

Napier City Council

Representation

Review 2024

Community engagement

| SIL Research

May 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this research was to assist Napier City Council (NCC) with their 2024 Representation Review public engagement, assessing the most preferred out of five potential options for Napier's future local democracy arrangements. In addition, consideration for a community board in the Maraenui area was also included in this public engagement. SIL Research was provided with the five options for ward arrangements to consult with the community.

Data was collected between 6 and 24 May 2024, using postal forms, online surveys and telephone interviews.

A total of n=702 responses were used in the analysis, representative by area, age, gender and ethnicity.

The main findings were as follows:

- The community engagement survey on local representation arrangements for Napier revealed a diverse range of preferences among respondents. From the five options provided, no single option was preferred by a clear majority of respondents.
- Option 4 emerged as the most selected option, receiving 34% of the votes (n=235). Options 1 and 2 were nearly tied, with 21% (n=147) and 22% (n=154) support respectively. Option 5 garnered 13% (n=92) of the votes, while Option 3 was the least preferred, with 10% support (n=72).
- Public feedback was taken into account when analysing the selected options; 15% of respondents (n=103) either disagreed with all five presented options or with some aspects of these. After recalibration, Option 4 maintained its lead with 28% support, highlighting a community inclination towards fewer councillors and balanced representation across wards.
- Despite this preference, notable support remained for options that maintain or closely resemble the current arrangements, driven by a desire for distinct ward representation and concerns over costs.
- Taking the two most preferred options (4 and 2) together (representing 47% of respondents), the most selected common elements were: fewer councillors, no 'at large' councillors, combining Nelson Park and Onekawa-Tamatea wards only.
- Feedback on establishing a community board in the Maraenui area did not reach a consensus, reflecting a community divided on the issue, with a nearly even split, with 45% against and 41% in favour, and 14% unsure or neutral. Just under half of respondents (46%) believed there are sufficient existing means within the Maraenui community to be represented; 22% were dissatisfied with existing arrangements, and one-third (33%) remained unsure.
- Furthermore, the results underscored the importance of addressing cost concerns and the desire for equitable representation in any future local governance arrangements for Napier.



METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH GOAL

Representation reviews are reviews of the representation arrangements for a local authority.

Elections for councils are held every three years. This is when residents vote for mayors and councillors, and in some parts of New Zealand, for community board members.

Councils are required by the Local Electoral Act 2001 to take a fresh look at their representation arrangements at least once every six years. This is to ensure the council is structured to best serve the interests and needs of its community. For Napier, this means Council needs to consider:

- How many elected members should be on council?
- How many wards should our city have, what should their boundaries be, and what should they be named?
- Should we have a mix of both ward councillors and at large councillors?
- How many Māori wards and representatives should Napier have?
- Should we establish community boards?

Napier City Council, together with SIL Research, undertook a community survey on this matter in late 2023, including analysis to identify communities of interest in Napier. Council considered the community's feedback and analysis and, based on this, the Council is now considering five potential options for Napier's future local democracy arrangements.

After this survey, the Council will consider the community's responses along with the analysis and then put forward one proposal for a formal community consultation in July 2024.

QUESTIONNAIRE AND PROJECT SPECIFICS

SIL Research was provided with the five options for ward arrangements to consult with the community. In addition, Council was considering a community board for the Maraenui area; this topic was also included in the survey.

The detailed information about suggested options can be found in the Appendix.

To ensure that the sample is representative of the Napier population, SIL utilised auxiliary data from Statistics NZ to establish standard proportions for sampling a diverse group of Napier residents aged 18 and above.

All relevant information about the review was available online at the Council's website (<https://www.sayitnapier.nz/ncc/2023-24-representation-review-2/>), and distributed by the Council in a form of flyers.

Several Council-led community drop-in sessions and meetings were held on 8 May (Pukemokimoki Marae), 11 May (Maraenui), 14 May (Taradale), 16 May (Aquatic Centre), and 21 May (War Memorial Centre).

DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected between 6 and 24 May 2024.

Multiple data collection methods were utilised to ensure residents were well-represented. The mixed-methods approach included:

(1) Postal survey. A total of 2,000 survey forms were delivered to randomly selected Napier households, with 1,000 forms delivered in the Maraenui area and surroundings;

(2) Telephone survey. Respondents were randomly selected from the publicly available telephone directories;

(3) Social media (available via SIL Research social media platforms, such as Facebook). The invitation advertisement was randomly promoted to Napier residents;

In addition, the survey was advertised via NCC's website to increase survey awareness (using a separate unique survey link).

Responses were collected in proportion to the Napier residents' population aged 18+ across four current wards (see Table 1).

Table 1 Responses by ward (weighted)

	Frequency	Percent
Ahuriri Ward	125	18%
Onekawa - Tamatea Ward	117	17%
Nelson Park Ward	194	28%
Taradale Ward	265	38%
Total	702	100%

DATA ANALYSIS

A total of n=702 surveys were used in the final analysis.

The response rate from sent out postal surveys was, on average, 4% (3% in the Maraenui area and 6% in other areas of Napier).

Post-stratification (weighting) was applied to the full dataset to reflect Napier's age and gender group proportions within each of four wards as determined by the Statistics New Zealand 2018 Census.

SIL Research ensured quality control during the fieldwork period.

Further checks included, but were not limited to, removal of incomplete responses, duplicate responses, and responses coming from outside of Napier.

The main resident groups analysed in this report were: ward, area, age, gender, ethnicity, and home ownership. During the analysis stage of this report, Chi-square tests were used when comparing group results in tables. The threshold for reporting any statistically significant differences was a p-value of 0.05. Where differences were outside this threshold (less than 95%), no comments were made; where differences were within this threshold, comments have been made within the context of their practical relevance to NCC.

Overall results are reported with margins of error at a 95% confidence level. The maximum likely error margin occurs when a reported percentage is close to 50%.

Table 2 Margin of error

Responses n=	Reported percentages	
	50%	80% or 20%
700	±3.7	±2.9
500	±4.4	±3.5
400	±4.9	±3.9
300	±5.6	±4.5
200	±6.9	±5.5
100	±9.8	±7.8

A reported significant difference implies that, within a given tested sample group or factor (e.g. age, ward, ethnicity, etc.), one or more subsample result is substantially different from other subsample results (e.g. younger vs. older respondents, one ward vs. another ward, etc.). Where results do vary within a sample group, this difference is noted in the report text.

NOTES ON REPORTING

Due to rounding, figures with percentages may not add to 100%. Reported percentages were calculated on actual results not rounded values.

Where results are reported by sub-groups of residents, estimates of results may not be statistically reliable due to the higher margins of error (small sample sizes).

Open-ended (free-text) responses were also collected to allow residents to provide more detailed qualitative feedback. SIL Research used a content analysis approach to determine certain themes, concepts or issues within this feedback. This represents a 'bottom up' data driven approach where identified themes are derived purely from the collective respondent feedback, rather than fitting responses into pre-determined categories. Results for reported themes may not add to 100% as several themes could be mentioned by a given respondent.

RESPONSES USED IN THE ANALYSIS

Table 2 Responses by age

	Frequency	Percent
18-44	274	39%
45-64	243	35%
65+	184	26%
Not stated	1	<1%
Total	702	100%

Table 3 Responses by gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	329	47%
Female	367	52%
Another gender	6	1%
Total	702	100%

Table 4 Responses by home ownership

	Frequency	Percent
Other	17	2%
Owned	564	80%
Rented	92	13%
Not stated	29	4%
Total	702	100%

Table 5 Responses by ethnicity (aggregated, multi-choice)

	Frequency	Percent
New Zealand European	521	74%
European	57	8%
Māori	131	19%
New Zealander/Kiwi/Refused	43	6%
Other	42	6%
Total	702	100%

Table 6 Responses by area (aggregated)

	Frequency	Percent
Westshore	7	1%
Bay View	15	2%
Ahuriri	17	2%
Napier Hills	87	12%
Napier South	33	5%
Marewa	41	6%
Maraenui	79	11%
Onekawa	63	9%
Tamatea	55	8%
Pirimai	26	4%
Poraiti	18	3%
Greenmeadows	62	9%
Taradale	170	24%
Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa	30	4%
Total	702	100%

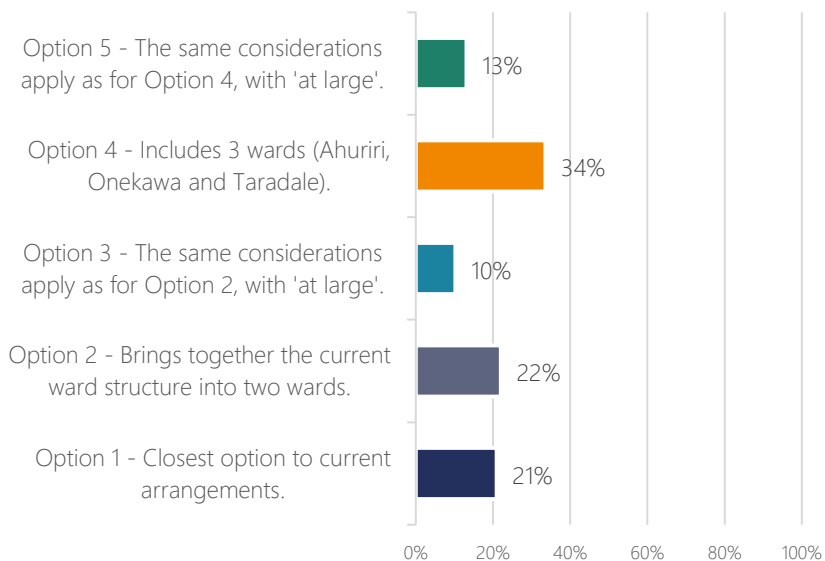
Note: final dataset was statistically weighted to increase accuracy of the reported results. The results are representative of key demographic groups (age, gender, ethnicity and area/ward) for adults aged 18+. The target was based on 2018 New Zealand Census information.



