

# 2025-2034 LTP Consultation Frequently Asked Questions

*As at 11 April 2025*

## About the Long Term Plan

### What is the Long Term Plan (LTP)?

The LTP is the Council's strategic plan that sets out priorities, projects and funding for the next decade. It outlines when and how the Council intends to invest in infrastructure, services and community projects to support growth and development.

### Why is the LTP important?

The LTP impacts rates, services, and the future of the district. It ensures the Council has a clear direction for how it will maintain essential services and plan for future challenges.

### When will the 2025-2034 LTP be adopted and come into effect?

The 2025-2034 LTP will be adopted on 30 June 2025 and will come into effect on 1 July 2025.

### When can I have my say?

Public consultation runs from 11 April to 11 May 2025. During this time, you can provide feedback on the proposed plan.

### How can I give my feedback on the LTP?

You can find more information and share your views at [waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it](https://waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it). Hard copy submission forms are also available at our Council offices and libraries.

### What happens after the consultation closes?

The Council will review all feedback during hearings, consider any necessary changes, and adopt the final LTP in June 2025.

### Will the Council actually listen to public feedback?

Yes. Community input is a key part of the decision-making process. All submissions are considered before the final plan is adopted.

### Can I speak at a Council hearing about the LTP?

Yes. You can request to present your submission in person at a Council hearing during the consultation period. Simply tick the box on your hard copy or online feedback form.

### Where can I find more information about the LTP?

You can visit the Waikato District Council website at [waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it](http://waikatodistrict.govt.nz/say-it) or contact the Council directly for detailed information on the draft plan and consultation events. Printed copies of our draft 2025-2034 LTP consultation document are available to read at our Waikato District Council offices and libraries.

## **Financial and rates**

### **Will my rates go up?**

This LTP consultation document proposes property rate increases between 4.25% and 11% depending on the services received and location. The proposed general rate increase is 4.25% from 1 July 2025. Property owner's rates are made up of general rates, which includes a uniform annual general charge, and targeted rates. Targeted rates vary depending on where you live. A number of services are targeted rate funded, so residents only pay for those they receive.

Increases each year reflect the need to fund infrastructure, services, and projects, and your Council has worked hard to balance affordability with delivering essential services.

### **Where can I find the rating impacts for my property?**

To view the rating impacts on your property, head to [waikatodistrict.govt.nz/rid](http://waikatodistrict.govt.nz/rid) where you will find our rates calculator.

### **What do rates pay for?**

Rates help fund essential services like roads, water supply, wastewater treatment, rubbish collection, parks, libraries and community facilities, district planning, and animal control.

### **What are targeted rates? Will they impact my property?**

Targeted rates are specific charges added to a property's rates bill to fund services or infrastructure that benefit a particular group of ratepayers rather than the entire district. An example includes a recycling service. Information about targeted rates is included in the consultation document, and you can see how your property may be impacted using our rates calculator at [waikatodistrict.govt.nz/rid](http://waikatodistrict.govt.nz/rid).

### **What are some of the key issues that the LTP will address?**

The council's plans for roading and proposed changes for water services are two major matters we would like feedback on.

Other important issues include proposed changes to waste management (rubbish and recycling), including pricing changes to bags and tags, a proposed pop up service in Te Aakau and changes to recycling.

## **Key issues**

### **What is the Council proposing around roading?**

Funding from NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) has been reduced, impacting new projects and the amount of maintenance we can do. The council is considering whether to only do maintenance if we have received a subsidy for half the funding from NZTA or extend the maintenance program with rates funding only. and we'd like feedback from the community about whether we should do more maintenance funded by rates only.

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 projects as rates affordability remains a major focus.

### **What's proposed for the delivery of water services?**

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. 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.

While change is required, we get to decide how it happens — and your input will help shape the path we take.

Council's preferred option is to form a new Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) with Hamilton City Council to manage water services. We anticipate that this will bring some relief to ratepayers in future years, but it will take up a good part of this LTP to realise the full benefits.

### **What changes are proposed for waste management (rubbish and recycling)?**

A review of rubbish and recycling services aims to ensure they are fair, cost-effective, and sustainable. This includes increases to tags and sticker prices, moving to rubbish bags for all our district, a new glass recycling crate for those who receive a kerbside service, rubbish and recycling services being offered to those who live on Island Block Road, and a new recycling collection point in Te Aakau.

### **What does the council's debt look like over the next nine years?**

\$162.7 million of our capital projects are related to growth. Growth will be funded through borrowing, reduced by subsidies and external funds. Development

contributions will lower the debt once projects are completed. The remaining debt will be repaid over 25 years by current and future ratepayers."

Debt is set to peak in 2025/26 at \$347 million, and ranges from \$152 million in the year 2026/27 to \$283 million in year 2033/34.

As a result of careful financial management, we have a credit rating of AA+, the highest available for a council, and that helps keep interest rates on our debt at a low level.

### **Is the spending necessary?**

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. For context, your rates make up about 4% of your 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. These are not basic services – they are an essential part of your daily life.

### **What's caused such high rate increases?**

Council costs have increased by 20 per cent since the previous LTP, with construction costs rising by 27 per cent. Most of these cost increases are outside our control, such as roading and building materials, insurance, and increasing compliance and regulatory costs. We are managing over \$2 billion in infrastructure assets, many of which are ageing and need upgrades/renewals. This includes one of the longest local roading networks in the country. We also have a small rating base, with approximately 33,000 ratepayers living in many small communities spread across a very large geographic area. This means our ability to leverage economies of scale is extremely limited, and this impacts rates, and rates affordability.