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Report To: Council



Meeting Date: 4 June 2024

Subject: **Deliberations on Long Term Plan 2024-2034**

Type: Decision Required

Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this business paper is to provide comment on the submissions received on the Consultation Document for the Long Term Plan 2024-2034 (LTP) and Fees and Charges (FCs) 2024/25 to assist with Council's deliberations.

Background

- 2.1 The LTP development process, which began in February 2023, involved a number of workshops and formal Council meetings which resulted in the adoption of the Consultation Document (CD) and Supporting Information (SI) for audit purposes and public consultation on 9 April 2024.
- 2.2 An annual review of the Fees and Charges (FCs) was undertaken, and due to the increase in operating costs most fees and charges were required to be increased by 5% to ensure that costs are recovered so that Council services are not subsidised further by rates. Some FCs that have been increased by more than the above percentages to ensure cost recovery and some held at current levels. The fees and charges would come into effect from 1 July 2024.
- 2.3 **CONSULTATION AND SUBMISSIONS**
- 2.4 Formal consultation for the LTP took place from 16 April to 17 May 2024. A total of 132 submissions were received.
- 2.5 Greenplan submission #124 also had support from approximately two thousand investors.
- 2.6 Consultation for the FCs 2025 was undertaken during the same period of the LTP consultation. We received 13 submissions through the FCs consultation, six related specifically to fees and charges, submissions that related to LTP topics were processed through the LTP submissions.
- 2.7 Council heard from 25 submitters who spoke to their written submissions at the Council hearing on 28 May 2024.
- 2.8 **DELIBERATIONS**
- 2.9 The purpose of the deliberations meeting is for Council, having heard from the community, to consider any amendments to the draft LTP on the matters that were consulted, or matters raised by a submitter.
- 2.10 Where no change is sought to the draft LTP budget, no resolution is required.

- 2.11 These changes will be incorporated and the final draft LTP is to be submitted to the Office of the Auditor General for review. This 'hot review' may result in recommendations and changes, generally of a technical nature.
- 2.12 The final LTP with a summary of any changes, will be presented to Council for adoption on 25 June 2024.
- 2.13 Although the deliberations report does not respond to every item raised through submissions, Elected Members have the opportunity to raise motions on any LTP item through the deliberations process.
- 2.14 The LTP sets out Council's course for the next ten years, it is the appropriate time to make significant decisions. Some decisions can only be made in years two and three without triggering an LTP Amendment via an Annual Plan if they are provided for in the LTP. These include:
- Transferring ownership or control of a strategic asset;
 - Significant changes to a level of service provision; or
 - Commencing or ceasing an activity.
- 2.15 There are some restrictions on the kinds of decisions the Council can make as part of the LTP process; these include:
- Setting a rate that was not consulted on as part of the draft LTP or changing a rate substantially.
 - A decision that triggers the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy and was not consulted on as part of the draft LTP. The trigger is based on the following thresholds and criteria:
 - A funding decision involving expenditure that exceeds 20% of the operating budget or 2.5% of the capital expenditure.
 - There is a legal requirement to engage with the community.
 - The level of financial consequences of the proposal or decision.
 - Whether the proposal or decision will affect a large portion of the community.
 - The likely impact on present and future interests of the community.
 - The likely impact on Māori cultural values and their relationship to land and water.
 - Whether the proposal affects the level of service of a significant activity.
 - Whether community interest is high.
 - Whether the likely consequences are controversial.
 - Whether community views are already known, including the community's preferences about the form of engagement.
- 2.16 If through the deliberation process, Council seeks to make a decision that has not previously been considered or consulted on, this new decision must be assessed against the Significance and Engagement Policy and if it is deemed 'significant', consideration should be given to whether additional consultation is required on this specific matter.
- 2.17 Council may also be required to re-consult should Council make a decision on the consultation proposal that is not in line with options that were put forward to the community or has reasonably different impacts on those affected.

2.18 **SUBMISSION ANALYSIS**

- 2.19 It is important that the submissions are considered in accordance with the LTP development process. The consultation phase of the process is intended to be focussed on the proposals made in the CD and other matters specifically related to the LTP like Council's intended direction over the following 10 years in the different activity areas, the proposed Infrastructure Strategy, the Financial Strategy and debt and rating impact over the 10 years covered by the LTP.
- 2.20 To assist the process, matters raised in the submissions have been divided into four categories. The first category is "**Submissions on the Proposals**" and covers submissions that contain comments on the specific proposals included in the CD including: roading rate differential for forestry, rural halls, Te Kūiti flooding remedies, elder persons housing, stormwater rating area, and rates structure changes.
- 2.21 The second category is "**Submissions on our approach**" and includes topics raised by the submitters which cover matters included as a conversation topic in the CD including: the impact of retaining 3 waters and the landfill and sludge removal.
- 2.22 The third category is "**Submissions on the Plan**" and includes topics raised by the submitters which cover matters included in the CD like the Financial Strategy, the Infrastructure Strategy, or the work programme.
- 2.23 The fourth category is "**Other Submissions**" and addresses submissions that are not directly related to the proposals under consultation or other matters included in the CD.
- 2.24 The submission summary attachments to this paper include a comment/summary column taken directly from the submission, and in some cases the points have been summarised noted by a bullet point.
- 2.25 When any decisions are taken on the topics covered, submitters will receive a letter that outlines the key decisions made at this deliberations meeting relating to the LTP proposals and their submissions.
- 2.26 The additional information received Monday 27 May 2024 for submission #115 has not been included in this analysis but was presented at the hearing.

SUBMISSIONS ON PROPOSALS

- 3.1 Through the development of the Long Term Plan 2024-2034, Council reviewed all activities and how we deliver them over the next ten years. During the review, Council considered all the services we provide, and the rates required to pay for these. As part of this review Council put to the community six proposals covering rural halls, Te Kūiti flooding remedies, elder persons housing, stormwater rating area, roading rate differential for forestry, and rating structure changes. This section provides a summary of the submissions to these proposals.
- 3.2 Please note that staff have split the submissions summary between those that had a Waitomo District address and total submissions because so many were received from outside our district.
- 3.3 **ROADING DIFFERENTIAL or TARGETTED RATE FOR EXOTIC FORESTRY**
- 3.4 Council proposed a roading differential for roading damage caused by forestry harvesting.

3.5 Three options were presented to the community:

- Option 1 (status quo) – Not change the rating for forestry exotic properties
- Option 2 (preferred) – Differential roading rate for forestry exotic properties
- Option 3 - Targeted rate for the unfunded additional roading damage or other payment mechanism.

3.6 The following table shows preference of the 110 submission responses to this proposal:

Topic/Issue	Total Submissions	Local Address
Option 1 – No change	51	6
Option 2 – (preferred) differential roading rate	11	5
Option 3 – (preferred) targeted rate or alternative mechanism	5	3
Unspecified (disagree)	38	11
Unspecified (agreed)	1	1
Unspecified	5	2

3.7 There were also approximately two thousand Greenplan investors that supported Greenplan Forestry Ltd submission #124.

3.8 The following themes were identified in the submission responses.

Option 1 and disagree	Option 2 and agree	Option 3 or alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 12x factor is too high if you compare tonnage to other road users such as farming and mining 25-30 years. • The increase is excessive and unjustified and too rapid. • The environmental/emission benefits should be taken into account • Mixed use properties have incorrect forestry portions allocated • Permanent forestry blocks should be charged less • The 50% split for mixed use properties is unfair • This issue should have been addressed sooner to avoid such a drastic rate to correct • A shortfall has been indicated the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread issue, no simple solution. • A levy could go towards solving this issue • More gradual increase would be better • Is fair that parties causing the damage should pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted rate would be fairer as a 'user pays' approach • Ideally the full repair cost should be re-couped from forestry owners, Council cannot afford it. • Should be aligned to annual and costs revenue, e.g. fixed cost over harvest time.

Option 1 and disagree	Option 2 and agree	Option 3 or alternative
<p>process is therefore flawed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is not a future proof approach • Small forestry blocks and permanent blocks will not harvest so will not damage the roads • It would be fairer to charge by weight and km travelled. RUC should contribute to the local roads. • The rate increase will make forestry unviable in this region which will have a wider impact socially and economically • Forestry companies can fix the roads leaving Council to fix the non-forestry roads • Forestry/land owners have different arrangements/contracts which makes paying additional rates complex. 		

