

December 2023

Living your best life in eastern Porirua:

Views from rangatahi, older and disabled peoples

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1. Glossary

	Translation	Culture
aro‘a	love	Cook Island
faka‘apa‘apa	respect	Tongan
falanaki	trust	Niuean
kai	food	Māori
kāinga	family	Tokelauan
kaitiaki	guardianship	Māori
kaupapa	purpose	Māori
kete	basket, kit	Māori
kotahitanga	unity, collective action	Māori
manaakitanga	hospitality and care to uplift others	Māori
olaga faka tea gaga	spirituality	Tuvaluan
pāhake	senior	Māori
rangatahi	younger generation, youth	Māori
rangatiritanga	autonomy, leadership, self-determination	Māori
solesolevaki	reciprocity	Fijian
taiao	natural world, environment	Māori
talanoa	Pacific research methodology	pan-Pacific



	Translation	Culture
tautua	service	Samoan
whaikaha	disabled person/peoples	Māori
whānau	family	Māori
wairuatanga	spirituality	Māori
whanaungatanga	social connections	Māori



2. Summary of findings and action points

This report summarises findings from 9 talanoa (small group conversations) conducted in 2023 with rangatahi (youth), pāhake (older people) and whaikaha (disabled peoples) who have strong connections to eastern Porirua.

Te Rā Nui - Eastern Porirua Development wanted to better understand the viewpoints of these groups because they are not well represented in existing information about eastern Porirua residents.

	What's needed to live your best life	How things are now
 <p>Housing</p>	<p>Homes that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> culturally appropriate, especially for large, intergenerational families accessible built to maximise privacy and sunlight affordable diverse in look and feel. <p>Being able to stay in the area through life changes (e.g. ageing, income changes).</p>	<p>Most homes in eastern Porirua don't currently meet the needs identified by participants.</p> <p>Decent housing is already unaffordable for many and participants were concerned that gentrification associated with redevelopment might increase costs further, forcing some residents out of eastern Porirua.</p>
 <p>Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm, dry and accessible homes. Homes and health services that recognise residents' cultural and spiritual needs. Support for those who feel isolated and lonely, including rangatahi and pāhake. 	<p>Many existing homes are old, cold, damp and not accessible for disabled peoples.</p> <p>Low incomes make keeping healthy (by eating well and exercising) a challenge.</p> <p>Eastern Porirua has some excellent health services but demand for culturally-specific and youth mental health services, in particular, is stronger than service capacity.</p>



Actions:
Te Rā Nui should continue to build a diverse range of warm, dry homes, making sure housing options are:

- Accessible
- Culturally appropriate
- Private/not blocked by sunlight
- Affordable and diverse, helping to avoid gentrification.

Actions:
Te Rā Nui should:

- Continue to build warmer, dryer homes that improve physical and mental health
- Ensure house designs support cultural and spiritual health
- Work with health services to ensure that rangatahi, pāhake and whaikaha are supported as redevelopment changes the community.

2. Summary of findings and action points continued

	What's needed to live your best life	How things are now
 <p>Economic self-determination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local work opportunities within eastern Porirua support for rangatahi and others searching for employment. food security, including affordable access to healthy foods. 	<p>Too many eastern Porirua residents are struggling to reach financial stability and are limited by racial stereotypes about what work is 'suitable' for them.</p> <p>Employment is often outside of eastern Porirua bringing extra financial costs, commuting times and carbon emissions.</p>
 <p>Education & skills</p>	<p>Education and skills training that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reflects collective values such as tautua (service) and solesolevaki (reciprocity) support all young people to their best potential, no matter what their ethnicity or ability. 	<p>Rangatahi generally described positive learning environments in schools, but they did not always feel understood or supported by teachers.</p> <p>Other participants were concerned that relocations are disrupting student connections with schools.</p>

Actions:

Te Rā Nui should:



- Continue its cadetship and apprenticeship programmes providing work opportunities for eastern Porirua residents and its support for Le Fale jobs and skills hub in Cannon's Creek.
- Enable opportunities for community or private gardens to help improve food security.

Actions:

Te Rā Nui cannot directly influence educational outcomes, but it can:

- Work with Kahui Ako and the Ministry of Education to monitor significant changes in school rolls as the local population grows to avoid educational disruption.

2. Summary of findings and action points continued

	What's needed to live your best life	How things are now
 <p>Social connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong sense of local identity and belonging. • Intergenerational living. • Events and activities bringing the community together. • The collective values of tautua (service), solesolevaki (reciprocity), whanaungatanga (connections between people) and manaakitanga (hospitality and care to uplift others). 	<p>There's great pride in eastern Porirua and the collective values reflected in the community.</p> <p>However, racism, shrinking networks as residents age and design features like large fences harm social relationships.</p> <p>There's also concern that population changes might change community identity and kotahitanga (unity), especially if local voices are not heard by decisionmakers.</p>
 <p>Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community awareness of climate change. • Climate resilience. • Shared green spaces where people can exercise and make social connections. • Accessible parks with inclusive amenities (such as public toilets and benches to rest on). • Safety in public and private spaces. 	<p>Gardening is a key way of connecting with te taiao (the environment).</p> <p>Many participants do not currently use parks and green spaces due to safety or accessibility concerns, although they wanted to use them to connect to te taiao.</p>

Actions:

Te Rā Nui should:


- Continue supporting community events
- Consider working with Porirua City Council and community groups to develop a community hub that brings residents together as redevelopment progresses
- Work to protect the strong social connections and identities that are important to residents.

Actions:

Te Rā Nui should continue to:

- Ensure better access to and safety in green spaces and parks
- Continue addressing climate resilience through wetland and water reservoir projects
- Enable residents to act as kaitiaki (guardians) of the local environment.

2. Summary of findings and action points continued

	What's needed to live your best life	How things are now
<p>Transport</p> 	<p>Reliable and convenient transport to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with whānau and friends. • Get to work, health services, shops and other amenities. 	<p>There is recognition that climate action requires decreased reliance on cars (and, as a result, on parking to).</p> <p>However, cars are still essential until public transport in eastern Porirua is more frequent, reliable and accessible, particularly for those travelling outside of standard hours and for family members travelling to different destinations.</p>

The findings summarised in this report reaffirm the views of eastern Porirua residents collected through 2019 community engagement activities and the 2023 Hui tahi tātou o Porirua engagement event which asked for residents' feedback on the eastern Porirua spatial plan.

By drawing directly on the words of rangatahi, pāhake and whaikaha who took part in the outcomes monitoring talanoa (small group conversations), this report ensures that Te Rā Nui decisionmakers will better understand the views of residents whose voices are often not well heard in eastern Porirua.

Actions:

Until public transport, cycle paths and other car alternatives are accessible to all, Te Rā Nui should:

- Continue to work with Waka Kōtahi on the Transport Plan to improve transport routes and connections
- Be careful not to disadvantage residents through reduced parking.

3. Report kaupapa

This report is part of the outcomes monitoring undertaken by Kāinga Ora to track how Te Rā Nui - the eastern Porirua Development shapes eastern Porirua residents' wellbeing.

It builds on the 2023 Hui tahi tātou o Porirua engagement event which collected feedback on the eastern Porirua spatial plan by fleshing out the high-level comments made by eastern Porirua residents at that event. The report does this by drawing on quotes and narratives provided through 9 talanoa (small group conversations, see slide 9) held during April and June 2023. The talanoa were hosted by local organisations supporting rangatahi, pāhake and whaikaha.

The perspectives of rangatahi, pāhake and whaikaha collected through the talanoa will be used to:

1. Advise Te Rā Nui staff and work programmes;
2. Shape the questions and content of the eastern Porirua community survey, which will be delivered in February 2024;
3. Inform the Baseline Outcomes Report that will be published by Kāinga Ora in 2024. The Baseline Outcomes Report will provide a picture of what eastern Porirua is like now, so Kāinga Ora can monitor changes in community outcomes over the next 25 years.



