

V2

2010

Auckland 'super city' is formed

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## Local Government Act 2002

By about 2000 many of the operations of local governments had been transferred to central government departments and businesses. Many of their functions, such as operating ports, water supply, and other enterprises, were removed from the direct influence of the voters. To counter this loss of democratic control, and encourage greater participation in local body decision-making, the Local Government Act 2002 required local authorities to draw up and publicise long-term council community plans, outlining in detail where their council was heading, how it would fund its activities, and the rules and processes it would apply. These plans required the council to pay greater attention to the needs and preferences of its citizens, while giving communities information to participate actively in local democracy.

### Georgie girl

Georgina Beyer became the world's first openly transsexual mayor when she was elected mayor of Carterton in the Wairarapa, north of Wellington, in 1995. She later became the MP for Wairarapa.

## Community boards

The Local Government Act 2002 also aimed 'to enable democratic decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities'. Any group of local residents could apply to their city or district council to set up a community board. In practice, this happened especially in cases where small local authorities, such as the boroughs of Makara or Tawa in Wellington, were to be absorbed within a larger body such as the Wellington City Council. The functions of these community boards varied but generally represented the interests of their communities, and considered and reported on matters referred to them by the territorial authority. In 2011 there were 143 community boards around New Zealand.


### From radical to mayor

Local-body politics have provided some of New Zealand's most memorable political figures. Tim Shadbolt, a former student radical, became mayor of Waitemata City in 1983 while working as a concreting contractor. He celebrated the win by towing his concrete mixer behind the mayoral car. In 1993 Shadbolt became mayor of Invercargill. He was re-elected to this position for the sixth time in 2010.

## Auckland 'super-city'

In 2010 a new regional authority was established to administer the Auckland region. The Auckland Council merged the Auckland Regional Council with six territorial authorities, covering a region with over 1.4 million people. This 'super-city' combined the powers and functions of a regional authority for issues concerning its entire area. Council-controlled organisations operated many of the major infrastructure services formerly provided by the various local authorities, including public transport, water supply, economic development, the operation of major facilities, the inner city and waterfront, and the council's commercial property portfolio.

(Derby, 2012c)



Waitomo District Council long-term plan



Otago Peninsula community board, 2008



Auckland Council mayor Len Brown

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