

Waitakere City Council

Review of Membership and Basis of Election

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Electoral Act 2001, the Waitakere City Council is required to determine the membership and electoral arrangements of the Waitakere City Council to apply for the triennial election to be held on 13 October 2007.

The Council has resolved to issue the following proposal:

Proposal

Basis of Election

The first principle of the Local Electoral Act 2001 is to provide for fair and effective representation of individuals and communities.

With regard to fair representation the Local Electoral Act 2001 prescribes that this is to be achieved, in respect of representation arrangements, including Wards and Electoral Subdivisions for both Councils and Community Boards, through the requirement to ensure that the ratio of Elected Members (other than the Mayor or any Members elected at large) to population does not vary by more than 10% within the respective Council or Community Board. The only exceptions to this 10% rule which are permitted are in respect of island or isolated communities. Both in its decisions in respect of the 2003 Review and in its draft guidelines for the 2006 Review, the Commission has made it clear that there will be stringent interpretation of the term "isolated".

With regard to effective representation, the Local Electoral Act 2001 prescribes that this is to be achieved, in respect of representation arrangements, including Wards and Electoral Subdivisions, for both Councils and Community Boards, through the identification of Communities of Interest. All electoral boundaries are required to align with statistical meshblocks.

The Waitakere City is a large and diverse area. It is made up of urban communities, life-style, rural areas and the Waitakere Ranges. The Council is of the view that it is necessary to divide the Waitakere City into Wards to provide for effective representation of the City.

The Council considers that a division of the City into three Wards would appropriately reflect the broad communities of interest in the Waitakere City. In addition, the Council proposes to provide for 14 Elected Members, all to be elected within the Wards established for that purpose, and this proposal meets the Acts requirements for fair representation using the mathematical formula in the Act that requires no differentiation beyond +/- 10% of the population per Elected Member:

The Councillors considered a number of options and subsequently opted for three Wards based on a modified transport approach, whereby the city is divided into three east-west bands, running north - south.

To achieve this, a Northern ward would extend from Bethels / Te Henga in the West, and include Swanson, Ranui and Massey / West Harbour, including Hobsonville and Whenuapai.

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The Central Ward runs from coast-to-coast and covers Piha, Karekare, Sturges Road area, Bruce McLaren area, Henderson, Lincoln, Te Atatu South and Te Atatu Peninsula.

The Southern Ward, also runs from coast-to-coast, and covers Whatipu, Huia, Laingholm, Titirangi, Oratia, Glendene, Glen Eden and New Lynn.

This option, while it was derived from the transport approach, clearly departs from the rationale behind that approach. The approach combines a number of elements of the other approaches, as follows:

- Each "Ward" has a large town centre and community hub within it (Massey North / Westgate, Henderson and New Lynn).
- Each Ward combines rural (non-urban) and urban functions and areas. It therefore tends to reinforce the notion of connectedness between the Ranges and the urban area of the city, rather than division. While urban residents enjoy the landscape of the Ranges, residents of the Ranges use the amenities and services in the urban centres.
- The east – west bands tend to reflect the main landscape features of the city:
- To the south are the Manukau coast and the southern portion of the Ranges including the rolling foothills leading down to Glen Eden and New Lynn.
- In the middle are the main central part of the Ranges and the main foothill catchments, leading to the broad central plains of the eastern seaboard – Henderson Valley, Sturges / Lincoln Road and Te Atatu.
- To the north is the northern edge of the Ranges, and the more heavily dissected and rolling landscapes association with the Massey / West Harbour area.

This option was motivated by a feeling that the city was relatively homogeneous in terms of its community, and that three "mixed" rural and urban Wards would ensure a reasonable representation of the communities from across the City.

Proposed Ward Area of the Proposed Ward

Northern Ward - The area generally comprising Bethels/Te Henga, Whenuapai, Hobsonville, West Harbour, Swanson, Ranui and Massey (and comprising the areas delineated on S.O Plans xxxxx (Auckland Land District) deposited with Land Information New Zealand);

Central Ward - The area generally comprising Piha, Karekare, Sturges Road area, Bruce McLaren area, Henderson, Lincoln, Te Atatu South and Te Atatu Peninsula (and comprising the areas delineated on S.O Plans xxxxx (Auckland Land District) deposited with Land Information New Zealand);

Southern Ward - The area generally comprising Whatipu, Huia, Laingholm, Titirangi, Oratia, Glendene, Glen Eden and New Lynn (comprising the areas delineated on S.O Plans xxxxx (Auckland Land District) deposited with Land Information New Zealand);

The boundaries of the proposed Wards are detailed in a map which is attached and is available from the Council's website - www.waitakere.govt.nz and from the offices, service centres and City libraries of the Waitakere City Council.

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Membership

The population of the Waitakere City is growing rapidly. Between the time of the 2001 Census and June 2005 the estimated resident population increased by approximately 14,000 to 182,925 persons.

In determining the membership of each of the proposed Wards the Council is required to ensure that each ward receives fair representation based on population.

The Council therefore proposes that the Council to be elected at the October 2007 general election of the Council comprise 14 Councillors, and a Mayor elected at large.