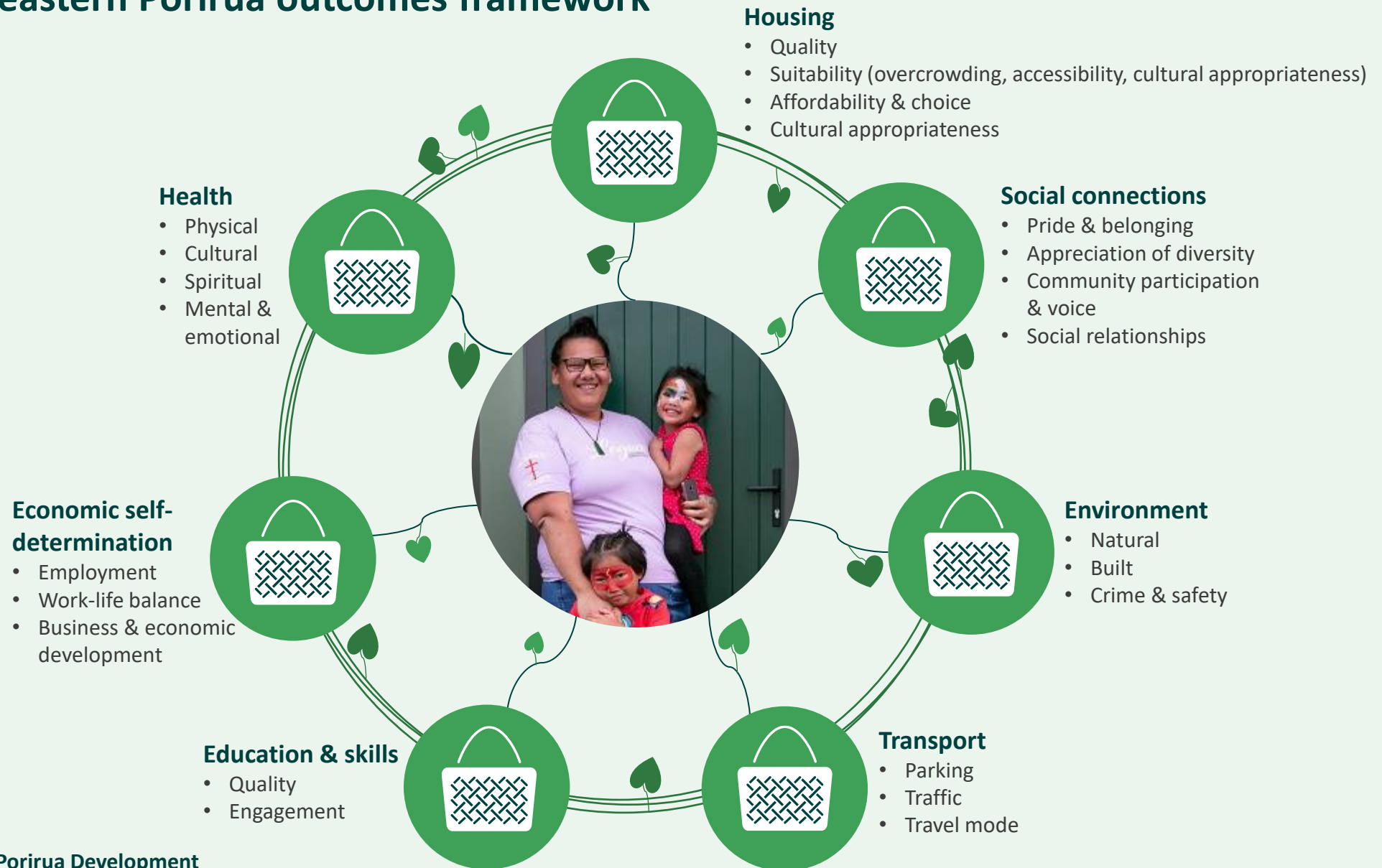
3.1. What is outcomes monitoring?

- Information will be regularly gathered from residents about life in eastern Porirua, focusing on the same kind of questions and topics, so Kāinga Ora can measure *changes* in outcomes over the next 25 years.
- Information will be collected through:
 - A community survey conducted in eastern Porirua every four years.
 - Statistical data from existing surveys and government ministries.
 - Talanoa with residents from different backgrounds and community representatives. Talanoa are a [Pacific research methodology](#) where face-to-face conversations between ‘researchers’ and ‘research participants’ are flexible and provide room for participants to ask questions and shift the focus of discussion to what is important to them. Researchers also commit to using and sharing information in a way that supports participant and community aspirations.
- An outcomes report will be published every two years, so eastern Porirua residents can track changes in their community.

3.2 The eastern Porirua outcomes framework

- Information will be collected across seven interconnected kete (defined here as baskets of knowledge or domains) as illustrated on the next slide.
- The kumara vine linking each kete shows their interconnectedness and how information will be woven together to provide a comprehensive picture of outcomes for eastern Porirua.

3.2.1. The eastern Porirua outcomes framework



3.3. How talanoa information was collected and analysed



After introductions, we asked participants:

- What does it mean to live your best life?
- What do you and your whānau/kāinga need to live your best life in eastern Porirua?
- What should stay the same in eastern Porirua so you can live your best life?
- What needs to change in eastern Porirua so you can live your best life?



Initial responses were simple:

- “Closeness to schools. Closeness to shops”
- “Grateful to walk” | “Socially connected”
- “Health and happiness”
- “Family and memories”
- “...being a billionaire”
- “Accessible facilities for larger families and youth”
- “...just having enough money to survive on”



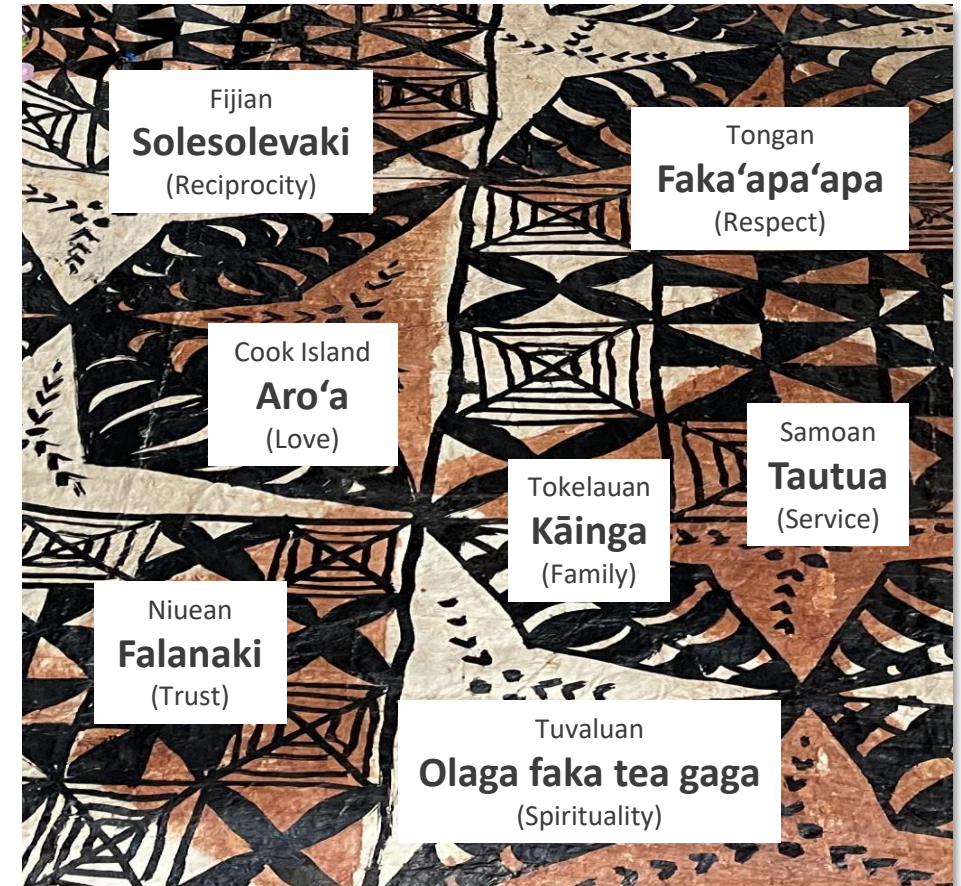
Deeper conversations emerged:

- Focusing on their best life, participants typically spoke to all 7 kete (domains), explaining how and why they were important for rangatahi, pāhake and whaikaha and the broader community;
- Participants also explained how redevelopment could influence their best life in different ways, providing guidance for Te Rā Nui.

Data was analysed by drawing on the seven kete (see previous slide) and Māori and Pacific values (see slide 12) to shape the themes discussed in this report.