3.9 KEY THEMES

3.10 The following themes were identified in the submission responses. The submission summary summarises the concepts raised and is not the exact wording from the submissions.

- Road damage/management
- Rating/paying for damage

Submission Summary	Analysis
<p>Forest owners / managers should manage and fund the road repairs during harvest period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is important that Council work with forest owners to look at options for managing and funding the cost of damage to roads caused by forest harvesting. ➤ This could include forest owners and / or managers taking over the maintenance of the road for the period of the harvest. ➤ Forestry companies can fix the roads leaving Council to fix the non-forestry roads. ➤ Examples where this has worked already with other logging operations in the district. ➤ Agreements where forestry operators/owners take responsibility for the road during harvest is a common solution to this complex issue as used by large operators across other districts and other councils. 	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Councils have limited tools for developing and implementing rates to specifically take into account variables such as length of roads used, greenhouse gas emissions, log prices, business risks, roading infrastructure used. ➤ The development of relationships and then potential agreements with forest owners to take responsibility for the road maintenance during harvest is complex. Additional resource would be required to undertake this work. • The 12X rating differential proposed in the LTP was a modelled average cost of the additional maintenance and renewal costs associated with the harvesting of forestry over a 27 year period and not just the costs of road

Submission Summary	Analysis
<p>Mapara South Road Damage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Road maintenance needs to occur over the next 5 - 7 years well beyond the level required for other roads to keep the road serviceable for users. ➤ 1200+ Greenplan investors emailed Greenplan to oppose rate rise in support of Greenplan's submission that rates increase was far too high. ➤ Road has historically not been adequately repaired and has caused personal trauma. ➤ In discussions with Council regarding undertaking road maintenance during harvest period ➤ Greenplan have undertaken some road upgrade themselves ➤ Potential for dust mitigation funding from NZTA ➤ A formal agreement to take over responsibility for the road is seen by Greenplan as the best outcome for all road users, the road would be better prepared for harvest, better condition during harvest and left in better condition after harvest. <p>Road Maintenance – current levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Roading maintenance on local roads with forestry has been very low. <p>Rating models and levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 12x factor is too high if you compare tonnage to other road users such as farming and mining 25-30 years. • The increase is excessive and unjustified and too rapid. • How was the 12X differential calculated? • How will these rating mechanisms remain future proofed? • How is the cost of roads damaged that flow from the direct road recovered. <p>Rating mixed use properties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed use properties have incorrect forestry portions allocated. • The 50% split for mixed use properties is unfair. <p>What types of properties should pay for roading damage?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will or should carbon forests pay for roading damage? • Should permanent forestry blocks be charged less. • The environmental/emission benefits 	<p>damage during the forest harvest. The differential is to cover the 27 year average of these additional costs. This modelled cost of extra roading damage exceeded the cost that would be received from a 12X rate. The differential factor was set at 12X to make it more affordable and account for the beneficial aspects of forestry to the district from employment and commercial activity. It is not the actual incremental cost of road damage that will occur in any one year. The model did include damage costs to all local road modelled to be used for forest harvesting and not just the road the forestry is on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The factor of 6X using for mixed properties set to be half the 12X rate to reflect that these properties had less forestry on them therefore causing less damage. • The sources of funding considered were: the use of a differential rate, a targeted rate, charges using the Land Transport Bylaw charges for damage and NZTA funding. • An alternative proposal to rate for forestry on mixed use properties was proposed during the engagement period. This approach was to rate on the basis of the capital value of the forestry component of the property would incur the differential of 12X and the non-forestry component with a differential of 1X. • Approaching central government for funding or using industry levies (e.g. Forest Growers Levy) was not deemed practical. • It was considered that there is no guarantee that forests planted for carbon farming, permanent forests or small forestry blocks will not be harvested in the future so these properties should be included in any potential rating scheme. • Forestry properties located on state highways may access local roads during the logging period so could be included in any potential rating scheme. <p>Suggested Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Council acknowledges the significant value of economic benefits and employment generated from commercial forestry in the Waitomo district. ➤ Council has endeavoured to maintain local roads to the best of its ability within the funding it had available from rates and NZTA.

Submission Summary	Analysis
<p>should be taken into account.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small forestry blocks and permanent blocks may not harvest so will not damage the roads. <p>Rating for properties assessing state highways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properties adjacent to state highways don't use local roads so shouldn't incur a differential rate. • Approach to not rating properties on state highways is potentially flawed. They could still use local roads. <p>Affordability to pay an increased rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate increase will make forestry unviable in this region which will have a wider impact socially and economically now and long term. • How can a 1200% rate increase be justifiable? <p>Equity of rating system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity - the party causing the damage pays for the damage. • What opportunity is there to take into account the following variables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The actual length of road used by the individual forest for logging. ○ The volume of logs harvested. ○ The value of economic benefits and employment generated for each property business operation or the wider impact that forestry has on the Waitomo district. ○ The different levels of roading damage caused by each classification of property e.g. dairy vs forestry vs pastoral. ○ The volatility of log prices. ○ The business risks of various farming activities. ○ The potential impact on greenhouse gas emissions. ○ The roading surface and infrastructure on road being harvested e.g. bridges. ○ The input of material coming in to maintain local and forestry roads. • Why was a rating system for roading damage not introduced earlier when it was known that there was a need for funding when the trees were planted? • Ensure funding received from rates is spent on roading and damaged roads. • Forestry ratepayers have paid rates over the years the forest grows with little road damage. • A funding shortfall has been indicated the process is therefore flawed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding collected from differential rate for a specific activity must be (and is) spent on that activity. In this case roading. • Roading and general rates are rated on the capital value of a property so lower value properties pay less rates on a per hectare basis. Therefore, forestry land will generally pay (per hectare) less rates than mixed use properties. • Only land classified by QV as Forestry Exotic or where exotic forestry has been identified will attract any proposed rates. This current model is based on charging on capital value. Council is not able to change land classification, this must be worked through with QV. Rates corrections can be made if land is found to be incorrectly classified. <p>Potential components of a Solution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Council works with property owners of exotic forests to have agreements covering the management and funding of maintenance on directly affected local roads during the forest harvest. ➤ Council could resource a role to build relationships, create these agreements with forest land owners and understand forestry logging plans. Council's Roading Engineer would ensure the right conditions are met with any agreements. Funding for this will come from a potential differential rate. <p>Options to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate a differential between 2X and 5X and Council endeavours to get NZTA additional support for the funding of this road damage. This would involve including a budget in subsidised roads and removing the current budget in unsubsidised OR • Rate a differential at a level similar to the 12X detailed in the LTP with an appropriate unsubsidised roading budget. • Rate the full rate differential on mixed use properties but only apply this rate to the capital value of the land assessed by QV as being in forestry OR • Rate mixed use properties as detailed in the consultation document. • Include OR exclude properties adjacent to state highways from being rated the Forestry Rating Differential • Include OR exclude mixed use properties with a forestry area under

Submission Summary	Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of damage rates / claim costs with the foresters receiving revenue. <p>What alternative revenues and / or methods of paying for this have been explored e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have forest levies been considered? It would be fairer to charge by weight and km travelled. RUC should contribute to the funding of local roads. 	<p>20 ha from being rated the Forestry Rating Differential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to obtain information and gain knowledge from forest owners, managers, and contractors over the next six to nine months to propose solutions for future rating structures or funding agreements ready for the 2025/26 Annual Plan. Land Transport Bylaw provision to enforce payment of damage to roads is still a last resort option.

3.11 Local Government Act Section 101 considerations

3.12 Because of the importance of the decision regarding the maintenance and funding of damage to local roads from exotic forest harvest the direct consideration of section 101(3) is detailed below.

