

Annual Plan 2024/25

I Mahere-aa-tau

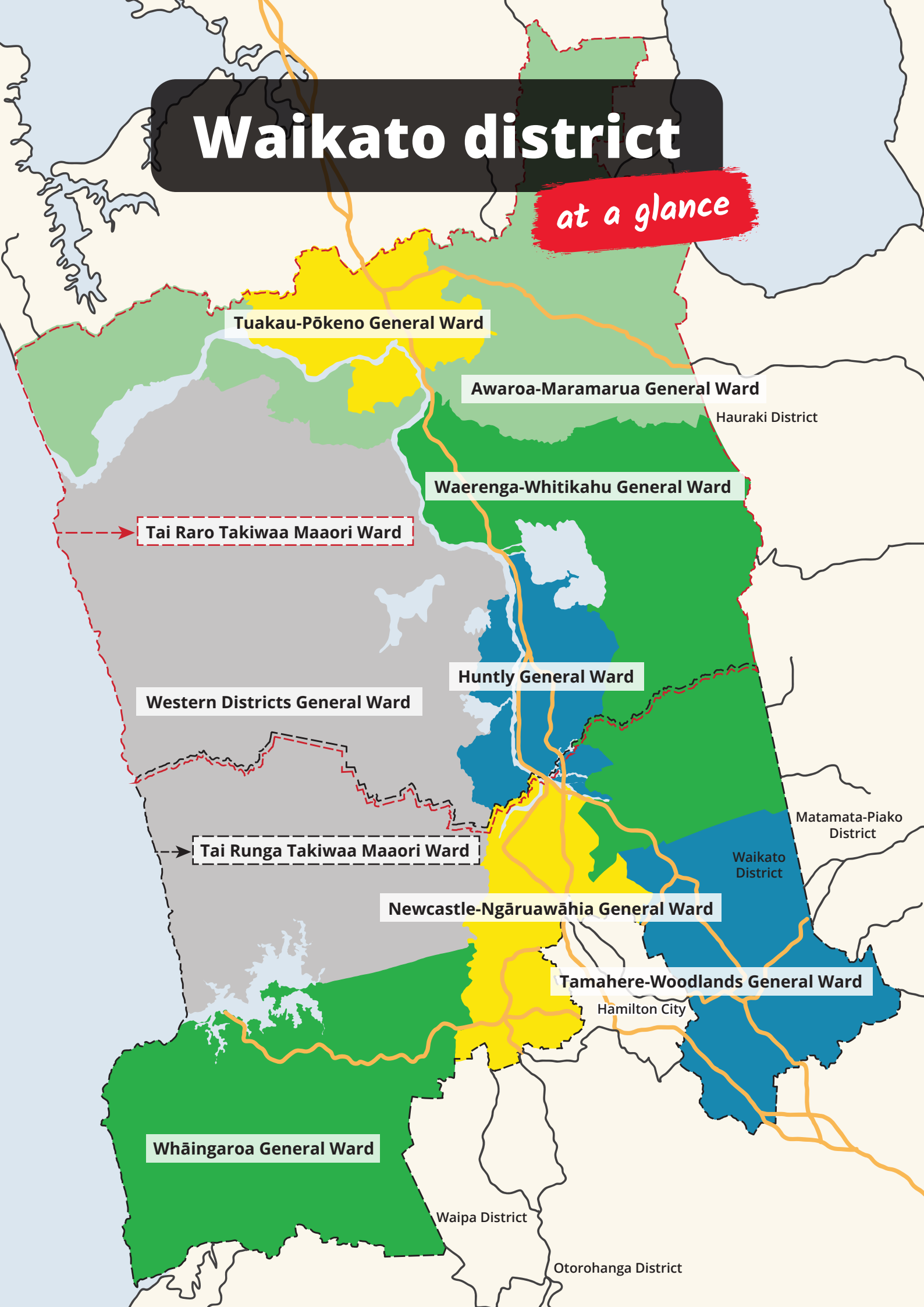
Consultation Document

This is a discussion document for our community.



Waikato district

at a glance



Tuakau-Pōkeno General Ward

Awaroa-Maramarua General Ward

Hauraki District

Waerenga-Whitikahu General Ward

Tai Raro Takiwaa Māori Ward

Huntly General Ward

Western Districts General Ward

Matamata-Piako District

Tai Runga Takiwaa Māori Ward

Waikato District

Newcastle-Ngāruawāhia General Ward

Tamahere-Woodlands General Ward

Hamilton City

Whāingaroa General Ward

Waipa District

Otorohanga District

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Setting the scene

Message from the Mayor and Chief Executive

Waikato District Council is facing serious affordability issues, which has led the Council to put our 2024-2034 Long Term Plan on hold and produce a one-year Annual Plan instead. At this point, we don't have all the answers to address these challenges, and we want to work with you and the wider community over the next year to understand how we can best deliver the services you need and want in the future.

Waikato District Council has a legal obligation to update its Long Term Plan every three years, but this year we have taken a one-off offer from the Government to pause this work and focus on a draft 2024/25 Enhanced Annual Plan.

Waikato district is facing extraordinary changes in local government and we (your Council) need to gather more certainty around central government funding and waters legislation still to come before we can deliver our longer-term plans to you – the community.

We know that our current financial projections are not affordable for many ratepayers and members of the community. The one-year enhanced annual plan allows us to reset, investigate and find ways to potentially lower our level of service, find other funding sources, advocate to government and investigate other savings.

In the midst of this cost of living crisis, affordability issues have been top of mind for our Council as we've been planning projects, services, and activities to deliver to local communities for the short, medium, and long term. We understand that the last thing communities want is a rates increase from their Council, and we know the pain of higher rates will be felt by many people across the district.

However, we are one of the fastest-growing councils in New Zealand. This growth provides both opportunities and costs to our council as we work to deliver liveable, thriving, and connected communities. So we need to have conversations with you about how we can deliver on our collective vision while working within our means and keeping rates as affordable as possible.

Our last Long Term Plan was prepared when the consumer price index was 3.3% (June 2021), but local government's costs have escalated by around five times that percentage in the past three years. We expect costs, inflation and the cost of compliance to continue rising in the next three years if we don't take action now.



In the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan, we proposed setting a general rate increase of 3.5% in the 2024/25 financial year based on 2020 rating valuations and property information.

Today, we are proposing in our 2024/25 Annual Plan a general rate increase of

13.75%



just to keep services ticking over, complete pre-planned projects and maintain your infrastructure to the standards that have been set for us.

We have little room for change as rates contribute about two-thirds (or 63%) of the Council's overall funding, with the remaining funding coming from the government, development contributions and other external funding sources. However, we have managed to find some cost savings, which we outline under our services section from page 11.



