

NOTICE OF INTENDED MOTION

Dated: 1 December 2025

For

The Rotorua District Council Meeting of 10 December 2025.

Pursuant to

Standing Order 27.

Background

On 28 May 2025, following public consultation as part of the Annual Plan process, Council resolved as follows:

Council resolves to direct the Chief Executive to investigate other options to potentially run the night market by another operator at an alternative location.

On 18 August 2025 a report prepared by Rob Pitkethley was presented to the Ngati Whakaue Gifted Reserves Protocol Committee concerning:

1. “an expression of interest process to explore the viability of an external operator managing the Rotorua Night Market; and
2. “a 3-month trial of Memorial Plaza as a new market location”.

On 26 September 2025, during the election period, Council staff announced:¹

After more than 15 years, we’re trialling a move of the Rotorua Night Market.

Starting Thursday 2 October 2025, and running through summer, visitors and locals will be able to enjoy the vibrant Thursday night market at Kuirau Park.

Discussion

The original purpose of the Night Market was to help revitalise the Central Business District (CBD), which it has achieved successfully for many years. This remains a priority for Council in 2025. This purpose is not served by re-locating the market outside of the CBD to Kuirau Park.

¹<https://www.rotorualakescouncil.nz/our-council/news/news?item=id:2vji2podr17q9su7gcir>

I have spoken to most of the stall holders last week as well as most of the retailers in Tutanekai St where the Night Market is held. The feedback I have received has been resoundingly negative including:

- most of the customers now are locals who specifically want to attend the Night Market. The CBD workers and tourists are not inadvertently finding the market because Kuirau Park is outside the CBD and not in a prominent and obvious location;
- Kuirau park is too exposed to the weather - direct sun is melting product, more windy which will inevitably lead to more cancellations whereas the CBD is more sheltered from both the wind, rain and sun;
- turnover of most stall holders has dropped by between 30 - 70%;
- generators are required to provide power, which offsets some of the potential savings from road management;
- Council has now employed traffic management staff, rather than having external contractors so there are no longer savings to be gained by moving the market.
- retailers in town say that the CBD has become a 'ghost town' on Thursdays and it would be better for Rotorua for the Night Market to return to Tutanekai Street.

It is apparent to me that it is not tenable for stall holders and retailers to continue with the market in Kuirau Park as currently planned by Council staff until the end of summer.

I am of the view that the good-will built up by having the market in Tutanekai Street for over 15 years is diminishing week by week.

Recommendation

I give notice that I intend to move that:

1. Council instructs the Chief Executive to end the trial as soon as reasonably practical and return the Night Market to Tutanekai Street while the investigation continues.

MOVED BY

SECONDED BY

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Lee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'R' and 'L'.

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Cr Robert Lee

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