

JANUARY 2015 – FINAL DRAFT

CONTENTS

1.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2.	INTRODUCTION	4
3.	CONTEXT	6
	Place-based approach	6
	Challenges and opportunities	8
4.	TOWN CENTRE PLAN SUMMARY	10
5.	PLACE MAKING STRATEGIES	12
	Build a coherent visitor experience	12
	Make great streets and public places	16
	Provide better, adaptable facilities	22
	Deliver “Destination Taihape	28
7.	IMPLEMENTATION - MAKING IT HAPPEN	34
	Project priorities	36
	Design brief – Civic Centre	38
8.	APPENDIX	40



© Creative Communities International Pty Ltd
PO Box 442 Ashgrove Q 4060, Australia

Creative Communities has prepared this report in good faith, on the basis of information available at the date of publication, without any independent verification. You must not rely on the information in this report as an alternative to advice from the relevant professionals at your Local Authority. Creative Communities will not be liable for any loss, damage, cost or expense incurred or arising by reason of any person using or relying on information in this publication.

CLIENT: Rangitikei District Council
Version 1: 15/1/2014



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Four strategies

1. Build a coherent visitor experience
2. Make great streets and public places
3. Provide better, adaptable facilities
4. Deliver “Destination Taihape”

Purpose

The purpose of the Taihape Town Centre Plan (TCP) is to establish an agreed framework and guide for:

- The future management and development of the public areas (including roads/footpaths) and green spaces in central Taihape;
- The nature and timing of the development and associated funding decisions of the public and private sector;
- Defining council’s role in the CBD, and create a civic heart for the town; and
- Building a consensus on the future development of a multi-purpose facility at Memorial Park.



Place based approach

The Taihape Town Centre Plan uses a “place-based approach” to planning. It focuses on how the town will best work as a “people place” for both locals and visitors. This is especially important for Taihape because the local economy is highly reliant on attracting visitors and getting passing traffic to stop.

Place-based planning is very different to the rational approach to planning which tends to deliver spaces that lack “heart and soul”.

Making it happen

The Town Centre Plan will require a coordinated approach to translate the strategies and tactics into results on the ground. The three work streams are:

1. Collaboration and negotiation with stakeholders.
2. Design briefing, design, and cost estimation.
3. Funding and prioritising through the Long Term Plan and aligning Asset Management.

Four high priority projects which will yield immediate results:

1. Fund community-based place making projects aimed at delivering Destination Taihape.
2. Wayfinding signs
3. Make Clock Tower Park a village green
4. Encourage retailers to embrace the footpath and be generous.

2. INTRODUCTION

Background

Taihape is located in the northern Rangitikei District. It services a large rural community and lies on State Highway 1 and the North Island main trunk railway line. The 2013 census records the town's population as 1,515. This is a decrease of 279 people, or 15.6 percent, since the 2006 Census. Taihape is home to 10.8 percent of Rangitikei District's population.

Taihape, like other rural towns, was initially an isolated pioneer settlement. It developed as a key railway and transport town, reaching its peak of population and activity during the 1950s and 1960s. Much of its economic activity revolved around the railway and servicing rural communities. A major decline occurred in the 1980s due to a restructure and electrification of the railway system and a general downturn in the farming sector. However, its location on State Highway 1 has ensured its economic survival.

As a gateway to the District, Taihape has developed into an important traveller destination, with a vibrant café scene in the CBD area and major tourist attractions (River Valley Lodge, Mokai Gravity Canyon) in the area. It remains a service centre for the local farming community. The town has similarities with Bulls – its southern “gateway” counterpart. Whereas Bulls has developed an identity around the a-bull trademark, Taihape's brand centres around being the “Gumboot Capital of the World” and it attracts

large numbers of people to the annual gumboot-throwing contest.

As described in the 2012–22 Long Term Plan, Council has a strategic priority to rationalise its portfolio of Community and Leisure Assets with the intent to have fewer, but better facilities in the future. This reflects the declining use of existing buildings and predicted changes in patterns of use from the changing demographic of the population.

A group in Taihape has developed a concept for a multi-purpose leisure facility (the Leisure Hub) in the Memorial Park, which sits behind the main CBD area. However, there is no consensus within the town over this development.

The town faces some important decisions around the earthquake-prone Town Hall, which also houses the Library and Information centre. The seismic strengthening bill is estimated at \$1.9 million, and because of this Council has signalled that it does not see a long term future for this building. Clearly, the town needs to look at the functionality of all its assets – current and proposed – and develop a rational plan for the future.

Vision

Participants at the first workshop were asked to choose three words that described how they would like Taihape to be in the future. Like words were grouped by the participants. The larger the word, the more people who selected that word.

The goal of the Town Centre Plan – is to develop and deliver this vision for the future.



Purpose

The purpose of the Taihape Town Centre Plan (TCP) is to establish an agreed framework and guide for:

- The future management and development of the public areas (including roads/footpaths) and green spaces in central Taihape;
- The nature and timing of the development and associated funding decisions of the public and private sector;
- Defining council's role in the CBD, and create a civic heart for the town; and
- Building a consensus on the future development of a multi-purpose facility at Memorial Park.

Scope

The Taihape TCP will focus on the area of the Town zoned commercial in the Rangitikei District Plan. In general terms, this area encompasses Hautapu Street from Weka Street in the south to Mataroa Road in the north and from Robin Street in the east to Kokako Street west including Memorial Park.

Objectives

- Identification of issues, opportunities and options, including costs.
- Work with the community to address the barriers that are holding the community back from moving forward in a cohesive manner.
- Foster community and stakeholder engagement and consensus-building in developing and finalising the Taihape TCP.
- Determine Council's ongoing role in the CBD, particularly with regard to civic space and administrative, information centre and library services, and finalise any proposals through the 2015–25 Long Term Plan process.
- Establish a plan for the future development of the town centre, including recreational/leisure facilities at Memorial Park, and finalise any proposals through the 2015–25 Long Term Plan process.
- A community–centric action plan, which can be implemented by the community 'as of right'.

Strategic Drivers

Council has considered demographic change predicted for the District and has agreed to align its activities and services to promote the District as a place to retire to (or to stay for retirement) and as a place to raise a family. Council has recognised the role of its community and leisure assets in achieving these goals. The management of community and leisure assets in

the District must also contribute to Council's strategic priority to address ageing (and surplus) infrastructure, including rationalising provision in line with the community's ability to afford these facilities.

Council wants to take a district-wide strategic approach to the management of its community and leisure assets over the lifetime of the LTP; building on the historical investment the community has made in these assets, but not being restricted by it in terms of developing assets that are fit-for-future purpose. There is a historical community expectation these assets will be available in perpetuity – this has impacted upon rationalisation of these assets, but the whole portfolio is increasingly unaffordable. In future, Council will not undertake major programmes until a review of the potential to partner/collaborate with other stakeholders has been undertaken. It is open to the full range of ownership, maintenance and management models (including contributing towards facilities owned by other organisations that meet community needs) in order to give communities more options.

Process

A public meeting was held on July 30, 2014, where a *Taihape Town Centre Plan Steering Group* was appointed to guide the process on behalf of the community. The Steering Group's mandate was to have a draft Town Centre Plan to present to Council in January 2014 for inclusion and implementation through the 2014/15 Annual Plan and the 2015–25 LTP.

The Steering Group has been supported by an

independent urban design consultancy, Creative Communities. Creative Communities takes a place-based approach to urban design using a process of community engagement and "prototyping" to ensure buy-in from all stakeholders.



Resident spell out their vision for Taihape

3. CONTEXT

3.1 PLACE-BASED APPROACH

The Taihape Town Centre Plan uses a “place-based approach” to planning. It focuses on how the town will best work as a “people place” for both locals and visitors. This is especially important for Taihape because the local economy is highly reliant on attracting visitors and getting passing traffic to stop.

Place-based planning is very different to the rational approach to planning. The rational approach became popular in the late 1950s and 1960s and was dominant until recently. Many experts are now arguing that the rational approach to planning tends to deliver spaces that lack “heart and soul”.

Here is a comparison of the two approaches.

RATIONAL PLANNING	PLACE-BASED PLANNING
Optimise the parts	Total system
Utilitarian	Quality of experience
Object focus	Nurture focus
Movement focus	Exchange and movement focus
Ordered and static	Dynamic and evolving
Master planned	Agile and incremental



1. Optimise the Parts vs Total System

The rational approach viewed towns and cities as a giant machine that could be improved by optimising its parts. Specialists looked after different parts of the machine: traffic engineers looked after roads; landscape architects looked after parks; economic development officers looked after business. Place-based planning views towns and cities as a complex system that can only be improved by understanding the relationships between the parts. Optimising one part, without considering its impact on the total system, can create a chain reaction that degrades the entire town or city. Conversely, working on a leverage point with multiple impacts can create virtuous cycles.

2. Utilitarian vs Quality of Experience

The rational approach focused on meeting people's needs (such as the need for a toilet, drinking water, seat, road, footpath, shade) in a utilitarian fashion. To improve efficiency, the method of meeting these needs was standardized, resulting in sterile and mechanized environments. The place-based approach focuses on the quality of experience people have in a space. It is focused on facilitating social interaction and stimulating sense experiences that are enriching. Its goal is to build an emotional attachment to that space by creating memories for those who visit or dwell in a space.

3. Object Focus vs Nurture Focus

The rational approach focused almost exclusively on the objects in a space and how those objects were arranged. The result was nicely designed spaces, but they felt more like an over-ordered display house than a homely home. Place-based planning also has a great emphasis on design, but design that creates spaces that nurture people, and helps them reach their fullest potential. Take public seating as an example. Rational planning is more focused on how they look, and how easy they are to maintain while place-based planning is more concerned about whether they facilitate social interaction or whether they provide for people-watching.



4. Movement vs Exchange

Because rational planning views towns and cities as a giant machine, it is movement focused (an idle machine is an unproductive machine). This results in environments that are totally dominated by the movement function. Even footpaths become primarily spaces for pedestrian movement. Place-based planning believes that the core mission of towns and cities is "facilitating diverse exchanges": social exchanges, economic exchanges, information exchanges, exchanges of friendship. Rational planning sees most public spaces as a corridor for movement, while place-based planning sees the same spaces as a series of rooms for exchange (but rooms people can move through).

5. Ordered and Static vs Dynamic and Evolving

Because rational planning views the city as a large machine, it sees its core mission as creating order and preventing disorder: order makes the machine more efficient, and disorder makes the machine less efficient. Place-based planning believes that towns and cities are a "living organism", dynamic and

evolving. In nature, chaos and disorder are essential to the evolutionary process – nothing new can ever emerge in a totally ordered universe. Spontaneous, unplanned exchanges are the life-blood of public places. They feed the creative and economic life of the town or city. Imposing too much order can strangle the life out of public places.

6. Master Planned vs Agile and Incremental

For rational planning, the key to creating and maintaining order has been master planning. However, master planning only manages to create an illusion of control. Because towns and cities are constantly evolving, it is actually impossible to forecast how they will evolve or to control their evolution. Place-based planning attempts to be much more agile by making small "tactical interventions". It is nimble in how it responds to emerging trends, unforeseeable events, and unexpected opportunities. It sees the beginning of every intervention as a "trial", not as a final solution. It focuses on making places rather than making plans.