Section	Description	Consideration
101(3) (a) i	Community outcomes - A local authority must manage its revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments, and general financial dealings prudently and in a manner that promotes the current and future interests of the community.	During the development of the proposal to consider a rating differential for roading damage from exotic forest harvest the Council's Community Outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A district for people A prosperous district A district that cares for its environment were considered to look at the long term sharing of these costs versus the social, environmental and economic benefit that comes from the exotic forestry sector. The modelled incremental costs from harvest damage are proposed not to be fully passed on through a potential rating differential and there is strong intent to work with forestry businesses to find the best solution for maintaining and funding road damage during log harvest.
101(3) (a) ii	Distribution of benefits - the distribution of benefits between the community as a whole, any identifiable part of the community, and individuals;	<p>The District's roading network is part of the national and regional transport network. Efficient and sustainable development of the network within the District contributes to the economic and social well-being of the nation, region and in particular businesses and residents of the District.</p> <p>The potential implementation of forestry differential to recover part of the direct cost of exotic forest harvesting on local roads is seen to be a prudent way to balance the economic benefits derived by the district from forestry operations with the increased costs of maintaining local roads during harvest. It has been modelled that the incremental average annual cost of maintaining a forestry road, over the 27 years of a forest's lifecycle, is well in excess of the cost to maintain other roads. Therefore an additional contribution from ratepayers who own exotic forests is considered appropriate.</p> <p>The capital value of the forestry exotic property values do not include the value of the trees resulting in a lower capital value compared to other property categories thereby contributing significantly less towards roading costs.</p>

Section	Description	Consideration
101(3) (a) iii	Period of benefits - the period in or over which those benefits are expected to occur	The period of benefit has been taken over the 27 years of an exotic forest's life because of the high road damage costs during harvest relative to the rest of the forest's growing lifecycle. The modelled cost, and therefore the potential differential rate, has been calculated as an average per year for that 27 years.
101(3) (a) iv	Exacerbator pays - the extent to which the actions or inaction of particular individuals or a group contribute to the need to undertake the activity	Costs are driven by traffic volumes and size (e.g. heavily loaded vehicles cause more wear and tear damage on roads than lighter vehicles). The forestry traffic, at times of harvest, creates significant damage beyond that of other users to roads. The frequency of heavy traffic use during the harvest is believed to also accelerate damage compared to if the same volume was spread over a much longer period. In the case of mixed use properties with less than 20 hectares of forestry, it was considered that these blocks may be too small and uneconomic to justify harvesting.
101(3) (a) v	Costs and Benefits - the costs and benefits, including consequences for transparency and accountability, of funding the activity distinctly from other activities	Greater opportunity for the Waitomo District community to have input on decisions, proposals, issues and other matters through consultation. Modelling of forestry compared to non-forestry road costs has made it more transparent that there was a significant difference in costs. Engagement with the community and stakeholders through meetings with Greenplan, discussions with sawmill owners, the LTP Consultation Document and community engagement that accompanied it, letters directed to exotic forestry owners who may be affected or may not be affected by the rating differential proposal has yielded a large amount of information and a much better understanding of the economic and social benefits of exotic forestry and strong suggestions around solutions. These have been built into this deliberations report and were discussed during hearings.
101 (3) (b)	Impact on social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the community	The benefit recognised that the forestry industry provides to the district is through employment and commercial activity. In considering the setting of the differential factors, Council reduced the differential factor to recognise the benefit that Forestry Activities provide to the district. Affordability. Consideration of the overall impact of the introduction of the differential categories and the resulting differential rates on each category of ratepayer.

3.13 **RURAL HALLS**

- 3.14 Council consulted on the funding and future of the eight rural halls that Council own located in Mokau, Waitanguru, Mapiu, Aria, Mairoa, Mokauiti, and Mahoenui.
- 3.15 Council proposed that the ownership of these halls could transfer to the community.

3.16 Three options were presented to the community:

- Option 1 (status quo) – remain Council owned, minimal investment, no provision for upgrades; or
- Option 2 (preferred) - transfer ownership to community groups; or
- Option 3 - consider closing halls.

3.17 The following table shows the preference of the 71 submission responses to this proposal, of these 17 submissions were received from Waitomo district addresses:

Topic/Issue	Total Submissions	Local Address
Option 1 – Status quo	31	3
Option 2 – (preferred) transfer hall ownership	33	11
Option 3 – close halls	3	0
Options 1,2 and 3	2	2
No unspecified/ Preference	2	1

3.18 The following themes were identified in the submission responses.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community should decide if they want this option • Preference over option 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each hall committee/community should get to decide what works for them. • Shared ownership for a transition period e.g. 5 years • If locals are benefiting, they should take over the hall and meet the costs • A targeted rate should be put in to support the hall maintenance, this works for other councils. • Sell rather than gift halls to the community groups. • Council can save with this option, if wanted badly enough community will meet the costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community should decide if they want this option • Lost future opportunity if halls are closed

3.19 **HALL MEETINGS**

3.20 Elected members and WDC staff met with hall committees and the conversations were positive on ownership transfer. Concerns were raised on ground lease arrangements, current repairs needed and possible Council contribution for this, Council covering agreement/legal costs of transfer and the best ownership structure for the hall if it was transferred to a community entity.

3.21 **KEY THEMES**

3.22 Overall, most comments through the submissions supported the proposal with some suggestions for changes such as transition period or some rate support.

General concerns raised through submissions were regarding lack of community support and lost future opportunities if halls close. There was a common theme of letting each community decide on what would work best for them.

3.23 Comment: Elected Members and staff will continue working with hall committees to determine what is best for each community. No material impact on LTP.

3.24 **TE KUITI FLOODING REMEDIES**

3.25 Council consulted on the investment required to improve the stormwater network in Te Kūiti.

3.26 Council proposed medium and long term remedies requiring \$6.7 million over five years.

3.27 Two options were presented to the community:

- Option 1 (status quo) – minimal investment, small scale improvements; or
- Option 2 (preferred) – build retention ponds, stormwater modelling and capacity improvement planning; or

3.28 The following table shows the preferences of the 67 submission responses to this proposal, of these 15 submissions were received from Waitomo district addresses:

Topic/Issue	Total Submissions	Local Address
Option 1 – Status quo low level investment	30	5
Option 2 – (preferred) medium and longer term remedies	37	10

3.29 The following themes were identified in the submission responses.

Option 1	Option 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling is essential and working with landowners to finding solutions. • Property owners need to take some responsibility for material blocking drains e.g. gravel driveways. • This is essential and high priority. • Requires a collective approach from landowners. • Overseas examples of where trying to address this has not worked. • Detailed modelling and planning (suggest 3 years to create) should proceed any capital investment • Needs to be kept up to standard • This has been very stressful for homeowners flooded three times and living in motels • Lifting homes should be considered • Future proofing is necessary but costly

3.30 **KEY THEMES**

3.31 The submitters who commented on this proposal were all in support of option 2 and felt this was essential and high priority work. The stress and impact for property owners repeatedly impacted was highlighted. Recognition of the importance of modelling, planning and combined input from landowners were seen as essential before capital investment. One submission thanked Council for the improvement works done so far that they believe have made a difference already.

3.32 Comment: This is a very significant project for Council and has been ranked as a high priority. The project approach will involve working with landowners, detailed planning, and extensive modelling prior to any upgrades to the piped network. The improvements to the network will be aimed at substantial improvements on managing stormwater flow and network capacity to reduce the likelihood of homes and businesses flooding. The October 2023 event was close to a 1 in 250 year event, new build standards are 1 in 100 year event capacity. Council recognises it is impractical to have a network that has capacity for all possible future severe weather events.

3.33 **ELDER PERSONS HOUSING**

3.34 Council consulted on how we should fund Elder Person Housing (EPH) and who should provide this service.

3.35 **Funding of EPH**

3.36 Council proposed that increasing the rent levels would allow eligible residents to access government funding and reduce ratepayer contribution.

3.37 Two options were presented to the community:

- Option 1 (status quo) – ratepayers subsidise EPH and have modest rental increases; or
- Option 2 (preferred) – rent levels are increased to a nil general rate requirement over two years.

