



Representation Review

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of a representation review?

To ensure we have fair and effective representation that meets our communities' needs and expectations.

We want our council to represent a city where everyone knows they have a voice, knows how to be heard, uses their voice and experiences being genuinely heard.

Why are we holding a representation review?

Our Council held a representation review in 2018, but as Council has voted in favour of establishing Māori wards, it triggered the need for another representation review in 2021.

During this review, we must consider three key factors:

- What are our city's communities of interest?
- How can those communities be effectively represented?
- How can those communities be fairly represented?

For our councillors to make the best decision, we need your feedback.

What will a representation review look at?

A representation review considers how we can best have fair and effective representation in our city. It will look at:

- The number of councillors
- How they are elected - elected from wards, across the whole city, or a mix of both
- Boundaries and names of wards
- If we should have community boards and,
- what communities people identify with – geographical, historical, or something else.

It will not consider our voting system. Council has already made the decision to retain the Single Transferable Vote (STV) electoral system for the 2022 and 2025 local elections. You can read more about this [here](#).

It will not consider Māori wards. Council has already made the decision to have Māori and general wards for the 2022 and 2025 local elections.

When can I have my say?

Consultation will run from 6 August – 6 September.
Council will hear submissions from those who wish to speak on 21 September.

What is a Māori ward?

People on the Māori electoral roll vote for candidates standing in a Māori ward.
Māori wards sit alongside general wards. Those voting in Māori wards receive the same number of votes as all voters.

How are Māori Wards established?

Palmerston North City Council resolved to establish a Māori ward on 7 April 2021 following the February 2021 changes to the Local Electoral Act (LEA).

Who can stand for election in a Māori ward?

Any New Zealand citizen, on the electoral roll who is nominated by two other electors.

Candidates in Māori wards do not have to be of Māori descent.

Candidates cannot stand for the general and Māori wards at the same time.

Who can vote for candidates in a Māori ward?

You can only vote for candidates in the Māori ward if you are enrolled on the Māori electoral roll.

If you are of Māori descent, you can enrol in either the general or the Māori electoral rolls.

If you are not of Māori descent, you can only enrol on the general electoral roll.

You can find more information about the Māori Electoral Option on the [Electoral Commission's website](#).

Who votes for the mayor?

The mayor is elected 'at large' by all eligible voters. This means all electors from Māori and general wards vote for the mayor.

Do Māori ward councillors only represent Māori?

No. All councillors, from either the Māori or general wards, represent the entire community.

How many councillors can we have?

The minimum number allowed by law is five and the maximum is 29. We currently have 15.

How many Māori ward councillors will there be?

As part of the representation review, we will consider how many councillors (in total) can represent the city fairly and effectively. The number of councillors depends on a formula in the Local Electoral Act. It is based on the Māori and General electoral populations of the district relative to the number of councillors.

In Palmerston North we will have either one or two Māori seats depending on the total number of councillors we decide to have.

What are community boards?

Community boards are an additional layer of representation that report directly to the Council. They can have 4-12 members, at least four of whom are chosen by voters in the board area.

Councils that have well-defined communities with different characteristics and interests to the rest of the city may have community boards.

There are approximately 110 community boards throughout New Zealand.

The purpose of a community board is to:

- represent and act as an advocate for the interests of the community;
- consider and report on any matter referred to it by their council, and any issues of interest to the community board;
- make an annual submission to their council on expenditure;
- maintain an overview of services provided by their council within the community; and
- communicate with community organisations and special interest groups in the community, and undertake any other responsibilities delegated by their council.

How does this impact how much it all costs?

Total remuneration of councillors is set independently by the Remuneration Authority and is decided by the size of the city, not the number of councillors. Having more councillors representing a community does not mean an increase to people's rates and having fewer councillors representing a community does not mean a decrease to rates.

There will be minimal impact on election costs regardless of the decisions.

If a community board is to be developed the Council must ensure it has the financial and other resources to establish and support a community board including elected board members' remuneration. A targeted rate could be considered.

Didn't the councillors already vote in Maori wards? What's the point in asking us?

Yes, it is because the Council has decided to introduce Māori wards that we need to hear from you. Now, we need to decide how having Māori wards affects our other representation arrangements- how many councillors we should have altogether and whether there are other communities of interest that we can define geographically.

The councillors never listen- what's the point in submitting on this?

One of the key jobs of councillors is to advocate for you. If you feel this way it's even more important that you make a submission on the representation review, because it's all about how we choose who represents us.

Why do we have a Māori ward when we already have Rangitāne representatives on committees?

The option of Māori wards was developed by parliament to enhance the role of all Māori in local government. One of the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 is to facilitate participation by Māori in local authority decision-making processes.

Our city is benefiting from the knowledge and expertise of Rangitāne as mana whenua on the Rangitāne o Manawatū, Community Development, Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability committees. However Appointed members do not sit at full Council.