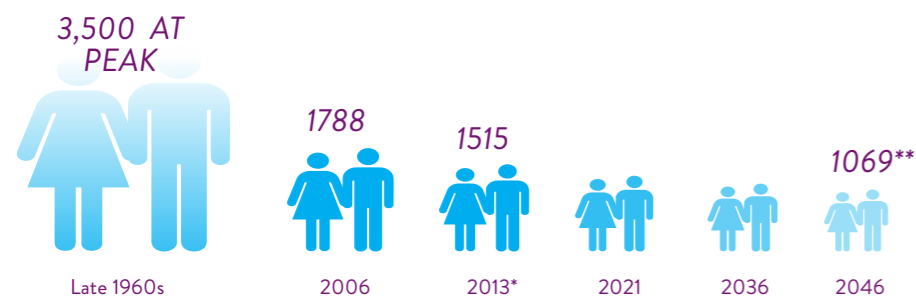
3.2 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

POPULATION DECLINE

Taihape's population is less than half what it was at its peak in the late 1960s down from approximately 3,500 to 1515.

It has decreased by 15.6% between 2006 and 2013* – a loss of 279 people – the largest population loss in the district during that period.

Rangitikei district's population has decreased 4.7 % in the last 7 years* – a loss of approximately 690 people.



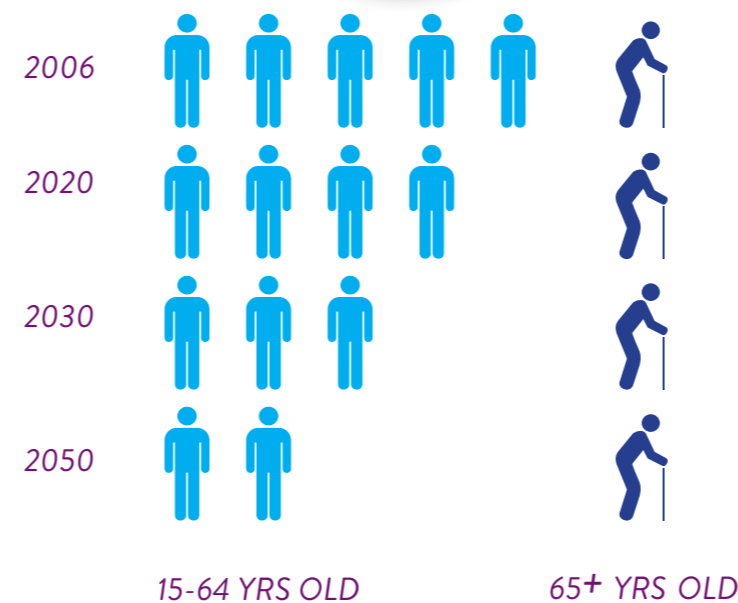
TAIHAPE POPULATION PROJECTION

* Census data – Usually resident population. These figures are for the township, not for the district.
 **Based on advice from Statistics New Zealand to Rangitikei District Council

BASED ON CURRENT TRENDS
AND INFORMATION, TAIHAPE'S
POPULATION IS FORECAST TO
DECREASE BY ALMOST 50% OVER
THE NEXT 30 YEARS

AGEING POPULATION

BY 2050
1 in 3
PEOPLE WILL BE
OVER 65*



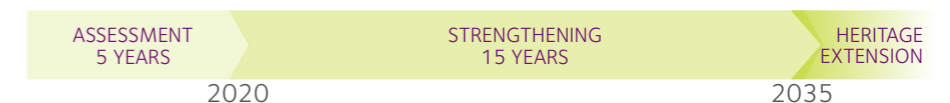
* The Business of Ageing P6 Ministry of Social Development. This is a PROJECTION ONLY.

It is projected that in the future, older people will be healthier, wealthier, and have more time to participate in civic life.

The baby-boomer generation has different preferences than previous generations and is likely to work for longer, but in different arrangements.

In the future, people will be more focused on their "life stage" than their age. They will be looking for facilities and services that enhance their particular life stage.

EARTHQUAKE PRONE BUILDINGS

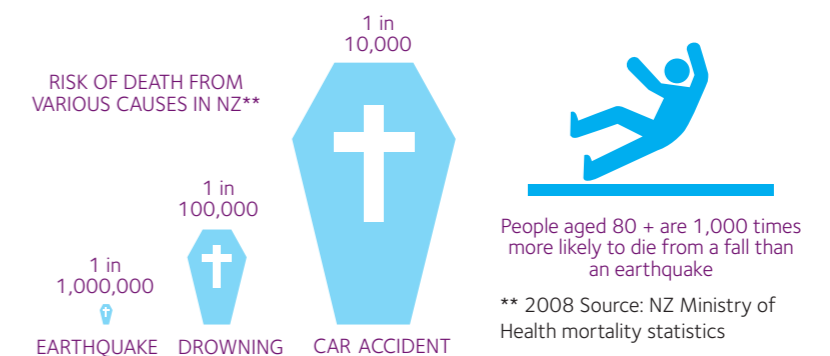


TIME ALLOWED FOR ACTION, if legislation were enacted now

The New Zealand government is making changes to the Building Act for earthquake prone buildings (EQPB). Building owners will have specific time-frames to resolve their building's issues. A possible 10-year extension for heritage listed buildings may be part of the building act changes, if certain conditions are met. Information about earthquake prone buildings is poor nation-wide. Consequently, only desktop analysis to determine likely earthquake-prone buildings has been carried out in Taihape:

- There are approximately 34 earthquake prone buildings in the town centre – 23% of buildings in the commercial zone.
- 24 Potential EQPB buildings are on Hautapu Street – 42% of the buildings on the street.
- The town hall is an earthquake prone building, and costs for strengthening have been estimated at \$1.91 million.

EARTHQUAKE RISK IS POORLY UNDERSTOOD BY THE PUBLIC:



ON STATE HIGHWAY 1

Taihape is on State Highway 1, strategically located between Wellington and Taupo and is the northern gateway to the Rangitikei District. This presents a significant economic opportunity – get a greater proportion of those who currently drive through to stop and get those who currently use the town as a pit-stop to stay longer. This requires making Taihape *look and feel* like a destination town with its own unique charm and personality.

GUMBOOT CAPITAL

Taihape has already established a trademark as “gumboot capital of the world”. This is reinforced with a giant sculpture of a gumboot, gumboot throwing lane and a gumboot festival. However, the gumboot experience is currently fractured and not exploited to its maximum capacity. There are no gumboots to throw at Gumboot Lane, and no giant gumboots outside the information centre that you can stand in and take your photo. There is no wayfinding to tell you what experiences are on offer or how to get there.

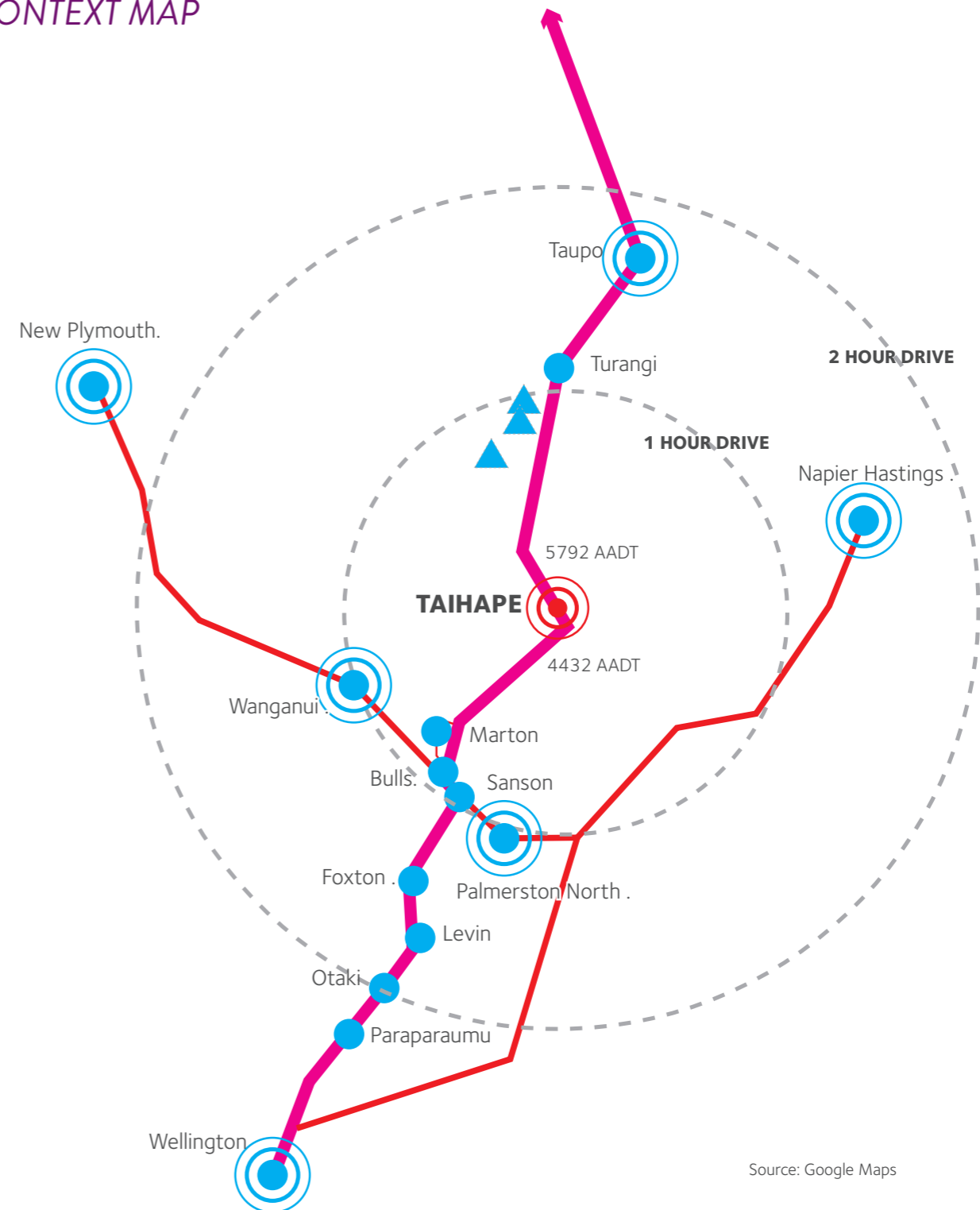
NATURAL SETTING

Taihape sits in a great natural setting. It provides the ideal place for travellers to stop for a day or two and explore the natural surrounds. Taihape has a range of nature walks and bike trails that it should actively promote.

TAIHAPE IS
IN THE IDEAL
PLACE TO
POSITION ITSELF AS
A DESTINATION
TOWN



CONTEXT MAP



4. TAIHAPE TOWN CENTRE PLAN – SUMMARY

1

BUILD A COHERENT VISITOR EXPERIENCE



1. Enhance the *Gumboot Experience*.
2. Create additional photo opportunities.
3. Create great pedestrian connections between all visitor destinations.
4. Provide way-finding.
5. Upgrade and connect natural environment experiences.
6. Provide for iwi and historical cultural expression

2

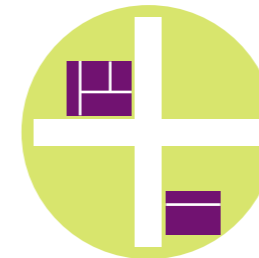
MAKE GREAT STREETS & PUBLIC PLACES



1. Create outdoor living rooms on the main street.
2. Make Clock Tower Park the village green with a greater range of things to do.
3. Enhance Memorial Park.
4. Create streets and public places which are aesthetically pleasing and all-ages and all-abilities friendly.
5. Extend the natural environment into town via street planting, green corridors and/or linear parks.

3

PROVIDE BETTER, ADAPTABLE FACILITIES



1. Create a multipurpose civic centre on the existing Town Hall site. This civic centre to provide a wide range of flexible meeting spaces for community groups and storage for these groups.
2. Integrate a town square into the new civic centre
3. Upgrade the swimming pool complex and include facilities for recreation-oriented community groups.
4. Open negotiations with Clubs' Taihape to explore what facilities may be included in The Hub should this proposal proceed
5. To facilitate large events over 138, adapt the Taihape Area School Hall to make it fit for purpose and enter a MOU with the school to ensure its availability.
6. To complement the performance space at the civic centre, adapt the Majestic Theatre by installing a small stage.