Proposed Ward Population

Table 1: Estimated Population – Combined Approach

	Estimated Population 2005	Estimated number of members	People per elected member
Northern	51,534	4	12,884
Central	67,062	5	13,412
Southern	64,329	5	12,866
Total	182,925	14	13,066

Community Boards

The Council has also been required to consider whether Community Boards should be provided for in the City. A Community Board is a separate legal entity to the Council. It is not a committee of the Council.

The Council has decided to propose the retention of Community Boards because:

- the proposed ward structure and membership of the Council will not adequately provide for the effective and efficient governance of Waitakere City
- the retention of Community Boards will significantly enhance the governance arrangements of the City
- the Community Boards, which the Council has given wide ranging delegated powers, consent to their retention
- there is a strong desire in the City for the retention of the Community Boards.

To assist the efficient operation of the City whilst providing for fair and effective representation the Council proposes to establish three Community Boards covering the same areas as the Council Wards and to disestablish the Henderson, New Lynn, Massey and Waitakere Community Boards.

The Council therefore proposes that the following three Community Boards be established:

Northern Community

- (1) There shall be constituted a community for the area of the Northern Ward to be known as "the Northern Community".
- (2) The Community Board for the Northern Community shall comprise:
 - (a) Six Members elected by the Electors of the Northern Community; and
 - (b) Three persons elected, as Members of the Council representing the Northern Ward and appointed, from time to time, to the Community Board by the Council.

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Central Community

- (1) There shall be constituted a community for the area of the Central Ward to be known as "the Central Community".
- (2) The Community Board for the Central Community shall comprise:
 - (a) Six Members elected by the Electors of the Central Community; and
 - (b) Three persons elected as Members of the Council representing the Central Ward and appointed, from time to time, to the Community Board by the Council.

Southern Community

- (1) There shall be constituted a community for the area of the Southern Ward to be known as "the Southern Community".
- (2) The Community Board for the Southern Community shall comprise:
 - (a) Six Members elected by the Electors of the Southern Community; and
 - (b) Three persons elected, as Members of the Council representing the Southern Ward and appointed, from time to time, to the Community Board by the Council.

Role of Community Boards

The role of a Community Board is specified in Section 52 of the Local Government Act 2002, as follows:

- a. To represent, and act as an advocate for, the interests of its community.
- b. To consider and report on all matters referred to it by the territorial authority, or any matter of interest or concern to the community board.
- c. To maintain an overview of services provided by the territorial authority within the community.
- d. To prepare an annual submission to the territorial authority for expenditure within the community.
- e. To communicate with community organisations and special interest groups within the community.
- f. To undertake any other responsibilities that are delegated to it by the territorial authority

The Council determines what additional roles, functions and powers it may delegate to Community Boards after each triennial election.

Submissions Invited

The Council invites submissions on its proposal for the membership and electoral arrangements of the Waitakere City Council.

Submissions must be made in writing and need to be received by the Council by 28 February 2006.

Submissions are to be forwarded to:
The Electoral Officer
Waitakere City Council
Private Bag 93109
Henderson
Waitakere City

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Submitters should clearly indicate in their submissions whether they wish to speak to their submissions at a hearing of the Council. The Council will be holding a hearing in the Waitakere City Council Chambers on its proposal during March 2006. All submitters who advise the Council that they wish to be heard will be offered the opportunity to appear before the Council. Submitters wishing to appear before the Council should provide a contact telephone number.

Inquiries may be made to the Council at phone 836-8000 ext 8712, fax 836 8011, or email darryl.griffin@waitakere.govt.nz

Darryl Griffin
Electoral Officer
Waitakere City Council

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EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

STATEMENT OF THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE REVIEW OF THE MEMBERSHIP AND BASIS FOR ELECTION FOR WAITAKERE CITY

This is a statement of the advantages and disadvantages of the review of membership and basis for election for Waitakere City. It should be noted that the proposal is a draft at this stage and could be subject to change following the Council's consideration of submissions.

ADVANTAGES

Meets the statutory criteria

- The proposal will promote good local government. In particular the Council is satisfied that:
- It would result in a City containing distinct communities of interest, and
- The proposal meets the statutory criteria that the Council is required to take into account when considering such proposals.

Participation in Decision-Making

The new Ward structure of the Council is intended to provide effective representation for communities of interest in the City.

The existing Community Board will be abolished and three new Community Boards will be constituted based on the new Ward areas.

The three Community Boards will have the same wide range of functions, duties and powers, including the opportunity to input into Council decision-making.