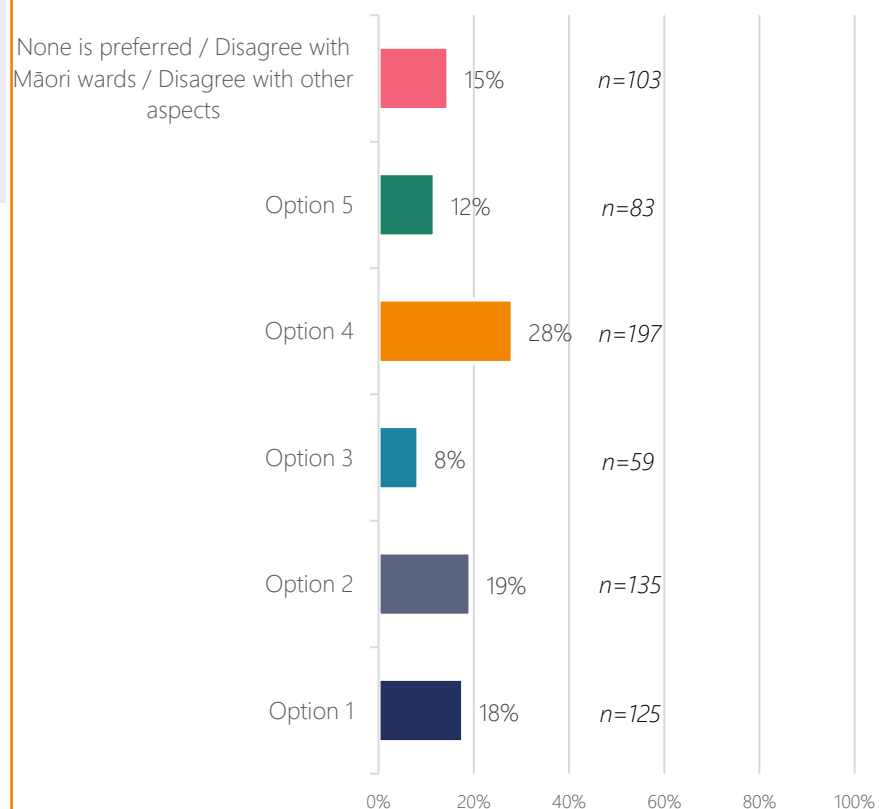
PREFERRED REPRESENTATION OPTION

- From the five options provided, no single option was preferred by a clear majority of respondents.
- Overall, 34% (n=235) of respondents selected Option 4 for future Napier representation. There was an even split between Option 1 (21%, n=147) and Option 2 (22%, n=154), while 13% (n=92) selected Option 5. Option 3 was the least preferred (10%, n=72).
- Public feedback was taken into account when analysing the selected options; 15% of respondents (n=103) either disagreed with all five presented options or with some aspects of them.
- After recalibrating the results, Option 4 remained the most preferred out of five (28%).

Most preferred option (n=701)



Re-calibrated results taking into account public feedback (when none of the proposed five options was preferred to full extent). n=702

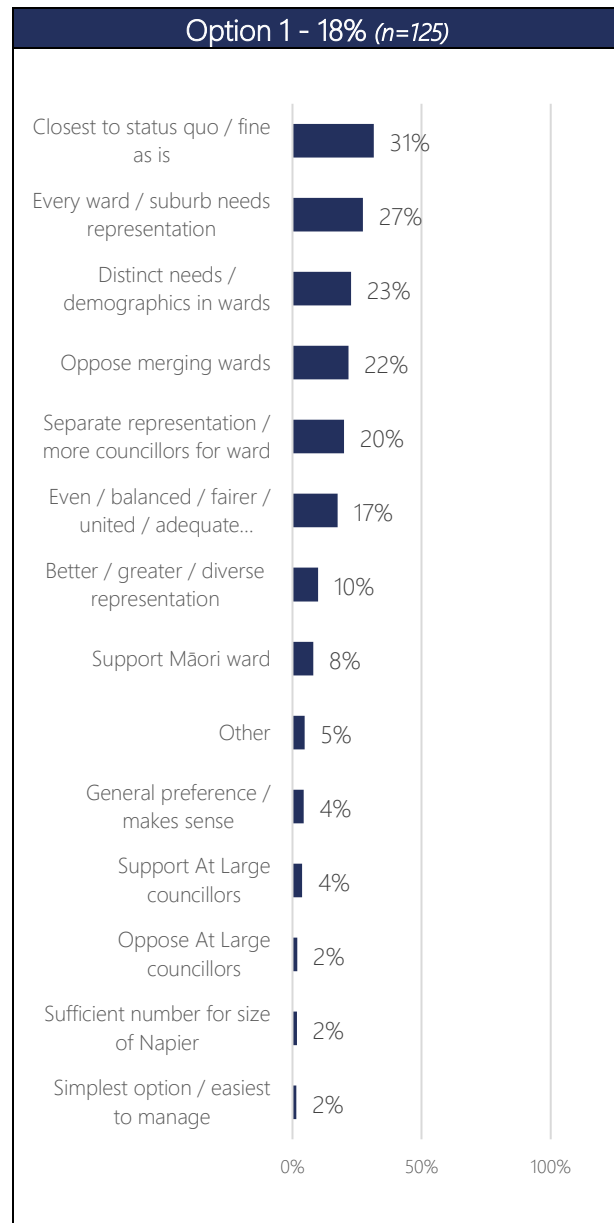


All respondents were asked: "The following five options are potentially what Napier could introduce as its new representation arrangements. All options include one mayor and a Māori ward. Please read the information about each option and select one option you prefer the most?"

Option 1 - Closest option to current arrangements including two city-wide Māori ward seats.

Provides 13 councillors in total.

Reasons for preferred options



		Option 1
Ward	Ahuriri	8%
	Onekawa-Tamatea	24%
	Nelson Park	19%
	Taradale	19%
Age	18-44	15%
	45-64	19%
	65+	21%
Gender	Male	17%
	Female	18%
Area	Westshore	34%
	Bay View	3%
	Ahuriri	12%
	Napier Hills	7%
	Napier South	15%
	Marewa	20%
	Maraenui	23%
	Onekawa	26%
	Tamatea	25%
	Pirimai	5%
	Poraiti	12%
	Greenmeadows	15%
	Taradale	21%
Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa	14%	
Home ownership	Owned	17%
	Rented	18%
Ethnicity	NZ European	18%
	European	11%
	Māori	22%
	NZder/Kiwi/Refused	18%
	Other	4%

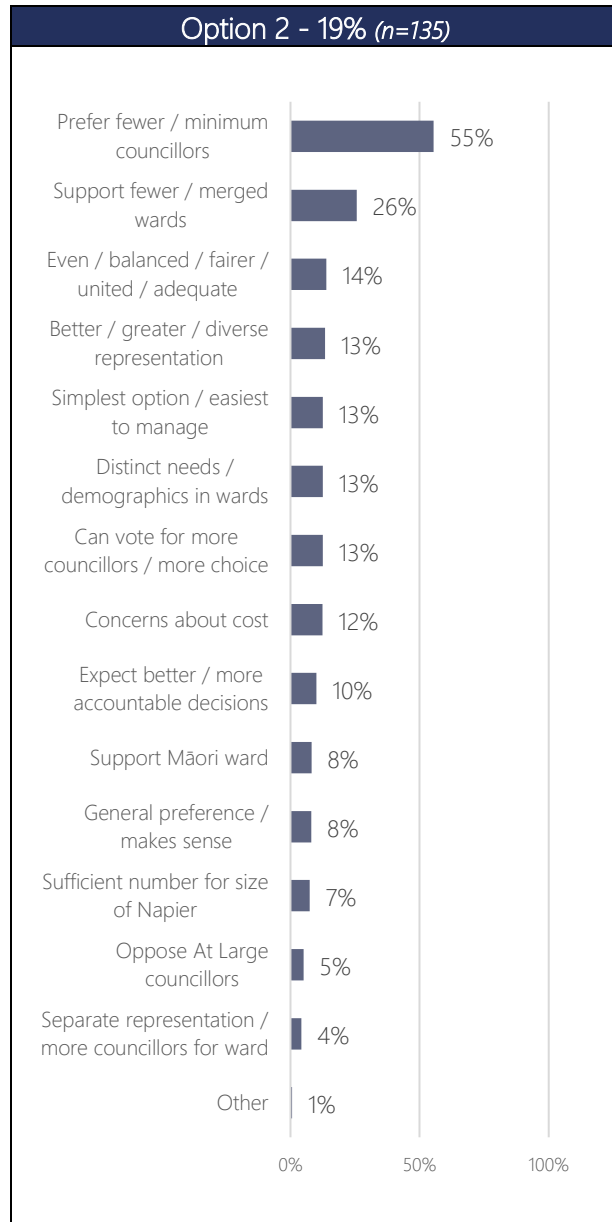
Option 1 was the third most-preferred option out of 5. Onekawa-Tamatea residents were generally more likely to favour this option, whereas Ahuriri residents were the least (particularly Bay View residents).