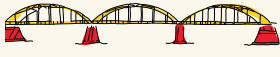
The impacts of increasing compliance

Operating and capital costs have significantly increased in the last four years. One main reason behind the increase is the escalating compliance requirements and the number of regulations imposed by the central government, which directly increase costs.

We understand that these regulations are designed to protect us, but they have led to a rise in the cost of the infrastructure required to ensure safe drinking water, wastewater management, and other activities the Council is responsible for. Every new policy also serves to slow down the planning and delivery processes.



Transportation costs and funding allocation

In 2024/25,  **transportation will contribute around \$78.9 million to the Council's overall budget, with 51% of funding coming from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency grants.**

Your roads are vital for commuting to work, taking our kids to school, and transporting goods. They're the backbone of your livelihood, the local economy, housing, and the rural sector, but maintaining them is expensive. When multiple infrastructures are aged, coming to the end of their lifespan, and needing replacement, this has significant cost implications, which we are experiencing now.



Changes ahead for your water services and infrastructure

Your local water infrastructure assets are worth \$729 million, which is about one-third of Waikato District Council's overall assets of \$2.3 billion that we take care of for you.

One main reason we've put our 2024-2034 Long Term Plan on hold is to better understand central Government's new Local Waters Done Well policy. It's important we consult thoroughly with you on how best to implement this policy locally.

The second challenge is that Watercare has given notice that it will cease its contract with the Council in 2026, and we need a new approach. Following the approval of this Annual Plan, the Council will work on a solution for delivering water services beyond 2026, but want to assure you that your waters services will continue.



In the meantime, insufficient investment in water services would be irresponsible. We must be able to continue to serve a rapidly growing district, and we cannot risk the health and safety of communities.

We are proposing to spend \$115.5 million in the 2024/25 financial year on drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater maintenance, upgrades, and operational costs. To reduce the rating impact this year, we're proposing to postpone some non-critical water projects until future years. \$27.4 million for drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure development will be loan-funded.

While we have a plan for this financial year, again, we will be having conversations with the government about the affordability issues specifically relating to your water services and infrastructure, and longer-term implications for local communities.



Meeting the challenges we face head-on

The bottom line is that our current financial position is complex, and we still have a lot of work ahead of us to address these financial issues head-on, fully understand the local impact of the government's new waters policy, and find solutions to provide the services our communities need and deserve. Putting our Long Term Plan on hold is essential; the real work is yet to come.

The Waikato district has proven resilient in challenging times. We – you and the Council – must work together to address the critical issues that lie ahead, such as water, roads, buildings, public spaces, and social infrastructure. We must act now and respond to communities' immediate needs. Failure to maintain community assets, roading and waters has a direct effect on you and Waikato communities now, as well as our children and for future generations, and we simply cannot leave them bearing costs and the consequences of our actions today.

Please take the time to have your say on the draft 2024/25 Annual Plan at waikatodistrict.govt.nz.

Jacqui Church
Mayor

Gavin Ion
Chief Executive

Introducing Waikato District Council's **Draft 2024/25 Annual Plan**

Let's talk about the upcoming year for our district.

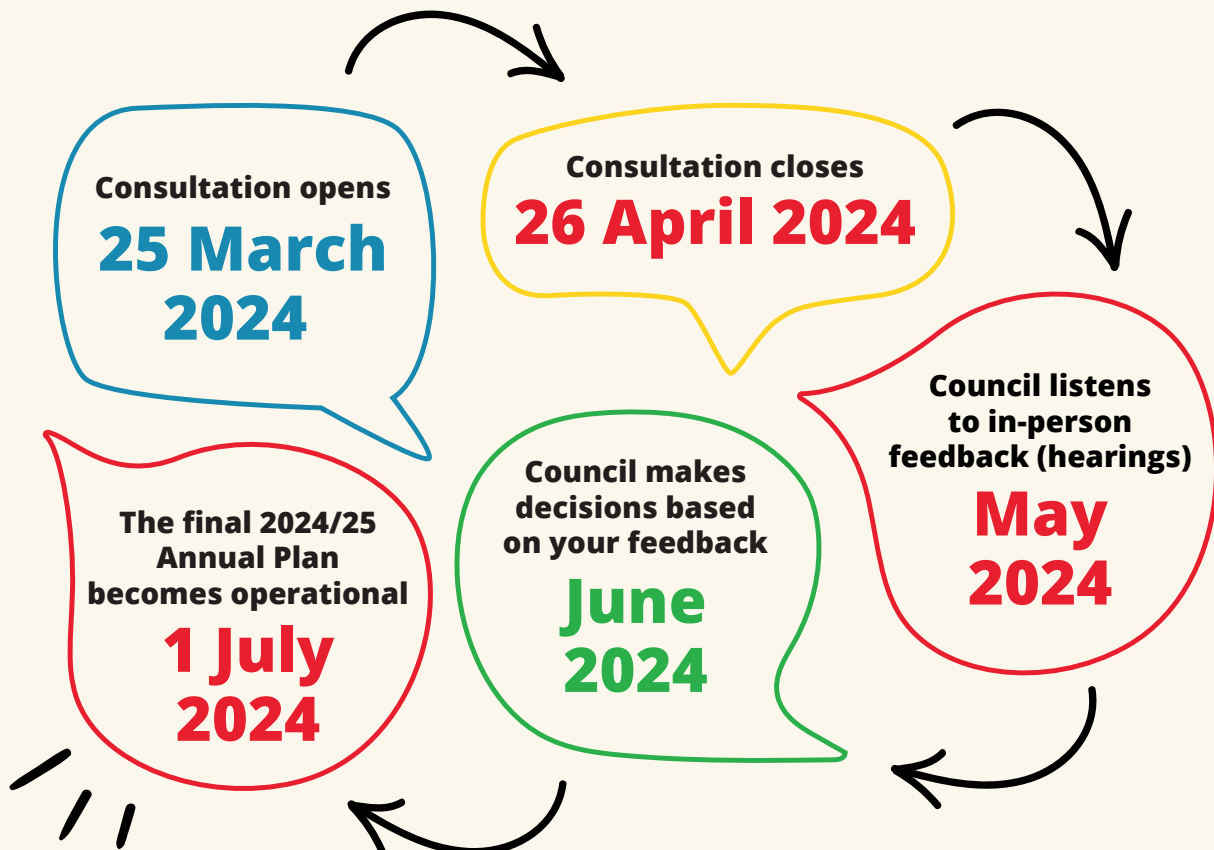
This consultation document provides an overview of our services, upcoming projects and rating impacts outlined in the draft 2024/25 Annual Plan. It also summarises the activities that have a significant cost, are of high interest to the community, or deviate from what we had outlined in year four of the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan.

We need you to have your say! Your feedback will help the Mayor and councillors who represent you and your whaanau to make final decisions on behalf of the community.