3.38 The following table shows preference of the 66 submission responses to this proposal, of these 14 submissions were received from Waitomo district addresses:

Topic/Issue	Total Submissions	Local Address
Option 1 – Status quo ratepayers subsidise	33	7
Option 2 – (preferred) increase rents	33	7

3.39 The following themes were identified in the submission responses.

Option 1	Option 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The residents are vulnerable people, happy to subsidise their rent through our rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability needs to be balanced with social purpose • Rents should only move in line with inflation. • Rental increases should be limited to that which non-commercial operators should charge.

3.40 **KEY THEMES**

3.41 The submitters were split 50:50 on this proposal, most of those that commented supported a modest rent increase to shift from ratepayer funding to central government funding, however one submitter did comment that the residents are vulnerable people, and they were happy to subsidise their rent through rates. Council staff and elected members met with residents formally and informally to discuss the proposal, the conversations were positive about the service and understanding of their options to access the Accommodation Supplement.

3.42 Comment: Council staff will continue to work with the residents through any outcome, the aim is to provide the best possible service to our residents. It is noted that the current government is considering all social housing policies and budgets, any information and any changes will be considered during decisions in this area.

3.43 **Provider of EPH**

3.44 Council proposed that alternative providers such as Community Housing Providers (CHPs) should be explored.

3.45 Two options were presented to the community:

- Option 1 (status quo) – Council should own and operate EPH; or
- Option 2 (preferred) – explore an alternative provider.

3.46 The following table shows preference of the 66 submission responses to this proposal, of these 14 submissions were received from Waitomo district addresses:

Topic/Issue	Total Submissions	Local Address
Option 1 – Status quo Council owned	26	4
Option 2 – (preferred) alternative provider	40	10

3.47 The following themes were identified in the submission responses.

Option 1	Option 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council should continue to provide this service until government funding is 100% secured. • Do not add to the stress of this vulnerable sector, housing security is vital. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree this should be investigated as a future option. • Social services are better provided by central government. • There is a shortfall in this area, will need specialist investment and management. Future for Local Government may create a fit here. • Once investigated, options should come back to ratepayers. • This should be progressed urgently. • The provider must give equal opportunity to all residents.

3.48 **KEY THEMES**

3.49 The majority of submitters supported exploring an alternative provider, however one submitter did comment that this is a vulnerable sector and Council should continue to provide this service until there is more certainty from central government. Council staff and elected members met with residents formally and informally to discuss the proposal, there was some concern of moving to another provider, generally residents were very happy with the current arrangements and have a good relationship with council staff.

3.50 Comment: Council staff will continue to work with the residents through any outcome. The aim is to provide as much affordable housing to the district as possible. Affordable housing is considered to be 30% or less of gross income. It is noted that the current government is considering all social housing policies and budgets, any information and any changes will be considered during decisions in this area.

3.51 **STORMWATER RATING AREA**

3.52 Council proposed changing the area for urban stormwater rating to more accurately reflect the infrastructure and the properties that benefit.

3.53 Two options were presented to the community:

- Option 1 (status quo) – No change to the rating area; or
- Option 2 (preferred) – Change the rating area.

3.54 The following table shows preference of the 68 submission responses to this proposal, of these 14 submissions were received from Waitomo district addresses:

Topic/Issue	Total Submissions	Local Address
Option 1 – Status quo Council owned	27	4
Option 2 – (preferred) alternative provider	40	10
Unspecified (opposed)	1	0

3.55 The following themes were identified in the submission responses.

Option 1	Option 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unclear what benefit rural properties included in the urban stormwater rating area are getting benefit from • Stormwater assets that are primarily servicing roading assets should not be considered urban stormwater assets. • Surface water courses [open drains] should not be considered urban stormwater assets • The proposal/calculation is not fair for larger properties on the outskirts that are more rural. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important for equity. • All properties that have benefit should contribute.

3.56 **KEY THEMES**

3.57 The proposal has received submissions and feedback during the public drop-in sessions that have raised issues relating to the inequity of some of the properties on the outskirts of the urban area, which have a predominately rural use with only minimal stormwater assets nearby such as catchpit or an open drain. Other submissions have agreed that all benefitting properties should contribute.

3.58 Comment: The new boundary as proposed is based on asset location and properties that benefit from the network are all included. A more refined approach could consider the amount of benefit and if this is at an urban level of service or a rural level of service. It could be considered that these properties are receiving closer to a rural property benefit rather than urban. An alternative map (**Attachment 5**) shows this approach of rural properties on the boundaries that could be considered as rural.

3.59 Rural stormwater maintenance is for open drains, usually these are service transport routes or preventing erosion near assets.

3.60 **SIMPLIFY THE RATES STRUCTURE**

3.61 Council proposed to bring all activity costs that benefit the district together then apply a percentage split between General Rate and Uniform Annual General Charge.

3.62 Two options were presented to the community:

- Option 1 (status quo) – Not change the rating approach; or
- Option 2 (preferred) – Change the rating approach.

3.63 The following table shows preference of the 67 submission responses to this proposal, of these 15 submissions were received from Waitomo district addresses:

Topic/Issue	Total Submissions	Local Address
Option 1 – Status quo Council owned	34	6
Option 2 – (preferred) alternative provider	33	9

3.64 The following themes were identified in the submission responses.

Option 1	Option 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't sound simple so stay with status quo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple approach is good • the erosion of the UAGC as a percentage of the General Rate is unacceptable, (26% a number of years ago dropping to 17.5% by Year 3) The transfer of costs to higher CV properties, i.e., Rural, is not equitable • Happy if no negative effect on General Rate • Should be fully utilised at 30% • This has always been arbitrary and now has become political, reducing administration is a good outcome.

3.65 **KEY THEMES**

3.66 Most submitters who commented supported the proposal and said that simplifying and reducing administrative input were good outcomes. There were submissions that called for the percentage of the UAGC to be increased.

3.67 Comment: This approach helps maintain the same proportions being met by each rating category (i.e. residential, commercial, rural). This will also ensure we are following our Revenue and Finance Policy and will create administration efficiency for our rating team while making the rating calculation more transparent.

SUBMISSIONS ON OUR APPROACH

4.1 This section of the report focuses on the issues that were raised as conversation topics to gain feedback on how Council plans to approach these activities. The community feedback received has been summarised on these matters.

4.2 IMPACT OF RETAINING 3 WATERS

4.3 In response to the repealing of the Water Reform legislation, Councils were required to include 3 waters in their LTPs. This required careful consideration of what the best approach is for some significant areas of delivery.

4.4 Two approaches were presented to the community relating to the impact of retaining 3 waters assets and service delivery:

- Approach 1 – no additional investment, continue with low level repairs on an as needed basis; and
- Approach 2 – installation of water meters from Year 4.

4.5 The following table shows the submission responses to this proposal:

Topic/Issue	Total Submissions	Total Agree	Total Disagree	Local address Agree	Local address Disagree
Approach 1 – no additional investment.	50	40	10	9	3
Approach 2 – Install water meters	37	27	10	5	5

4.6 The following themes were identified in the submission responses.

Approach 1 – no additional investment	Approach 2 – install water meters
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disagree – this has not worked for other councils, can cause additional expense if emergency repairs needed, example Wellington water pipes and Auckland sewer pipes.• Disagree – this will leave the towns vulnerable, Local Water Done Well will likely take 5 years so in the meantime we need to ensure fully functioning 3 waters infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree - water meters make users more careful not to waste water• Agree - A user pays approach is fairer• Agree - Should be implemented immediately, will be loan funded so this is possible.• Agree - Will reduce demand, modify behaviour, enhance leak detection, this is a good return on investment.

Approach 1 – no additional investment	Approach 2 – install water meters
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree – Enhances water management, only loan fund what can't be covered by depreciation reserves. • Disagree – this could lead to privatisation, punishes larger families and does not support growth.

4.7 **KEY THEMES**

4.8 Most submissions supported the no additional investment approach to do repairs and maintenance on an 'as needed basis'. There were some concerns raised about the impact of low investment and how this could create vulnerability and extra expense if emergency repairs were required. Examples of other councils that have had issues through low investment approaches were highlighted.

4.9 Most submissions supported the installation of water meters, however the local submissions were split 50:50. Those who agreed, highlighted the benefits of reduced demand, wastage, and improved leak detection and water management. It was raised that user pays is a fairer approach, and it makes people more aware of their water use habits. Those who disagreed were concerned about privatisation and that it would be unfair on larger families and limit growth.