At the same time, Option 1 was generally more selected by Westshore, Onekawa and Tamatea area respondents.

Option 1 was selected primarily because it is the closest to the status quo, with many respondents specifically indicating their feeling that current arrangements are fine as they are. This was in part driven by a belief that every ward (or suburb) needs representation to best meet its distinct demographic or socio-economic needs. Consequently, advocates of Option 1 were most likely to explicitly oppose merging of wards, to ensure distinct representation and/or more councillors for their specific ward.

Taradale (and to some extent Nelson Park) residents were most likely to prefer remaining close to the status quo arrangements, with the strongest belief that every ward needs distinct representation. Nelson Park and Ahuriri residents were most opposed to merging wards and recognising distinct needs in individual wards. Onekawa-Tamatea residents most explicitly felt Option 1 provides the greatest balance in representation.

Reasons for preferred options



Option 2 - Brings together the current ward structure into two wards, including two city-wide Māori ward seats: Ahuriri/Taradale and Nelson Park/Onekawa-Tamatea, that share similar socio-demographic characteristics. Provides 11 councillors.

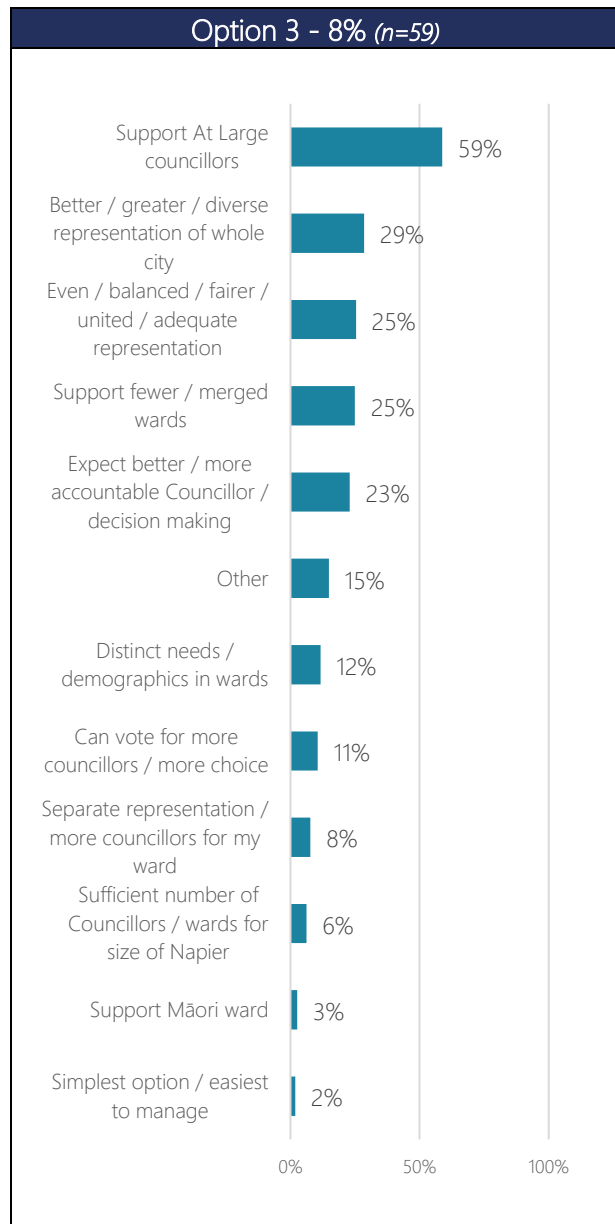
		Option 2
Ward	Ahuriri	25%
	Onekawa-Tamatea	10%
	Nelson Park	24%
	Taradale	17%
Age	18-44	22%
	45-64	17%
	65+	19%
Gender	Male	18%
	Female	20%
Area	Westshore	17%
	Bay View	37%
	Ahuriri	7%
	Napier Hills	26%
	Napier South	14%
	Marewa	24%
	Maraenui	40%
	Onekawa	5%
	Tamatea	11%
	Pirimai	8%
	Poraiti	20%
	Greenmeadows	24%
Taradale	16%	
Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa	10%	
Home ownership	Owned	17%
	Rented	35%
Ethnicity	NZ European	18%
	European	19%
	Māori	22%
	NZder/Kiwi/Refused	12%
	Other	30%

Option 2 was the second most-preferred option out of 5. Ahuriri and Nelson Park residents were generally more likely to be in favour of this option. The greatest preference for Option 2 was recorded in Maraenui, Bay View, and among respondents in a rental property.

As for Option 4 (the most preferred option), Option 2 was selected primarily because it provides fewer (or the minimum possible) councillors overall (for over half of respondents) – the over-riding concern across all consultation submissions. This reasoning was to some degree connected to concerns about cost, with residents perceiving fewer councillors to represent lower cost for Council and ratepayers. Advocates for Option 2 also supported merging into fewer wards, and saw this as providing a more even or balanced Council (albeit least of all Options) that better represents the diversity of the city while combining the wards with similar demographic profiles and needs.

Preference for fewer overall councillors was high across most wards, but notably much lower for Nelson Park residents (who also had less concern about costs). However, both Nelson Park and Ahuriri residents expressed the greatest support for merged wards, with Nelson Park residents in particular seeing this option as representing the distinct needs and demographics of their ward. In contrast, expressed support for merging wards was substantially lower in Onekawa-Tamatea.

Reasons for preferred options



Option 3 - The same considerations apply as for Option 2. The difference is this option provides two extra 'at large' representatives. Having some councillors elected at large provides a balance between representation of district-wide interests and local concerns. Provides 13 councillors in total.

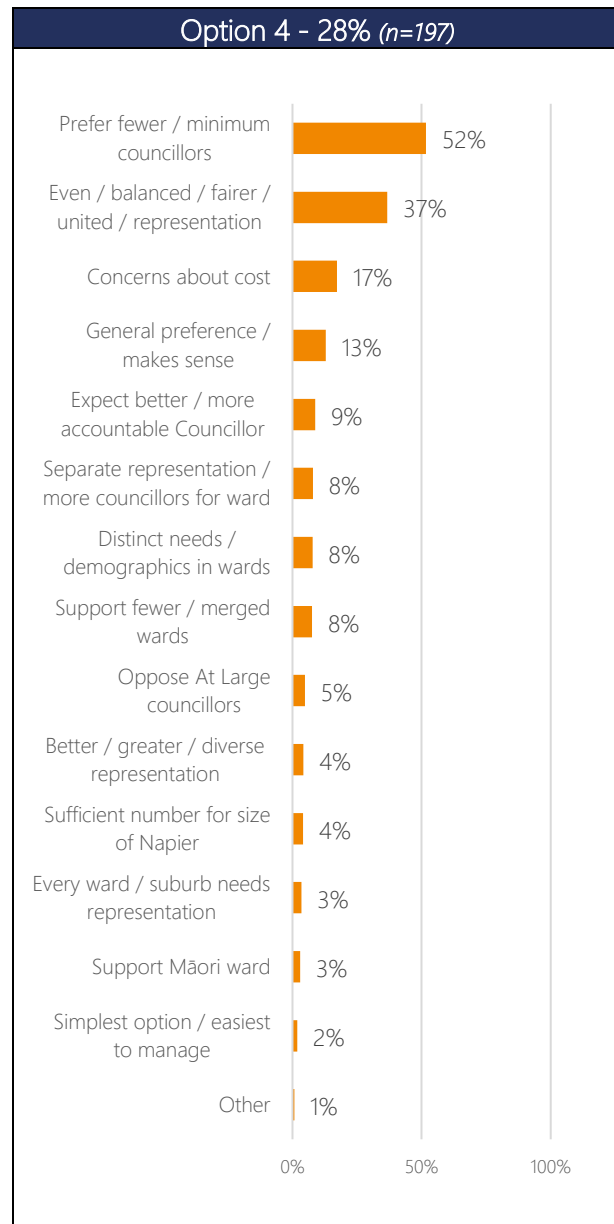
		Option 3
Ward	Ahuriri	5%
	Onekawa-Tamatea	12%
	Nelson Park	11%
	Taradale	7%
Age	18-44	12%
	45-64	6%
	65+	6%
Gender	Male	3%
	Female	13%
Area	Westshore	0%
	Bay View	0%
	Ahuriri	7%
	Napier Hills	6%
	Napier South	17%
	Marewa	0%
	Maraenui	10%
	Onekawa	14%
	Tamatea	13%
	Pirimai	19%
	Poraiti	6%
	Greenmeadows	3%
	Taradale	8%
Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa	8%	
Home ownership	Owned	7%
	Rented	15%
Ethnicity	NZ European	7%
	European	21%
	Māori	15%
	NZder/Kiwi/Refused	11%
	Other	16%

Option 3 was the least preferred option out of 5. Particularly this was the least preferred option among Ahuriri and Taradale respondents (given the proposed merging of these two wards). Younger respondents (18-44 years), and females, were slightly more likely to be in favour of this option compared to other age or gender groups.