You can find all of this information and have your say at waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it

While you're there, you can check out how your property rates might look by using our online rates calculator.

What's The Process?



Update On The 2024-2034 Long Term Plan



We've momentarily pushed pause on the 2024-2034 Long Term Plan.

Our Long Term Plan (LTP) is our most important planning tool that sets out what the Council plans to do over the next decade – and how it'll be paid for. It provides information on the activities, services and projects we'll be delivering and includes all of the important funding and financial management information.

By law, we must review our Long Term Plan every three years. However, this year, central Government gave Councils the one-off option to delay their 2024-2034 LTP as part of the "Local Water Done Well" legislation and instead prepare an 'Enhanced Annual Plan' for the 2024/25 financial year.

We believe the Government's water infrastructure policy and local affordability implications need to be resolved before we can finalise our LTP. We also need a better understanding of the level of Waka Kotahi subsidies that will be secured for the district's roading programme, so we can secure as much central funding as possible to reduce the impact on ratepayers.

We fully understand that the proposed rate increase is high. This is required right now to deal with the cost escalations that we are facing. Before completing the next nine years of our Long Term Plan, we would like to engage and involve you and the wider community in discussions to identify areas where we can potentially reduce services to reduce future rate increases in the following years. You can share your thoughts with us now, and we'll consider those areas over the next year.

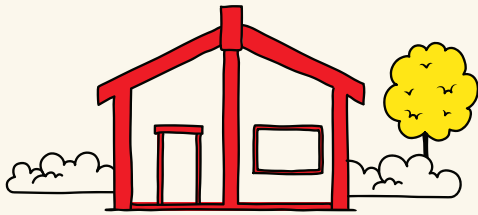
Moving to the 2024/25 Annual Plan and deferring our LTP was the best option for the district. It will give staff, the Mayor, and councillors more time to engage with you — our communities — to ensure we deliver the services, activities, and projects you need and want to pay for.

Head to waikatodistrict.govt.nz for more information and to join our fortnightly newsletter.

A Snapshot of the Waikato District



Our district is home to
88,900 people



We have a diverse population, with **77%** identifying as European, **26%** as Maaori, **6%** Asian, **4%** Pasifika and **2%** made up of other ethnicities

There are **51% male** and **49% female**, with an average age of 37 years old

Our **district** covers more than **400,000 hectares** and has **25,514** urban, rural or residential properties

We also have **3,519 business** properties and **3,569 farmland** properties in the district



Waikato is the principal iwi in the district, with 21 of their

33 hapuu and 39 of their 68 marae located here

There are 6 Council libraries with over
85,000 books



Council maintains over **2,500 kms** of sealed and unsealed roads



We have **1,289ha of natural reserves** that are home to thousands of species

We own and maintain **229ha of sport and recreation areas** for active communities

We manage over **1 million** individual rubbish and recycling collections per year throughout our district

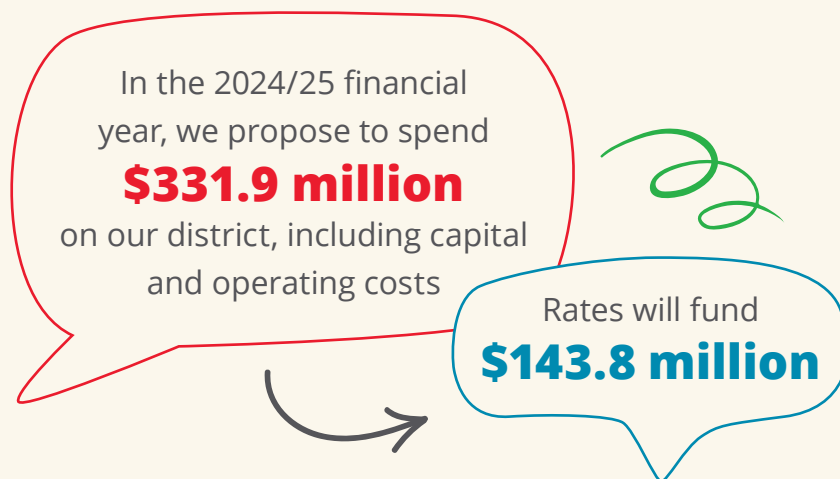


Over **1,100 kms of pipes** either supply, drain or remove water through our residential towns

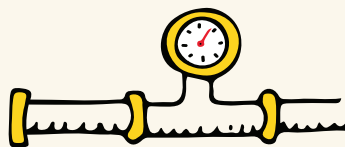
42 community centres and town halls help bring our communities together



Over The Next Year



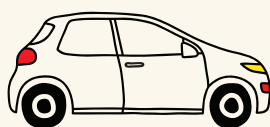
We are looking at a general rate increase of **13.75%** for the 2024/25 financial year



\$15.7 million will be spent on maintaining and enhancing our parks and reserves, including **\$1.6 million** on playground renewals

Our net debt will increase by approximately \$100 million, to **\$299 million** by June 2025, this is well below our debt cap of \$389

\$65.5 million will be spent on wastewater treatment and disposal, **\$32.8 million** to treat and supply water, and another **\$17.2 million** on stormwater



We'll be spending **\$78.9 million** on upgrading, renewing and maintaining our roads, footpaths and cycleways, of which \$37.1 million* will be funded from Waka Kotahi

