

2025-2034 draft LTP key messages

As at 11 April 2025

About the LTP

- Our Long Term Plan (LTP) outlines the council's plans for the next decade – and how these will be funded.
- It includes information on services, upcoming projects, rating impacts, and financial management. It also includes what we will be delivering, when, where and how.
- To keep providing quality services for you and your family/whaanau, we need to carefully balance costs while keeping rates increases to a minimum. This means making some tough choices about what is most important to maintain our district and keep moving forward.
- The 2025-2034 LTP will be adopted on 30 June 2025 and comes into effect on 1 July 2025.

Have your say

- Ensuring local voices are heard is vital. All submissions on the draft LTP will be taken to council chambers for discussion and decision-making.
- Share your views at waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it.
- Consultation on the draft 2025-2034 LTP runs from 11 April to 11 May 2025.

Major Matters

Waters

- We're looking to change the way we deliver water services because of new Government legislation requiring all councils to submit a Water Services Delivery Plan by September 2025.

- While change is required, we get to decide how it happens — and your input will help shape the path we take.
- The council's preferred option is to form a new Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) with Hamilton City Council to manage water and wastewater services.
- We expect that this will bring some relief to ratepayers in future years, because it means we can better manage costs through economies of scale and improved borrowing capacity. But it will take up a good part of this LTP to realise the full benefits.
- This is part of the Local Water Done Well programme, aimed at ensuring New Zealand's water services are safe, reliable, and financially sustainable into the future.

Roading

- Funding for Council roading maintenance from NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) has been increased relative to previous years albeit slightly less than the amount requested.
- The bid for capital projects was declined for the next 2 years (2025/26, 2026/27) impacting new capital projects.
- NZTA will contribute around \$46m of the \$90.3m spend through a subsidy for roading maintenance across the district in the first two years of this LTP.
- We are asking the community if they would like us to do more maintenance on our roading network for the next two years with rates funding only.
- NZTA are not funding Capital for the next 2 years as they focus on roads of national significance. This has an impact of about \$35 million. Council's strategy does not support unsubsidised roading works hence there will not be any capital projects undertaken in the next 2 years unless additional external funds are made available.

- In two years, we will submit another bid to NZTA to provide more funding, but in the meantime, we have had to carefully prioritise our work programme as rates affordability is a major focus.

Additional Messages

Waste

- A review of rubbish and recycling services aims to ensure they are fair, cost-effective, and sustainable.
- This includes changes to tags and sticker prices, moving from wheelie bins to rubbish bags in Tuakau, a new collection point in Te Aakau and to extend the weekly waste collection service to include Island Block Road.
- From 1 July 2025: The rubbish bag sticker price will be raised from \$1.50 to \$3.00 per sticker. The wheelie bin tag will also be raised from \$3.00 to \$6.00 per tag. These changes will result in about 60 per cent of the rubbish service cost being covered by user pays fees. The remainder will be funded via the targeted rate.
- More details are included in our consultation document and the Waste Statement of Proposal.

Public transport

- Waikato Regional Council (WRC) is responsible for managing public transport services.
- Previously, we collected funding from Waikato District ratepayers and transferred this to WRC. Starting 1 July 2025, WRC will directly charge ratepayers for these services.
- If public transport funding remained in our budget, a general rate increase of 6.55% would have been proposed from 1 July 2025, instead of the proposed 4.25%.
- Visit WRC's website for more information and to provide feedback.

Growth

- Waikato is one of New Zealand's fastest-growing districts, with the population expected to grow by 42.1% to 126,454 by 2054.

- \$162.7 million of capital projects are related to growth, with developers contributing through development contributions.

Financial

- Council manages over \$2 billion in assets on your behalf and generates around \$216 million in revenue each year from rates, fees, charges, and government grants.
- Over the next nine years delivery of our services including water and wastewater will cost \$4.2 billion. The proposed joint CCO with Hamilton City Council will take on \$1.3 billion of this expenditure, and delivery of the services, from the second year onwards.
- We are proposing to invest \$787.1 million to build, upgrade and maintain our roading network. \$3.9 million of this is for maintaining footpaths and cycleways.
- We are proposing to spend \$160.3 million in stormwater, and \$1.8 billion on all other council services.
 - \$125.8 million will be spent on enhancing our parks and reserves, including \$20.5 million on playground renewals.
 - \$20.6 million will be spent on upgrading community facilities, and \$400,000 on community halls.
 - \$25.8 million will be spent on maintaining our buildings including libraries.
- NZTA will subsidise approximately \$46 million of the \$90.3 million total expenditure for maintenance on local roads for the first two years of this LTP. This is more than we have received in previous years, but less than we asked for.
- Debt is set to peak in 2025/26 at \$347 million, and ranges from \$151 million in 2026/27 to \$260 million in 2033/34.
- There are two types of rates: general rates (which includes a fixed and a variable charge) and targeted rates for services that benefit properties in specific locations.

- This draft LTP proposes a general rate increase of 4.25% in the first year (2025/26).
- This draft LTP proposes targeted rate increases between 4.5% and 11%. The focus of this LTP is on the 'must haves' and effective delivery of what we said we were going to do. While there are many aspirations and needs across the district, some are not affordable right now as we focus on maintaining services and projects within current budget constraints.
- Your rates make up roughly 4% of the average weekly household budget and help fund essential services like drinking water, rubbish and recycling, stormwater, and the maintenance of over 2,400 km of roads.
- We hold an AA+ credit rating which shows we are managing your money well and can meet our financial obligations. Our strong credit rating means we can borrow money at lower interest rates, which in turn benefits our communities and minimises the impact on your rates.
- Council costs have increased by 20 per cent since 2021, with construction costs rising by 27 per cent. This required careful planning and prioritisation for the draft 2025-2034 LTP and is reflected in our consultation document.