As for Option 5, Option 3 received support for its inclusion of 'at large' councillors – with many advocates believing this provides greater or more diverse representation for the whole city, and even or balanced representation in general. This option also received the most support for merging wards, and held greatest appeal for those who wanted more choice with the ability to vote for more councillors overall. Notably, Option 3 was most likely to draw support from residents who dislike the existing wards system (with some calling for 'at large' councillors exclusively); and with the greatest expectation that this option would enable more accountable councillor performance and/or better Council decision making generally.

From comments perspective, support for 'at large' councillors was high across all wards, but especially Taradale and Ahuriri residents. Onekawa-Tamatea residents were most likely to support merging of wards. Together with Taradale residents, Onekawa-Tamatea residents also expressed greatest desire for more choice in councillor selection. Ahuriri residents were most likely to expect more accountable councillor performance and decision making.

Reasons for preferred options



Option 4 - Gives close to even split of councillors across city and includes 3 wards (Ahuriri, Onekawa and Taradale wards), with two city-wide Māori ward seats. Provides 11 councillors in total.

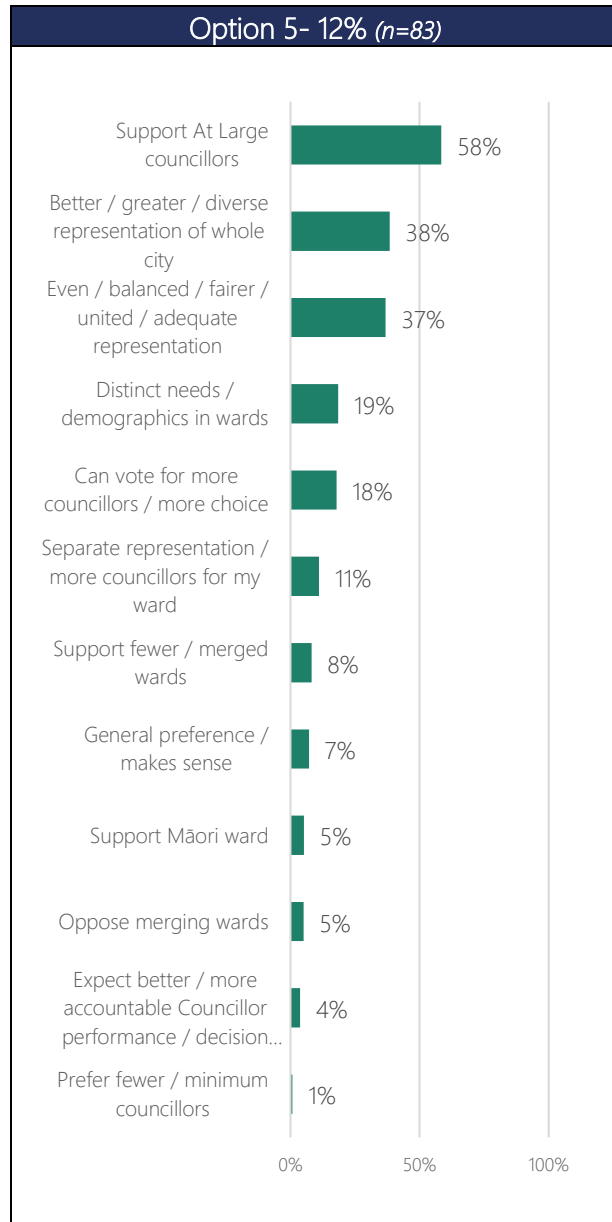
		Option 4
Ward	Ahuriri	32%
	Onekawa-Tamatea	22%
	Nelson Park	21%
	Taradale	34%
Age	18-44	29%
	45-64	26%
	65+	30%
Gender	Male	30%
	Female	27%
Area	Westshore	18%
	Bay View	34%
	Ahuriri	39%
	Napier Hills	32%
	Napier South	22%
	Marewa	26%
	Maraenui	18%
	Onekawa	22%
	Tamatea	25%
	Pirimai	18%
	Poraiti	30%
	Greenmeadows	28%
	Taradale	36%
Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa	30%	
Home ownership	Owned	30%
	Rented	15%
Ethnicity	NZ European	29%
	European	36%
	Māori	21%
	NZder/Kiwi/Refused	16%
	Other	31%

Option 4 was the most preferred option out of 5. All four wards were generally in favour of this option. Option 4 was the most preferred among Ahuriri and Taradale respondents, and most of suburbs. Particularly respondents from Taradale, Ahuriri, Bay View, Napier Hills, and home owners, were more likely to be in favour of this option.

However, Onekawa-Tamatea and Nelson Park wards – the two wards proposed for combining – were relatively less favourable. Onekawa-Tamatea residents exhibited an even split between Option 4 and Option 1, whereas Nelson Park residents showed an even split between Option 4 and Option 2.

As the most preferred of all options, Option 4 was selected primarily because it provides fewer (or the minimum possible) councillors overall (for half of respondents) – the over-riding concern across all consultation submissions. This reasoning was to some degree connected to concerns about cost (for almost one-in-five respondents), with fewer councillors perceived to represent lower cost for Council and ratepayers. Option 4 was also the option most seen by respondents as providing an even, balanced or fair representation of wards and councillors (the second-most mentioned consideration across all submissions) – more so than Option 2. 1-in-10 specifically indicated support for merging the Nelson Park and Onekawa-Tamatea wards. In contrast, this option registered the greatest open opposition to 'at large' councillors (albeit just 5% spontaneously mentioned this as a concern). Preference for fewer councillors was particularly high among Onekawa-Tamatea residents (who also expressed greatest concern about costs) and Taradale residents; but notably lower among Ahuriri and especially Nelson Park residents. Ahuriri and Onekawa-Tamatea residents were most likely to appreciate the even or balanced nature of Option 4.

Reasons for preferred options



Option 5 - The same considerations apply as for Option 4. The difference is this option provides two extra 'at large' representatives. Having some councillors elected at large provides a balance between representation of district-wide interests and local concerns. Provides 13 councillors in total.

		Option 5
Ward	Ahuriri	14%
	Onekawa-Tamatea	6%
	Nelson Park	14%
	Taradale	12%
Age	18-44	10%
	45-64	14%
	65+	11%
Gender	Male	13%
	Female	11%
Area	Westshore	19%
	Bay View	2%
	Ahuriri	12%
	Napier Hills	15%
	Napier South	17%
	Marewa	10%
	Maraenui	9%
	Onekawa	12%
	Tamatea	5%
	Pirimai	9%
	Poraiti	16%
	Greenmeadows	23%
Taradale	8%	
Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa	20%	
Home ownership	Owned	12%
	Rented	11%
Ethnicity	NZ European	13%
	European	2%
	Māori	13%
	NZder/Kiwi/Refused	3%
	Other	3%

Option 5 was the fourth most-preferred option out of 5.

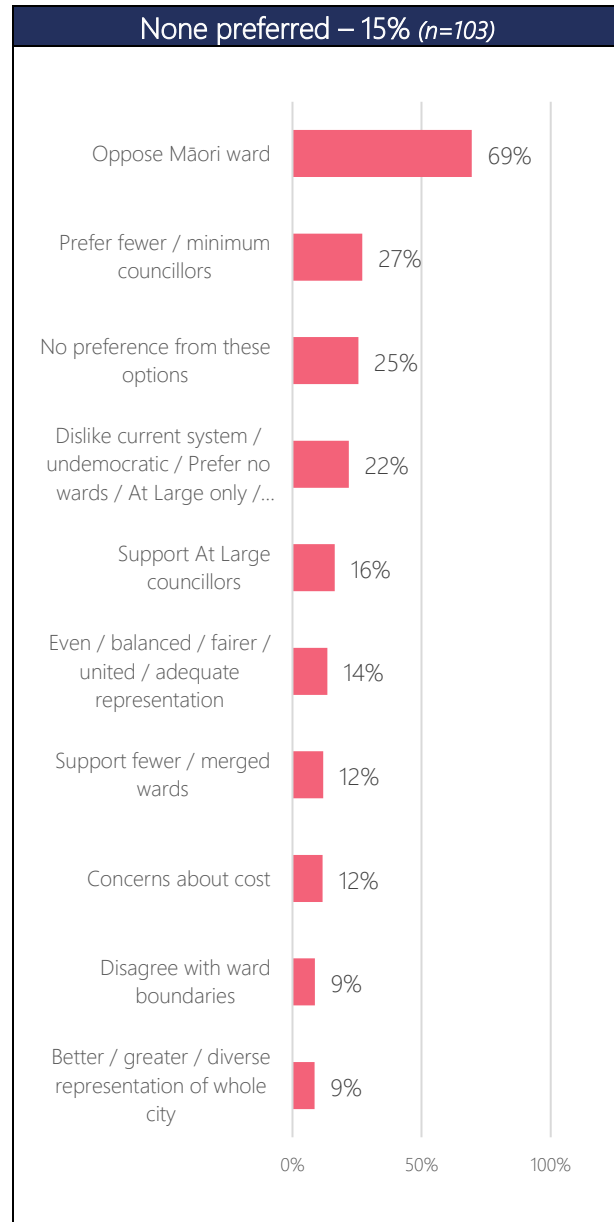
As for Option 3, Option 5 primarily received support for its inclusion of 'at large' councillors. Many respondents believed this arrangement provides better or more diverse representation for the city as a whole (more so than for any other Option); while also providing even or balanced representation across the wards (more so than for Option 3 in particular).