3.4. How cultural values shaped the analysis of talanoa information

The talanoa, as well as the broader outcomes monitoring process, were informed by Māori and Pacific cultural values that have been identified as important to residents in eastern Porirua. Although this report is organised around the seven kete presented on slide 10, discussion also considers how talanoa participant comments reflected the following values that honour connections between the mana whenua of eastern Porirua and the surrounding region, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, and the community's diverse Pacific population:





4. Housing

Te Rā Nui, Eastern Porirua Development



4.1. Warm, dry homes are important for living your best life

Facilitator: “What would an ideal house look like for you and your whānau?”

Participant 1: “Warm and safe. So, the house lasts the whole time you’re there, instead of having to move or having to waste a lot of money ourselves” (rangatahi talanoa).

“When I had someone come and repair some weatherboards a couple of years ago, just at Covid, he said...your house is the best built house around because it’s all insulated outside, as well as inside in Batts. And people walk into my home and go ‘gosh, your place is warm’. I don’t have mould or dampness, or anything” (pāhake talanoa).

“...we’ve got a three-bedroom house at the moment and it’s pretty old, a bit drafty, so I’m not going to complain but I want my bloody heat pump back!...What happened is – five years it’s fine, there’s nothing wrong with it, turns on to cold, turns on to hot. They [Kāinga Ora] came round and checked for some reason and it never worked again” (whaikaha talanoa).



Few participants discussed the quality of their current homes, but when they did it was usually about the levels of warmth and dryness they thought a home should have for eastern Porirua residents to live their best lives. Only a handful of participants already lived in warm and dry homes. Te Rā Nui will substantially increase the number of new and retrofitted homes that have excellent insulation and heating. For many Kāinga Ora tenants, these new homes cannot come soon enough.



4.2. Concerns that housing intensification will reduce privacy and sunlight

Participant 3: “...those [houses] on Champion [Street]? Those are pretty flash, but damn that’s too tight, too close to each other”

Facilitator: “Alright so what’s, what’s the concern with them being too close to each other?”

Participant 2: “You see into each other’s, yeah”

Participant 1: “No privacy”

Participant 3: “Probably hear it all, probably hear all the domestics going on”

Participant 1: “Probably hear the toilet”

Participant 3: “Hear them walking around” (rangatahi talanoa).



“You get these sections now and they’re putting four houses on that. Privacy is a thing where you’re looking out your kitchen window into someone’s bedroom or something like that” (pāhake talanoa).

“I’m living next door to...there was an old garage there. They pulled that down and there’s nine flats going on...They’re going to be two-storey. Cut out my sun...” (pāhake talanoa).

Participants had many questions and concerns about the intensification of homes in eastern Porirua. Having seen the Kāinga Ora houses already built in Castor Crescent and Champion Street, they worried that there would be reduced privacy and sunlight if houses are built closer together than current homes. There was agreement that privacy and light in your own home are important to living your best life.



4.3. Home design must meet residents' cultural needs

“...a matai and leader and a prayer leader, when someone passes and he can't get in the house [because he is in a wheelchair], they have to put a tent outside. It's not the same as coming into the body...And so, we just adapt. I know that. But sometimes it's too cold to put the body outside and the visitors. It's just our houses were designed basically here by an Austrian....it was not built for us. And look at our families, how big the people are physically. You have to turn sideways to get into the toilet” (whaikaha talanoa).

“So the houses that are being built now are very tiny. And for our Poly families, how are you going to expect us to all fit in a little cube?” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...my family, we're having to find a new house, but most of the houses around here are only two bedrooms, three bedrooms but there's mum, my dad, me, my sister, our partners, my brothers. There's almost 10 of us living in one house and there's only like three bedrooms inside. My brother sleeps in the garage because that's the only space that's available” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...there's no way that I [could] ever live in that...there's no area that the kids can play or stuff like that” (rangatahi talanoa).



Participants said that design or size limitations meant that current homes often do not meet the community's cultural needs, limiting the ability of whānau/kāinga to express whanaungatanga and manaakitanga. As Te Rā Nui builds different types of houses, it must ensure homes are flexible enough to allow residents to meet a range of family and community obligations (e.g. caring for children or elders, hosting whānau/kāinga, holding important events like weddings or funerals). It will also be important for Te Rā Nui to build adequate shared spaces in cases where homes or private gardens are not able to meet cultural needs (see slide 48).

4.4. To live their best lives, whaikaha disabled residents need accessible homes

“...we want an accessible country, and that’s in terms of architecture ...turn it into a national accessibility standard for *all* houses, that every house is built in a way that people can buy, sell, just move from any place, that they don’t have to be stuck in a state house over there” (whaikaha talanoa).

“...with an ageing population that we’ve got in New Zealand, do we need to be thinking about suitable housing for older people? And that could mean just single level homes, because it’s a known fact that people are more susceptible to falls as they get older...having a bathroom with just open wide wet areas that they can just walk into for their shower. And having handles by toilets and showers and things like that” (pāhake talanoa).



“...most of the people wanting homes are like these ones that have got mobile chairs, have a bit of trouble walking and climbing stairs (whaikaha talanoa).

“Our tenancy manager come along, she took the kitchen door off. She got the builder to take the kitchen door off, so the wheelchair could get in. And I said, ‘It’s not the door, it’s the frame!’” (whaikaha talanoa].

“...if you look at the models of the new houses for Kāinga Ora, you’re restricted...Just looking at the plans, the disabled person basically lives in a granny flat and then everyone else lives upstairs...if I want to go see my children, how am I supposed to do that? Even though I can still partially walk, I can’t do stairs” (whaikaha talanoa).

Many whaikaha and pāhake lived in houses that did not meet their accessibility needs and felt they were not living their best lives because they could not access their entire house or connect with whānau/kāinga as they wished. Eastern Porirua’s hilly landscape is a challenge, but Te Rā Nui must increase the number of Universal Standard and accessible homes built to meet the needs of eastern Porirua’s residential population.



4.5. An affordable home is key to living your best life

“My house, six people there. Seven, if you come on weekends. And then there's multiple households, where it's multiple generations living together because no one can leave and live on their own because they can't afford that, so they have to go back home and stay there, like my brothers” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...a lot of people have left Porirua because the rates have just got so exorbitant, they can't live there so they've moved to Paraparaumu and that, they've lived here all their life, it's sad: 50 years of paying rates and they up and leave” (pāhake talanoa).



“These [retirement village and care] facilities that they've got now I know some people are living in, they're *very* expensive. There's no way that you could go and live in a lot of these places if you were just on a pension” (pāhake talanoa).

“I've heard concerns about the gentrification of this area and I think that needs to be avoided at all cost...we need to be aware of that and avoid it happening because surely...all this development is for the people and the communities that are already living there and their relatives and such like and we certainly don't want people to be forced out of the area as they have been in some other areas of New Zealand. Having grown up in Ponsonby and then you see when it was a poor area and then you see all the middle classes move in...force the others out, we don't need that happening” (pāhake talanoa).

Many participants discussed housing costs, with comments suggesting both rangatahi and pāhake were at risk of being unable to live as they wished. High costs not only contributed to a lack of choice in housing, but also overcrowding and concerns that redevelopment will increase housing costs, forcing some residents out of the area. Affordability and home ownership were aspirations also discussed frequently at the Hui tahi tātou o Porirua engagement and should be a priority for Te Rā Nui.



4.6. There is strong demand for choice and diversity in housing

“...if you’re buying a house, you look around in the market and see what’s going and you find one that suits you, whereas with Kāinga Ora you’re going to be put in a place...” (whaikaha talanoa).

“...my mum had to move a lot because of the landlord. They keep on like selling houses and telling people to just move...after how many months of paying rent to then just turn around and be like, ‘You’ve got to get out. Other people paid more money, so you’ve got to get out’. It’s not only just a house for some people, it’s a place that holds memories. Generations of knowledge as well” (rangatahi talanoa).

Participants indicated that renters have limited choice about where they live, which influences the quality of the homes they live in, as well as their sense of belonging and control over their own lives.



“...[we] want to have a variation of housing. That we don’t simply have a whole row of the similar type boxes or whatever else...you’ve [also] got to allow that a lot of these houses have two dogs and those dogs have to toilet somewhere, and where is it going to be?” (pāhake talanoa).

“People that have got big sections, they can maybe have a [granny flat]” (pāhake talanoa).