4

DELIVER “DESTINATION TAIHAPE”



1. Promote Taihape as a destination.
2. Encourage retention of heritage and character buildings by providing incentives for their strengthening and refurbishment.
3. Reduce vacancy by encouraging innovative leasing arrangements such as pop-up shops and rent-a-shelf.
4. Encourage retailers to engage with the footpath and provide services for the general public that enhance the visitor experience.
5. Provide funding to enable the community to undertake place making projects aimed at delivering Destination Taihape.

THE PLAN

TOWN CENTRE ELEMENTS

See individual strategies for detail



5. PLACE MAKING STRATEGIES

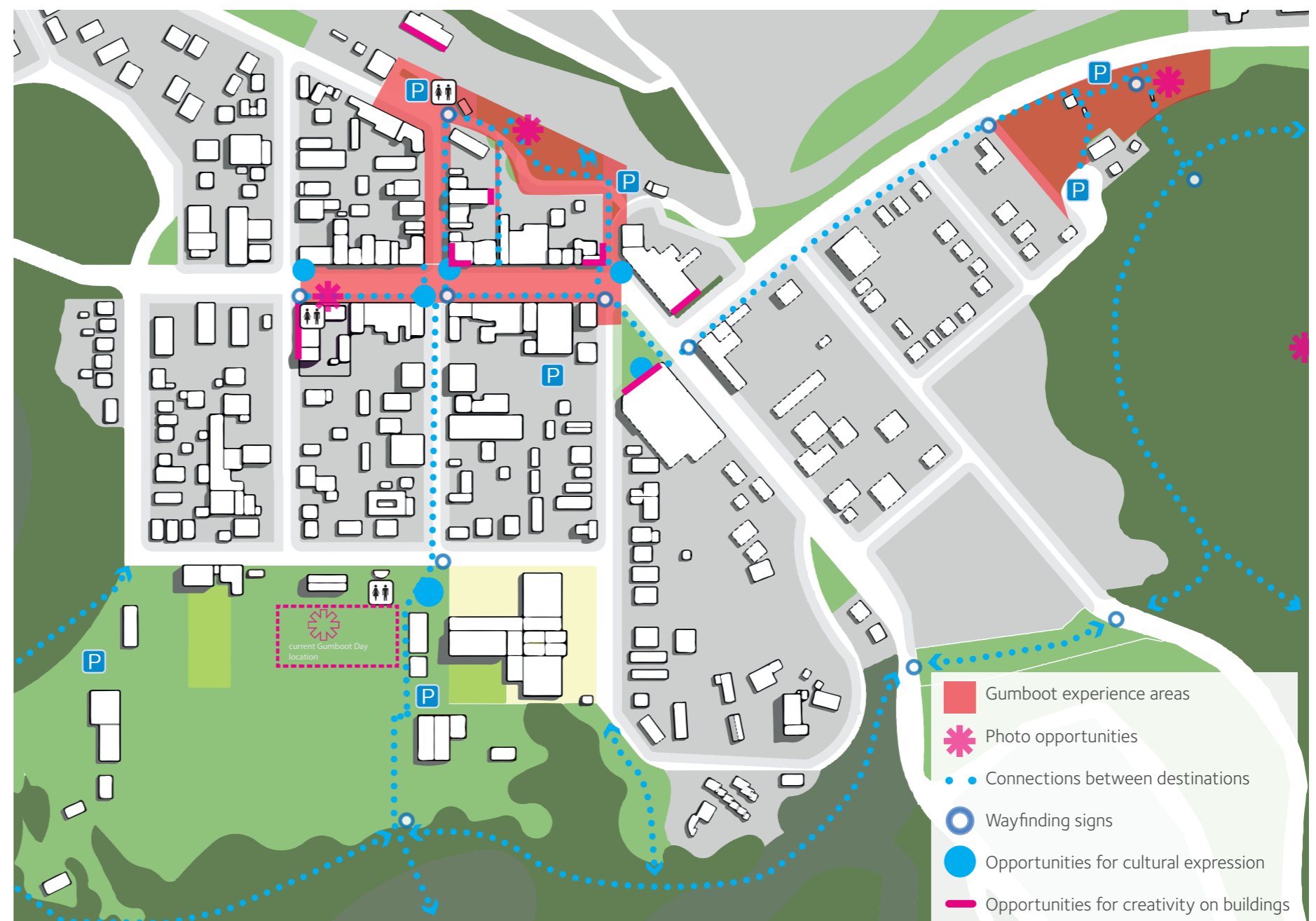
5.1 BUILD COHERENT VISITOR EXPERIENCE



Invite travellers to stop by creating a series of rich, multi-layered experiences.

Summary of Tactics

1. Enhance the gumboot experience.
 - Provide parking at Gumboot Park
 - Provide for gumboot throwing at Gumboot Lane.
2. Create additional photo opportunities
 - Paint the clock tower in eye-catching colours
 - Giant gumboots you can stand in
 - Interesting seating such as wave seats.
3. Create great pedestrian connections between all visitor destinations.
4. Provide way-finding signs that inform visitors of major points of interest and how long it takes to walk to these destinations. Way-finding signs should include services such as toilets, free wi-fi and places to stretch the legs.
5. Upgrade natural environment experiences such as Mt Stewart Reserve and Recreation Reserve through ecological restoration, walking and mountain-biking tracks, and clear wayfinding.
6. Provide for iwi, cultural, historical, farming culture expression to add another layer to the visitor experience.



Rationale

While the Taihape economy is strongly linked to encouraging travellers to stop, the visitor experience is fractured. “Gumboot Capital of the World” could potentially act as a unifying theme for a more varied and engaging visitor experience.

1. Enhance gumboot experience

GUMBOOT PARK: This park, with the large gumboot sculpture, is the Northern gateway to Taihape.

- Monitor use of the new car park to see if it is adequate or needs expanding.
- Add additional facilities such as picnic tables
- Make the connection to Mt Stewart clearer with landscaping.

GUMBOOT LANE: is isolated from the rest of town and if visitors do want to throw a gumboot, then they must pick one up from the information centre. To make this experience more complete:

- Provide a permanent supply of gumboots at the throwing lane. The gumboots can be branded as a promotional item.
- Display record throws on the fence in Gumboot Lane - e.g. records for different age groups, records for women and men.
- Build a “grandstand” area (earth mound or stepped seating) where people can watch others trying to break a record.

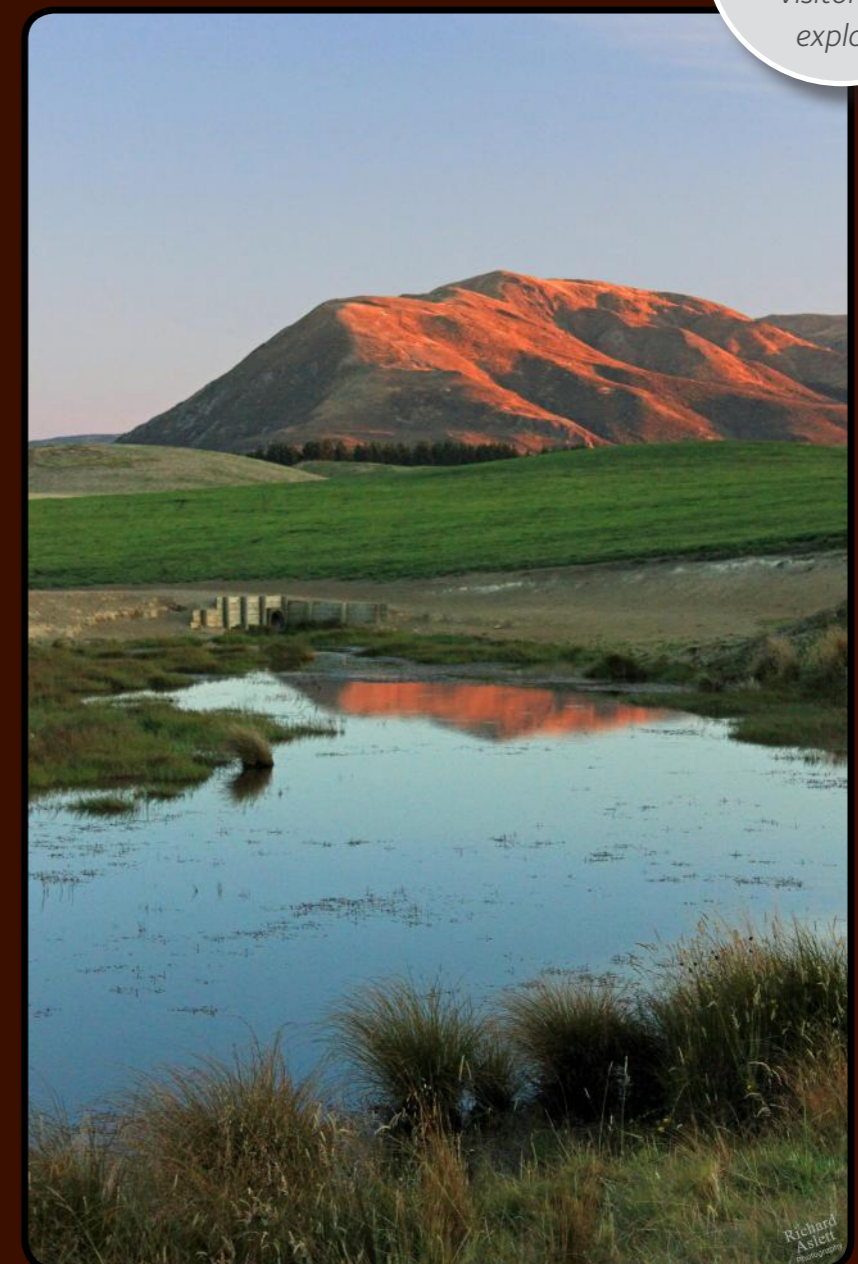
2. Provide wayfinding signs

At present there is no information or wayfinding that explains what destinations and services are on offer in Taihape, and how to get there. This can be easily integrated with street furniture (e.g. rubbish bins). This wayfinding signage would send a strong message to visitors that Taihape is a destination town.

Show distance
to major
features as time
taken to walk



Display
natural features
and inspire
visitors to
explore



Taihape to Napier Road
by Ngamatea Station

3. Create great pedestrian connections

All the destinations featured on the wayfinding signs should be connected via great pedestrian connections. Priority should be given to:

1. Corner of Hautapu and Huia Street to Gumboot park
2. Hautapu Street to the Outback area (Tui Street, laneway, and Huia Street)
3. Corner of Hautapu and Tui Streets to Memorial park

4. Create photo opportunities

Photos capture the memory of a place, and become a talking point when visitors return home. They also help market the town when they are uploaded on social media.

All photo opportunities should have the word “Taihape” in the shot.

Additional photo opportunities are:

- Paint the clock tower in eye-catching colours.
- Giant gumboots people can stand in.
- Interesting seating such as wave seats or giant armchairs.
- Throwing a gumboot at Gumboot Lane.

All photo opportunities must have “Taihape” featured in the potential shot



5. Upgrade natural environment experience

The natural environment in and around Taihape is one of its major attractors as a visitor destination. In town, this experience of the natural environment (Mt Stewart Reserve and Recreation Reserve) should be enhanced through continued ecological restoration, providing walking and cycling tracks, creating connections, and clear wayfinding.

