciting and economically resilient town centre.








Taupō's current strengths

- Stunning lakefront and riverside open spaces
- Visual and physical links to the wider landscape
- A flexible and functional town centre street grid system
- A compact and walkable town centre
- North facing shops
- Tongariro Street fronts onto the open space of the Tongariro Domain
- A cluster of civic activities around the cenotaph space next to the commercial areas
- Promising laneway network
- Plenty of open space through the town centre
- Industrial areas in close proximity to the East Taupō Arterial
- Location at the crossroads of the North Island

Taupō's challenges

- Developing a town centre that is liveable meeting the future needs of locals
- Creating an attractive location for new businesses, their employees and families
- Maintaining and enhancing a distinctive destination for visitors
- Turning the existing civic space into a civic heart for the town centre, a place for the community to come together
- Reconnecting with the Lake, Domain and River
- Building flexibility to meet changes in the way people live and work such as telecommuting, and resilience to manage the inevitable ups and downs in the economy

Structure Plan goals

Character	<i>To reinforce the distinct character of Taupō by embracing and integrating the natural and cultural qualities that define the town and district</i>	
Land use	<i>To consolidate future commercial and industrial growth in a way that enhances the quality of life for the Taupō community and protects or improves environmental values</i>	
Built form	<i>To achieve a sustainable and compact urban form that projects a distinct image, promotes an active and vibrant street edge and improves architectural quality.</i>	
Circulation	<i>To reconnect the town centre with the lakefront, the Waikato River & surrounding residential areas. To refocus towards pedestrians, cyclists & public transport. Connect existing & future commercial/industrial areas with sound transport links</i>	
Public space	<i>To realise the untapped potential of Taupō's open space network and provide a diverse range of safe and functional public spaces from sheltered arcades through to squares and open-air events facilities</i>	
Heritage and culture	<i>To protect and draw attention to Taupō's unique heritage and culture and provide an increased focus on events and the creative arts</i>	
Economic growth	<i>To develop an economy with multiple opportunities for employment and economic investment that is able to leverage off Taupō's lifestyle and image to retain and attract a diversity of people and business interests</i>	
Sustainability	<i>To ensure that future growth is delivered in a sustainable manner, both in terms of delivering affordable, efficient infrastructural solutions and embracing Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles in the landscape and built environment</i>	