“I think that’s a good idea to have the rent to buy, they’re prouder of where they’re living, don’t take it for granted they put, you know, work into it and get gardens and make it nice” (pāhake talanoa).

Pāhake were particularly concerned about having diversity in how homes looked. They also wanted greater flexibility for people to extend their homes (either permanently or temporarily) and/or to buy a home.



5. Health

Te Rā Nui, Eastern Porirua Development



5.1. Physical health is affected by homes but also other factors

“I live in...a Housing New Zealand house, so we don’t own the house, and...there’s a lot of times where we have to force someone to come clean up some mould and stuff. And it’s like...unhealthy living in that kind of environment, especially having a little sister with asthma, it’s really bad for her” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...you can’t be a healthy family if you don’t have the money for healthy food, you know what I mean” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...some people, like my mum, we used to live in a house with stairs and she used to struggle because she has a back pain and her legs just hurt. I don’t know why. And if you also have someone that’s old in the house, it’s hard for them. If you have babies, it’s kind of dangerous” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...as I get older, the things that I used to do are diminishing and I’m not doing what I used to do, and I always find that a heartbreak. I’d love to still be able to play tennis. I’d still love to go hiking. Those things diminish...” (pāhake talanoa).

“I can’t even have a shower sometimes. I can’t lift my body over [the bath]” (whaikaha talanoa).

“...some days I can’t do much, and I can’t get out of the house – I get told off all the time, but she doesn’t understand that with cancer, it also drains your energy...” (whaikaha talanoa).

Health was specifically identified as important to living your best life by only a handful of participants. The stories show how homes can cause or worsen health problems, limiting the ability of residents to live as they wished. Participants also highlighted how health changes over time. Homes and neighbourhoods should be able to support residents through these life stages. Pāhake and whaikaha were especially concerned with making homes and neighbourhoods accessible for those with decreased energy or mobility.



5.2. Cultural and spiritual health not always well-supported by organisations and homes

“Yeah, it was also with the names too. Just kind of hard to pronounce Pasifika kind of names. And some teachers can’t be bothered learning to pronounce them. Can’t be bothered learning the name, then they can’t be bothered learning about the culture and stuff like that...Just helps show that you actually care about the person that’s in front of you. Helps build a good rapport. Because yeah, our names hold a lot to it, holds a lot of our identity, so I think if you’re willing to take the time...it kind of says to us, ‘Okay, we should give you time.’ Because if you’re not even gonna give us the time to get our names right then, why should we give you the time of day?...I think it’s embarrassing for some people too. Like say at assemblies or like prize giving, and they read your name wrong and then people are just laughing in the crowd. It’s not really the best” (rangatahi talanoa).

No residents spoke directly about cultural health, but some mentioned racism, which harms cultural health (see slide 40). Older participants thought cultural appreciation and integration in eastern Porirua had improved in recent years, but rangatahi provided examples of ongoing racism. This reflects a broader lack of faka’apa’apa, which evidence shows can negatively impact the cultural identity and mental health of young people.

Wairuatanga or olaga faka tea gaga was not discussed directly but some participants spoke of how current housing designs make it difficult to express spiritual or religious beliefs in a way that supports spiritual health.

“PIC is not open to everybody because it’s too busy, but it’s the only one of the churches that take bodies, and you can lay them out at the church community hall. But other churches, you keep the body at your house. So, your house is not really made so that you can get the casket in and out the house. You can look at pictures and stuff where windows are taken out just to get the body out of the house” (whaikaha talanoa).




5.3. Mental & emotional health are affected by a range of factors in eastern Porirua

Loss of rangatiratanga or independence

“You can get a caregiver for a shower and that. But [my wife is] so fiercely independent because that’s her territory, her kitchen – get out! And there’s a lot of people like that” (whaikaha talanoa).

“I’ve always been able to do it myself, [and I’m trying] to feel not guilty asking somebody, so from being independent to learn to be like a child saying ‘oh mummy, daddy could you help me do this?’...I’m trying to stop saying that. I don’t want to be a bother” (pāhake talanoa).



Participants discussed how mental health is connected with:

Social connections

“That’s what I miss. It’s all very well coming into all these groups but still going home to an empty home, and that’s what I’m still trying to come to terms with [in living alone]” (pāhake talanoa).

Facilitator: “What makes a family healthy?”

Participant: “Communicating. Trust.

Understanding. Respect. Positive, being positive... Listening to each other” (rangatahi talanoa).

Sustained connection with the area

“This place gives me the most confidence...Because I grew up here” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...this is my childhood home, this is my childhood hometown, I grew up here with my grandparents. And it was doing fine but then had to move everywhere because of family problems. But this is still my home and I love being here. Even though there’s this one time I really hated being here, but I loved it because of the memories I had here” (rangatahi talanoa).

5.4. Access to health services in eastern Porirua could be improved

Older participants described the disjointed nature of health services in eastern Porirua, with some feeling that the level of support available had declined in recent years.

“I’m an epileptic and there used to be support groups, once a fortnight. And it’s not so much for the person who’s an epileptic, it’s more for family, and [they’re] non-existent anymore” (whaikaha talanoa).

“[Living my best life requires a] socially cohesive society and good health system, where people can access health as a normal thing – not that they have to go out of the way to find doctors or anything like that. We need doctors. We need, doctors – well, the full health team really working together” (pāhake talanoa).



Participants particularly liked the idea of locating various health services together, for example through the creation of a health hub.

However, they said that better transport connections would be needed, so that pāhake and whaikaha could get to health services. Te Rā Nui should work with Te Whatu Ora and Waka Kōtahi to help improve access to health services, including supporting a Metlink hop on/hop off bus service that was reportedly being trialled in the area.

“...you’ve got to have a bus or some kind of transport that goes straight to the hospital” (pāhake talanoa).

“Metlink are trying to get a hop on/hop off bus service going, so you can actually ring up and get the bus to come and pick you up and take you where you want to go” (pāhake talanoa).

5.5. Culturally-appropriate health services are valued

“My auntie was explaining to me about Pasifika nursing for our elderly. My grandparents, I just have to give their medical records and from there, it kind of takes a load off me as youth because it kind of gets harder and harder every day when I have to hold back from going and doing what I want to do as an 18 year old ...instead of staying home on like Friday nights and weekends or staying up late at night or driving to the A&E, having to understand all this medical talk when for myself I don't feel like I should be going through all of that. And I don't really trust other people coming into my home and looking after my grandparents because they raised me, they're my parents and then having random people just come in that the hospital tries to give to us but they don't help anything. If anything they just make it worse but then I go into [names community organisation] and they have people that I trust and that I can understand what's going on with them is that they help me take a load off my things as a kid. For me I still think I'm a kid and having to deal with all of that, but then having all these facilities open to me as a kid, it was great, because I can be a kid again. I can go out, I can go chill with my friends” (rangatahi talanoa).

Many eastern Porirua families live intergenerationally, which increases the likelihood that rangatahi care for older people (and vic versa). A young Pacific participant explained the value of having culturally-appropriate wrap-around health services based on falanaki. Te Rā Nui should support these services and work with Te Whatu Ora to ensure they can continue supporting eastern Porirua residents as redevelopment progresses.



5.6. Increased mental & emotional health support is needed, especially for rangatahi

“I feel like [young people drink] because there’s no one to talk to...one of my cousins, she was just drinking because...[s]he was just so upset about something, so she just chose alcohol because it was the only thing that could calm her down. And I feel like that’s why some young people choose to do that, because it’s the safest thing for them” (rangatahi talanoa).

“The gap when the service is closed gives the kid the option to sit alone and when the kid is alone, everything just feels the heat...That’s when the bad decisions come out, like having to go through the streets to find something that will satisfy the needs of what the brain is actually telling the kid but which is not helpful and it’s not healthy for the kid’s mindset. It’s like one thing leads to the other. Mental health, not as strong, it’s very bad. It’s only thinking about bad things and that results in doing drugs, alcohol, and that just becomes the addiction” (rangatahi talanoa).



Evidence suggests that rangatahi who have positive, supportive and stable connections with mentors are less likely to engage in risky behaviours. Rangatahi participants provided examples of how youth in eastern Porirua who did not have these connections were more susceptible to alcohol, other drug use and harmful social media practices (see slide 51). They said youth support services should be available 24/7 because rangatahi can be vulnerable at any time. Because redevelopment can impact residents’ mental health, Te Rā Nui should work with Te Whatu Ora and local community organisations to improve access to youth services.