6. Provide for heritage and iwi cultural expression

Another layer can be added to the visitor experience by telling the stories associated with a place. Local iwi should be invited to tell these stories and decide the best way in which to engage visitors in the stories. In addition, the history and farming heritage should be put on display.



5.2 MAKE GREAT STREETS & PUBLIC PLACES



Encourage more people to spend more time in the town centre by making the streets more engaging, humanised and safe.

Summary of Tactics

1. Create *outdoor living rooms* in the main street that encourage people to linger and socialise.
2. Make Clock Tower Park the *Village Green* with a greater range of things for people to do.
3. Enhance Memorial Park and the reserve by relocating the playground, and updating the skatepark, toilets, and walking trails. Provide mountain bike trails, walking paths, and bridges to access all areas of the river reserve.
4. Create streets and public places which are aesthetically pleasing and all-ages and all-abilities friendly.
 - Provide at-grade crossings across side streets at intersections.
 - Use tree planting and a visual narrowing of the street to slow traffic.
5. Extend the natural environment into town through:
 - Native planting (continue existing streetscape palette)
 - Creating green corridors
 - Providing viewing points to natural features
 - Having photographs of regional natural features throughout town.



Rationale

The economic vitality of Taihape is proportionate to how long people spend in the town centre, and that depends on how welcomed visitors feel.

Taihape has invested heavily in meeting its social needs through “clubs” – “private” social spaces. By contrast, there is a distinct lack of investment in quality public places. On the revamped main street, there is no furnishing to encourage spontaneous social interaction.

This has resulted in an introverted town where visitors – and locals who do not belong to a club – can feel undervalued and ignored. Investing in quality streets and public spaces will make everyone feel more welcome – locals and visitors.

1. Create “outdoor living rooms” in the main street

A home is not a home until it has been furnished. You can spend a fortune on great carpet, but if there is no where to sit, then your visitors are not going to feel very welcome. A lot of money has been spent on paving Hautapu Street, but there is no furniture.

- The primary spaces for creating these outdoor living room areas are on corners or near crossing points.
- People should be able to easily adapt the furnishings to suit their needs – to sit in the sun or the shade, or change the seating to facilitate different sized groups. This requires either loose furniture that can be moved or flexible seating such as platforms or a collection of footstools.
- Some elements should be playful and attractive for children and the young-at-heart to interact with.

The design of seating is fundamental in making people feel at home



Horotutu – Our Place, Paihia.

2. Make Clock Tower Park the Village Green

The Clock Tower Park could become a highly attractive public space for visitors and locals. It has high visibility and visual appeal. However, with only a few dated picnic tables and some formal seating on the garden walls, it is not reaching its potential as a people place. This space should become the town's primary *Village Green*.

To turn this space into a village green, the following should be undertaken:

- Furnishings people can move such as Cape Cod or Adirondack chairs.
- Wave seats or platforms which people can relax on.
- Low cost things for people to do such as table tennis or chess.
- Increase prominence of this park by making it the centre-point of a precinct where it feels like the park extends into the entire precinct – for example, by repeating some design elements (such as sculptures or landscape elements) from the park elsewhere in the precinct and on the other side of the street.



3. Activate Memorial Park

Memorial Park is the primary recreational park. The following should be considered in activating this space:

PLAY AREA

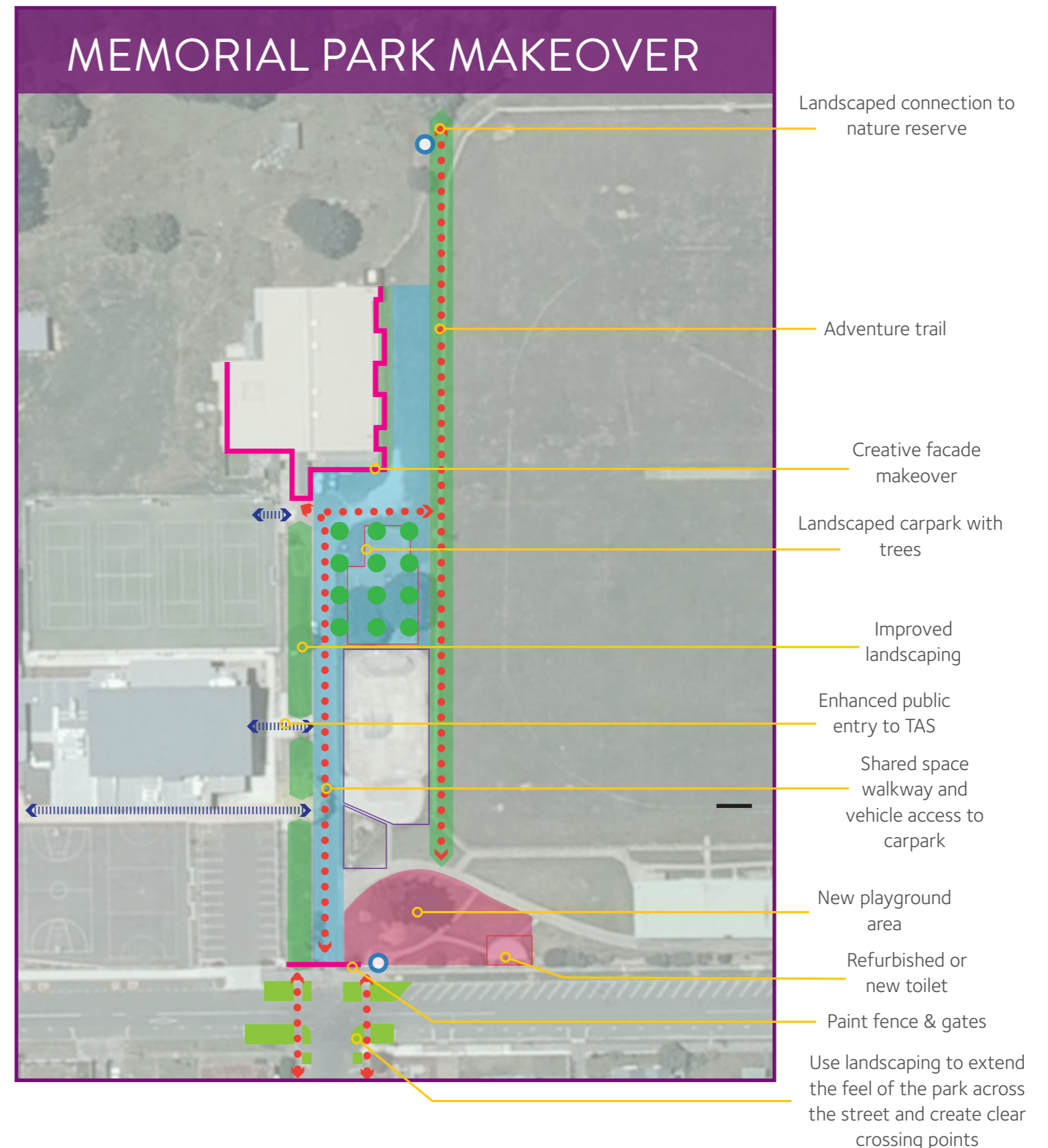
- Move the playground, which is currently tired and in poor repair, to the front of the park around the large tree.
- Use playground as the start of an adventure trail for children and parents that encourages them to explore the reserve area.
- Update the skatepark – paint and artwork.

TOILETS

- To upgrade the toilets, they need not be demolished. They could be *funkified* and turned into a tourist attraction.
- Use toilets as a way of encouraging visitors to explore the reserve – for example have a map with walking trails and photos of key attractions on the back of toilet doors.

WALKING AND BIKE TRAILS

- Improve and expand the walking and bike trails.
- Display information about the trails available at the park entrance so visitors (and locals) know what is on offer.



4. Create all-ages, all-abilities friendly town centre.

While the mission of NZTA is to move vehicles safely through the town with minimum time delays, the economic vitality of Taihape will be proportionate to the quality of the experience people have as pedestrians. While physical barriers, such as speed tables, cannot be used on the state highway to slow vehicles, creating a more engaging and pleasant street environment will tend to *psychologically calm* drivers.

NZTA have indicated in-principle support for the following measures, which improve safety:

- Creating an uninterrupted pedestrian experience by using raised crossing thresholds across side streets.
- Street trees down Hautapu Street to visually narrow and humanise the roadway, including a design speed of 40kph.
- Protecting pedestrians at crossings with landscaping in central median.

5. Bring natural environment into town

One of the major assets of Taihape is the natural setting. The natural environment should be brought into town by:

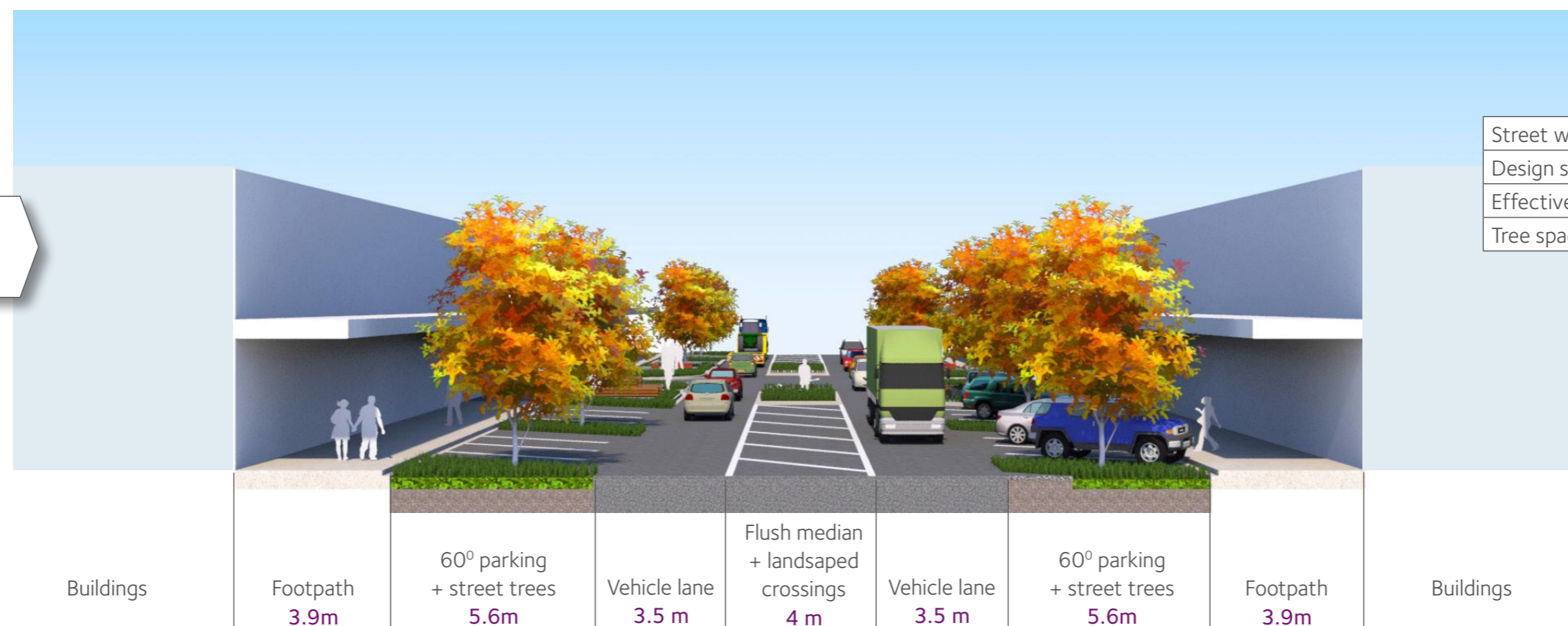
- Continuing the existing streetscape palette of native planting.
- Creating green corridors – in particular, from Memorial Park along Tui Street to the rail station and from town out to Gumboot Park.
- Providing viewing points or platforms to natural features.
- Displaying photographs of regional natural features throughout town – e.g. in conjunction with wayfinding on rubbish bins.

