

Help shape the future Hamilton Kirikiriroa

A quick guide to the Consultation Document



We're putting together our plan for the next 10 years. We're focusing on looking after what we've got, delivering what our community expects, and balancing the books (ensuring that our everyday costs are covered by our everyday revenue). Have we got the balance right? Go to hamilton.govt.nz/futurehamilton for more information and to share your voice. This quick guide summarises what you need to know.

What's this consultation about?

Council has approved its draft budget for the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan, setting out its proposed plans for the next 10 years. No final decisions have been made yet. Council wants to hear what you think about the proposals.

What's behind the proposed rates increases?

Our draft 2024-34 Long-Term Plan proposes an average rates rise of 19.9% (**\$11 per week**) for a median-value residential property in 2024/25, and 15.5% in the following four years. This isn't the outlook we were hoping to present for our city. But significant rates increases are necessary to invest in what our city needs now and in the future.

The city's costs are not being met by rates

The costs of delivering the city's core services have consistently exceeded Council's revenue, which is mostly made up of rates (see page 7). We have lower rates than any of New

Zealand's other big cities and our neighbours. Hamilton's rates are not enough to cover all the costs of running our growing city. This Council wants to make a correction to the way our city operates its finances. By law, councils should plan for revenue being sufficient to meet their operating costs. Our plan to tackle our financial challenges would achieve this, after more than 20 years of rarely doing so.

The business of local government is costing more to deliver

Councils across the country are facing the same challenges. These cost increases we're facing - depreciation (see page 8), interest (see page 13), inflation (see page 14), and compliance demands from central government (see page 15) - are outside of Council's control. And being a growing city means there's more for Council to deliver - more pipes, roads, parks and playgrounds to build and look after (see page 16). We need to balance our financial situation with investing to grow our city well.

Council has reduced spending

We are committed to looking after the assets ratepayers have funded to create a thriving and prosperous city. We've made sure that what is in this plan will keep Hamilton's critical infrastructure in good working order. With cutting costs for our essential work off the table, we've looked for areas where we could make cuts across both our everyday and capital budgets (see page 9).

Council is proposing to reduce services for more cost savings

Our budgets for 2025/26 and beyond are based on us further reducing the everyday costs to run the city. This would likely mean reductions to some back-office functions and some community facing services that Council provides. We have not yet identified which services would be affected. We will ensure critical services which are legislatively required are not impacted (see pages 27-29).

If we accrue less debt, we'll save money in the long run

Debt invested in assets the city needs is the responsible way for Council to pay for its construction activity - where there will be ongoing benefit for current and future generations of Hamiltonians. However, borrowing money to fund operating expenses is not a good use of debt - that's why we need to balance our books. And why we need the level of rates increases we're asking you about, so we get to annual surpluses to service debt (see pages 37-40).

What are our priorities?

During the development of the 2021-31 Long-Term Plan, we asked the community what they love about Hamilton Kirikiriroa and what would make our city an even better place to live. This led to the creation of our five long-

term priorities over the next decade. Council remains committed to these priorities, which also guide our 2024-34 Long-Term Plan: shaping a city that's easy to live in; a city where our people thrive; a central city where people love to be; a fun city with lots to do; and a green city (see pages 18-23).

What's changing in this Long-Term Plan?

While much of this Long-Term Plan is a continuation of work planned through the previous one, there have been some cuts and some new additions to save costs or increase revenue. These include: introducing demand-responsive pricing for parking in the central city and removing the central city targeted rate; modifying commercial rates in the central city; a possible boundary extension to the Business Improvement District and a rates review (see pages 24-25);

Give us your feedback

What we're consulting on

We want your feedback on targeted rates for:

- community infrastructure
- community resilience and extreme weather
- private swimming pool safety inspections (see pages 31-32).

We also want your feedback on:

- how we plan to manage the city's finances
- reducing Council services and costs
- walking and cycling bridge in the central city
- any other comments you have about our plans for the next 10 years
- our Revenue and Financing and Rates Remissions and Postponements policies.

How can you have your say?



We encourage you to have your say on our plans for the next 10 years.

Go to hamilton.govt.nz/futurehamilton or fill out a hardcopy submission form.

Feedback closes 21 April 2024