**Funding has not been confirmed, and therefore this figure might change*

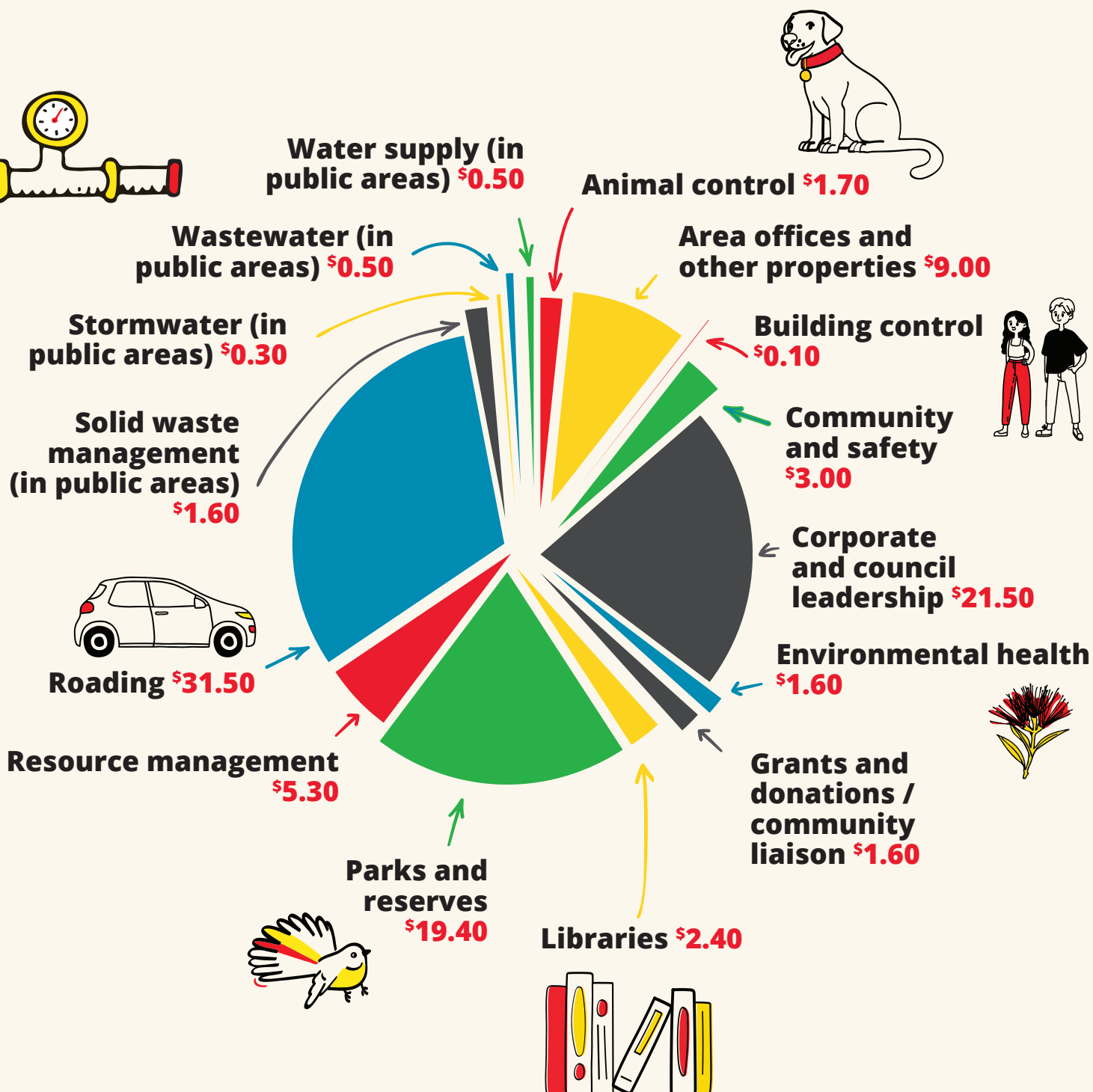


\$14.9 million on collecting and disposing of rubbish and recycling, educating communities about waste reduction options, and maintaining collection centre facilities

\$15.9 million to be spent on strategic property purchases, improving our dog pound facilities, building the Pookeno community hub, essential renewals on the Ngaaruawaahia Council offices, and upgrades to public toilets

What You Get for \$100

We deliver a broad range of services to our communities. Here's a breakdown of how we typically spend every \$100* we receive in general rates.



**Data is based on the 2023/24 Annual Report. This does not include targeted rates. A targeted rate funds a specific Council activity or group of activities rather than general Council services. For example, those who receive a refuse collection pay for it through a targeted rate. Those who don't receive it, don't pay for it.*

Our Vision and Community Outcomes

Liveable, Thriving and Connected Communities

He noohanga aahuru, he iwi whai ora, he hapori tuuhono tahi

Our Vision and Community Outcomes set the goals we want to achieve in everything we do. Our vision is to work together as a district to build liveable, thriving and connected communities as our district grows.

Liveable communities are well-planned and people-friendly, providing a range of quality residential options, social infrastructure, walkways, and open spaces. They reflect what's important to people and support a shared sense of belonging to the local community and the wider district.

Thriving communities participate in Council decision-making and community-led projects, provide input into the management of their local assets, and sustain the local business sector, which provides local employment.

Connected communities have fit-for-purpose infrastructure to create liveable, thriving communities. Connectivity through roads, cycleways, walkways and digital capabilities enable rapid information sharing and engaging in activities together. By these means, people in connected communities access services and amenities that meet their social, health, education and employment needs.

Community outcomes

Ngaa putanga aa-hapori

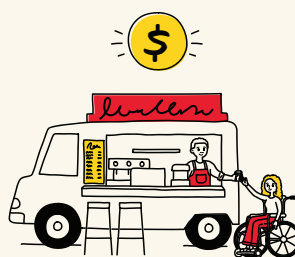
Everything we do is aimed at improving the wellbeing of the people that live, work, and explore the Waikato District. Our Community outcomes are developed under the four local government wellbeing pillars and describe what we want to achieve for the Waikato District into the future.



Cultural Ahurea

We celebrate who we are
Ka whakanui maatou i too maatou katoa

We celebrate all cultures. We treasure our diverse communities and acknowledge our cultural rights and obligations. We honour, understand and implement Te Tiriti o Waitangi and acknowledge the relationship with mana whenua of our district.



Economic Ohaoha

We support local prosperity
Ka tautoko maatou i te houkura aa-rohe

We champion sustainable growth in our local economy. We support local enterprises and encourage innovation and socio-economic prosperity for all while managing regulatory processes to protect and promote our unique district. We acknowledge our rural and Maaori economies as key contributors to our district's prosperity and sustainability.



Environmental *Taiao*

Our environmental health underpins the health of our people | *Ka taunaki too maatou oranga aa-taiao i te oranga o oo taatou iwi*

We want healthy waterways that create connections. We protect and enhance our soils, water, and native biodiversity and take care of our Taiao (natural environment) for the health and well-being of our people, our communities, and future generations.



Social *Paapori*

We have well-connected communities
He hononga whitake katoa o oo maatou hapori

Our communities are connected, safe, accessible and resilient. We put community wellbeing at the heart of our decisions, and we embrace partnerships to get things done to improve people's lives.

Strategic priorities

Ngaa rautaki whakaarotau

Our six Strategic Priorities represent the areas we want to focus on over the next three years. They will help us prioritise our investment to ensure we are meeting the immediate needs of our communities.



Building community resilience
Te whakatupu i te manawaroa aa-hapori



Improving Council responsiveness
Te whakawhanake i te urupare a te Kaunihera



Building relationships
Te whakatupu whanaungatanga



Improving connectivity
Te whakawhanake aaheinga



Consistent delivery of core services
Te tuku tonu i ngaa ratonga maataamua



Supporting sustainable growth
Te tautoko i te whanaketanga toituu

Services, Projects and Activities for 2024/25

What's changed since our last Long Term Plan? And what do we need your feedback on?

This section provides an overview of the proposed changes to Waikato District Council's services, projects, activities and budgets for the 2024/25 financial year.

