

Bay of Plenty Times

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\$1.6 million

That's how much we will pay in parking fines

by John Cousins
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Tauranga parking wardens are on track to issue \$1.6 million worth of tickets this financial year.

Their eagle-eyed efforts are poised to be a big contributor to the city council's parking account notching up an expected surplus of nearly \$1 million by June 30, despite usage of the Elizabeth St parking building remaining fairly low.

Parking fines and court recoveries from tickets for expired warrants and registrations are projected to reach a third of Tauranga City Council's \$4.5 million parking revenue by the end of this financial year.

The cash gains from enforcing parking time limits around the city was disclosed by the council's financial controller Paul Davidson.

He used actual revenue and expenditure figures up to March 31 to extrapolate out to the end of council's financial year, June 30.

Nearly half the fines will be collected from areas outside Tauranga's downtown, with Mount Maunganui contributing about \$280,000 and Greerton about \$180,000. City centre fines will reach about \$930,000.

Tauranga motorists have so far paid \$1.53 million in parking fines in the 2009 financial year, \$80,000 more than the previous year, with 30,388 infringement notices issued compared with 32,158 in 2008. In the 2009 financial year, 65.6 per cent of infringement notices were issued for meter/time zone offences; 27.65 per cent for no WOF/registration/illegal use of bus lanes; and 6.6 per cent for safety offences such as parking on yellow lines.

In 2008, 63.70 per cent were issued for meter/time zone offences, 27.8 per cent for no WOF/registration/illegal use of bus lanes and 8.3 per cent related to safety offences.

Tauranga City Council's parking team leader Kevin Nally said for the



ON TRACK: Tauranga parking wardens are set to issue \$1.6 million worth of tickets this financial year.

PICTURE / JOHN BORREN060510JB0480P

period July 1, 2009 to the end of April this year, motorists were issued 25,843 infringement notices resulting in \$1.2m revenue for the city.

Mr Nally said there had been occasions where the city's parking wardens had been in the firing line of heated arguments with angry motorists.

"They have had some problems in the past, it's always been verbal (abuse)," he said.

However, over the past year things had eased up, he said.

"It's part of the job but there are limits and things they should not have

to put up with. If it gets past a point we will pass the matter on to the police."

Mr Nally described the city's parking wardens as experienced and competent.

The parking building straddling Elizabeth St and First Ave has only averaged about 40 to 45 per cent occupancy over the past 12 months, compared with the healthy 80 per cent occupancy for the Spring St parking building.

The council's traffic manager Martin Parkes said the city needed to attract more people to use the Elizabeth St parking building.

PARKING FACTS

Snapshot of parking offences and the infringement fines

- Failing to display current warrant of fitness — \$200
- Parked within an intersection or within 6m of one — \$60
- Parked over time limit or at an expired meter — \$12
- Failed to display valid parking ticket — \$40
- Parked on broken yellow line — \$60
- Parked in a loading zone — \$40
- Illegally parked in a mobility park — \$150

STREET VIEW: What do you think of Tauranga's parking enforcement rules?



"They suck. I was issued a ticket for not having my car registered. There aren't enough parking spaces."

— Tori Boyd, 18, Otumotai



"If it is too difficult or too expensive people are going to stop will shop elsewhere."

— Don McDougall, 63, Omokoroa



"Council should provide more free parking spaces in the central business district for shoppers."

— Glen Hardley, 17, Bellevue



"There needs to be more grace time and should be cheaper for shoppers parking in the CBD."

— Debbie Leatham, 45, Mount Maunganui

Bay house sales stall but values are steady

by Graham Skellern
Business Editor

House prices in Tauranga are still firm even though sales activity has stalled in anticipation of next week's Budget.

The latest QV Valuations figures show average sale prices in the city fell slightly from \$413,173 to \$412,080 (for the past three months ending April).

But residential property values increased 0.6 per cent over the past year — from the 0.1 per cent annual growth recorded to the end of March.

Shayne Donovan-Grammer, of QV Valuations in Tauranga, said it was a buyer's market and "while prices are fairly sharp, there haven't been too many heavily discounted sales of late".

He said first homebuyers were still the most active and good property under \$350,000 had a higher chance of selling.

Overall, the market has continued to stall over the last month, Mr Donovan-Grammer said.

The much-anticipated Budget announcements (on May 20) should bring some clarity and direction to the property sector, particularly for investors.

"While many commentators over the past months have attributed a quiet market to the Budget announcement, time will tell whether we see a lift in activity."

"While most Budget attention has focussed on rules around investing, general household affordability through tax cuts is also a key issue which could act on the market."

Though values are holding up in Tauranga, they are still lagging in other main centres. For the year ending April, property values grew 2.7 per cent in Hamilton (though they fell from 3.8 per cent in March); 9.5 per cent in the Auckland region; 7.1 per cent in Wellington; Christchurch 6.9 per cent; and Dunedin 7.5 per cent ahead.

The growth in values in the Western Bay district, including Katikati, Omokoroa and Te Puke, fell slightly from 4.7 per cent to 4.6 per cent, with an average sales price of \$384,384.

Values in neighbouring Rotorua have fallen 1.2 per cent below the same period last year.



AND WE'RE OFF: Eves Realty auctioneer Gil Beadle gets the bids rolling for the charity house auction.

PICTURE / SARAH GULLY 080510SG11B0P

Charity auction raises \$500,000 for hospice

by Sandra Conchie

Waipuna Hospice's charity auction house at The Lakes in Pyes Pa west has been snapped up for \$500,000 by a Papamoa family.

The Eve's Realty-run auction at the new home in Hastings Rd attracted about 60 people and at one stage there was four to five interested parties bidding. But the auction ended with the property passed in at \$480,000.

But Waipuna Hospice chief executive Richard Thurlow and Eves Realty's auctioneer Gil Beadle were convinced a deal could be done and about 10 minutes after the auction, a buyer — who wished to remain anonymous — and the hospice agreed on a price. "It's a fantastic property built to very high specifications and has many great features and will make someone a fabulous home," he said.

The split level design home is ready for the family to move into.

It has three bedrooms, two living areas, ensuite/guest bathroom and powder room, a double garage and is tastefully finished with generous windows for maximum light and a fully landscaped section.

Mr Thurlow said it had been a community project with the donation of the section from Grasshopper Properties and resources from Belvedere Construction.

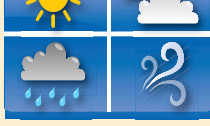
More than 95 businesses and individuals also contributed to the project in

some way, including donations of goods and/or services and a spare of pair of hands.

Mr Thurlow said their efforts had transformed a bare section into a complete house in less than 26 weeks and all the funds raised would benefit Waipuna Hospice.

"It's a fantastic result and I want to thank everyone involved. The \$500,000 will go a long way towards covering our costs this year and part way into next."

Weather



TOMORROW:

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