4.10 Comment: We have made significant investment in our 3 waters infrastructure in the previous 10 years, projects are focused on managing demand and maintenance to ease rate increases. Future borrowing may be more favourable for larger renewal projects.

4.11 Comment: Reducing water wastage and therefore demand reduces treatment and storage pressures and benefits the environment. The timing of the water meter installation project into our capital programme of works recognises the resources and lead-in work required for a project of this size. The new capital expenditure will be fully loan funded.

4.12 **LANDFILL AND SLUDGE REMOVAL**

4.13 Our District has retained a district landfill, however as the cost of waste disposal and operations continue to increase, the future investment into our landfill needs to be regularly assessed. Another factor that impacts this is disposal of sludge from our wastewater treatment process. The treatment ponds have nearly reached capacity so disposal options for bulk removal need to be looked at now.

4.14 The following table shows the submission responses to these topics:

Topic/Issue	Total Submissions
Landfill – continue investment.	2
Sludge – removal required	2

4.15 The following themes were identified in the submission responses.

Landfill	Sludge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep landfill open provides future options. • Council need to choose the best option for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System for sludge disposal was in place 10-12 years ago, ensure option chosen remains in place. • Council need to choose the best option for residents

4.16 KEY THEMES

- 4.17 Submitters have expressed that keeping the landfill open gives more future options and residents and good operational management should be at the forefront of any considerations.
- 4.18 Comment: Council will continue to keep the landfill open while this is the most viable option. Any solutions for sludge disposal will address the excess volume of sludge and on-going disposal needs. The two topics have a significant overlap.

SUBMISSIONS ON THE PLAN

- 5.1 As noted previously, some of the submissions received were related to other matters in the CD but not related to the specific consultation proposal. This section provides an analysis of submissions on these work programmes.
- 5.2 The following table shows the submission topics and points made under each topic in this category:

Topic/Issue	Total Submitters	Submission #
Infrastructure		
• Solid Waste - wheelie bins	1	083
• Roothing (non-forestry)	1	125
• 3 Waters	2	022, 101
Community and Recreation		
• Housing Strategy, affordable housing	1	101
• Aquatic centre	2	102, 116
• Centennial Park	2	102, 116
• Playgrounds	2	102, 116
Finances and rates	6	011, 022, 072, 101, 131, 105

- 5.3 The submission themes and associated staff commentary are included within **Attachment 1** of this business paper.

OTHER SUBMISSIONS

- 6.1 There were 22 submission points raised that are not directly related to matters in the CD.
- 6.2 The submission points outlined below relate to either new service provision, amendments to an existing level of service, or requests for funding. The issues raised do not address matters under consultation.
- 6.3 Where submissions relate to amending existing services or grant funding, Council should give consideration as to whether any decision made by Council could be significant or material under Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, especially as key stakeholders and the wider public have not had an opportunity to submit on these issues.

- 6.4 Funding of \$10,000p.a. has been included in the draft LTP 2024-34 budget for economic development facilitated by Te Waka – Waikato Economic Development. The recent announcement from Te Waka that they will not be in operation from 1 July 2024, allows consideration to reallocate this budget. Options include allocating this to an alternative funding request, or to utilise this budget in-house to support economic development.

Topic/Issue	Total Submitters	Submission #
Community facilities and recreation		
Library opening hours	1	012
Waitomo Aerodrome	2	017, 045
Les Munro	1	083
Funding Contributions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hamilton and Waikato Tourism 	8	001, 003, 005, 010, 016, 046, 095, 097
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waikato Screen 	1	006,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waitomo Caves Museum 	1	055
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maru Trust 	1	022
Infrastructure		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waitomo Caves water and wastewater 	1	008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town enhancement and entry points 	2	051, 131

- 6.5 The submission points raised within this category and associated staff commentary are included in **Attachment 3** of this business paper.

Fees and Charges

- 7.1 Formal consultation on the Fees and Charges (FC) for 2024/25 occurred alongside the LTP.
- 7.2 The table below summarises the points raised for fees and charges.

Key theme / Issue	Submission No
Reduction for ratepayers	001
Increases seem reasonable	002, 013
Aerodrome fees and charges	004, 011, 014
Building consent fees	012

- 7.3 The submission points raised within this category and associated staff commentary are included in **Attachment 4** of this business paper.

7.4 **KEY THEMES**

- 7.5 Submissions on FCs general comments suggested with increased rates there should be discounted use of community facilities and that the increases seemed reasonable.

- 7.6 Three submissions relating to the landing fees at the Waitomo Aerodrome. It was suggested that the \$5 increase would reduce revenue and annual fees should be considered for Aero Club members and other leases holders. The Waitomo Aero Club spoke in support of their submission at the Council hearing highlighting the variation in member use and difficulty in setting a standard fee, a combination of a bulk fees and casual fees were suggested.
- 7.7 One submission raised the possibility of negotiating building fees specifically those related to consents for repair of older houses.
- 7.8 Comment: FCs have been increased in line with inflation to ensure that costs are recovered so that Council services are not subsidised further by rates. Where possible FCs have not been increased, and where necessary FCs have been increased more than inflation to recover increased costs.
- 7.9 Many community facilities and services such as the refuse stations, rubbish disposal, the aquatic centre, and library as a few examples are subsidised by rates, the fees do not currently cover the full cost of these services.
- 7.10 The usage, community benefit and costs of the Waitomo Aerodrome need to be considered when looking at the landing fees. An option is to set the landing fees at \$15 per private landing and \$20 for commercial users unless individual contracts can be negotiated with individual groups. This may encourage airfield use, give users certainty of costs, and Council certainty of income. This is dependent on staff concluding discussions around CAA reporting and the investigation of different aircraft movement systems.
- 7.11 For the building consent process to provide surety to the customer in terms of what the charge will be for the building consent, and to ensure that the actual council cost is recovered it is necessary to set a standard fee.
- 7.12 An administrative error has been found in the draft FCs schedule for the Water Connection Fee. The 3 waters connections (water supply, wastewater, and stormwater) in the Statement of Proposal were all included the provision for actual costs to be charged for connections past 8m. The note was not copied into the water connection fee notes as a change. Staff recommend this correction is made to the FCs schedule 2024/25.

Considerations

8.1 RISK

8.2 Any risks related to council decision making will be mitigated by assessing the significance or the materiality of the decision made in relation to what Council had sought feedback on and the submissions.

8.3 There is a risk of legal challenge to Councils decisions.

8.4 CONSISTENCY WITH EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

8.5 Decisions being sought relate to setting Council's direction for the Long Term Plan 2024 -2034.

8.6 SIGNIFICANCE AND COMMUNITY VIEWS

8.7 Council has undertaken consultation on the LTP 2024-2034 and the FCs for the 2024/25 year by using the Special Consultative Procedure under section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002. This ran from 16 April to 17 May 2024 with

consultation and supporting documents available online and hardcopies at local businesses in town centres.

- 8.8 Having regard to the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 and Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations would be considered to have a high degree of significance.
- 8.9 The community views have been considered through the consultation process which involved direct letters, public drop-in sessions, public meetings, meetings with community groups and individuals, and the formal submission process.
- 8.10 If through the deliberation process, Council seeks to make a decision that has not previously been considered or consulted on, this new decision should be assessed against the Significance and Engagement Policy and if it is deemed ‘Significant, consideration should be given to whether additional consultation is required on this specific matter.

Suggested Resolutions

- 1 The business paper on Deliberations on Submissions to the Long Term Plan 2024-2034 be received.
- 2 That the Chief Executive be delegated the authority to ensure that Council directions arising from the consideration of submissions is reflected in the responses schedule and all changes, together with feedback from Council’s auditors, and the Officer of the Auditor General, are made to the final Long Term Plan 2024-2034 and any policies prior to adoption.
- 3 Elected members and WDC staff would like to thank all of the people who engaged with the Long Term Plan 2024-2034 and acknowledge the time and effort made by those who made written and verbal submissions.