In our 2021-2031 Long Term Plan, we made assumptions about the future circumstances and environment that we would be operating in, which have since reviewed. In our previous LTP

- We assumed a high level of uncertainty about the economic conditions New Zealand would be in as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are now facing high inflation costs, and a cost of living crisis that weren't previously anticipated.
- We had previously assumed, based on central Government direction that there would be a review of the future of local government and three waters reform. However, the new coalition Government has reversed the previous Governments position and will be providing further legislation in future with a different outlook.
- We have adopted new growth projections, which show that the district is growing slightly faster than anticipated.
- Our borrowing costs are higher in 2024/25 than we planned.

You can find more information and have your say at waikatodistrict.govt.nz

Governance

This group of activities includes the work of the elected Council and its committees, the community boards and committees, and Maaori liaison and partnerships.

What's changed?

Since the 2021-2031 LTP, we have an additional Community Board for Port Waikato and the surrounding area, which requires funding.

Another key change is the introduction of a strategic advisor to focus specifically on Maaori strategies and hapuu and iwi management plans in areas where resources are scarce. This new role will ensure meaningful support for our Maaori communities.

We are proposing to remove the following measure, as it does not reflect the work that our elected members do to support their communities.

Activity	Performance measure	Target 2024/25
Governance	21 – Percentage of customers satisfied with the availability of their Councillor.	80%

Sustainable communities

This group of activities focuses on improving the social and economic wellbeing of our communities and includes the work we do for you through our libraries and frontline staff, our economic and community development team, emergency management, grants and donations, and parks and leisure facilities. We achieve this by providing leisure options while also building community resilience and protecting the enduring nature of our communities. We also support economic development for our district to enrich people's lives through local employment opportunities and improved quality of life and provide grants and donations for community-led initiatives.

What's changed?

Parks and reserves

We are facing cost escalations across several core areas in the 2024/25 financial year to maintain our local parks and facilities to a level that meets the community's expectations. To reduce the impact of these cost escalations, the Council has implemented cost-saving measures where possible.

Cost escalations include electricity, insurance, cleaning and maintenance contracts, and some of our contracts to manage key services, like our local pools.

Assets across our parks and reserves are also being damaged by graffiti and vandalism more frequently, so we are spending more to ensure they are usable. The recent storms also caused damage to our community facilities, meaning we now need to do additional maintenance.

We are proposing to increase our investment in some key areas, to ensure the community continues to have leisure options and good facilities to support community connection. These include:

- Future-proofing district-wide sports field infrastructure with better surface maintenance, drainage, and lighting.
- Work to address earthquake strengthening, asbestos removal and roof replacements now required for Council-owned buildings.
- Land acquisition for areas experiencing significant growth (the Council will also strategically sell and dispose of land to fund other projects where appropriate).
- CCTV installation throughout the district (in partnership with Hamilton City Council and City Safe and funded by Better Off Funding), which requires an annual management and maintenance fund to improve security and safety.
- Ongoing work with Waikato Tainui and Mana Whenua as part of the Council's Joint Management Agreement commitments and alignment with Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles for a land history investigation and consultation regarding the Council's property portfolio.
- Additional resource to manage the Council's community halls portfolio and is the primary liaison for hall committees.

Capital cost increases

The Council undertakes regular assessments of its assets to confirm the timing of replacement or upgrades. During recent assessments, we have gained more accurate data regarding the condition of our assets and expected renewal timeframes. As a result, we have revised the proposed capital works programme for the 2024/25 year to reflect the current asset status, prioritising urgent work and postponing less critical projects.

Significant capital expenditure changes:

- Unexpected delays have pushed back the renewal of the Greenslade Road playground and the upgrade of the Buckland Road sports field and playground. These will now occur in 2024/25.
- Changes to the way district-wide toilets are developed and renewed have resulted in additional unbudgeted costs for priority works.
- The district-wide walkways renewal project was planned but has taken longer than expected. Overall project costs have increased due to inflation and higher contractor costs.
- Due to a lack of investment and limited funds, some Council-owned community halls require urgent repairs. An assistance fund is proposed to address structural issues.
- A feasibility study for the Ngaaruawaahia Library will explore the possibility of replacing the current small and outdated facility with a new community hub.

- Funding is earmarked to dispose of old, condemned, or erosion-affected buildings. Removal reduces vandalism and safety risks. Land can be used for community recreation.
- Funding for property management tools, including mapping, sales data and survey, title and interest data is needed to improve efficiency, customer experience and decision-making, and reduce costs.

We are proposing to remove the following measure, as we recently adopted the revised Climate Response and Resilience Policy, which takes a more holistic view. This measure only reports on a portion of our energy efficiency/emissions reduction work.

Activity	Performance measure	Target 2024/25
Property and Facilities	29 - Waikato District Council Carbon road map shows an improving trend in energy efficiency / emission reduction.	5% reduction per annum

Economic development, grants and donations

From the 2024/25 financial year onwards, Waikato District Council is proposing to remove the funding it provides to Te Waka (Waikato's regional economic development agency) and reduce annual funding to Hamilton Waikato Tourism from \$150,000 in the 2021-2031 LTP to \$75,000 per annum. Existing internal staff will continue to provide support in this area.

The Council will be ensuring the voices of local residents, ratepayers, community groups and stakeholders are heard by working with a rural economic advisory panel, the Community Boards and other community committees. This will be funded within the existing budgets.

Customer and Partnership Focus

We are proposing to include the following two performance measures, which were not in our 2021-2031 LTP as we understand response times are important for our customers.

Activity	Performance measure	Target 2024/25
Customer and Partnership Focus	The overall percentage of service requests responded to by Council within the agreed timeframes.	83%
	The overall percentage of service requests completed by Council within the agreed timeframes.	77%

Sustainable environment

This group of activities is all about improving environmental outcomes and public health and safety. Within these activities, we plan, regulate, monitor and consent, focusing on delivering sustainable, attractive, affordable, and safe living options. We also manage and minimise waste in the district, and manage land use, growth and support our regional partnerships.

What's changed?

Animal control

As the number of dogs in the Waikato district increases, so do the costs associated with managing pound facilities.

To plan for growth, we originally aimed to build a new pound in our last LTP to serve the district. After exploring three potential locations, we determined that none of them were feasible, so we are proposing to use the existing budget to renovate the pound in Ngaaruwaahia and build a smaller satellite pound in Tuakau instead. This ensures uninterrupted services in the northern part of the district are available when the current lease of the Pukekohe pound expires.

Additionally, we will be building a \$2 million refuse station at the same site in Tuakau, which will maximise the use of a large piece of land while providing financial and accessibility benefits. This will be funded by debt and repaid over time through rates and user charges. Construction for these projects will begin next year, and no additional budget is required.

We are proposing to update the following measure in our 2021 LTP to remove the requirement to undertake 10 engagement or education visits each month. We will still deliver 120 events over the year.