“...social media is almost like another bottle of alcohol and weed. It’s there, and they think letting it out there is the way because they get the response from the comments and the likes and that’s the response they want to hear but that’s not the response they need. Want and need, keywords. They’re wanting to hear something the brain is craving at the moment but deep down, it’s not what you need personally to solve your issue...You get so bottled up or you’re so angry at someone that you just start typing, start writing, start posting and then those who comment and share, it just adds on and it just makes it so big but it’s not useful, it’s not necessary” (rangatahi talanoa).



6. Economic self-determination



6.1. Living your best life requires financial stability

“I just see that it’s as though the financial systems in New Zealand, particularly in Porirua, seem to be going down. It’s a rather negative thing to say, but that’s how I feel it is and I feel desperately for some of the people...it seems as though it’s in the east essentially where there is a lot of poor people suffering badly and that should not be, and there’s no justification or excuse in my opinion for this to be a case in this modern world” (pāhake talanoa).

“Being financially stable, having your, you know your family around you. I guess you know being healthy with life, having a job...” (rangatahi talanoa).



When expressing how they could live their best lives, participants spoke strongly of the need for financial stability. They recognised that too many whānau/kāinga in eastern Porirua struggle to make ends meet, and that financial instability adversely impacts a range of other key health outcomes, including eating healthy and having positive relationships with others (see slide 21). Manaakitanga is the practice of uplifting another’s mana (status or power). As participants suggest, it will be important for Te Rā Nui to continue collaborating with community partners to uplift residents’ occupational skills and expand their opportunities for work (see next slide).



6.2. Eastern Porirua provides limited opportunities for economic self-determination

“[Make] sure the jobs are stable and in our community” (whaikaha talanoa).

“...there’s less in Porirua than there is in Wellington. For example, housing in Wellington is harder to get, but there’s more job opportunities out there for them. Whereas in Porirua, there’s more housing here, but less job opportunities” (rangatahi talanoa).

Many participants were concerned about the lack of local employment opportunities and that residents had to leave eastern Porirua to pursue professional careers (at least temporarily, see slide 44). Making eastern Porirua economically self-sufficient was a key aspiration expressed by participants. Te Rā Nui should continue working with community partners dedicated to stimulating small businesses, upskilling residents and connecting residents with work opportunities (see next slide).



“I chose to study fashion because I want to be a fashion designer. I want to design for big names. I want to be my own fashion house. I want to do couture. But there’s nothing here for me to be able to do that. That’s why I said before, I want to leave Porirua because what I want to achieve, I can’t do that here” (rangatahi talanoa).



6.3. Transitions into employment are essential

“...in most cases it’s not like what you know. Like say you went to uni, majority of the time it’s your connections, like knowing people and then you’ll get that job...” (rangatahi talanoa).

“Yeah, it was like a big change knowing that like, you have to work to provide for yourself, and if you don’t have money...so yeah, hard having to go from not much responsibilities to having to provide for yourself” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...if they give us expo’s, cos a lot of the expos [are] aimed for year 12 year 13, but if they give it to you younger then maybe you’d get to experience more, I mean get to know them earlier and see what you want to learn so that you can study those subjects in school instead of do[ing] all of these other subjects, then find out later...damn but I took the wrong subjects” (rangatahi talanoa).



Rangatahi spoke of the difficulties transitioning from school into young adulthood, when they take on more financial responsibilities. These participants highlighted the importance of organisational support when applying for jobs, as well as being better connected to meaningful work opportunities in and around eastern Porirua. Both were also a significant theme in the Hui tahi tātou o Porirua engagement event. Te Rā Nui has already supported the development of the Le Fale Jobs and Skills Hub and is creating work opportunities through its cadetship, apprenticeship and local procurement programmes. It should work with other agencies to further stimulate employment in the area and Te Rā Nui should be present at local job fairs to ensure residents know of local employment opportunities the partnership can offer.

6.4. Rising living costs and discrimination impede rangatiratanga

Like other New Zealanders, eastern Porirua residents are struggling with rising living costs. Participants discussed how increased costs led whānau/kāinga to purchase cheaper but less healthy foods and to struggle to pay for health services. Food insecurity was also a major theme coming out of Hui tahi tātou o Porirua.



Rangatahi were also concerned about the stereotyping of eastern Porirua residents as suitable only for lower-paying occupations, with one participant commenting that some employers held racist attitudes, assuming that Pacific peoples will not pursue professional careers. These challenges further harmed both individual and collective rangatiratanga, limiting the potential of residents to live their best lives.

Participant 1: “Cause like the healthy food is expensive compared to junk food...”

Participant 2: Like if you go to Pak’n’Save the first thing you walk into is vegetables but they’re all...expensive as for like strawberries or something, but when you go to like the chips and stuff like the biscuits like just the shiny packet stuff...there’s deals on those like \$2 for \$5 and stuff” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...just having enough money to survive on you don’t have to be, you know...You can’t take your money with you in your coffin so, I mean, as long as you’ve got enough to provide for your health needs etc., food” (pāhake talanoa).

“I think just having jobs that would cater to things that are outside of what’s expected of what Islanders go into in terms of work. Because like what [names other participant] said before, supermarkets, trades, all that stuff, that’s just what we’re expected to do. But for people like me who want to do something else, there’s nothing really there. So I guess just having opportunities that we can do what we aspire to be” (rangatahi talanoa).





7. Education & skills



7.1. Schools are the heart of eastern Porirua



“...if I had gone to a different school other than Porirua College...I wouldn't feel safe, I wouldn't feel as comfortable that whole time to complete my studies. Just because of the school and where it was. It was my people, that's how I felt. Fresh off the islands, not knowing what New Zealand is, but Porirua College showed me what's good, what it is to actually live the life and see the struggles in person. It makes me feel more empowered to strive for more in the future, to push for more, for the community. Yeah, it's a give and receive, coming from my age, this generation as well. So yeah, eastern Porirua for me is home. And it's so much more than just home, if that makes sense. It's everything for me” (rangatahi talanoa).

“I agree with what [another participant]'s saying about education and education needs to have things like fundamental life skills...responsibility, a responsibility to each other not just to self. I mean those things are really important” (pāhake talanoa).

Participants stressed the importance of education to the community. For example, schools serve as essential institutions that successfully transition young migrants into the eastern Porirua community and provide a home away from home. Other participants supported schools and other educational providers within eastern Porirua continuing to role model and teach collective values like whanaungatanga, solesolevaki and tautua.



7.2. Healthy school relationships are essential for rangatahi to live their best lives

“At this school, we do get some support from our teachers, but some of our teachers do teach to year level and they kind of don’t have that much time to work with us individually” (rangatahi talanoa).

Facilitator: “Is it because he was a local that you trusted him...he knows the background of you know people from Porirua, like what was it about him?”

Participant: “For me it was just you know [the school counsellor] knew how to listen and [didn’t], like a lot of people these days like to turn things into their like you know themselves and make it all about them...” (rangatahi talanoa).

Rangatahi stated that many of their teachers and other school staff worked hard and demonstrated manaakitanga when supporting students. In particular, rangatahi participants acknowledged school staff who they felt were honest and demonstrated falanaki, providing guidance on future employment and connecting them with social service agencies (see slide 30).

“It’s within school for youth especially, the help that the kids need in school, mentally, emotionally. For us when we were at school, we didn’t really get the support from our teachers or from the staff that were already there, like counsellors, social workers. They didn’t really listen to what we had to say....A lot of it was them telling us, that’s not how you’re feeling, I know what you’re feeling, I’m correct, you’re not. And that made a lot of us just shut down and try and find support from either our peers or just someone random because we couldn’t go to the people at school” (rangatahi talanoa).

Some rangatahi participants, however, thought that some school staff were overly directive and did not acknowledge young people’s perspectives when trying to cope with the concerns that young people face in the community (see slides 26 and 40).




7.3. Redevelopment and educational disruption



“So, when you move a school or you move the whānau away from a school, like when we were supposed to decanter the population down in Cannon’s Creek and put it in a house around about six months away from your school, what is that going to do for the ability of that child to reconnect with other people they’ve never met?” (pāhake talanoa).

“I still work part-time at a school over the bay [Titahi Bay] and it’s a very transient population of kids because sometimes they’re in a house and [there are] some that have to get out because the house is being demolished and they’re relocated somewhere else. When is all this going to stop, you know?” (pāhake talanoa).