BEN SMIT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



CHARMAINE ELLERY
MANAGER - STRATEGY AND POLICY



TINA HITCHEN
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

29 May 2024

Attachments:	1	Summary of Submissions – CD Topics
	2	Summary of Submissions – Rooding Rate
	3	Summary of Submissions – Other Topics
	4	Summary of Submissions – Fees and Charges 2024/25
	5	Alternative Map Urban Te Kuiti

Summary and commentary on submissions received to draft Long Term Plan 2024-34

Proposal: Funding and the Future of our Rural Halls

Option 1 – Status quo – minimal rate funding with no provision for required repairs

Option 2 – Transfer ownership of Council halls to community groups

Option 3 – Consider closing halls

Summary of submissions

Overall, 31 submitters selected option 1, 33 selected option 2, three selected option 3, two submitters selected options 1,2 & 3, and two unspecified/no preference.

Filtered by Waitomo District addresses, three selected option 1, 11 selected option 2, two submitters selected options 1,2 & 3, and one unspecified/no preference.

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
11	Siobhan		Option 2	Second choice is option 1	Comment/Response: Closing halls would be done in consultation with each community if there was no interest from the community to take over the hall and the usage did not warrant further investment.
22	Phil Brodie		Option 2	The process is already underway, and I suspect each community involved will have a different response, and the actual solution for each Hall will depend on that response.	Comment/Response: Conversations have been had with hall committees who have then also gone out to their community. Each community and hall committee will need to ultimately decide what works for them, Council will follow a consistent approach where appropriate such as sale and lease conditions.
26	Carol Joy Abraham		Option 2	Consider shared ownership for a significant transition period, e.g. 5 years.	Comment/Response: In a practical sense this is the current scenario as hall committees are operating the halls, covering their costs and repairs, plus any additions to the halls.

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
081	Tim Stokes	Kinohaku Hall Society Inc	No preference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer some insight as a hall committee that has taken over ownership of their hall. <p>Some challenges have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited people willing to be involved in operating the hall. Hall needs regular income to be financially viable, insurance at over \$3000 pa. With income from Council grant and fundraising the hall only makes a slight profit. Would not be able to pay for maintenance materials or tradesmen, rely on volunteers and people donating materials. <p>Community ownership not viable without the support from communities and good opportunities for income/fundraising.</p> <p>Committees may need support from Council in creating legal entities to take on ownership.</p> <p>Rural halls have a role to play in being a venue for gatherings and events, we wouldn't like to see them disappear.</p> <p>We would welcome a discussion if you would like to know more. We do not have a position on the ownership of the rural halls in our communities.</p>	<p>Comment: Conversations have been had with hall committees who have then also gone out to their community. Each community and hall committee will need to ultimately decide what works for them, Council will follow a consistent approach where appropriate such as sale and lease conditions.</p> <p>Following conversations with hall committees Council has a good understanding of the use of the halls and the support of the communities who use them. The conversations with the committees have been positive on taking ownership and the advantage that there are some funds available to the community sector that Council cannot access. Council will support these committees with entity formation and funding applications and information. Most local submissions have agreed with this approach which supports halls with community and external funding.</p> <p>Response: The insights provided reflect what we have heard from our meetings with hall committees, where halls are being used for these activities, we would also like to see them remain. Thank you for the offer of your experience with running a rural hall.</p>
099	Jeffrey Williams		Option 2	Let local community groups take over responsibility for maintaining assets which benefit their communities.	Comment/Response: Agree community groups can access funding that Council cannot and as owners of the halls more likely to be successful for funding and grants. Communities have been very supportive of their hall committees, so this approach does have merit.
101	Lorrene Te Kanawa		Option 2	With the caveat, if a local community doesn't buy into taking over the hall, then the hall should be eligible for minimal rate funding.	Comment/Response: There is no budget in the LTP for rural halls, Council will consult with the community on what to do with the local hall should there be no committee able to own or run the hall.
104	Dr Jeremy Mayall	Creative Waikato	No preference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages Council to consult with local community around the value of the eight halls that council funds, including a needs assessment, and identifying barriers to use. 	Comment: Conversations have been had with hall committees who have then also gone out to their community. Each community and hall committee will need to ultimately decide what works for them,

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential to invest in 'soft infrastructure', the people, the programmes that activate infrastructure. Invest in promotion of these spaces, as well as collecting impact and usage of these spaces. • Essential to consider the burden of ongoing maintenance and capital works, there are limited streams of funding for capital expenditure and maintenance will only increase over time. • Engage in best practice around Community Asset Transfer which may occur, ideally not placing unnecessary burden on community groups. Investing in strengths and supporting ongoing processes where community groups provide these important accessible spaces in partnership with councils. 	<p>Council will follow a consistent approach where appropriate such as sale and lease conditions.</p> <p>While no formal assessment has been undertaken, following conversations with hall committees Council has a good understanding of the use of the halls and the needs of the communities who use them. The conversations with the committees have been positive on taking ownership and the advantage that there are some funds available to the community sector that Council cannot access. Council will support these committees with entity formation and funding applications and information. Most local submissions have agreed with this approach which supports halls with community and external funding.</p>
105	John Burns Anderson		Option 2	Transfer to community groups along with a commitment by Council to levy a targeted local community rate to support the maintenance of a hall where such a rate has community support (evidenced by a poll of the ratepayers covered by such a rate). This worked well in communities I have been involved with. Democracy and local decision making in action.	<p>Comment/Response: Many rural halls do not have a significant population to share a targeted rate. Expanding the range to include more ratepayers means it would be the same as it becoming part of the general rate.</p> <p>From our consultation the majority of local respondents were in favour of hall committees taking ownership. This option has been positively responded to by the hall committees we meet with. The use of halls and expense of maintaining them can be managed by community hall committees through fund raising and community grants</p>
109	Bernadette Mary Hoeberechts		Option 3	Or you could sell the halls to community groups rather than give them away.	<p>Comment/Response: Currently these halls are run by committees that rely on fund raising events and sourcing community funding, they do not have funds for a market value purchase and have often made repairs and improvements to the halls with the funds they have raised.</p> <p>Some halls need repairs for rot or watertightness, if a market purchase price was asked for Council would need to consider addressing these issues at ratepayer expense prior to sale so that the halls</p>

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
					were sold in a good order. This may need to be considered for a sale below market value also. Incorporated Hall Societies cannot sell the hall to profit, it can only go to a similar society or would likely return to council if the committee disbanded. Therefore, a market value sale is not in the best interest of the local community that supports these halls.
127	Kelly Langton	Federated Farmers	Option 1,2 & 3	That the Council work with individual communities and hall committees to determine whether option 1, 2 or 3 is appropriate for each rural hall, no preference. Future opportunity lost if halls are closed	Comment/Response: We are working with each hall committee on what they would like to do with the local hall who are in turn discussing with their communities what will work for them. Further consultation would be undertaken if there was no longer an active hall committee before any decisions on closing the hall.
129	Brett Tawse		Option 2	My view is people (ratepayers) do understand there are increasing demands on Councils, not all of which should be met by the way (District Halls...?? – in my day in the rural community, volunteers did this work, and if the community is not prepared to do it, then maybe they don't want the hall badly enough, and Council can save that possible investment).	Comment/Response: We are working with each hall committee on what they would like to do with the local hall, who are in turn discussing with their communities what will work for them.
131	Sheree Amber Heath		Option 1, 2 & 3 selected	Each community in my opinion should be given the choice of the above listed 3 options - each community can decide whether its viable to maintain or sell their halls.	Comment/Response: We are working with each hall committee on what they would like to do with the local hall who are in turn discussing with their communities what will work for them.

Proposal: Te Kūiti Flooding Remedies

Option 1 – Status quo – low level investment, small scale improvements

Option 2 – Build retention ponds, storm water modelling and capacity improvement planning long term (preferred)

Summary of submissions

Overall, 30 submitters selected option 1 and 37 selected option 2.

Filtered by Waitomo District addresses, five selected option 1 and ten selected option 2.