Activity	Performance measure	Target 2024/25
Animal Control	3 - Complete engagement and education visits throughout the district.	120 per annum / 10 per month

Consenting

To ensure we have the right capacity in our team, we are proposing to add additional resource to focus on consenting, and monitoring activities. By bringing this resource in-house, the use of external contractors will be reduced.

Building quality

It's important that we have the right internal resources to meet statutory deadlines to meet the demand for our building quality services. At times, the volume of building consents is higher than we anticipated when we developed the 2021-2031 LTP. Therefore, we continue to use consultants if additional resources are needed to meet demand.

Solid waste

What's changed?

Costs in this particular area have been rising significantly year-on-year. The cost of rubbish and recycling contracts has increased considerably, and we expect this to continue in the coming years due to inflation, higher fuel costs, higher costs for labour, and central government's recent increase in the Waste Disposal Levy on Class 1 landfills. These costs are funded through targeted rates.

To address this issue, we're planning to undertake additional work in the waste minimisation area, which will be funded by our share of the national Waste Minimisation Levy. We can only use this money to promote or achieve waste minimisation, for example, for educational and advertising to promote waste minimisation activities, to develop new diversion opportunities for the communities, and encourage behavioural changes to reduce illegal dumping. We'll be regularly reporting to the Ministry on waste volumes and how we're using the waste levy.

As mentioned above, we also propose to build a new Tuakau Resource Recovery Centre on the same site as the animal pound in the 2024/25 financial year (see page X for more information).

Some assets have reached the end of their useful life, and upgrades are needed at Te Kauwhata and McVie Rd transfer stations. We also need to make safety improvements at the Raglan refuse and recycling centre.

Strategic and district planning

What's changed?

In the strategy and district planning activity, we face increased costs due to new government regulations that we must comply with that were not in play when the 2021-2031 LTP was approved. It is costing us more to maintain our District Plan and ensure that it is up to date.

In this financial year, the Council also proposes to continue working with communities to plan and respond to climate change, coastal erosion from increased storm activity and sea level rise, and increased flooding from severe weather events. We will also continue to invest as planned in identifying and protecting heritage values across the district.

Organisational support

This group of activities is at the core of the Council's operations. It includes communications and engagement, information management, business improvement, finance, legal, risk management, procurement and contract management, and people management. These teams work together behind the scenes to enable our service teams to do their jobs. These support activities are key in moving the Council forward, making services more efficient and cost-effective for ratepayers, and fostering continuous improvement.

What's changed?

In the 2024/25 financial year, Council is proposing to make some changes to the way the business is supported compared to what was planned when we adopted our 2021-2031 LTP:

- We will be renegotiating a number of large contracts, including our providers of roading, parks, and pools services.
- We now have an in-house enterprise project management office to support the delivery of capital projects. There are no additional operational costs to run this team as they are already included in the capital project budget.
- Legal costs are increasing due to the more complex matters Council is dealing with, and the specialist advice required.
- We are working on financial transformation projects to ensure better financial management and access to better options for our customers.
- Changing from an LTP to Annual Plan process has required a shift in budget for LTP-related activities in 2024/25.
- Maintaining our data costs more, we have more software than we have had in the past and costs are increasing to maintain these systems and ensure they are supported. An additional \$1.45 million will be allocated to maintain these systems, which is funded through general rates.
- We are also investing \$150,000 more in our mapping tools to support our planning and communicating to the community about where work is happening. This is also funded through general rates.

We are proposing to include the following two measures, which were not in our 2021 LTP as we understand response times are important for our customers.

Roading

The roading activity provides a well-designed and fit-for-purpose transport network that gives people choices about how they move around our district. This includes urban and rural roads, footpaths, cycleways and safe crossings within the roading corridor. This activity also supports the development of the public transport network.

What's changed?

In 2024/25, we'll continue to maintain our roading assets to prevent further deterioration across the network, as well as make improvements to the network to ensure it is resilient, but that's going to cost more money. As with other areas of our business, our base costs are increasing for things like electricity, oil, labour and insurance, and we are experiencing more damage and vandalism to our assets. We also have more assets to maintain, and there have been some shifts in what central government will subsidise.

Changes include:

- Minor improvements to the sum of \$1.4 million to a number of roads, including Buckland / George Road intersection, Washer Road, Tauwhare / Woodcock road intersection. We anticipate 51% will be subsidised by Waka Kotahi. The remainder will be funded through a combination of general rates, growth (development contributions) and debt, which is repaid with a mix of rates collected over time, and user charges.
- Minor improvement works that we are no longer planning to undertake in 2024/25 include Buckland, Masters, Onewhero-Tuakau and Whangarata roads.

- Additional funding of \$150,000 will be allocated to implement the Council's speed management plan.
- District-wide streetlight improvements to the sum of \$100,000.
- The pre-planned Saulbrey Road roundabout, which costs \$750,000 and has been brought forward to this financial year for safety reasons.
- Additional network wide resilience works totalling \$2.64 million following Cyclone Gabrielle and other weather events.
- New trial traffic lights will be installed on Wainui bridge to manage high traffic volumes in peak times. This project will cost \$200,000.
- A new Harrisville Road / George Street / Dominion Road intersection project,, which will cost \$2 million.
- District wide road surface safety improvements increased by \$1.5m.
- \$900,000 district-wide culvert improvements to support the resilience of the network.

As we begin each project, we carry out thorough evaluations of the specific requirements. This often leads to an increase in the scope of work required, which can subsequently affect the overall cost of the project. Additionally, costs have risen since the initial planning stage.

Some budgets have been reduced due to specific projects being completed before 2024/25.

Public Transport

The Waikato Regional Council is consulting on a proposal to fund public transport services region-wide from July 2025 through a new Waikato Regional Council rate. This would mean the Waikato District Council would no longer have to fund public transport in our district but would still be involved in decisions on public transport through the **Waikato Regional Transport Committee** and **Future Proof Public Transport Sub-Committee**.

You can find out more about the Regional Council's proposal, including how to make a submission in the Waikato Regional Council's draft Long Term Plan consultation document at **yourvoicematters.waikatoregion.govt.nz**. Submissions on the Waikato Regional Council's draft Long Term Plan are open from 2 April – 2 May 2024.

In the coming year, Waikato Regional Council will also undertake more bus trials in our district. This will be an added cost for us as we are currently still responsible for collecting rates from our communities to fund this.

Stormwater

Through this group of activities, we are responsible for efficiently operating and maintaining all of Council's existing stormwater infrastructure. This protects our environment from storm damage and run off. We also plan for the renewal of existing infrastructure and work on new infrastructure through growth-driven projects.

What's changed?

In the next year, we will invest more in upgrading and extending our stormwater infrastructure to match our growing needs and build the network's capacity to respond to climate change and future weather events. More work on the network has been identified through catchment management and resilience planning, which we are now required to do, as well as planning for growth in our district.