Raised crossings create a more pleasant pedestrian experience and help slow traffic



Raised crossing thresholds, Palmerston North

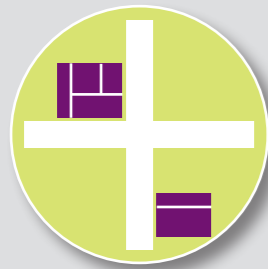
Main Street –
State Highway



Side streets



5.3 PROVIDE BETTER, ADAPTABLE FACILITIES



Provide the optimum mix of venues and facilities to deliver a high level of service for the community

Summary of Tactics

1. Create an integrated, adaptable multi-purpose civic centre on the existing Town Hall site¹. This facility to house Library, Information Centre, Council front desk, flexible meeting and event spaces, and storage for community groups.
2. Integrate an outdoor civic space with this facility.
3. Upgrade the swimming pool complex to include facilities for indoor recreation.
4. Open negotiations with Clubs' Taihape to explore what facilities may be included in The Hub should this proposal proceed
5. To facilitate large events over 138, adapt the Taihape Area School Hall to make it fit for purpose and negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding on community use of the facilities .
6. To complement the performance space at the civic centre, adapt the Majestic Theatre by installing a small stage.

1. See page 38 – *Design Brief for Civic Centre*



Rationale

The facilities in Taihape were created when the population was twice its current size. With a projected further decline in population and facilities that need significant upgrading, the Council has decided on a strategy of “smart decline” – that is to provide “fewer but better” facilities.

1. Integrated, adaptable, civic centre

Provide an integrated, adaptable, civic centre on the existing Town Hall site that houses the Library, Information Centre, Council front desk, Council staff offices, meeting rooms, performance space and storage for community groups.

This facility, which will replace the meeting rooms currently provided at the Women’s Club, will offer equal or better services for all the existing groups, and at a comparable rent level. It will offer equal or better storage for these user groups. It should offer greater flexibility than the existing Women’s Club by providing a greater choice in room configurations.

This facility is to remain on Hautapu Street to maximise exposure to travelers who wish to use the Information Centre and to help activate the main street.

There are three possible ways to create this multipurpose facility.

1. Retain the existing facade of the Town Hall and demolish the Library and rear section and build a new civic centre.
2. Demolish the entire structure and build a new facility.
3. Retrofit the entire existing structure.

Page 38 is a record of community input into which of these options is favoured and should be used as input into the *Design Brief*. However, the civic centre should be a landmark building which the town can be proud of and which invites travellers to stop and explore.



Greytown multipurpose civic centre



Martinborough Community Centre concept plan – Architecture Workshop

2. Integrate Town Square into civic centre

Taihape has adequate recreational parks and the Clock Tower Park plays the roll of “village green”. What is missing is a Town Square to serve a range of civic functions – a place for people to mingle, farmers’ markets, outdoor ceremonies and concerts.

Attaching a town square to the civic centre will provide mutual benefits to both the civic centre and the town square.

3. Upgrade swimming pool complex

The swimming pool complex needs upgrading. This provides an opportunity to make provision for other recreational needs such as fitness centre.

4. Revisit Hub proposal

Council should open fresh negotiations with Clubs’ Taihape Inc. regarding their proposal for The Hub on the recreation reserve. This plan was created eight years prior to this TCP, which aims to create an optimum package of venues. The Hub, may be able to provide some facilities Council may otherwise need to provide, for example, toilets in the park, activity spaces for some of the groups that currently use the Women’s Club, and longer term, some of the functions of the grand-stand. If this is the case, then there may be an opportunity for a joint venture.



Town square to be a flexible space for dining out, markets or outdoor performances

Retain facade option¹



Total rebuild option¹

1. See page 38 for more information on all options and on community preferences

5. Optimise use of Taihape Area School Hall

Taihape Area School offers three venues which are potentially a huge asset for Taihape:

- Hall (gymnasium) with seating for 600 but can hold up to 900. It has a stage, stage lift, theatre lighting, and dressing rooms.
- Foyer (called “The Hub”) which can seat 120, is equipped with state-of-the-art audio visual equipment including projector and large screen, and has a commercial kitchen attached. It has a strong architectural feel which makes it ideal for creating an ambience for special occasions.
- Outdoor amphitheatre and stage with seating capacity of 900. The stage is covered and has theatre lighting and power.

The hall has one issue which limits its value as a venue for the town; it has a sprung floor which is easily damaged by high heels. There are companies, such as Arena Flooring,¹ who specialise in providing solutions for gymnasium floor which make them suitable for a wide range of activities from concerts, to trade fairs, to car shows. Other measures that may be considered are:

- Demountable stage extension for shows like the RNZ Ballet that require a larger stage area
- A more formal community entry from Memorial Park.

A formal agreement should be negotiated with TAS that clearly spells out the conditions of use and guarantees the community access for the staging of major events (currently 5–7 per year).

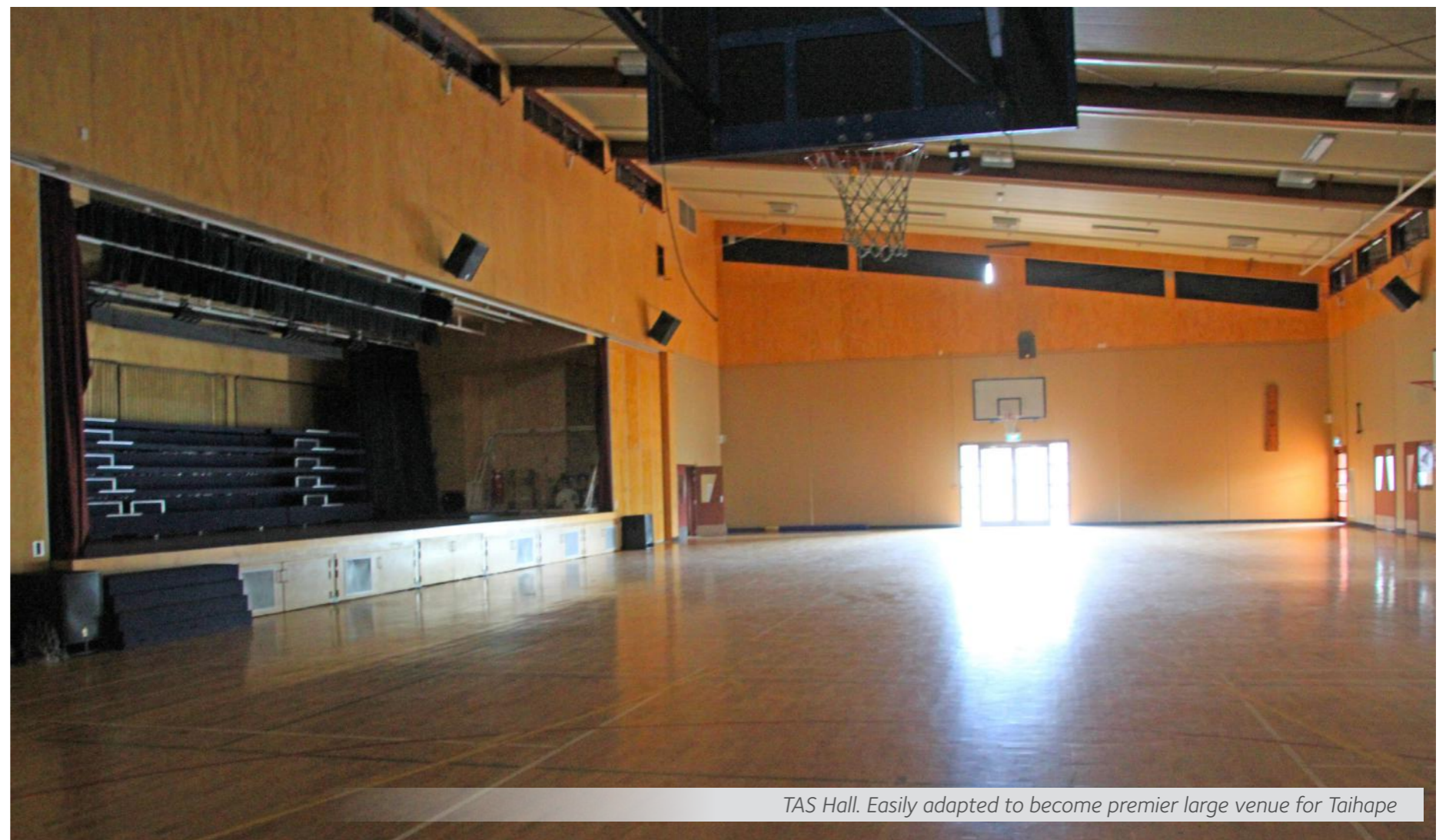
1. www.arena.co.nz



TAS Hub – first class facilities



Specialist floor covering for gymnasium floors



TAS Hall. Easily adapted to become premier large venue for Taihape

6. Optimise use of Majestic Theatre

The Majestic Theatre has been lovingly restored by volunteers and is a high-class medium size venue seating 138 upstairs and a large foyer area and cafe downstairs.

This venue would be ideal for small boutique conferences, intimate concerts and a range of other events, except it has no stage area at the front. This severely limits its versatility.

A stage can be easily added by simply building the lower level in front of the screen up to the level of the first step (an increase in height of 180mm). This is a low cost upgrade.



Steering Group inspect Majestic Theatre which has been lovingly restored.

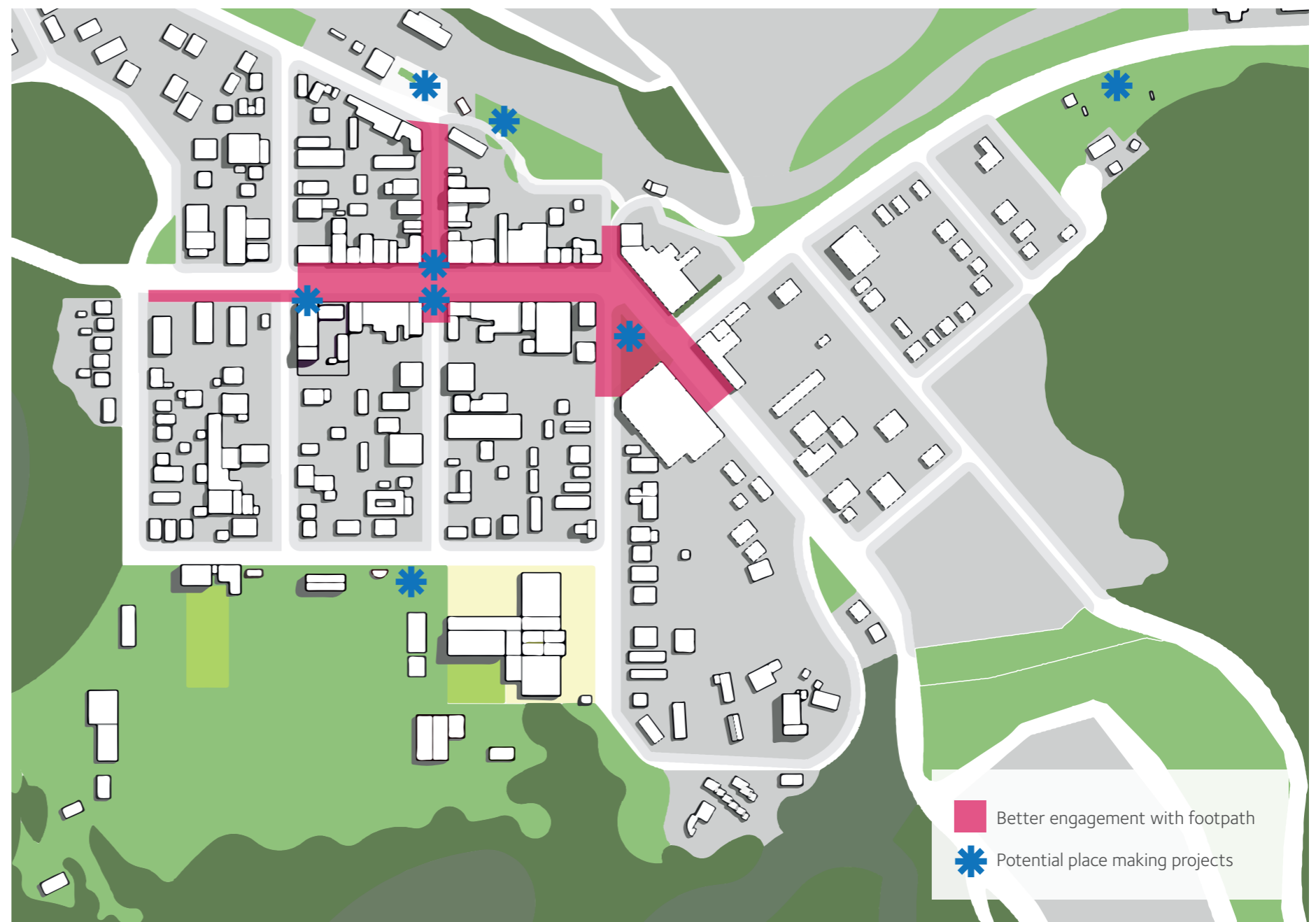
5.4 DELIVER “DESTINATION TAIHAPE”