Support for 'at large' councillors was especially high in Onekawa-Tamatea and Ahuriri, but notably lower for Nelson Park residents. Nevertheless, both Nelson Park and Ahuriri residents felt Option 5 provided greater or more diverse representation for the whole city, and Nelson Park residents in particular believed this option was more even or balanced.

However, Ahuriri residents were most likely to explicitly oppose merging of wards, given the perceived distinct demographics and needs within existing wards.

Both Onekawa-Tamatea and Nelson Park residents appreciated that this option allowed them greater choice to vote for more councillors.

Reasons for preferred options



		None
Ward	Ahuriri	16%
	Onekawa-Tamatea	25%
	Nelson Park	12%
	Taradale	12%
Age	18-44	13%
	45-64	17%
	65+	13%
Gender	Male	19%
	Female	10%
Area	Westshore	12%
	Bay View	24%
	Ahuriri	23%
	Napier Hills	13%
	Napier South	15%
	Marewa	21%
	Maraenui	1%
	Onekawa	22%
	Tamatea	21%
	Pirimai	39%
	Poraiti	17%
	Greenmeadows	7%
	Taradale	12%
Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa	17%	
Home ownership	Owned	17%
	Rented	7%
Ethnicity	NZ European	14%
	European	10%
	Māori	8%
	NZder/Kiwi/Refused	39%
	Other	15%

None is preferred / Disagree with Māori wards / Disagree with other aspects

15% of all respondents stated they disagree with all five proposed options or expressed opposition towards particular aspects of these options.

The overall feedback reflected a clear opposition to the establishment of Māori wards, with many respondents advocating for a non-racial, inclusive representation system. Some believed that decisions about Māori wards should be subjected to a democratic vote (referendum) by the entire community.

There was a call for a more efficient, smaller government that prioritises fiscal responsibility and addresses local issues effectively.

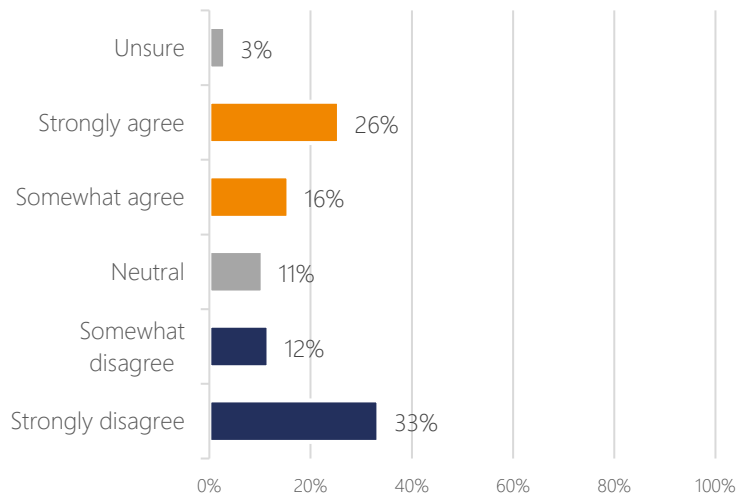
The consultation process was seen as flawed, with respondents feeling that their views were not adequately represented or considered.



MARAENUI AREA – community board

- Across all respondents, there were divided opinions over establishing a community board in Maraenui.
- Overall, 45% (n=316) of respondents disagreed with establishment of a community board in the Maraenui area, and 41% (n=289) agreed; 14% remained either unsure or neutral on this matter.
- Notably, Nelson Park respondents (particularly from Maraenui area) were more likely to be in favour of a local community board in their area.
- In addition, younger respondents (18-44 years), Māori, and those living in a rental property, were also more likely to agree to community board establishment.
- Disagreement was higher among respondents from Bay View, Poraiti and Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa areas.

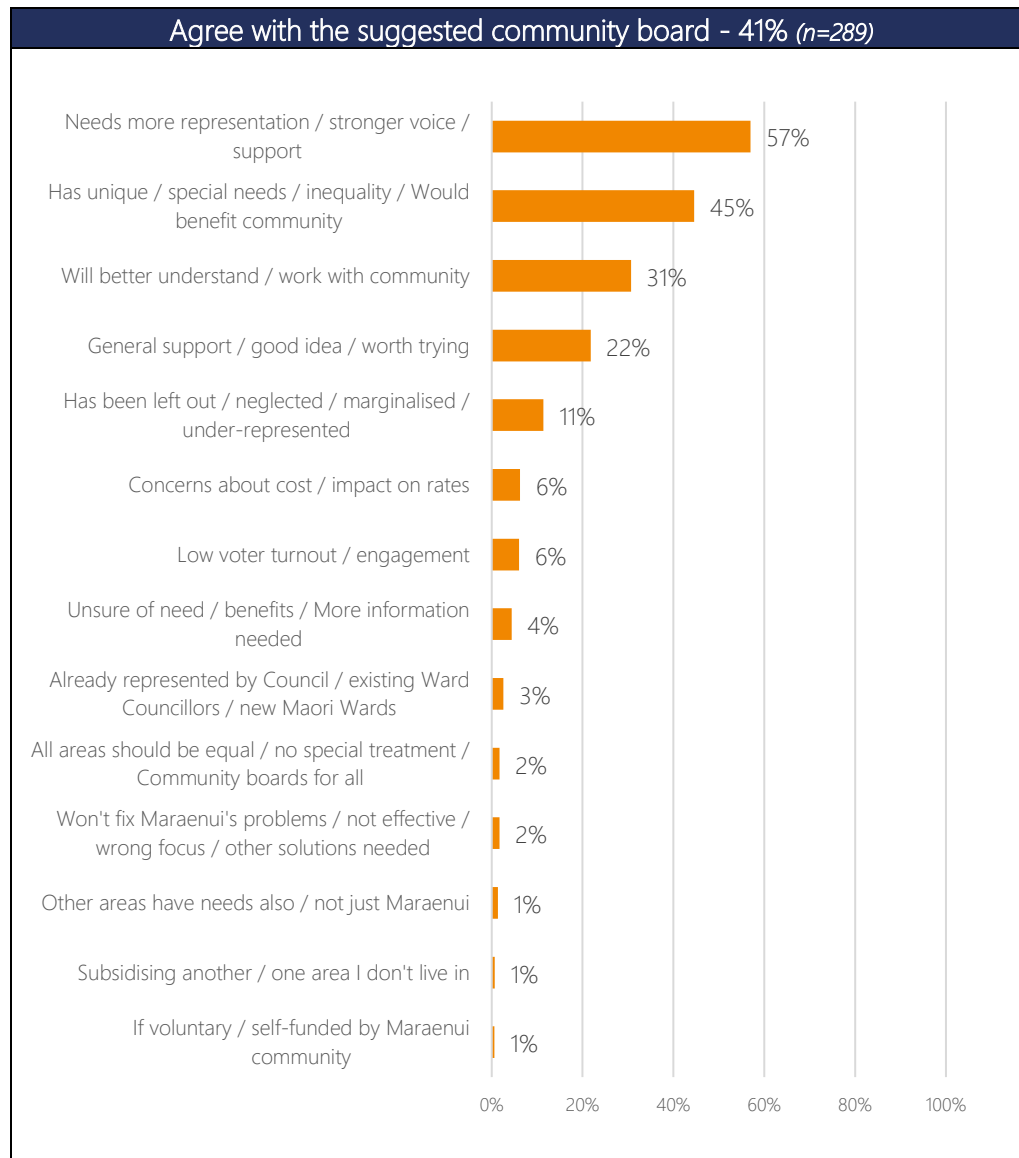
Community board preferences (n=701)



		Disagree	Agree
Ward	Ahuriri	49%	46%
	Onekawa-Tamatea	49%	33%
	Nelson Park	33%	53%
	Taradale	51%	34%
Age	18-44	39%	49%
	45-64	49%	38%
	65+	49%	34%
Gender	Male	51%	34%
	Female	40%	49%
Area	Westshore	54%	30%
	Bay View	65%	35%
	Ahuriri	53%	28%
	Napier Hills	44%	52%
	Napier South	43%	39%
	Marewa	38%	47%
	Maraenui	24%	64%
	Onekawa	49%	38%
	Tamatea	41%	36%
	Pirimai	44%	42%
	Poraiti	65%	27%
	Greenmeadows	49%	45%
	Taradale	48%	32%
	Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa	63%	26%
Home ownership	Owned	48%	38%
	Rented	25%	65%
Ethnicity	NZ European	46%	40%
	European	53%	37%
	Māori	38%	56%
	NZder/Kiwi/Refused	60%	25%
	Other	54%	27%

All respondents were asked: "A community board in the Maraenui area is being considered to help this community be better represented on Council. Do you agree or disagree with this suggestion?".