The overall cost to maintain and upgrade our stormwater infrastructure is significantly higher than in 2021, when we signed off on the LTP (up \$9.2 million) with costs are escalating faster than expected.

Wastewater

Through this group of activities, we ensure wastewater is collected, treated, and disposed of to protect our environment and the public's health. We also plan to renew existing infrastructure and work on new infrastructure through growth-driven projects.

What's changed?

Like stormwater, wastewater costs have escalated at a faster rate than anticipated, and the Council is trying to manage these cost increases carefully. This is largely due to increasing standards and compliance placed on local government bodies like our Council.

Upon assessment, we have reprioritised and rescheduled some projects according to their urgency. The following projects will be funded through targeted rates and have increased altogether by \$20 million:

- Horotiu wastewater pump station upgrades were originally planned for 2024/25 but were brought forward into earlier years of the 2021-2031 LTP, reducing costs in the next financial year.
- The Pokeno wastewater pump station has been deferred to later years.
- The Huntly wastewater treatment plant upgrade was planned for 2027/28, but immediate priority works have been brought into this financial year to comply with our consent requirements and meet growth demands.
- The Raglan wastewater treatment plant upgrades have incurred additional costs for scoping and investigation.
- The Te Kauwhata wastewater treatment plant upgrade work will now occur in stages with a revised schedule, resulting in some changes to costs in the 2024/25 financial year.

Water supply

This group of activities is responsible for efficiently managing Council's water supply infrastructure across the rohe (district), including treatment plants, pump stations, reservoirs and the reticulation network.

We develop, maintain and manage the water supply network and its components such as pipes, valves, hydrants, pumps and treatment plant equipment. We treat water to meet health standards and work on growth-driven infrastructure projects.

What's changed?

The budget allocation for water supply remains largely the same as what was forecast in the previous LTP. However, we have brought forward work to improve the water quality in Huntly and extend the network costing an extra \$2 million. This will be funded by debt and repaid with general rates collected over time, and user charges.

We are also building the new water supply reservoir at Te Kauwhata to support growth in the area (this development has been brought forward from 2027/28). An additional \$1.25 million will be funded through development contributions.

It's worth noting that the cost of supplying water to our residents has increased due to treatment costs.

Our services and activities



We Are Also Consulting On...

Changes to our development contribution charges

What is a Development Contributions Policy?

A development contributions policy determines the amount of money developers or property owners must contribute towards the capital costs of public infrastructure when they undertake development activities. These contributions help fund capital projects like roads, parks, water and sewage systems, and other essential infrastructure that benefit the community.

Development contributions ensure that any new development that places additional demand on local infrastructure contributes to the additional capital cost that it imposes on the community. This is done to avoid the burden being placed on general rates or other indirect funding sources.

Development contribution fees are determined through a process outlined in the Local Government Act 2002. They are typically charged as a one-off payment for residential development (new houses), non-residential development (commercial, industrial or retail), subdivisions, and changes in land use.

What's changed?

As part of the draft Annual Plan, we have updated our capital expenditure programme for 2024/25, which resulted in changes to the development contribution charges. You can find more information about these changes on our website at waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it, where you can also access a supporting document.

Fees and Charges

What are fees and charges?

User fees and charges are one of the ways the Council can recover some of the costs of delivering an activity or service directly from its users, who benefit from the activity or service.

The Council charges fees to both residents and users of particular services. This helps to share the costs between the two groups. It's known as the 'user pays model'. However, sometimes, it's hard to find a perfect balance between the two. For activities that benefit the public more, like libraries and sports fields, the costs are mostly covered by general rates.

Which fees and charges are being updated?

The Council must regularly review fees and charges to ensure we can maintain the Waikato District's great community services and facilities, process applications, and carry out other obligations under government legislation.

Our fees and charges are reviewed annually to ensure they reflect the true cost of providing services, as outlined in our Revenue and Financing Policy. A number of factors are considered when setting fees and charges, including indirect benefits to the community and distribution of benefits.

The key changes in our fees and charges schedule are provided below.

Sustainable communities

- **Library services** — removed the charge for DVDs.
- **Campgrounds** — reviewed the way in which we charge some fees.
- **Community events** — the structure for charging for community events has been reviewed to better categorise the impact the event is having on our reserves. There has been no change to the charge per event, but we have updated the number of people criteria for each event category and added a new category for a major event with over 2,000 people attending.

Sustainable environment

- **Dog registrations and infringement charges** increase to reflect our service in all registration areas except farm owner dogs.
- **Building control** — increases due to covering the cost of service.
- **Planning charges** — pre-application charge increased and first hour free removed to reflect the service that is provided.
- **Planning charges** — most charges have increased to ensure the charge reflects the service/ time provided.
- **LIMS** — the way in which we charge LIM services has been simplified, and costs have been reviewed to ensure they reflect the service that is provided.

Roading

- We have increased the cost of some charges to ensure we cover our costs to provide the service.
- We have reduced the charge for overweight permits, making them more affordable, and made the penalty for non-notification of corridor maintenance fairer.
- The cost of new roads and signage has increased to cover our time and the cost of the sign.
- **Motor rallies**—a bond of \$5,000 is required for every road closed for a motor rally. We have increased the maximum fee to \$50,000 for sealed roads and \$65,000 for unsealed roads so that it is a fairer rate when multiple roads are blocked.

Waters

The interim charge for properties connecting to reticulated wastewater network has increased, as these reflects the increase in the targeted rate and connecting to the network for a portion of the year.

The changes to all our fees and charges can be found on our website at waikatodistrict.govt.nz.

What Does This Mean for **You and Your Rates?**

Your annual rates are determined by several factors, such as the type of property you own — residential, lifestyle, rural, or commercial — and its location within the district.

The Waikato District Council sets two types of rates - general rates and targeted rates. General rates are paid by all ratepayers, while targeted rates are paid only by those who receive a specific service, such as water supply.

Additionally, your rates are calculated based on your property’s capital value, land use, and whether it qualifies for targeted rates, rates remission, or is non-rateable.

Use our online property rates calculator (known as the rate information database) to understand and compare your rates. You’ll find this at waikatodistrict.govt.nz/services-facilities/rates/rates-information-database.

Rates Breakdown: Indicator Properties

These are the indicated rates, inclusive of GST.

