

MĀORI WARDS

Let's get talking about Māori wards!

The Government has made changes to let local councils decide whether or not to have Māori wards in their city or district. We are consulting with our community before making a decision.

The last time we heard formally from the community about Māori wards for Napier was five years ago, it's important to hear from everyone in our community now before we make a decision that will affect all of us.

We are engaging now with our community to build knowledge of what Māori wards will mean for Napier so people are in a good position to give their feedback before a decision is made. Submissions will open in September and will be an opportunity for everyone to share their views.

What are wards?

Wards are areas of a city or a district identified for electoral purposes. They work in the same way as seats in a general election. In Napier we have a ward system where candidates stand in a ward area and people living in that area get to vote for them. Our four election wards are: Ahuriri, Onekawa-Tamatea, Nelson Park and Taradale. People can only vote for candidates in their ward, but everyone gets to vote for who they want as Mayor. Although candidates stand for their ward area, when voted on to Council, Councillors swear an oath to work for the city as a whole.

What about Māori wards?

Māori wards sit alongside general wards in a city or a district. They allow voters on the Māori roll to elect a representative to their local council. Māori wards work in a similar way to Māori seats in Parliament.

The aim of Māori wards is to make sure Māori are represented in local government decision making.

How many Māori wards for us?

How many Māori wards a city or a district has is decided by a formula in the Local Election Act based on the ratio of Māori electoral population to the total electoral population. If Napier goes ahead with Māori wards it's likely there would be two Māori ward members on council, based on this formula.

When would the change happen?

If we decide to have Māori wards this will be included in the Representation Review in 2024 and will come into effect for the 2025 Local Election.

Have your say!

Submissions open 16 August - 10 September.

To have your say go to sayitnapier.nz or pick up a submission form from our Customer Services Centre, 215 Hastings Street or at the Napier or Taradale Library.

**kōrero
mai!**

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Who can vote in the Māori wards?

- People enrolled on the Māori electoral roll for the area can vote for candidates standing in their Māori ward.
- People on the Māori electoral roll can only vote for candidates in a Māori ward.
- People on the general electoral roll can only vote for candidates from a general ward.
- People are able to move to the Māori roll during the next Māori Electoral Option in 2024. This is in time for the local elections in 2025.

Council's current engagement with Māori

Māori wards may be a pathway to increase Māori participation in decision-making, however Council recognise that this is not the only opportunity afforded to Council to enable this to occur. For this reason, Council are actively considering

other changes including its internal structure and provision in this area, as well as changes to the Māori Committee Terms of Reference.

Standing for election in a Māori ward

To be eligible to stand for election, a candidate must be:

- A New Zealand citizen (by birth or citizenship ceremony)
- Enrolled as a Parliamentary elector (anywhere in New Zealand); and
- Nominated by two electors whose names appear on the electoral roll within the ward a candidate is standing for. Candidates in Māori wards do not need to be of Māori descent, but they do need to be on the parliamentary electoral roll.

Timeline

- CURRENT**
Talk with us about Māori wards and what it will mean for Napier.
- 16 AUGUST - SUBMISSIONS OPEN**
Have your say on Māori wards - we invite you to make a submission at sayitnapier.nz
- 10 SEPTEMBER - SUBMISSIONS CLOSE**
- OCTOBER/NOVEMBER**
Hearings and decision

Napier's Māori Population



Information source: tpk.govt.nz

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