Reasons for preferred options



Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent. 'No answers' excluded from the analysis.

41% of respondents **agreed** with suggested community board in the Maraenui area, and 77% of these respondents provided a comment (n=223).

The overriding consideration for supporters of the community board proposal was the need for Maraenui to have greater representation and a stronger voice in civic matters, or more support generally. This was largely driven by the belief that this community has unique or special needs, given its socio-economic context, with recognition of social inequality – and therefore would benefit from community board support.

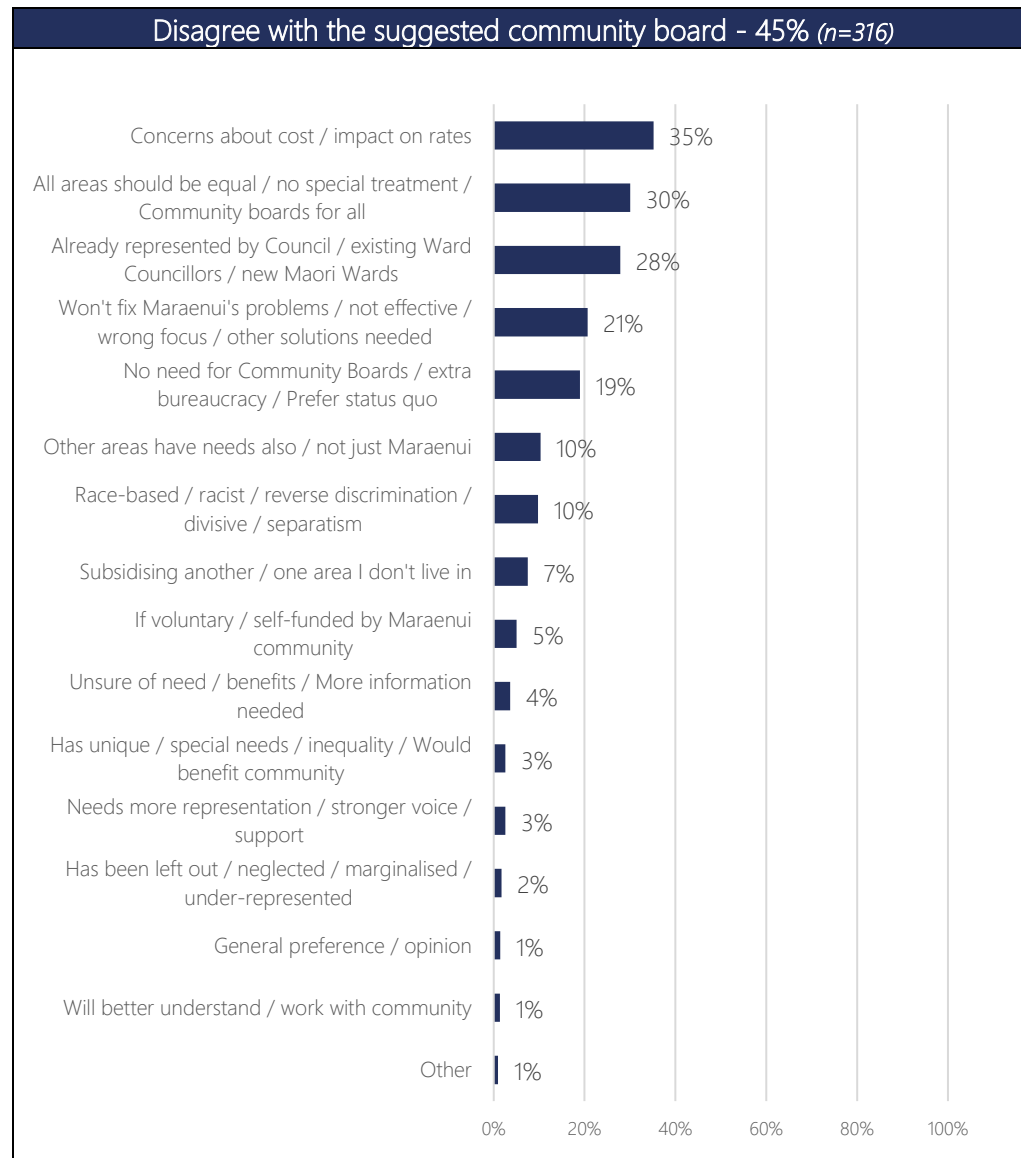
Many supporters felt that a community board comprising local residents would better understand the needs of the community (given their local knowledge and experience), and therefore could best work with the community to identify relevant needs, concerns, opportunities and solutions.

Reasons for supporting community boards were fairly consistent across wards, with slightly higher consideration from Nelson Park and Ahuriri wards.

Maraenui residents in particular believed that their community was in need of more representation, having been left out or under-represented historically; and that a community board would better work with the community.

Younger Napier residents (under 45 years) were also more likely to feel a community board would best understand and work with the Maraenui community.

Reasons for preferred options



Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent. 'No answers' excluded from the analysis.

45% of respondents **disagreed** with suggested community board in the Maraenui area, and 88% of these respondents provided a comment (n=277).

Three distinct concerns were most prominent for opponents of the community board proposal. The perceived additional costs of a community board were a consideration for over a third (35%) of respondents; particularly the impact this might have on rates in the current economic climate. A similar proportion felt that all areas of the Napier community should have equal representation or support systems, and therefore no single area should receive special treatment; alternatively, that all areas should have a community board if any were implemented. Thirdly, many respondents believed that the Maraenui area was adequately represented by Council and its existing democratic processes: particularly by existing Ward councillors that already represent the Maraenui community, and by the introduction of new Māori wards – making community boards unnecessary. Some also felt that community boards would not fix Maraenui's issues anyway, and would therefore be ineffective or the wrong focus for the community's needs; or that other solutions were required.

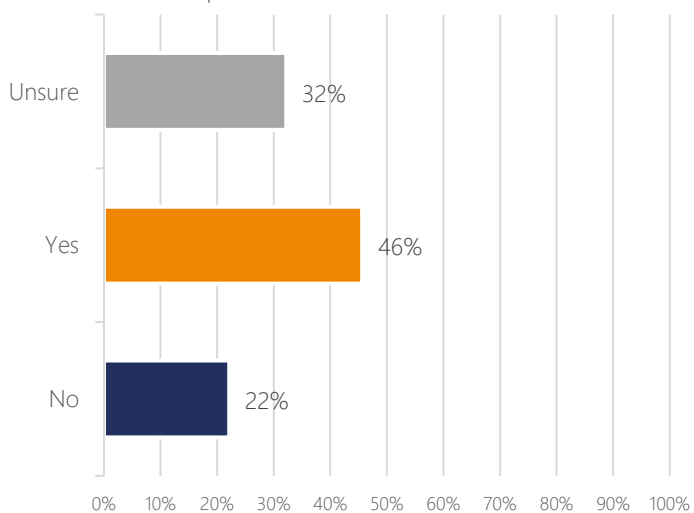
Ahuriri and Onekawa-Tamatea residents were most likely to suggest that all areas should be treated equally with either no community boards and/or community boards for all. Nelson Park residents were more likely to believe community boards were not the most effective mechanism for the Maraenui community and/or other solutions were needed; a view most shared by younger Napier residents (under 45) generally. Older adults (65+) were most likely to feel Maraenui was already adequately represented by existing means.



MARAENUI AREA – perceived representation

- Just under half of respondents (46%, n=318) believed there are sufficient means within the Maraenui community to be represented; 22% disagreed and one-third (33%) remained unsure.
- However, Nelson Park respondents (particularly from Maraenui area) were notably more likely to disagree they are sufficiently represented.
- In addition, respondents living in a rental property, Māori and other ethnicity respondents were more likely to disagree with this statement.
- Younger respondents (18-44 years) were more likely to remain unsure (37%).
- Perceived sufficiency of representation in Maraenui was high among respondents from Bay View, Onekawa, Poraiti, and Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa.