Older participants warned that redevelopment could make existing educational challenges worse, if some students and their whānau/kāinga relocate within or outside of eastern Porirua. Participants were concerned that relocation would disrupt students’ learning and break connections with friends and key education mentors. Te Rā Nui should work with Kahui Ako to ensure that rangatahi in whānau/kāinga moving from old Kāinga Ora homes into temporary ones (and eventually into new homes) are supported as redevelopment progresses. Good communication between schools and Te Rā Nui will also help predict any likely increases or decreases in school rolls as a result of relocations and population change.



8. Social connections

Te Rā Nui, Eastern Porirua Development



8.1. Whanaungatanga is important to living your best life in eastern Porirua



Many participants said they lived in eastern Porirua to be near whānau/kāinga. They also described the relationships that exist between residents as being like whānau/kāinga. These types of relationships were important in establishing feelings of aro‘a and manaakitanga across eastern Porirua. Te Rā Nui can help maintain and enable whānau/kāinga and community relationships as redevelopment progresses by ensuring that Kāinga Ora residents that must be temporarily relocated can stay living in eastern Porirua and by prioritising housing that supports multigenerational living.

“[My family moved to eastern Porirua]...just so we could be closer to my mum’s mum, my nan, and just to family because Porirua is close, this is where everybody is. Your family lives here. In Auckland we didn’t really have that much family, so we’re with family [now]” (rangatahi talanoa).

“I’m a great grandmother, and I provide all the whānau with [care] for when the kids are sick at home. I’m at home. They come to me and stay with me. At the time when they were suffering from mouldy houses and stuff like that, they were with me three or four months a year, one after the other” (whaikaha talanoa).



“We want to protect the elderly and the disabled, so that they can be part of the family not isolated from the family” (whaikaha talanoa).

“I think I nurture people to be my companions because my family are not here. I only have a son. I nurture people to be my friends and become my family, and that’s a best life for me at the present time” (pāhake talanoa).

“Porirua is like a family home-base kind of place. Like, people help one another, even if they don’t know you, they always make you feel at home...I think wherever you are in the community, I feel like anyone you see is considered family because it’s a family home-base area. Everyone just helps one another” (rangatahi talanoa).

8.2. Manaakitanga, solesolevaki and tautua are eastern Porirua strengths

“...the reason I do the work [maintaining a shared property]...goes back to the culture that we had when we were growing up...you got in and you did, and I’ll end up helping the guy next door, who’s in his 80s, when he’s cutting the trees on our joint properties, you know, and so you look and you think there’s that cultural connectedness” (pāhake talanoa).

“I love my job. I love my boss, I love my organisation. It’s a group by the people, for the people. And that’s what I have grown up or brought up to be. It’s like, just giving back to the community as much as possible with the age that I’m at, at the moment” (rangatahi talanoa).

“I’ve housed eighteen people at one time in my house [which has three bedrooms]...We had four cabins on our property and we made it work. [It was important to do this]...because nobody was hospitable to me when I was growing up” (whaikaha talanoa).



“I think [my best life] is...finding opportunities to reach out to other people who may not be as well off as you are. You know being able to just get out and visit someone that’s locked in, or you know helping people wherever you know whether you do some community volunteer work or visit people shut in, or you know reaching out...it gives you a sense of purpose you know doing something worthwhile as well as giving back to your local community” (pāhake talanoa).

“...both Polynesian families [that live on either side of the participant] keep an...eye on us...they know we’re both elderly, we have disabilities of some form, so the Polynesian families become very sensitive to that” (whaikaha talanoa).

Eastern Porirua residents regularly show manaakitanga in their interpersonal interactions. Additionally, participants expressed value in showing solesolevaki and providing tautua to their community. These qualities were described as central to living your best life. Evidence shows that rapid change in a community’s population can weaken the ways that residents display manaakitanga. Te Rā Nui should nurture these community strengths by ensuring that current residents are not pressured to leave the area by rising housing costs or the attitudes of newcomers.



8.3. Redevelopment's potential impact on social relationships

"I just think living *that* close to people [in blocks of flats] creates a lot of problems...Our area...you have that sort of safe area around you, your section around you where you [don't] have people right on top of you...my son lives in [a redeveloped street in western Porirua] and he *sees* the problems that go on there already" (pāhake talanoa).

"...when people who come *into* those areas, in effect being pepper potted into within those areas – how well accepted are they? You know, go and live in an area where [there are established neighbourhoods]" (pāhake talanoa).



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"...so, that to me is the biggest hurdle that we will find along the way to get participation or whatever else, integration with the private and the state [homes]...It is a hard one...we can actually build a community that is a mixture of those groups, [that] is the best way forward, it's a matter of how you gonna knit it together (pāhake talanoa).

Participant 1: "We learn off each other, from each other don't we?"

Participant 2: "I think that comes from talking to neighbours" (pāhake talanoa).



Over the next 20 years, Te Rā Nui will build many new homes across eastern Porirua, bringing new residents into the community. Some participants worried that local kotahitanga may diminish if new residents don't understand the value of eastern Porirua's history and cultural diversity. Yet redevelopment was seen by some participants as an opportunity for greater integration of homeowners and renters and for differing cultural groups. Te Rā Nui will need to carefully support relations between new and established residents, for instance by providing shared indoor or outdoor spaces where neighbours can meet and inclusive community events can be held.

8.4. Factors weakening residents' social relationships

Racism and poor appreciation of diversity

"...[Teachers] avoid giving attention to the brown people, due to the way brown people learn...I was always with white kids in class, so I was always sort of left out by the teacher. Just because of the way I process things was different to the way white kids did" (rangatahi talanoa).

"...it's starting to happen, but needs to be sped up a bit, where more communities, whether they're Samoan, Chinese, Muslim, everyone acknowledges everyone's opinions but come together, that you live in unity. Even though that happens, but in some areas it don't" (whaikaha talanoa).

Participants stated that social relationships in eastern Porirua were affected by:

Shrinking social networks as residents age

"...so we're happy and on a financial way, we're happy as a husband and wife, but community-wise the need to socialise is probably the most important thing in my opinion" (pāhake talanoa).

Fences that discourage neighbourliness

"...when we first moved to Rānui Heights none of the houses...had a fence. Now...getting near to 30% of our street have got fences. Now I'm not talking nice little picket fences, I'm talking big high ones where you can't see through or over unless you get a hand up sort of thing. So I'm wondering if that's some sort of an indication that there is an attitudinal change about home owners now" (pāhake talanoa).

"...next door put a big fence up – they had one about that high, he ripped it all down and put a big one like that with a locked gate because he got sick of people coming in his drive and helping themselves to stuff from his place and that, he got sick of being robbed, so he put a big fence with a lock on the gate" (pāhake talanoa).

Evidence shows that social relationships can be nurtured through design features (e.g. low fences) and shared spaces where neighbours can meet. Te Rā Nui should continue to use these design features in new housing developments and support community events that foster kotahitanga and whanaungatanga between residents from diverse backgrounds as the population in eastern Porirua changes.



8.5. There is concern that community opinion doesn't matter to decision-makers

"I got the impression some years ago that a lot of the consultations that the council had put out were pretty well pre-sorted before they got to the meeting..." (pāhake talanoa).

"I spoke to [a person involved in retrofitting Kāinga Ora homes]...and he said to me, 'People are so ungrateful.' I said, 'What do you mean?' He said, 'They go in the house, and they say, "I don't like this."' I said, 'That's because what they *didn't do* was have a consultation first.' 'We're here. We want to retrofit your house, let's have a talk. If you want to bring other people, the family or other advisors come.' They didn't do that. They just [have] this patchwork meeting" (whaikaha talanoa).

Even when consulted, many residents felt that community voices are not heard or taken into account by decision-makers. They said Te Rā Nui should find out how eastern Porirua residents like to be involved and consult more widely with groups, such as migrants, whose voices are often not heard.



Participants with accessibility needs, in particular, felt that advice about unsafe roads and paths was not taken seriously, limiting their ability to live their best lives (see slide 55).

"...they've made a proper footpath for wheelchairs to get off the kneeling buses...when we complained that there wasn't enough time for anybody...stick, cane, the scooters and also wheelchairs and power chairs [to get across a pedestrian crossing]...the boss said over the email that 'it's got all the national standards, blah blah blah', and I said, 'I don't care about the national standard, our job is to ensure that our people are safe.' So, we met the engineer out there and that day we could barely get across..." (whaikaha talanoa).