Residential												
	Tuakau		Huntly		Ngaaruawaahia		Raglan		Maatangi		Pookeno	
	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25
Average Capital Value	610,000	610,000	415,000	415,000	485,000	485,000	850,000	850,000	650,000	650,000	770,000	770,000
General Rates	1,398.00	1,590.21	951.10	1,081.86	1,111.52	1,264.35	1,948.03	2,215.87	1,489.67	1,694.49	1,764.69	2,007.31
UAGC	462.55	526.15	462.55	526.15	462.55	526.15	462.55	526.15	462.55	526.15	462.55	526.15
Fixed Targeted Rates	2,782.10	3,131.68	2,777.97	3,127.55	2,760.97	3,110.55	2,775.13	3,127.67	2,742.85	3,092.43	2,712.85	3,062.43
Total Rates	4,642.65	5,248.04	4,191.62	4,735.56	4,335.04	4,901.05	5,185.71	5,869.68	4,695.07	5,313.07	4,940.09	5,595.89
Total % increase (over 2023/24)	13.04%		12.98%		13.06%		13.19%		13.16%		13.28%	
Total \$ increase (over 2023/24)	605.39		543.95		566.00		683.97		618.00		655.81	
Weekly \$ increase (over 2023/24)	11.64		10.46		10.88		13.15		11.88		12.61	

Note 1: Individual rate increases will vary depending on property type, value and location, and services available.

Note 2: Fixed Targeted Rates reflect the range of services available for each property example, including water-by-meter charges.

Rural						
	Low range		Mid-range		High range	
	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25
Average Capital Value	2,000,000	2,000,000	3,500,000	3,500,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
General Rates	4,583.60	5,213.80	8,021.30	9,124.15	11,459.00	13,034.50
UAGC	462.55	526.15	462.55	526.15	462.55	526.15
Fixed Targeted Rates	251.61	285.56	251.61	285.56	251.61	285.56
Total Rates	5,297.76	6,025.51	8,735.46	9,935.86	12,173.16	13,846.21
Total % increase (over 2023/24)	13.74%		13.74%		13.74%	
Total \$ increase (over 2023/24)	727.75		1,200.40		1,673.05	
Weekly \$ increase (over 2023/24)	14.00		23.08		32.17	

	Lifestyle		Commercial		Industrial	
	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25
Average Capital Value	1,500,000	1,500,000	2,750,000	2,750,000	2,400,000	2,400,000
General Rates	3,437.70	3,910.35	6,302.45	7,168.98	5,500.32	6,256.56
UAGC	462.55	526.15	462.55	526.15	462.55	526.15
Fixed Targeted Rates	655.19	754.67	2,539.36	2,854.99	3,225.48	3,638.61
Total Rates	4,555.44	5,191.17	9,304.36	10,550.12	9,188.35	10,421.32
Total % increase (over 2023/24)	13.96%		13.39%		13.42%	
Total \$ increase (over 2023/24)	635.73		1,245.75		1,232.97	
Weekly \$ increase (over 2023/24)	12.23		23.96		23.71	

Note 1: Individual rate increases will vary depending on property type, value and location, and services available.

Note 2: Fixed Targeted Rates reflect the range of services available for each property example, including water-by-meter charges.

Rating Revaluation 2024

Every three years, we are required by law to assess the rating value of every property in the Waikato district. We use Quotable Value Ltd (QV) to complete this process for us, looking at property type, location and land size. This information is used as a basis to distribute the generate rates across properties in the district, and set a new rating value.

The latest property revaluation is currently underway, and QV is expected to release this data by 8 May 2024. We recognise this timing isn't ideal for our ratepayers, as the 2024/25 financial year information you download from our rates calculator (or Rate Information Database) will be out of date shortly after the consultation period closes on the draft 2024/25 Annual Plan. However, one benefit of delaying our 2024-2034 LTP by 12 months is that it allows our rating data to be more accurate next year when we engage with you on the LTP.

You can find out more about the district's Rating Revaluation at waikatodistrict.govt.nz/services-facilities/rates/property-revaluation.

Support is Available to Pay Your Rates

We offer flexible payment plans to help you spread costs throughout the year. Our team are happy to help you set up a direct debit payment plan today. Visit our website at waikatodistrict.govt.nz/pay-it and our team can help you organise this.

If you're eligible, the rates rebate scheme and postponement policies for financial hardship cases can help to ease some of the financial burden. There is an application process and eligibility criteria, which has been set by Central government.

Find out more or apply for the rates rebate at waikatodistrict.govt.nz/services-facilities/rates/rates-rebates.

Your Mayor and Councillors

The **Waikato District Council** is an elected body of 14 representatives – the Mayor and 13 Councillors. Council is accountable to the ratepayers and residents of the Waikato district for the planning, direction and management of the resources to meet the present and future needs of the community.



Jacqui Church

Mayor

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Carolyn Eyre

Deputy Mayor

Western Districts General

Ward Councillor

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Crystal Beavis

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General Ward Councillor*

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Lisa Thomson

*Whāingaroa General
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Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Have Your Say on the 2024/25 Annual Plan

Submissions open on Monday 25 March and close on Friday 26 April 2024 at 5pm.

We are planning a number of opportunities for you to come and chat with us about the draft 2024/25 Annual Plan. Go to waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it to find out where and when.

Submission Form

The easiest way to complete this submission form is online at waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it

You may also complete this physical form and drop a hard copy off at any of Council's offices or libraries, post it to us at Private Bag 544, Ngaaruawaahia 3742, or scan and email it to consult@waidc.govt.nz

Your details

Contact name: _____

Organisation (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Note: if you provide your contact details, you will receive an acknowledgement of your submission.

Would you like to present your feedback to Council in person at the hearings in mid-May?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Note: if you do wish to speak at the hearings, please ensure you leave your contact details above so that we can get in touch to confirm the date and organise time for you to speak.


Privacy statement: All submissions (including names and contact details) may be provided in full to elected members. Submissions (including names but not contact details) may be made available to the public at our office and on our website. Your personal information may also be used for the administration of the consultation process, including informing you of the outcome of the consultation. All information collected will be held by Waikato District Council, with submitters having the right to access and correct personal information.

If you would like your name kept confidential, please tick here:

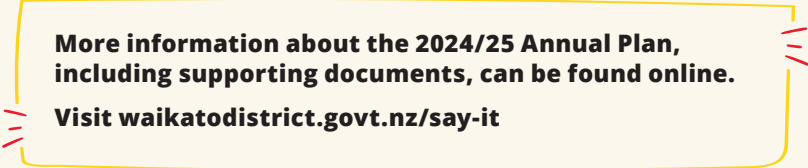
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Your submission

Please share your thoughts with us in the space provided below. You can attach additional pages or supporting documents if needed.

-  Next year we will be reviewing the services we provide. Have a look at the services on page 18 of the Consultation Document. Are there any you want us to look into reducing?

Do you have any comments on our work programme, development contribution charges or fees and charges for 2024/25?

 More information about the 2024/25 Annual Plan, including supporting documents, can be found online.
Visit waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it



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Waikato

District Council
 Te Kaunihera aa Takiwaa o Waikato