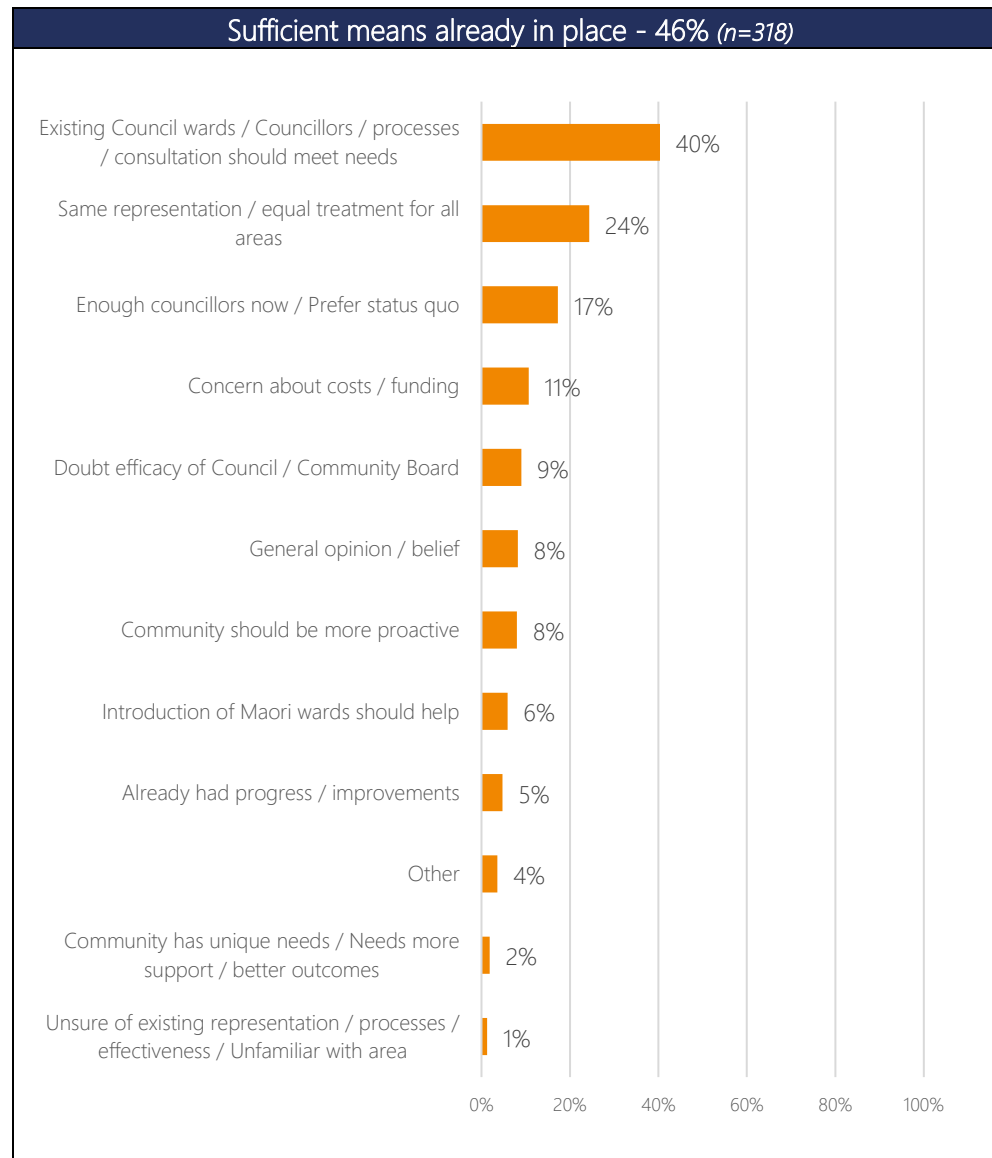
There are sufficient means already in place for Maraenui to be represented (n=696)



		No	Yes
Ward	Ahuriri	18%	47%
	Onekawa-Tamatea	19%	54%
	Nelson Park	37%	33%
	Taradale	15%	50%
Age	18-44	28%	35%
	45-64	20%	51%
	65+	16%	54%
Gender	Male	20%	51%
	Female	24%	40%
Area	Westshore	18%	39%
	Bay View	8%	64%
	Ahuriri	13%	55%
	Napier Hills	21%	43%
	Napier South	35%	46%
	Marewa	25%	40%
	Maraenui	49%	16%
	Onekawa	18%	59%
	Tamatea	24%	50%
	Pirimai	21%	46%
	Poraiti	10%	70%
	Greenmeadows	12%	44%
	Taradale	18%	48%
Meeanee-Awatoto-Te Awa	10%	62%	
Home ownership	Owned	18%	49%
	Rented	47%	18%
Ethnicity	NZ European	19%	48%
	European	20%	37%
	Māori	36%	38%
	NZder/Kiwi/Refused	5%	66%
	Other	37%	25%

All respondents were asked: "Do you think there are sufficient means already in place for this community to be represented at Napier City Council?"

Reasons for preferred options



46% of respondents believed there are sufficient means within the Maraenui community to be represented, and 72% provided a comment (n=230).

Respondents agreeing that the Maraenui community has sufficient representation in place predominantly believed that existing Council wards, councillors and other consultation processes should already meet the community's needs; and, if not the case, these current mechanisms need improving (e.g. greater or more active support from ward councillors).

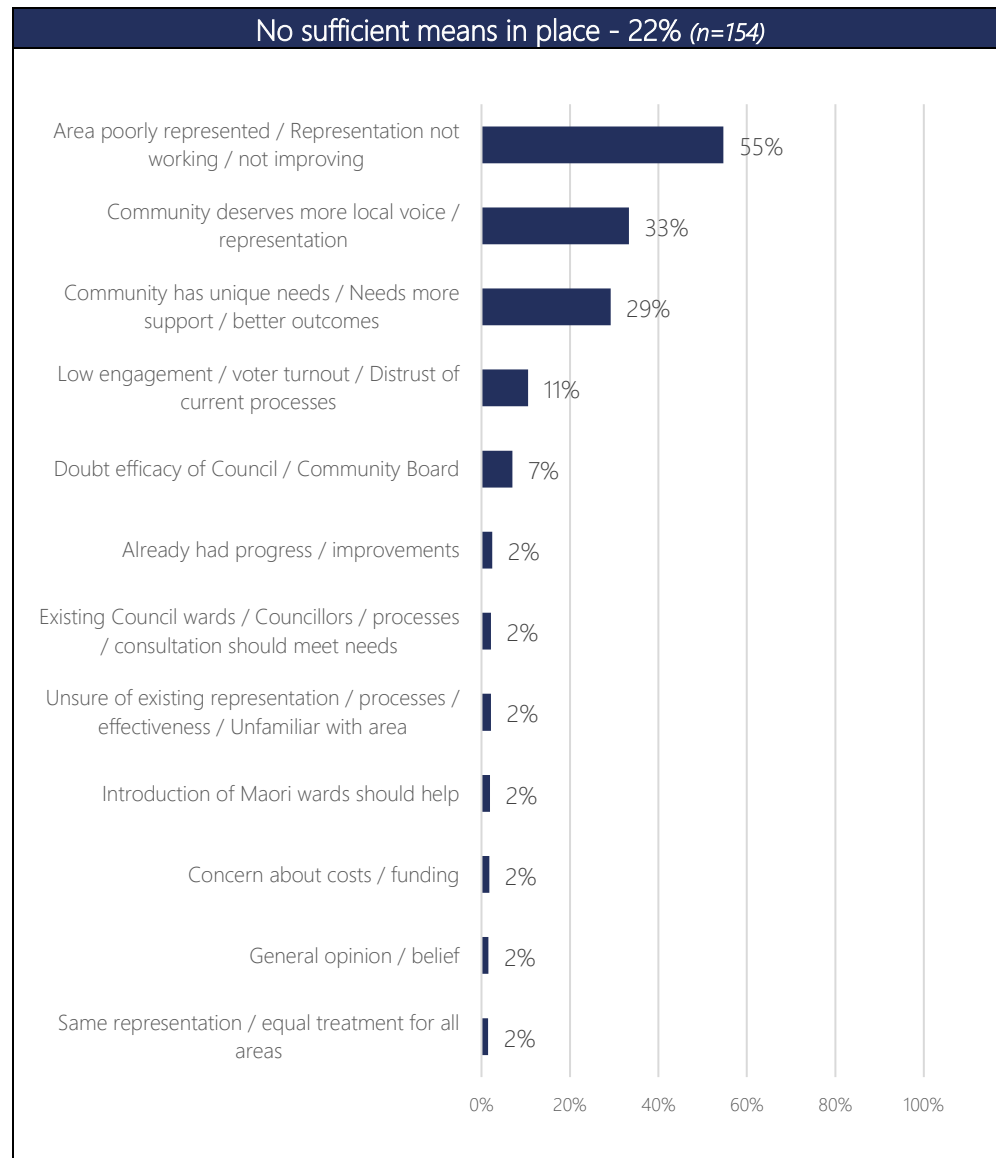
This view was most prevalent among Ahuriri and Nelson Park residents.

Relatedly, many respondents felt that all areas of Napier already (or should) receive the same representation and equal treatment; therefore, additional representation is not needed for any single suburb or community. Younger respondents (under 45) were most likely to suggest this.

More generally, some respondents believed there were enough existing councillors to meet the needs of the whole city and its specific communities, so status quo arrangements were preferred; accompanied by concerns about costs to ratepayers that any additional representation mechanisms might incur.

Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent. 'No answers' excluded from the analysis.

