

# Safe Tairāwhiti, New Zealand

## International Safe Communities Designation #270



Safe Tairāwhiti is a collaborative community effort to improve safety. Tairāwhiti District has a population of approximately 45,000 people. Tairāwhiti encompasses the East Coast region north of Wairoa up to Hicks Bay out west across to Matawai. Gisborne City is the main urban centre in the Tairāwhiti region. It has the highest percentage of Māori population at 44.3% compared to the national average of 14.87%. In the application, the Tairāwhiti District is described as a bicultural heritage and a vibrant, exciting and magical place to live, work, visit and play.

Accredited examiners from Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand conducted an official site visit in October 2011. The presentations and field trips all provided meaningful insights into how the Tairāwhiti District has effectively adopted the ISC six criteria to improve community safety at a local level. Additionally, the joint hosting of the site visit by the Police and the Gisborne District Council (GDC) was appropriate, as the Police have a lead role in working collaboratively to improve a wide range of safety outcomes. Furthermore, the council has a statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 2002 to work together with other government agencies to improve community well-being.

During the site visit presentations several measures were highlighted in the presentations including:

- Significant reductions in repetitive family violence incidents as a result of collaborative efforts across the community.
- Significant reductions in mean speeds as a result of effective road safety campaigns and police enforcement.
- Raised awareness of water safety and improvement in swimming skills as a result of the Sealord Swim for Life project in Tairāwhiti.
- Increased awareness of fire safety among students as a result of the Tairāwhiti Get Firewise initiative.
- Significant reduction in crime as a result of the street-by-street initiative.

Safe Tairāwhiti celebrated the achievement at a designation ceremony on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at Whakato Marae Manutuke. The first time an ISC designation ceremony has been held on a Marae. During this celebration, the final draft of the Safe Tairāwhiti Strategy was release for public consultation and feedback.

Further information can be found at the Safe Communities Foundation NZ website [www.safecommunities.org.nz/sc/trw](http://www.safecommunities.org.nz/sc/trw)

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