

Hon Rodney Hide, Minister of Local Government

By e-mail: r.hide@ministers.govt.nz

rodney@epsom.org.nz

cc: Hon John Carter, Associate Minister of Local Government

Hon John Key, Prime Minister

Hon Judith Collins, Member for Papakura

Friday 04 December 2009

Enabling Papakura to become a Unitary Authority

Dear Mr Hide,

SavePapakura.com is a community action group formed as a result of public concern in Papakura around the government's *Making Auckland Greater* proposal. We promote engagement with the Auckland governance reforms and support the local community in making submissions and engaging with the consultation process.

From our engagement with the local community it is clear that the people of Papakura are committed to ensuring our future local governance and democratic rights are retained.

SavePapakura.com affirms your statement from yesterday: "Local government is about democracy. The changes in Auckland are intended to enhance the effectiveness of citizens' participation in democracy..."

The people of Papakura want to share in your vision and participate in local democracy, but do not believe the government's proposed model will deliver those outcomes. There is a sense that under the *Making Auckland Greater* proposal the people of Papakura will lose a lot — their own local council, the lowest rates in the region, accessible local councillors, effective local decision-making; and gain nothing except higher rates and less local decision-making.

SavePapakura.com work hard with the people of Papakura to constructively contribute and facilitate the government's *Making Auckland Greater* legislative changes for an Auckland Supercity. We are deeply disappointed that the stated goals of increased local democracy and strongly engaged communities have not eventuated. We are strongly concerned that the unwanted, deeply flawed Supercity lacks the consent of the communities that are paying for it.

To ensure the effective local governance in Papakura is sustained and enhanced, we fully support the Papakura District Council's move to apply to you to become a Unitary Authority.

The government appears to be committed to implementing the Supercity in time for the 2010 local government elections. As a consequence, Papakura commencing to become a Unitary Authority will also need to be accelerated to meet this deadline. We urgently seek your support to start a process that will enable the Papakura District to become a Unitary Authority by 2010.

In recognition of the steps that need to be urgently taken, would you please provide a reply by Wednesday 09 December 2009 (e-mail accepted).

Yours sincerely,

SavePapakura.com steering group