"...all they see is this man in a chair. They don't understand that this man had a life before that, and he was engaged, and he was working with the council and knows what he's talking about...if you're going to make something accessible for someone with a disability, if it's in the community, don't go to someone in Wellington who's just studied disability and accessibility at university. Talk to someone who lives it on a day-to-day" (whaikaha talanoa).

8.6. There is concern that relocations and displacement will harm social relationships

“I’ve heard concerns about the gentrification of this area and I think that needs to be avoided at all cost, it’s not, that’s not the nature of this area and I think that, yeah, we need to be aware of that and avoid it happening because surely this is – hopefully – this is, all this development is for the people and the communities that are already living there and their relatives and such like and we certainly don’t want people to be forced out of the area as they have been in some other areas of New Zealand. Having grown up in Ponsonby and then, then you see you know when it was a poor area and then you see all the middle classes move in and force it out, force the others out, we don’t need that happening” (pāhake talanoa).



“...when you build more houses, you’re taking down like people’s property. And they’re like, like I know a couple of people that had to move out of their houses for new houses to be built. Then they get put in that hotel like not far from here. It’s kind of sad. Because like those people lost their homes, they probably grew up in the area for like years...it [new housing] looks cool for the moment but then you notice like a lot of our people are moving away because of all that stuff” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...there were so many people having to move out of Ōtaki to go to a retirement village. And they’re still building these flash homes all in subdivisions, but there’s no retirement village. You have to go out of the place [to find eldercare facilities]” (pāhake talanoa).



Participants were concerned that Kāinga Ora relocations and the displacement of residents due to gentrification would separate whānau/kāinga and reduce whanaungatanga, [as experienced elsewhere](#). Te Rā Nui will need to carefully manage both relocations and affordable housing options to ensure that those who wish to stay in eastern Porirua are not forced out by rising housing costs or a radical change in the feel of the area (see slide 44).

8.7. Residents think eastern Porirua is awesome

Participants actively challenged negative stereotypes about their area, saying they feel a strong sense of belonging to eastern Porirua and that they were proud of eastern Porirua because:



People are supportive

“I feel proud but, from what I’ve heard from outside, it gets a bad rap at times but they, they want to come out and meet the real people” (whaikaha talanoa).

“...we had the 685, the Samoan team, aye? They won and it was – the noise was unreal...their team had accomplished something...no one [else] recognises that but it was here, where you live” (whaikaha talanoa).



Organisations and groups encourage a sense of kotahitanga

“...you go to the committee things and you buy a sausage to support something...it’s not all give money, it’s people working together too” (pāhake talanoa).

“My best life is part of the community, coming here [to this organisation] and all that. Come here and learn” (whaikaha talanoa).

“...Cannons Creek Park, the Cage they like do different kinds of things to bring the community together and you don’t have to pay for that stuff. You know everybody loves freebies” (rangatahi talanoa).

8.8. Belonging results in strong and enduring connections to eastern Porirua

People *choose* to live in eastern Porirua

“...when we came back to Porirua – *by choice* – I bought a house...”
(pāhake talanoa).

“...once we move in, we’re in there for a lifetime...we’re there for keeps” (whaikaha talanoa).

“Actually, the income [in Porirua generally] is high. Many people living around here, including us, who have degrees, but nobody knows because we want to be with whānau” (whaikaha talanoa).

To enable current or past residents to live in eastern Porirua, housing needs to be more affordable and gentrification that pushes up housing costs needs to be avoided. This requires Te Rā Nui to support initiatives encouraging home ownership and affordable rental options, including those provided by Kāinga Ora and the [Central Pacific Collective](#). Encouraging locals to stay or return will contribute to kotahitanga and reduce some of the potential harms to social relationships identified by participants.

Young people want to explore opportunities outside of eastern Porirua, but plan to return

“I don’t want to leave here because I don’t like the community. I love the community, but in terms of my goals and my dreams and what I want to aspire to be, that is somewhere else. Just because I leave Porirua doesn’t mean I’m leaving Porirua behind...I’m always going to know my roots. If people ask where I’m from, I’ll be like, ‘I learned this in the Creek’. But yeah, I wanna leave just so that I can go do what I need to do to achieve what I want to achieve, not because I wanna run away. That’s not my reason” (rangatahi talanoa).

“I personally don’t like the idea of how people are like, ‘Get out of here, get out of here.’ I’m like, ‘What’s wrong with here?’ Let’s just say it this way, if we all start going one by one then what’s left? Porirua will be nothing without the people. It’s better to just stay here and do better for the community, other than going and do better to represent another community” (rangatahi talanoa).



8.9. Kotahitanga and whanaungatanga can be supported through events and physical spaces

Young people talked about the kind of events that they would like to see more of in eastern Porirua. Creek Fest was considered a great example.

“I think we can make Porirua like a good environment is when we have events like more events, so it can bring everyone together to the community. And, yeah, I do think, you know, letting young voices you know come out as well” (rangatahi talanoa).



“I guess like the vibe that it [Creek Fest] brings out of people like you know some people come out of their shells and do things so that they can win prizes and like it just boosts people’s confidence being able to sort of stand in front of those people. Like sometimes they do like singing competitions like those kind of stuff and like you know yeah just brings out confidence in people” (rangatahi talanoa).

Pāhake and whaikaha said eastern Porirua lacks a community hub, where organisations and groups can meet. A physical space was seen as important for those who don’t use the internet and/or like face-to-face contact. This is needed locally because some residents find it difficult to travel outside of eastern Porirua.

“...[eastern Porirua has] never had a lot of facilities. There is a lot of organisations but not a lot of facilities...” (pāhake talanoa).

“...groups actually fail because they have nowhere to meet unless you’re going to meet in someone’s home. So, to get people together in a community we need a...community hall or building, that can be used for whatever” (pāhake talanoa).

“I think when you’re looking at developing an area...I think that [a community hub] needs to be a very important part of it. A place where you can go...a community base somewhere where people can be comfortable to congregate” (pāhake talanoa).

“Yeah, [we] need a hub that caters for – It doesn’t matter if you’re orange with black spots you can still go in...it welcomes all teenagers from all walks” (whaikaha talanoa).



9. Environment

Te Rā Nui, Eastern Porirua Development



9.1. Building climate resilience



“I just think environmental concerns, I don’t think we can stress them enough...what are the things that you should think about when building houses these days to protect the environment and to stop the few issues with flooding? And yeah we need to work together around these things and know more about it” (pāhake talanoa).

“...the problem in Auckland with all the development up there was taking away the lawns, the grass, so that the water had nowhere to go and that is what has happened and people that bought houses with you know, and just sitting on a concrete pad, concrete round for the garage and the car, and down the drive and no garden. They don’t want to do the garden, they just want imitation lawn or concrete...” (pāhake talanoa).

“...when I was in primary we went to go plant trees near the old road” (rangatahi talanoa).

Taking action, or exercising rangatiratanga, to improve climate resilience and demonstrate kaitiakitanga was a significant theme discussed by participants. This included avoiding paving too much of the community with concrete, as they felt had happened in other parts of the country where re-development has taken place. Participants also stressed a desire for more green spaces, tree planting and gardens (see next slide).

9.2. Gardens enhance whanaungatanga

“...children need to know that there is green patches. They need to know that they’re just around, you know, within walking distance that they can go and look at trees, and work out that there are different sorts of trees. They can have a look at what’s creeping around in the ground underneath. This is an exploration, so that for adults it’s a place they can go and just have a good breath of fresh air. For children, it’s a place where they can go and they can take their bike, and they can make it you know a racetrack if they feel like it. They can build something. They can create and work out that life is not just on an iPad” (pāhake talanoa).

“I couldn’t live without my garden but that’s me personally and I think that when you’re getting older you certainly have to be able to go and even meet people in an area where there’s a lawn or there’s trees. Or there is a flower garden. Botanical gardens just anywhere that makes you feel good” (pāhake talanoa).



“And we make our vegetables and that in your gardens as well, so it’s a better way than just buying it from the shops and that. I think that would definitely be a good one” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...there should be more parks like Aotea Lagoon because there’s gardens there as well and there’s a water park. Everyone can just have a picnic and stuff, family stuff...” (rangatahi talanoa).