DISADVANTAGES

There may be a perceived loss of local democracy in the existing Waitakere Ward by abolishing the existing Ward and Community Board. This concern will be addressed by making all Elected Members (Councillors and Community Board members) having some responsibility and accountability for the rural area and the ranges as well as having urban responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

The Council considers that the perceived disadvantages will be outweighed by the advantages listed above and the benefits that will result from the proposed changes.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- The procedure from now on is as follows –
- The draft representation proposal is open to submissions until 28 February 2006;
- The Council meets with those who wish to speak to their submissions;
- The Council considers the submissions and makes any other investigations or enquiries it considers necessary;
- The Council decides whether to –
 - Issue a final representation proposal based on the draft representation proposal
 - Issue a final representation, proposal based on modifications to the draft representation scheme; or
- The Council's final representation proposal will be publicly notified.
- Any person or organisation (including a Community Board) that made submissions on the draft proposal may appeal in writing against the Council's decision adopting the final proposal.
- Where the Council final proposal is based on modification the initial proposal any interested person or organisation (including a Community Board) may lodge an objection in writing to the final proposal.

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- The Local Government Commission will consider Council's final proposal together with any appeal and objections.
- The Local Government Commission may hold hearings with those who made appeals and objections which hearings may take place in Waitakere City.
- The Local Government Commission makes a final determination which is only shifted to judicial review in respect of matters of law.

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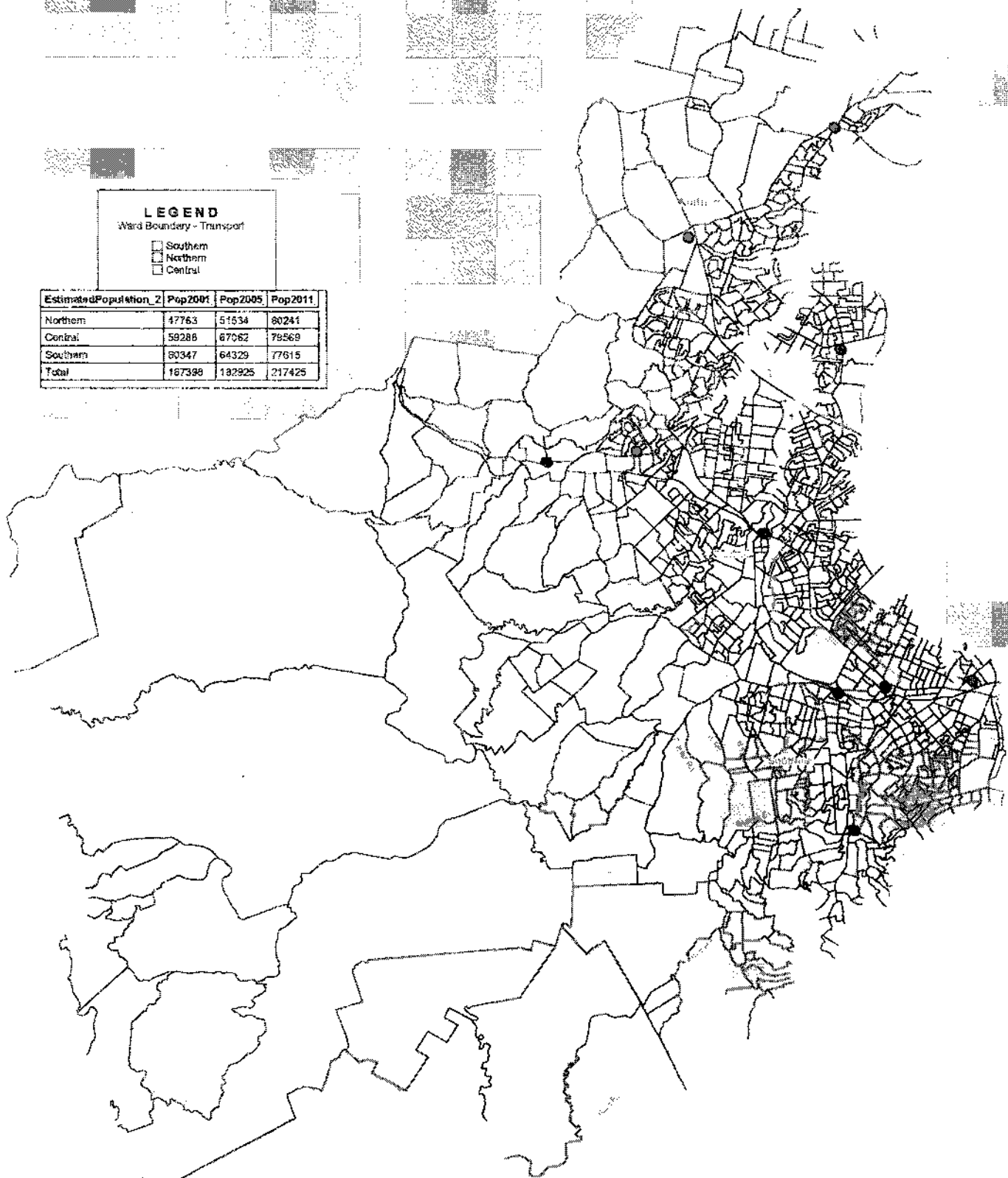
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Proposed Ward and Community Board Boundaries

LEGEND
 Ward Boundary - Transport

- Southern
- Northern
- Central

Estimated Population 2011	Pop2001	Pop2005	Pop2011
Northern	47763	51534	80241
Central	59286	67062	78569
Southern	80347	64329	77615
Total	187396	182925	217425



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