Sub.	Name	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
22	Phil Brodie	Option 2	The emphasis should be on modelling and sharing and discussing the outcomes with all effected landowners, above and within the flooding areas. If flotsam, and gravel from unsealed driveways, are contributors to the problem, landowners need to made well aware of this and that they bear some responsibility toward reducing those exacerbators, in other words, serious public education.	<p>Comment: There will be extensive modelling work as part of this project including working with landowners. Educating property owners will also benefit reducing flooding events.</p> <p>Response: A significant portion of this project is dedicated to modelling which will direct future investment and LTPs. We recognise the importance of public education as part of the solution and have initiatives in progress.</p>
26	Carol Joy Abraham	Option 2	Essential high priority work.	<p>Comment: This project has been given high priority in timing and resources.</p> <p>Response: We agree and have given this project a high ranking in priority for Te Kuiti residents.</p>
099	Jeffrey Williams	Option 2	Storm water modelling is critical to identify solutions available to help remedy flooding	<p>Comment: There will be extensive modelling work as part of this project including working with landowners. Educating property owners will also benefit reducing flooding events.</p> <p>Response: A significant portion of this project is dedicated to modelling which will direct future investment and LTPs.</p>
101	Lorrene Te Kanawa	Option 2	Landowners affected by the retention ponds should be called for a meeting together rather than approached individually.	<p>Comment: There will be extensive engagement with landowners as this project progresses.</p> <p>Response: We agree this is a community solution and should not just rely on individuals.</p>
105	John Burns Anderson	Option 2	Both options may ultimately be futile. American experience suggests that water will flow where it wants to flow and capacity improvement may ultimately prove both expensive and useless. Equally the increasing	<p>Comment: There will be extensive modelling work as part of this project for all stages, the modelling for the piped network upgrades will be the second stage that will provide information for increasing network capacity. The hydrology will be</p>

Sub.	Name	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
			<p>flooding that will occur in the future can not be ignored. Detailed modelling and a detailed plan needs to be produced on the impact of increasing flooding and how these are best dealt with, whether this is through greater capital investment or other alternatives prior to any further investment, and not left to the second stage. I suggest that a 3 year horizon should be set for the development of such a plan.</p>	<p>significantly different once retention ponds are in place so the significant portion of the modelling will be in stage two. Improving capacity to a 1 in 100 year event is the current standard for new builds. CE</p> <p>Response: We know that we cannot build a stormwater network with capacity for all future weather events. However we can make improvements that will reduce the likelihood of properties being flooded. CE</p>
130	Dennis & Maude Bennett	Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 2 selected as long as this is kept up to standard where our homes will not be flooded again and meet regulation requirements. • We should not have problems with flooding , it's been very stressful as our home has been flooded twice, we have had had to have a period of living in motels. We do not want to be flooded a 3rd time. • Homes below road level should be lifted to above the road. • Since Ngatai St has been resealed our section has since dropped lower (Duke Street). This option will give a sense of relief to residents. Scary to see heavy rain and worry floods will happen again. • Have been told it is an insurance company problem for our home to be lifted, but they are not responsible for infrastructure in Te Kuiti. • It has been suggested that emergency pumps be placed close to areas affected by floods so closer for fire trucks to pump water from sections rather than waiting for pumps to arrive. 	<p>Comment: The current stormwater system only has capacity for a modest (1 in 2 year event), improvements will be aiming to ultimately achieve much greater capacity to reduce the likelihood of properties flooding.</p> <p>Council is not able to raise homes, this would be up to individual homeowners.</p> <p>Some stormwater improvements have been made and are continuing, which have made some improvement to the entry points to the network.</p> <p>Work being undertaken in this area will reduce the likelihood that emergency pumps will be required.</p>
131	Sheree Amber Heath	Option 2	<p>Future proofing our water supply and infrastructure is necessary though the burden of the extra cost is frustrating.</p>	<p>Comment: The project scope is what has been what is considered high priority for our community. The cost will be spread over a long term loan so that current and future ratepayers benefitting contribute to the cost.</p>

Proposal: Elder Persons Housing

How should we fund elder persons housing?

Option 1 – Status quo – ratepayers subsidise elder persons housing

Option 2 – Council increases rental levels (preferred)

Summary of submissions

Overall, 33 submitters selected option 1, 33 selected option 2, and one unspecified.

Filtered by Waitomo District addresses, seven selected option 1, and seven selected option 2.

Is Council the best provider for elder persons housing?

Option 1 – Status quo – Council continues to own and operate elder persons housing

Option 2 – Explore options to transition elder persons housing to a provider (preferred)

Summary of submissions

Overall, 26 submitters selected option 1, 40 selected option 2, and one unspecified.

Filtered by Waitomo District addresses, four selected option 1, and ten selected option 2.

Sub.	Name and organisation	Funding - Preferred option	Provider - Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
11	Siobhan	Option 2	Option 2	It is worthwhile investigating options even if the best one is the status quo	Comment/Response: The recent announcement of \$140 million for new housing developments provided by Community Housing Provider's (CHP) is a positive direction. This may mean we can attract a CHP to our district and increase the Elderly Persons Housing (EPH) portfolio, we will investigate this further.
19	Richard Wallace	Option 2	Option 2	it is not the role of council to dabble in central government affairs or social services.	Comment/Response: Alternative service providers could offer more wrap around services and access central government funding
22	Phil Brodie	Option 2	Option 2	With our aging demographics will be an increasing challenge for the future, with forecast substantial shortfalls in beds for elder persons within 15 - 20 years (nationally ~ 40,000). This will become an area	Comment/Response: Alternative service providers could offer expansion of this portfolio; it is very unlikely Council will expand the EPH. The recent announcement of \$140 million for new housing

Sub.	Name and organisation	Funding - Preferred option	Provider - Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
				for specialised investment and management, which may fit with the Future for Local Government.	developments built by CHP's is a positive direction. This may mean we can attract a CHP to our district and increase the EPH portfolio.
26	Carol Joy Abraham	Option 2	Option 2	A careful balance between affordability and social purpose is required. Rents should not increase more than the rate of inflation on real costs of maintaining the property.	Comment/Response: With the Accommodation Supplement the rent movement that the resident would pay is closer to inflation movement.
101	Lorrene Te Kanawa	Option 1	Option 2	Elderly people in the council flats are generally vulnerable citizens and I approve my rates to subsidise their rent. I agree to exploring other ownership options and to come back to the ratepayers with the findings before a final decision is made.	Comment/Response: Further consultation would be undertaken for an alternative provider with the EPH residents and wider community.
104	Dr Jeremy Mayall, Creative Waikato	Unspecified	Unspecified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise the wellbeing of elders. Because employment in the in the creative sector is inconsistent it is difficult for people to maintain a regular wage, which is often on average lower. This affects ability to save for retirement. 	Comment/Response: We will ensure our residents are well looked after is there is any transition of ownership. The majority of any increase in rent will be covered by the Accommodation Supplement for eligible residents.
105	John Burns Anderson	Option 2	Option 2	Transfer options should be explored with urgency. Rental increases should be limited to that which non-commercial operators should charge.	Comment/Response: We have looked at what CHPs charge their residents and have kept any proposed increase within levels recommended for social housing.
109	Bernadette Mary Hoeberechts	Option 2	Option 2	Don't transfer to an Iwi or other Kiwi's will be disadvantaged. A non racist organisation is preferred	Comment/Response: If an alternative provider is bought in, they will need to align with our community outcomes, housing will be available for all those that meet the eligibility criteria.
131	Sheree Amber Heath	Option 2	Option 1	Housing security is a major concern nationwide, and I personally believe that at this present time the Council should display "good will" by continuing the status quo until or if a GHP can be 100% secured in the future especially if that provider will increase elder persons housing. In my opinion it would not be in the community "spirit" to add further stress to a vulnerable sector. Housing security is vital.	Comment/Response: We are aware of the reset being undertaken by central government in the social housing area. The recent announcement of \$140 million for new housing developments built by CHP's is a positive direction. This may mean we can attract a CHP to our district and increase the EHP portfolio.

Proposal: Update the Te Kūiti Stormwater Rating Area

Option 1 – Status quo – keep the current rating area

Option 2 – Extend the Te Kūiti Urban Rating Area (preferred)

Summary of submissions

Overall, 27 submitters selected option 1, and 40 selected option 2. One submitter was unspecified but opposed.

Filtered by Waitomo District addresses, four selected option 1, and ten selected option 2.