Make Taihape a more desirable destination for visitors and new residents.

Summary of Tactics

1. Promote Taihape as a destination, for example work with NZ Motorhome Association to establish a base, or run a “Conference for Conference Organisers” and show off Taihape as a boutique conference destination.
2. Encourage retention of heritage and character buildings by providing incentives for their strengthening and refurbishment
3. Reduce vacancy rates by encouraging innovative leasing arrangements such as pop-up-shops and rent-a-shelf.
4. Encourage retailers to engage with the footpath and provide services for the general public that enrich the visitor experience.
5. Provide funding to enable the community to undertake place making projects aimed at delivering Destination Taihape.



Rationale

A key determinant of the economic vitality of Taihape will be how much the town changes its image from “quick pit stop” to “destination town”. The longer people stop in Taihape, the more money they are likely to spend. Taihape has a range of assets that make it an ideal destination town, but these are not being traded on to their maximum capacity.

1. Promote Taihape as a destination

Taihape should develop a Destination Taihape Promotion Strategy. If resource constraints prevent Council staff undertaking this task, then the community should be resourced to develop and implement the strategy.

This strategy may include such measures as working with NZ Motorhome Association to establish a base in Taihape, or running a “Conference for Conference Organisers” and show off Taihape as a boutique conference destination.

2. Retain heritage and character buildings

Council already has an incentive program in place for retention of earthquake prone heritage and character buildings. These incentives should be maintained.



The Majestic Theatre is an ideal venue for small conferences

3. Innovative leasing arrangements

To attract new businesses to Taihape, the risks have to be reduced. This means encouraging and enabling a range of innovative lease arrangements such as:

- Free or very-low cost short-term pop-up stores in vacant premises.
- Shared leases with mixed-use and cross-over services (e.g. hair and nail salon during the day, cafe/bar in the evening).
- Rent-a-shelf which is refreshed periodically (e.g. several emerging designers or entrepreneurs rent space within a single store).
- Permanent market locations that operate on set-days.

These approaches allow entrepreneurs to keep capital investment to a minimum and allow maximum investment in the business, stock, marketing and promotion. Through collaboration, they also spread the costs of marketing.

Encouraging innovative lease arrangements should be a regional approach in order to build scale.

Part of the funding used to incentivise these innovative lease arrangements should be used to create a number of pop-up shop kits, similar to the ones provided by miLES in the revitalisation of Manhattan's Lower East Side¹.

An integral part of this program will be an information campaign which: reassures existing businesses that this will add, not detract, from their profitability; shows existing businesses how they can benefit (for example, as a way to shift excess stock); and invites local start-up-businesses to participate.

¹ <http://storefronttransformer.com/prototype/>

Destination shoppers will return more frequently if a section of the retail market is ever-changing.



4. Encourage retailers to improve visitor experience

Travellers are much more likely to stop if the street is alive with activity than if it feels like a ghost town. A large contributor to this feeling of vibrancy is the degree to which the retailers engage with the footpath and the generosity of the retailers.

ENGAGING WITH FOOTPATH: When retailers display goods on the footpath, or create experiences for those passing by, the street feels more alive. People pause, spending longer in the street, which increases the overall feeling of vitality. It also increases sales.

GENEROSITY: Our memories of a place (and hence the stories we tell our friends when we get back home) are often shaped by one small act of generosity. Generous acts build the reputation of the town as a desirable destination, while the feeling of meanness will degrade the reputation. This “spirit of generosity” is far more valuable for building Taihape’s reputation as a great place to visit than any changes that can be made to the physical environment.

Council should encourage footpath activation and greater generosity by:

- Providing a library of movable furniture that retailers can borrow to activate the space in front of their store.
- Reducing the red tape around the use of the footpath by retailers. Either the *Rangitikei District Council Public Places Bylaw 2013* needs to be updated or Council could issue a blanket permit for all retailers, with conditions for footpath engagement clearly outlined.
- Encouraging retailers to provide free services (e.g. toilet, baby change, play area for small children, free wi-fi or topping up a drink bottle) and provide the retailer with a sticker for the front window that shows the free service they offer. Make visitors aware of these free services on a tourist brochure or town map.



Graham Brown, accountant in Taree, NSW, paid for this abacus outside his business as a way of adding life to the town, but at the same time, drawing attention to the nature of his business

5. Provide funding for place making projects

Place making is like home making. Home making turns a house into a home while place making turns a space into a place. Traditionally TCPs tend to focus on the big moves – building the house and putting in great carpet. But this is a wasted investment if the house remains empty and uninhabited.

There needs to be a dedicated fund over the next three years for place making projects in Taihape that help “furnish the house”. It is imperative that this fund be for *community-based* place making projects. The reasons for this are:

- Community pride – The community has a much greater emotional connection to the places they create themselves.
- Value for money – The community generally delivers projects at a lower cost than for Council to undertake the work.
- Heart and soul – Projects delivered by the community are stamped with the personality of the community. What emerges is a town with authenticity and a point of difference – a place that feels like home rather than a display house.



5,000 residents turn out to celebrate the civic square they just created. Taree, NSW.



Porirua residents turn a dysfunctional space into a welcoming people's place

7. IMPLEMENTATION – MAKING IT HAPPEN

The Town Centre Plan will require a coordinated approach to translate the strategies and tactics into results on the ground. The three work streams are:

1. Collaboration and negotiation with stakeholders.
2. Design briefing, design, and cost estimation.
3. Funding and prioritising through the Long Term Plan and aligning Asset Management.

1. Collaboration and Negotiation

The major stakeholders in Taihape are:

- Taihape Community Board
- Taihape Community Development Trust
- Ngati Rangī, Ngati Hinemanu Paki, Ngati Tamakopiri and Ngati Whitikaupeka and Ngati Hauiti
- Business community, property owners and potential investors
- Established community groups
- Clubs' Taihape Inc. Taihape Area School and Majestic Theatre
- NZTA

The Council will need to work with these stakeholders to establish priorities and appropriate local solutions. The Town Centre Plan is the vehicle for these stakeholders to have a better dialogue about the future of the Taihape town centre. It provides a base to discuss and resolve competing interests before bringing projects to the wider community. Inevitably, new ideas and proposals for Taihape will arise. The Town Centre Plan is a lens through which to contextualize and discuss proposals that have not been anticipated.

Because funding of a new Civic Centre may not happen immediately, it is imperative that Council fund other projects that are likely to act as a catalyst for Taihape becoming a destination town:

1. Funding community-based place making projects aimed at delivering Destination Taihape.
2. Wayfinding.

3. Encourage retailers to embrace the footpath and be generous.
4. Activate the clock tower park.

2. Design Briefing, Design and Cost Estimation

The Town Centre Plan sets out strategies and tactics for Taihape's transformation to meet the Vision in the Long Term Plan. This will require investment. To be able to create realistic budgets and give the community certainty, the next level of detail needs to be created, which is a specific task outside the scope of the Town Centre Plan.

The descriptions of tactics outlined in this document provide a base for creating design briefs for individual projects. Designs will determine how the town centre will look, and the experience that visitors have in the town. Prototype actions should be considered as part of the design briefing and/or design phase to test out ideas in an affordable way and to support negotiation and collaboration through shared real-world experience.

Cost estimates can then be prepared to feed into Council's asset management and funding processes.

Three sets of design briefs need to be created:

1. Civic centre and venues

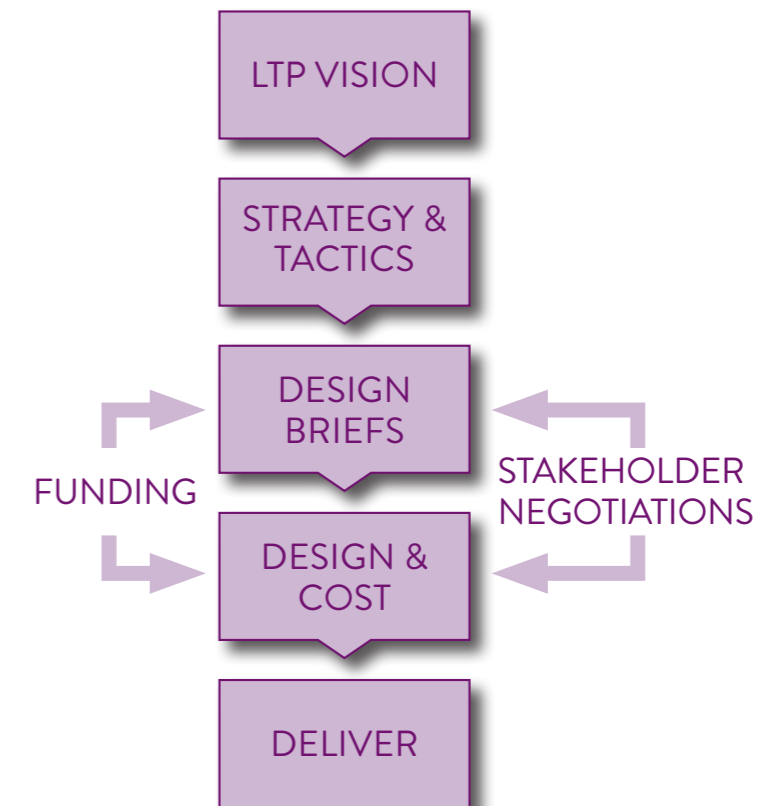
- a. Civic Centre and Town Square
- b. Adaptation of TAS Hall
- c. Adaptation of Majestic Theatre

2. Recreation reserve planning

- a. Swimming pool complex
- b. Memorial Park upgrade

3. Town Centre projects

- a. Street upgrades
- b. Landmarks and wayfinding



3. Funding and prioritising through the Long Term Plan, and aligning Asset Management.

In today's constrained budget environment any investment needs to compete with other priorities in the Rangitikei District. The vehicle for funding projects is the Long Term Plan process. The schedule of projects in the table on the next page provides a preliminary list and priority of projects. The prioritization of projects will be informed by public feedback and by asset management priorities.