Reasons for preferred options



22% of respondents believed there were no sufficient means in place for the Maraenui community to be represented, and 77% provided a comment (n=119).

Respondents who disagreed that Maraenui has sufficient representation in place primarily believed that the community was currently poorly represented and/or that existing representation processes were not sufficiently working; as seen in the current composition or diversity of Council and/or the lack of progress or evidence of improved outcomes in the area.

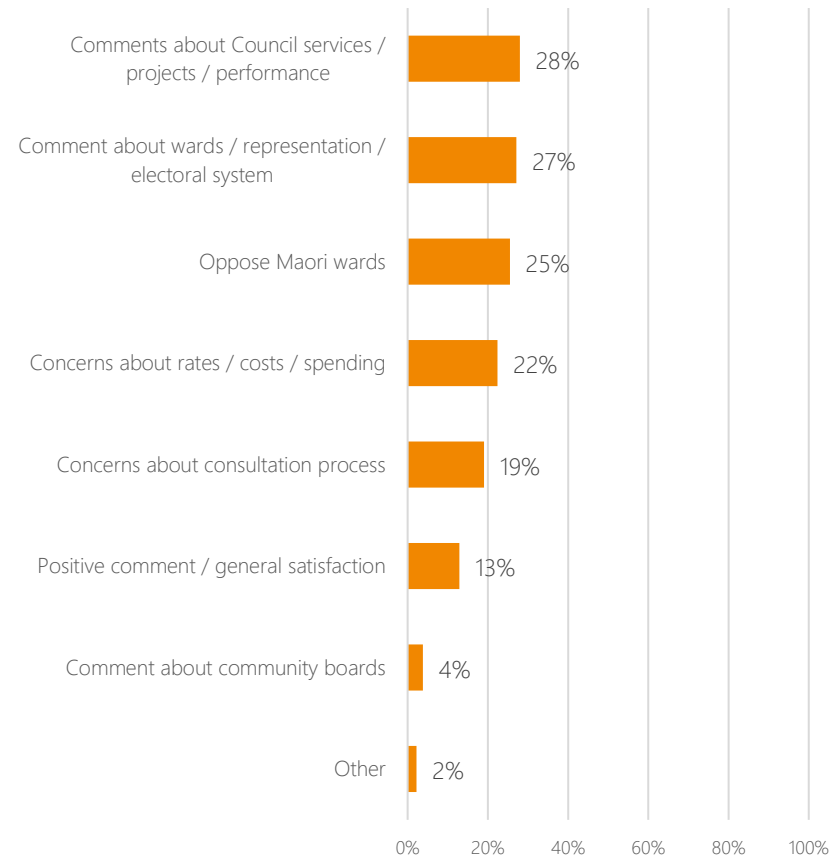
Relatedly, many felt that Maraenui deserves more local voice or representation from within the local community itself, rather than external advocates speaking on their behalf; and that this community requires additional support or representation to meet its unique socio-economic needs and to promote more positive local outcomes.

These latter concerns were driven by both Nelson Park and Ahuriri ward residents in particular, and by younger respondents (aged under 65).



OTHER COMMENTS

- Around one-third of respondents (35%, n=243) provided further general comments about topics related to the survey or the Council.
- The comments reflected significant concerns with the Council's current operations, particularly regarding financial management, visibility, and engagement.
- Comments highlighted a lack of visibility and engagement from ward Councillors, expressing frustration that Councillors are not more proactive, especially during the recent Cyclone Gabrielle emergency. Many felt that the Council is inefficient and lacks accountability, suggesting the number of Councillors is reduced, encouraging greater transparency in Council operations.
- Some comments referred to shifting of or better focus on core Council services: water quality, better management of stormwater, infrastructure maintenance.
- One-quarter of comments expressed strong opposition to the creation of Māori wards, citing concerns about fairness, equality, and democracy. Some residents felt that 'race-based' wards are unnecessary and divisive, advocating instead for a system where Councillors represent all residents equally.
- Another major concern highlighted by respondents was overall cost and rates. These comments overwhelmingly reflected dissatisfaction with the current Council's spending decisions and governance. Economic concerns, such as cost of living, high rates and perceived wasteful expenditure, were part of the community feedback.
- Overall, the feedback suggested a desire for a Council that prioritises essential services, spends responsibly, and engages more effectively with the community's needs and preferences.



Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent. 'No answers' excluded from the analysis.



APPENDIX – supporting information



2024 REPRESENTATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Thank you for your interest in our 2024 Napier City Council Representation Review.

Elections for councils are held every three years. This is when residents vote for mayors and councillors and, in some parts of New Zealand, for community board members. All councils are required to review their arrangements for representing their communities at least every six years.

We undertook a community survey on this matter in late 2023, including analysis to identify communities of interest in Napier. Council considered the community's feedback and analysis and, based on this, we are now considering five potential options for Napier's future City Council representation arrangements. We now want to know which one is your preferred option out of these five.

After this survey, we'll consider the community's responses along with the analysis and then put forward one proposal for formal community consultation in July 2024. You will have the chance to write a submission and speak at a Council meeting about your views during this consultation if you wish. SIL Research conducts this survey on behalf of the Napier City Council. SIL Research is an independent New Zealand based Market Research company and, as a member of the Research Association of New Zealand, strictly adheres to defined market research practices to preserve anonymity and confidentiality of the information you provide.

CURRENT REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Before considering Napier's future representation arrangements, it is important to understand the city's current arrangements.

Napier has a full ward system. That means our 12 councillors are elected from four wards – Ahuriri (2 councillors), Nelson Park (4 councillors), Onekawa-Tamatea (2 councillors) and Taradale (4 councillors). Wards work much the same way as electorates in a general election, but with an important exception. While you can only vote for candidates in your ward, all Napier residents directly vote for the mayor.

For more information about your ward, please visit: <https://www.napier.govt.nz/our-council/local-democracy/wards/>

MĀORI WARDS

In 2021, Napier City Council consulted with the community on whether to introduce Māori wards to Napier. Following this consultation, Council made the decision to introduce Māori wards at the 2025 local authority elections. Council is proposing to have one Māori ward with two councillors (for each of the new five suggested options). This will not affect the overall cost of councillors for ratepayers.

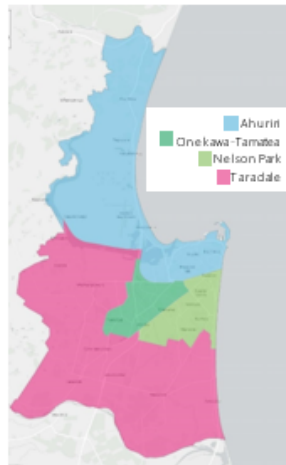
COMMUNITY BOARDS

Some local authorities have community boards, which have functions and powers delegated to them by their councils. They act in the interests of their community and liaise with organisations and special interest groups in their community on council matters. The cost of community boards is funded through rates, and therefore would be an additional cost to ratepayers.

Currently Napier doesn't have any community boards. In our November 2023 survey, we asked the community whether introducing community boards would be appropriate for Napier. There was positive feedback from communities based in and near Maraopu, to establish a community board there. Council is considering a community board for this area because it is a distinct area with unique needs. A community board would help Napier City Council better understand and meet those needs. The proposed community board would have functions and powers delegated to it by Council. The board's role would be to represent the interests of the community in areas in and close to Maraopu.

Ahuriri Info Session
Napier War Memorial Centre, 48 Marine Parade: 4-6pm, Tuesday 21 May
Nelson Park Info Session
The Base Maraopu, 38A Bledisloe Road: 11-12pm, Saturday 11 May

Onekawa-Tamatea Info Session
Napier Aquatic Centre, Maash Road: 4pm-6pm, Thursday 16 May
Taradale Info Session
Taradale Co-Lab, 1 Lee Road: 11am-12pm, Tuesday 14 May



PROPOSED OPTIONS BASED ON THE 2023 COMMUNITY SURVEY

For more information about suggested options, please visit Napier City Council's website.



OPTION 1:

- Closest option to current arrangements and including two city-wide Māori ward seats.
- Population to councillor ratio: 5,193:1.
- Gives voters in areas of lower voter turnout dedicated seats to vote for.
- Nelson Park ward has one less councillor.
- Provides 13 councillors in total + 1 mayor.



OPTION 2:

- Brings together the current ward structure into two wards: Ahuriri/Taradale and Nelson Park/Onekawa-Tamatea share similar socio-demographic characteristics.
- Population to councillor ratio: 6,137:1.
- Fewer wards.
- Provides 11 councillors in total + 1 mayor.



OPTION 3:

- The same considerations apply as for option 2 above. The difference is this option provides two extra "at large" representatives.
- Population to councillors ratio: 5,193:1.
- Provides 13 councillors in total + 1 mayor.



OPTION 4:

- Combines areas of similar demographics into three wards.
- Population to councillor ratio: 6,135:1.
- Gives close to even split of councillors across city.
- Provides 11 councillors in total + 1 mayor.



OPTION 5:

- The same considerations apply as for option 4 above. The difference is this option provides two extra "at large" representatives.
- Population to councillors ratio: 5,193:1.
- Provides 13 councillors in total + 1 mayor.