Participants across the different talanoa mentioned that gardens were essential for people to live their best lives. They hoped that many new homes will still have some kind of garden and that community gardens will be built, noting that residents can exercise kaitiakitanga and prevent food insecurity if whānau/kāinga grow their own kai. They also saw shared green spaces, like gardens and parks, as improving whanaungatanga and kotahitanga because residents can congregate in communal spaces and share kai with one another.



9.3. Inclusive parks build kotahitanga

“...we’re looking at developing a housing area, I think that needs to be a very important part of it. A place where you can go. It doesn’t necessarily have to be a church but a community base somewhere where people can be comfortable to congregate, and not feel obliged but you know just, you know so you need those whether it’s a park, shops, definitely that’s where you congregate” (pāhake talanoa).

“...I also think there should be more park benches – seating – around, people with disability can sit and stand up and walk with walker. I think there needs to be more seats, you see them with their shopping and all that sort of thing, they just need to have a bit of a break. There’s nowhere to sit” (pāhake talanoa).

“They can access a swing or sensory things for kids to touch and all that because we’ve got a lot of autistic children, they come through and all that. Sensory stuff for kids to touch” (rangatahi talanoa).

“Those exercise things, that would be gangsta” (rangatahi talanoa).



Participants across the different talanoa expressed their hopes that improvements to local parks, which will be part of the Te Rā Nui redevelopment process, would bring whānau/kāinga and the broader community together. They suggested that more benches would allow pāhake and whaikaha places to sit, exercise amenities would promote physical health and sensory play activities would support families with children who have cognitive, visual and emotional developmental needs. Properly maintained and accessible toilets were also seen as essential for local parks.



9.4. Eastern Porirua is “safe as”

“Just what these two said. Like honestly, every time you go to a shop, like a dairy or something, you’re bound to see someone you know. Like you turn the corner, ‘Hi Cuz!’ Turn the other corner, your dad’s over there. Honestly, it’s so homely. Porirua is just Porirua. People say it’s not safe. It’s safe. It’s safe as” (rangatahi talanoa).



“What Porirua East means to me is I guess, yeah, same as her – it’s been a home for me for the past 10 years so yeah, found comfort in that place, feel safe in that environment” (rangatahi talanoa).

“I think, for me, Porirua is a good place in a positive and a negative way. Positive way, I feel like you get to meet new people around, get to enjoy the view outside, go anywhere else you can go to. It’s a good area, good place. I think the negative part about Porirua is just the safety wise, gangs and that, they come around or fighting and arguments” (rangatahi talanoa).



Few participants discussed safety issues. Rangatahi frequently referred to eastern Porirua as home, noting that they felt safe amongst people they know, again stressing the strength of whanaungatanga found in the area. Environmental design can address safety by supporting these connections, for example, by making it easier for community members to see what is happening in parks or green spaces from the street. Te Rā Nui can also support community organisations in addressing concerns about gangs, alcohol consumption and drug use raised by some rangatahi (see next slide).

9.5. Alcohol prevention and culturally-informed youth services

Some participants from the whaikaha talanoa reflected on eastern Porirua from decades past, stating that bars and pubs contributed to community violence. They supported keeping such establishments outside the community as redevelopment progresses.

“There’s not a lot of pubs and bars. I think the Porirua that I grew up in, in the eighties, there were a lot...in their little bars, but there’s also quite a high amount of violence. I think it’s probably, it’s really quieted down as a community, and I think a lot of that’s attributed to not having a lot of pubs and bars in the area” (whaikaha talanoa).



Participant 1: “Kids growing up in a tough home situation where they are surrounded by drugs and alcohol, they are bound to grow up and do the same thing that their parents were doing. So they see it at home, leave home, go to school, instead they’re going to go and drink down at the Creek.”

Participant 2: “...a lot of kids nowadays, no one’s teaching us how to deal with what we’re dealing with. No one’s helping us gain the tools to actually deal with emotions and with our mental health” (rangatahi talanoa).

Although many rangatahi stated that they felt safe in eastern Porirua, they said there was a need for services that provided them with the ‘tools’ for dealing with substance abuse and mental health. Research with youth in Aotearoa has identified positive cultural identity as a factor that enhances wellbeing, even decreasing depressive symptoms and suicide attempts. Safety, cultural pride and practice were also key themes in the Hui tahi tātou o Porirua engagement event. This highlights the importance of Te Rā Nui supporting existing and new programmes that enhance cultural identity among young people, including those based in local marae and organisations like Ngā Uri o Whiti Te Rā Mai Le Moana Trust.





10. Transport

Te Rā Nui, Eastern Porirua Development



10.1. Current public transport is insufficient

“In the future we’re going to sort of reduce emissions and things like that so public transport is a key. And the other thing is that we need to have more, as citizens, more involvement in working collectively to reduce emissions and to live in a way which is not adding to the problem of climate change. And I think if we can each help each other to do that, that’s really important as well because, I mean, there’s some ghastly things happening in New Zealand right now” (pāhake talanoa).

“It’s going to take a long time for Kiwis to get used to using public transport. But they’re going to have to” (pāhake talanoa).

“The trains, I don’t know what happened but it’s like the trains are now like almost an hour apart to get to places, so if you miss this train then you’ve got to wait like 40 minutes for the next one. And then the buses there’s always like we need drivers or something and then like this bus is cancelled...” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...the trains are too packed and we expect our elderly to go on a packed train and stand” (rangatahi talanoa).

“All work in different areas, different times of the day. Especially public transport is not running as well so it’s not really that easy to stop driving. I get like how come yeah it’s good for the environment but at the same time people have to be able to afford to go places, drive their family they’ve still got to be able to go to work...it might be possible to have [public transport] at night as well, because some people do night shifts. So, like it’s not really helpful for them” (rangatahi talanoa).

Participants recognised the seriousness of climate change and the need for residents to reduce their reliance on cars. However, participants also discussed a range of challenges that make it difficult for more eastern Porirua residents to use public transport regularly. Public transport was said to be too infrequent and unreliable, particularly for eastern Porirua residents who work outside of the community during non-standard hours. In larger families, multiple cars were often seen as essential because family members need to get to different places at different times. Te Rā Nui should continue to work with Waka Kōtahi to address these issues.



10.2. Reducing parking presents challenges



“...different families with more people might have more cars but stay in the one house then it’s like damn. And if you’re parking along the road some idiots could crash into your car if it’s parked on the road you know” (rangatahi talanoa).

“...people with bigger families have got heaps of cars” (rangatahi talanoa).

“That’s what I’m not looking forward to is not being able to drive. I’ve just had to renew my license, so I’ve got it for the next two years anyhow. But if I can’t drive, I don’t know...I’d hate to have to depend on people all the time to take me” (pāhake talanoa).

Participants were concerned that redevelopment will reduce on-site parking, meaning more cars would need to park on the street. They thought this would impact larger families (who own multiple cars) more than others and could contribute to more road accidents. Pāhake noted the social impact of not being able to drive your own car, which can reduce independence and the ability to connect with others. At the same time, participants acknowledged that climate action requires incentives to drive less (see slide 53). Te Rā Nui should continue to work with Waka Kōtahi to ensure adequate planning and investment goes into public transport and alternative travel modes, such as cycling and walking.

10.3. Difficulties getting around eastern Porirua

“To give you another scenario too, about getting on and off the roads, if you come across – especially down here – any wheelchair user, prams are easy because you can tilt them up, but for someone in a wheelchair, especially the ones that have castor wheels at the front, you get a car that’s parked on the footpath, you go down on the road, and you could go past thirty or forty driveways before you actually find a lip onto a driveway that will actually let the wheelchair go up” (whaikaha talanoa).

“...at the moment there’s no way I could walk to the bus stop....And I’m not sure, having said if the buses don’t kneel, if I could even get onto a bus...” (pāhake talanoa)

“Where we live we’re a 20-minute walk down to the centre. But it’s good going down because we go downhill, but it’s hard getting back up the hill again. We’ve got to drive” (pāhake talanoa).



Pāhake and whaikaha spoke about how they want to get around and connect with others to live their best lives. However, eastern Porirua’s hilly topography and inaccessible footpaths make too many residents dependent on cars to get around. Te Rā Nui should continue to work with Waka Kōtahi to upgrade footpaths and roads to make sure they are accessible for all.

Mahi ki a koe

Thank you



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