Four high priority projects which will yield immediate results:

1. Fund community-based place making projects aimed at delivering Destination Taihape.
2. Wayfinding signs
3. Make Clock Tower Park a village green
4. Encourage retailers to embrace the footpath and be generous.

The Town Centre Plan is a lens through which to contextualize and discuss proposals that have not been anticipated.



7.1 PROJECT PRIORITIES

1 – VISITOR EXPERIENCE	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
1.1 Enhance gumboot experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside the I-site Gumboot Throwing Alley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hautapu Street – micro experiences 	
1.2 Create photo opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clock tower creative makeover Side of Town Hall – southern approach visual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top of Mt Stewart – view frame Bird sculptures at main street corners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toilets – Gumboot Lane Toilets – Memorial Park
1.3 Connect visitor destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From town to Gumboot Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To Outback via Tui Street and laneway 	
1.4 Wayfinding and landmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole town approach 		
1.5 Natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Corridor – Ecological restoration between Mt Stewart and Hautapu Bridge edge of Rec Reserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walkway / cycleway between Mt Stewart and the Rec Reserve 	
1.6 Cultural expression		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole town – coordinate with wayfinding 	NZ cultural icons

2 – GREAT STREETS	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
2.1 Outdoor rooms main street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corner Tui and Hautapu Streets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other intersections along Hautapu Street 	
2.2 Clock Tower Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Things to do (e.g. table tennis) Social seating (e.g. deck chairs and platforms) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redo existing assets such as picnic tables and seating that is part of raised planters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activate vacant space outside High Country Clothing
2.3 Memorial Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated project 	
2.4 Upgrade streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five raised crossings on side streets Tui Street connector – Outback to Memorial Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hautapu avenue of trees Clock Tower (Triangle) shared space 	
2.5 Extend natural environment into town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tui Street connector – Outback to Memorial Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School to Hautapu Street Town to Gumboot Park (coordinate with 1.3) 	

3 - ADAPTABLE FACILITIES	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
3.1 Civic Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and build 	
3.2 Integrate Town Square with 3.1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and build 	
3.3 Swimming pool complex		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concurrent with 3.1 and 3.2 	
3.4 Adapt TAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate MOU Adapt 		
3.5 Adapt Majestic Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate MOU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt 	
3.6 Promote use of venues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create knowledge base and make available 	

4 - DESTINATION TOWN	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
4.1 Promote Taihape as destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategy Implement 		
4.2 Incentive for retention of heritage buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue existing incentives 		
4.3 Innovative lease arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Force to develop strategies for implementation, such as developing pop-up-shop kits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with other towns such as Marton and Bulls to coordinate efforts 	
4.4 Retailer engagement with footpath and provision of free services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce red tape (focus on core of town centre) Create library of movable furniture Provide incentives for retailer generosity 		
4.4 Community place-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund for 3 years 		

7.2 DESIGN BRIEF – CIVIC CENTRE

Two rounds of community consultation were held on how to provide “fewer but better” facilities (see pages 41 & 42 for questionnaire for round one and page 43 for questionnaire for round two).

The results from round one showed that there was strong support for the four strategies for making Taihape a better place to live and visit. However, the results on how to provide fewer but better facilities were inconclusive.

So a second round of consultation was conducted. The options were further developed and concept drawings created. The results are in the table on the next page.

The key result is that 90% of respondents supported doing something to create a better, more usable civic centre – 85% want something done on the existing Town Hall site.

There are three options for creating a multipurpose facility on the existing site:

1. Retain two story facade, demolish the library and rear section and build a new civic centre. Estimated cost \$2.7 million.
2. Demolish the entire Town Hall and build a new civic centre. Estimated cost \$1.9 million.
3. Earthquake strengthen and retrofit the existing building. Estimated cost \$3.6 million.

The results of the consultation can be interpreted in a number of ways. For example, it can be argued that option 3, retaining and retrofitting the existing building, got the highest vote – 36%. Alternatively, it can be argued that 53% voted to create a purpose built facility (demolish, part demolish or build else where).

Therefore the voting cannot be used to justify selecting one of these three options. All that can be deduced is that 85% of respondents supported creating a better facility, *of some kind, on the existing Town Hall site.*

Steering Group recommendations

In light of the consultation, the Steering Group made five recommendations. This is how we have responded to these recommendations in this TCP.

Recommendation 1: that the location of the Civic Centre remain in Area A on Hautapu street.

Agreed. Because 85% of respondents want this done on the existing Town Hall site we believe other options on Hautapu Street should be eliminated from further consideration.

Recommendation 2: that the preferred principle area for new indoor recreational facilities should be in Area B the recreational reserve.

Agreed.

Recommendation 3: that the town does have a large auditorium facility available for public use.

Agreed, even though the town was fairly evenly divided on whether a large auditorium is required. Creative Communities believe an investment of \$30,000 – \$100,000 to modify the TAS Hall may be justified to cater for these 5–7 events per year. However, it is extremely difficult to justify building a purpose-built facility when this cheaper option is available.

Recommendation 4: that if a new location is required for small venues (i.e. the Woman’s Club) that it should be relocated to the Civic Centre..

Agreed. This will be part of the design brief for the new Civic Centre.

Recommendation 5: that the town hall site/ building be kept and that a staged approach to its renovation be taken.

Maybe. It is too early to decide if this is the best of the three options for creating a more functional civic centre. So this conclusion may be premature. Two clear steps are first needed.

Step One: Exploration & Trials

There are four key questions to be answered in this phase:

1. Can the Taihape Area School Hall be modified to adequately cater for the 5–7 large events each year, and can a satisfactory MOU be negotiated to ensure availability? What is the cost?
2. How well does this arrangement work over a trial period of say one or two years? Is it adequately meeting the needs for large events?
3. What potential joint venture partners are there for the Town Hall site, and what can they contribute? (This is a large site and if a large auditorium is not needed, there maybe an opportunity for housing or some other form of development.)
4. Will Clubs Taihape Inc. proceed with The Hub or enter a joint venture of some kind with Council? It is recommended that these discussions be held quickly in order to resolve this issue.

Step Two: Technical and Design Work

Until the above questions have been answered, it would be premature to create a design brief for the Civic Centre. Once these questions have been answered then the following process should help deliver the optimum outcome:

1. Create a detailed design brief
2. Create concepts for all three options and cost these options
3. Engage the community in making an informed decision on real options with real costs.
4. Fund and build.



Retain facade
22%



Demolish & rebuild
27%



Build this elsewhere
4%

Retrofit existing
building
36%

Do nothing
10%

Results round two

Question 1: The civic centre functions (such as library visitor information centre and council front desk) should be on Hautapu Street in Area A

Yes–118 No –3 Neutral –2

Question 2: Where should indoor recreational facilities (such as Basketball, badminton, fitness centre and sauna be located?

Area A–29 Area B–70 Either–26

Question 3: There are adequate venues in Taihape for meetings and functions up to 200 people. For events over 200 the only facilities with the capacity are the town hall and the TAS Area School Hall. Taihape hosts 5–7 such events per year.

Does Taihape need a large auditorium?

Yes–54 No–59 Neutral–17

Question 4: The Woman's Club (council owned) is the best used facility in Taihape for clubs and small groups. If council were to provide new and better facilities, these should be integrated into:

New Civic Centre in Area A–87

Improved recreation facility in Area B–16 Either–17

Question 5 Civic Centre Options

A. Retain front two story façade of the Town Hall building, demolish the library and rear section and build a new civic centre. 30

B. Demolish the Town Hall and build a new civic centre. 37

C. Sell the existing Town hall and build a new civic centre on Hautapu Street. 6

D. Earthquakes strengthen heat and renovate the existing Town hall and make it fit for purpose. 49

E. Do Nothing retain the Town Hall as is unheated, un-strengthened, library as is and with no civic square. 13

8. APPENDIX

8.1 HISTORY OF TOWN CENTRE PLAN

Creative Communities International (CCI) was engaged by Rangitikei District Council to produce a Town Centre Plan for Taihape.

The purpose of the Taihape Town Centre Plan was to establish an agreed framework and guide for:

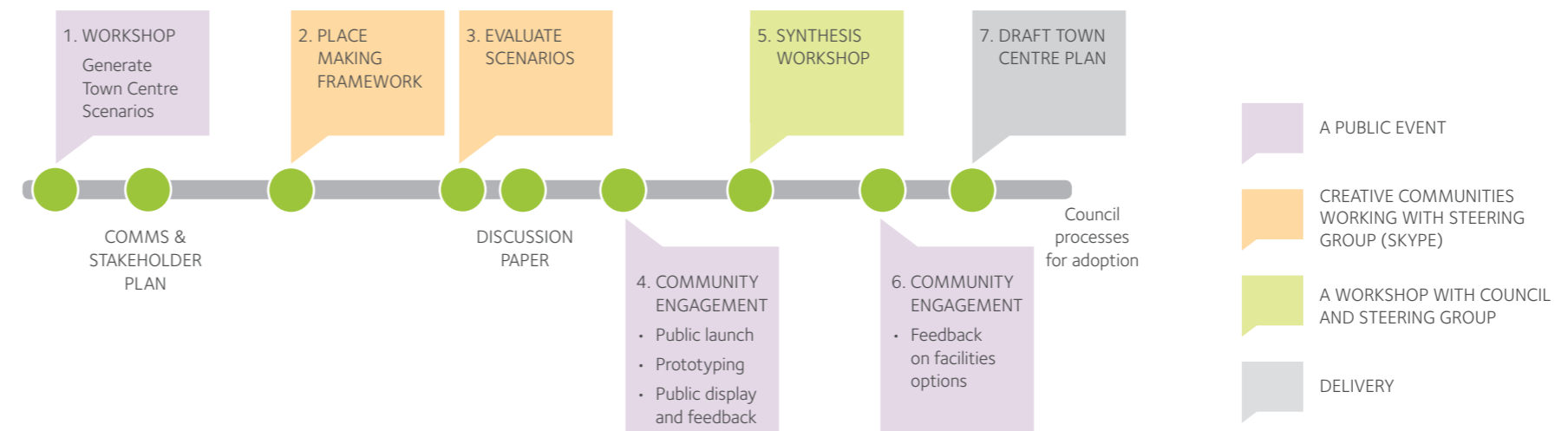
- The future management and development of the public areas (including roads/footpaths) and green spaces in central Taihape;
- The nature and timing of the development and associated funding decisions of the public and private sector;
- Defining council's role in the CBD, and create a civic heart for the town; and
- Building a consensus on the future development of a multi-purpose facility at Memorial Park.

The first step in developing the Town Centre Plan was to establish a Place Making Framework. The Place Making Framework focused on how the town will best work as a "people place" for both locals and visitors.

The Place Making Framework was used to evaluate potential scenarios for the town centre. A discussion paper was then produced and put out for community engagement.

A Synthesis Workshop was held with the Steering Group. There was another round of community engagement and from this came the Draft Town Centre Plan.

TIME LINE



THE PROCESS



WHICH PACKAGE DELIVERS THE BEST OUTCOMES FOR THE TOWN?

TICK YOUR CHOICE

<input type="checkbox"/> PACKAGE 1	<input type="checkbox"/> PACKAGE 2	<input type="checkbox"/> PACKAGE 3
TOWN HALL SITE Flexible Performance and Meeting Spaces	TOWN HALL SITE Women's Club & Meeting Rooms	TOWN HALL SITE Strengthened & Heat Auditorium Seating 350
Women's Club + Storage for Groups Commercial – e.g. cafe, gallery, housing	LIBRARY & INFO CENTRE Council Service Desk Back Portion SOLD	LIBRARY & INFO CENTRE Council Service Desk
Club Rooms	SWIMMING POOL SITE Swimming Pool Flexible Performance and Meeting Spaces Cafe/Gallery	TAIHAPE AREA SCHOOL Hall Not optimised Not usable for most events Foyer Area 120
LIBRARY & INFO CENTRE Council Service Desk	Club Rooms Grand stand	Amphitheatre 800
TAIHAPE AREA SCHOOL Hall 600–900 Optimised as premium large venue Cost approx. \$30,000 Foyer Area 120 Amphitheatre 800	TAIHAPE AREA SCHOOL Hall 600–900 Optimised as premium large venue Cost approx. \$30,000 Foyer Area 120 Amphitheatre 800	MAJESTIC THEATRE Not optimised Women's Club
MAJESTIC THEATRE Optimised as premium medium size venue Swimming Pool unchanged Grand Stand unchanged	MAJESTIC THEATRE Optimised as premium medium size venue Women's Club Sold	Swimming Pool unchanged Grand Stand unchanged

Comments about my choice

☐ PACKAGE 4 – MY DESIGN

DRAW YOUR IDEAS HERE

PUT COMPLETED FORM IN DROPBOX AT LIBRARY

Or mail to: Taihape Town Centre Plan Comments
c/- Rangitikei District Council, Private Bag 1102, Marton 4741

Or scan and email to: taihape.tcp@gmail.com

DEADLINE:
THURSDAY,
NOVEMBER 6,
2014

HOW CAN WE MAKE TAIHAPE EVEN BETTER?

Taihape is a great place. But like many other rural towns, it faces some challenges. Rangitikei District Council has engaged Creative Communities International to work with the residents of Taihape to develop a plan to turn these challenges into opportunities.

This document gives you some background, makes some suggestions, and invites you to have your say.

Thank you for taking the time to think about the future of the town you call home.

HAVE YOUR SAY!

THE CHALLENGES



A shrinking population across the entire district means the Council cannot afford to maintain all the community facilities and must downsize, but in a smart way.



An aging population means that the needs of the community will undergo a radical change over the next thirty years.



Council will be forced to strengthen earthquake prone buildings that it owns, costing millions of dollars. This presents an opportunity to rationalise assets.

POPULATION DOWN 15.6% IN THE LAST 7 YEARS

THE VISION*

REFRESHING
FUN **VIBRANT**
WOW ENTRANCE INNOVATIVE
ENTERTAINING CREATIVE

INVITING
WELCOMING
PEOPLE-FRIENDLY

COHESIVE UNITED
CONNECTED PROUD

INTERESTING
DESTINATION
UNIQUE ENTICING



*Participants at the first workshop choose three words that described how they would like Taihape to be in the future.

APPROACHES

THERE ARE THREE
POTENTIAL APPROACHES
TO DELIVERING THE
TOWN VISION



STATUS QUO – AD HOC
Taihape continues as a service town but in an ad hoc way



COUNCIL LED – DESIGN FOCUS
Professional designers focus on overall presentation of town



COMMUNITY LED – PLACE FOCUS
Business and community leads, council supports
Taihape becomes a destination town

creative
communities
INTERNATIONAL

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DISPLAY AT LIBRARY
or phone Kevin 0800422522



KEY MOVES

Creative Communities has made two key recommendations that we would like your feedback on.

A DELIVER DESTINATION TOWN

That funding of \$20,000 be allocated per annum from 2015-18 to implement a range of small-scale, low-cost initiatives that will transform Taihape into a destination town.

That where possible, these projects be delivered as community-driven, place-making projects.

These projects, outlined in the strategy section, should be undertaken regardless of other key moves.



Example of an initiative to deliver destination town – way-finding signage which would be attached to the side of rubbish bins



B DEVELOP A “FACILITIES PACKAGE” & IMPLEMENT

That the community identify the best way of rationalising and packaging up its facilities in order to:

- Reduce duplication
- Maximise the usefulness of existing facilities
- Co-locate services and facilities that will complement each other, creating flexible, adaptable spaces
- Deliver maximum benefits to the town for minimum overall investment
- Reduce competition for the same grant money.

That these packages then be evaluated to see which potentially will deliver the best outcome.

That the most viable options then be developed and implemented.

Example of a combined facility in Greytown which integrates Library, Info Centre, toilets, flexible meeting rooms, offices, and performance space



creative
communities
INTERNATIONAL

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DISPLAY AT LIBRARY
or phone Kevin 0800422522



MY FEEDBACK ON STRATEGIES

There are four strategies for making Taihape an even better place to live and visit:

BUILD COHERENT
VISITOR EXPERIENCE



MAKE GREAT
PUBLIC SPACES



CONNECT



PLAN RECREATION
RESERVE



Here are some ideas for implementing these strategies. Which of these are your TOP FIVE priorities?

Use the white boxes to indicate your priorities. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- ☐ **IMPROVE GUMBOOT PARK EXPERIENCE** by providing for parking and integrating a Taihape sign into Gumboot sculpture
- ☐ **IMPROVE MT STEWART EXPERIENCE** by upgrading and connecting Mt Stewart reserve, the gully, stream, and recreational area with improved walking paths and planting more native plants
- ☐ **INFORM VISITORS OF WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER** by providing clear, informative signs that show visitors what the town has to offer, where it is, and how long it will take to walk
- ☐ **PROMOTE “BOUTIQUE CONFERENCE TOWN”** by running a “Conference for Conference Organisers” and showing off Taihape as a boutique conference destination.
- ☐ **WORK WITH NZ MOTORHOME ASSOCIATION** by providing motorhomers with facilities within the Taihape township
- ☐ **TELL TAIHAPE’S STORY IN PUBLIC SPACES** by displaying historical photos and artwork showing all aspects of Taihape’s multi-cultural history
- ☐ **IMPROVE CLOCK-TOWER PARK** by painting the clock tower with brighter colours and by inviting people to use the space by furnishing it with seating, decks and things to do such as table tennis.
- ☐ **CREATE SOCIAL SPACES IN HAUTAPU STREET** by furnishing it with seating, and things to do.
- ☐ **ENCOURAGE RETAILERS TO ENLIVEN THE STREET** by creatively engaging with the footpath
- ☐ **PROVIDE VIEWING POINTS TO NATURAL FEATURES** by creating viewing decks or “picture frames” that encourage people to take photos of the framed view.
- ☐ **CREATE A MEETING PLACE OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY** by building a deck over garden and furnishing it

- ☐ **IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE** by making connections more obvious, making the spaces they walk through more interesting, and making crossing the road and streets safer
- ☐ **EXTEND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT INTO TOWN** by continuing existing streetscape palette of native planting, introducing green corridors, and large-format photos of regional natural features in the town centre.
- ☐ **UPDATE TAIHAPE’S RECREATIONAL RESERVE** by providing clear signage that shows possible activities in the reserve and clearly shows the walking tracks
- ☐ **UPDATE PLAYGROUND AND SKATEPARK** by revamping existing equipment and adding new play opportunities
- ☐ **INTRODUCE NEW ACTIVITIES INTO RESERVE** by providing mountain bike trails, walking paths, and bridges to access all areas of the river reserve
- ☐ **UPDATE RESERVE PARK TOILETS** by doing a creative makeover of the existing toilets (making them into a tourist attraction) or by replacing them
- ☐ **MY IDEA, WHICH IS:**

Do you think funding of \$20,000 pa for the next three years is sufficient to deliver these initiatives aimed at delivering Destination Town?

☐ Yes ☐ Should be less ☐ Should be more

HOW CAN WE DELIVER EVEN BETTER FACILITIES?

Thank you for your feedback in the last round of community engagement. It has helped shape this document.

Feedback revealed that there is general support for the strategies to make Taihape an even better place to live and visit, and that the swimming pool offers an opportunity to improve recreational facilities.

One issue yet to be resolved is how to deliver better, more adaptable facilities for Taihape – a strategic objective in Council's Long Term Plan.

Your feedback on this form will help resolve this issue and allow preparation of the *Draft Town Centre Plan*.



- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| AREA A | Council owned buildings | Taihape Area School Hall, Atrium & Amphitheatre | Courts |
| AREA B | Town Hall site | Proposed site for Clubs' Taihape Inc's Hub | |

QUESTION 1 – LOCATION OF CIVIC CENTRE

The Civic Centre functions (such as library, visitor information centre and Council front desk) should be on Hautapu Street in Area A.

Do you agree? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Neutral

QUESTION 2 – LOCATION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Where should indoor recreational facilities (such as basketball, badminton, fitness centre, sauna) be located?

☐ Area A (Civic Centre) ☐ Area B (Recreation Reserve) ☐ Either

QUESTION 3 – NEED FOR LARGE AUDITORIUM

There are adequate venues in Taihape for meetings and functions up to 200 people. For events over 200, the only facilities with capacity are the Town Hall and the TAS School Hall. Taihape hosts 5 – 7 such events per year.

Does Taihape need a large auditorium? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Neutral

QUESTION 4 – LOCATION OF SMALL VENUES

The Women's Club (Council owned) is the best used facility in Taihape for clubs and small groups. If Council were to provide new and better facilities, these should be integrated into:

☐ New Civic Centre (in Area A) ☐ Improved recreation facility (in Area B) ☐ Either

HAVE
YOUR
SAY!

CIVIC CENTRE OPTIONS

QUESTION 5 – CIVIC CENTRE OPTIONS

Illustrated below are four options for creating a new, flexible Civic Centre. Which is your preferred option?

- ☐ A – Retain front two story facade of Town Hall building, demolish the library and rear section, and build new civic centre
- ☐ B – Demolish the Town Hall and build a new civic centre
- ☐ C – Sell the existing Town Hall and build a new civic centre on Hautapu Street – Area A
- ☐ D – Earthquake strengthen, heat and renovate the existing Town Hall and make it fit for purpose
- ☐ Do nothing: retain Town Hall as is: unheated, un-strengthened, un-renovated, not fit-for-purpose, and with no civic square

These drawings are illustrative only, to show potential directions for providing a Civic Centre.



OPTION A

Retain facade & redevelop Town Hall site

- New purpose built library and information centre
- Flexible community meeting and event spaces
- Flexible civic square for markets and outdoor performances
- Businesses opening onto square (e.g. cafe)
- Earthquake strengthening front facade
- Demolish library and auditorium

ESTIMATED COST: \$2.7 million¹
Does not include large auditorium²



OPTION B or OPTION C

Option B: full redevelopment town hall site
Option C: elsewhere on main street

- New purpose built library and information centre
- Flexible community and event spaces
- Flexible civic square for markets and outdoor performances
- Businesses opening onto square (e.g. cafe)

ESTIMATED COST: \$1.9 million¹
Does not include large auditorium²



OPTION D – EARTHQUAKE STRENGTHEN HEAT & RENOVATE EXISTING TOWN HALL

- Renovated library and information centre
- Flexible community and event spaces
- Renovated auditorium
- Earthquake strengthening of entire building

ESTIMATED COST: \$3.6 million
Includes auditorium but no civic square

¹Includes costs of demolition. If an alternative site is chosen, cost of that site is offset by sale of Town Hall site.

²Taihape only needs a large auditorium 5–7 times per year. There are two options.

- Provide a large auditorium somewhere else at a cost of approximately \$900,000.
- Make the TAS Hall fit for purpose with protective floor covering, extension to stage and new entry foyer from Memorial Park. Cost approximately \$100,000.

PUT COMPLETED FORM IN DROPBOX AT LIBRARY

Or mail to: Taihape Town Centre Plan Comments
c/- Rangitikei District Council, Private Bag 1102, Marton 4741

Or scan and email to: taihape.tcp@gmail.com

DEADLINE:
TUESDAY,
DECEMBER 23,
2014

creative
communities
INTERNATIONAL