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
11	Siobhan		Option 2	Important for equity.	Comment/Response: Changing the boundary will mean those who benefit are contributing.
101	Lorraine Te Kanawa		Option 1	I can only speak to our Uncle Steve Hetet's land that is contiguous with land that we farm and maybe affected by the extra stormwater rate. I say maybe as the map in the LTP booklet and the map posted to us as an A4 have different boundary lines. I telephoned the council 3 days (Mon - Wed) in a row asking for verification what stormwater network Uncle Steve's land was connected/contributing to the stormwater. On the 3rd call I was advised that the CEO would get back to me by the end of the week. The CEO did call me on the Friday, but he didn't have an answer. Uncle Steve's land has an old woolshed on it only and I would suggest his land is making a significant contribution as a soak field. I still would like an answer to the location of the stormwater infrastructure that Uncle Steve's land is benefiting from.	<p>Comment: The new boundary as proposed is based on asset location and properties that benefit from the network are all included.</p> <p>A more refined approach could consider the amount of benefit and if this is at an urban level of service or a rural level of service.</p> <p>An alternative map shows this approach where rural properties on the boundaries with less benefit are not included in the urban zone. It could be considered that these properties are receiving closer to a rural property benefit rather than urban.</p> <p>Rural stormwater maintenance is for open drains, usually these are service transport routes.</p> <p>Response: The property you have mentioned has been assessed as receiving urban/rural level of service.</p>
110	Phil Lang	Universal Beef Packers Limited and	Opposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDC is proposing to rate one rural farming property owned by PEL Holdings Ltd and one industrial property owned by UBP. Neither of these are within the Te Kuiti urban area. 	Comment: The new boundary as proposed is based on asset location and properties that benefit from the network are all included.

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
		PEL Holdings Ltd		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PEL and UBP are opposed to the proposed expansion of the rating area. • For PEL property stormwater drainage is through surface water courses. The stormwater appears to be piped for a short distance beneath SH 30 and the NIMT (North Island Trunk Main) before discharging into the Mangaokewa Stream without any treatment. Appears only reason for pipe is to prevent natural course of water which would run onto the road before reaching the stream. • For the UBP property stormwater is directed to a single watercourse which has been modified to include two ponds for water detention and settlement purposes. It eventually reaches a short, piped section to travel under the railway and SH 30 to discharge to the stream without council treatment. • Interaction with the stormwater network is minimal and required only because of the SH and the railway across the natural watercourse. • The method for calculating stormwater rates have not been formulated to produce fairness for properties like PEL or UBP where the property value is high but the relationship with urban stormwater network is very low. Inclusion would be a disproportionate contribution by the property owner. • There is a mismatch between the benefit received and the amount paid because of the high CV value of the properties. • Disappointed that there was no conversation about this with us, proposal came out of the blue. The meat industry is already struggling have gone from two shifts to one. 	<p>A more refined approach could consider the amount of benefit and if this is at an urban level of service or a rural level of service.</p> <p>An alternative map shows this approach where rural properties on the boundaries with less benefit are not included in the urban zone. It could be considered that these properties are receiving closer to a rural property benefit rather than urban.</p> <p>The Waikato Regional Council issues stormwater consents and conditions.</p> <p>Rural stormwater maintenance is for open drains, usually these are service transport routes or preventing erosion near assets. These are Council assets.</p> <p>The stormwater rating has a fixed portion and a portion based on capital value as outlined in the RFP.</p> <p>All potentially impacted properties were informed by posted letter.</p> <p>Response: The property you have mentioned has been assessed as receiving urban/rural level of service.</p>
131	Sheree Heath		Option 2	Every property benefiting from the costly stormwater infrastructure should contribute fairly to its running costs.	Comment/Response: Changing the boundary will mean those who benefit are contributing.
129	Brett Tawse		Option 2	It is not fair as some property owners who benefit from the network are not contributing to its operation or maintenance. ([storm]water)	Comment/Response: Changing the boundary will mean those who benefit are contributing.

Proposal: Simplify the Rates Structure

Option 1 – Status quo – continue with current rates structure

Option 2 – Simplifying the split of rating costs between General Rate and UAGC (preferred)

Summary of submissions

Overall, 34 submitters selected option 1, and 33 selected option 2.

Filtered by Waitomo District addresses, six selected option 1, nine selected option 2.

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
11	Siobhan		Option 2	Simple is good.	Comment/Response: We agree it is better to use a more simple and transparent approach
22	Phil Brodie		Option 2	I support the idea of simplifying the rates calculation process, but am perturbed that there is no policy set out to guide the splitting of costs between the General Rate and the UAGC. My Capital Value is much higher than residential properties, so I find the erosion of the UAGC as a percentage of the General Rate, from the 26% it was a number of years ago, and 21.5% in 2024, with a further drop to 17.5% by Year 3, totally unacceptable. The transfer of costs to higher CV properties, ie, Rural, is not equitable. Is this how Council is proposing to fund in the future, the Three Waters depreciation you are choosing not to fund at this time, but will come to charge at a future date, forcing future rate payers to meet present day costs: what an inspiring legacy for your children and grandchildren!	Comment/Response: The approach we set is to keep the proportion that each rate category pays the same i.e. rural ratepayers contribute around 30% of the required rates revenue. Depreciation is covered by the later years of the LTP, it is being phased in to help affordability while the assets are newer and not requiring renewals.
101	Lorrene Te Kanawa		Option 1	Only because the 'simplifying' sounds complicated, this is also after reading the proposal in the LTP booklet.	Comment/Response: We appreciate rates can be very complicated, this approach will make it more transparent. Our Revenue and Finance Policy (RFP) gives further details on how rates are allocated.
105	John Burns Anderson		Option 2	My observation is that the split between the UACC and the General rate has been arbitrary since it was first introduced when a universal General Rate was introduced across the District. It was initially set to minimise the impact of the universal rate between urban and rural ratepayers and it's setting ever since	Comment/Response: The current approach is not achieving what the RFP sets out. This will reduce the administrative work.

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
				appears to have been a political exercise albeit coated in detailed cost allocation. Simplifying the split should decrease administrative workload will not changing reality.	
127	Kelly Langton	Federated Farmers	Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFNZ recommends that WDC fully utilise the UAGC mechanism at 30% of the total rates income, to provide equity between ratepayers. This should be standard policy. • FFNZ recommends that WDC actively promotes the rates rebates scheme and encourages ratepayers to apply. 	<p>Comment/Response: The setting of the UAGC can be used to keep the proportion that each rate category pays the same i.e. rural ratepayers contribute around 30% of the required rates revenue. This can move significantly with property revaluations so it would be difficult to have this set at 30% and not reduce the ability of Council to mitigate unintended outcomes of property revaluations.</p> <p>We actively promote the rates rebates through our website, rates newsletter and through our customer services team, we do encourage those eligible to apply for this government assistance.</p>
131	Sheree Heath		Option 2	I have chosen option 2 as I am trusting the Council's word that this new rating system does not negatively impact general rate payers.	<p>Comment/Response: This approach helps maintain the same proportions being met by each rating category (i.e. residential, commercial, rural). This will also ensure we are following our RFP and will create administration efficiency for our rating team.</p>

Conversation: Impact of retaining 3 Waters

1) Do you agree with Approach one – status quo, investing as and where needed?

Summary of submissions

Overall, 40 submitters selected “I agree with keeping the status quo with investing “as and when needed”” and 10 submitters agreed with “I do not agree with keeping the status quo”.

Filtered by Waitomo District addresses, nine submitters selected “I agree with keeping the status quo with investing “as and when needed”” and three submitters agreed with “I do not agree with keeping the status quo”.

2) Do you agree with Approach two – installing water meters?

Summary of submissions

Overall, 27 submitters selected “I agree with installing water meters” and 10 submitters selected “I do not agree with installing water meters”.

Filtered by Waitomo District addresses, five submitters selected “I agree with installing water meters” and five submitters selected “I do not agree with installing water meters”.

Sub.	Name	Approach 1?	Approach 2?	Comments	Analysis
11	Siobhan	I agree with keeping the status quo with investing “as and when needed”	I agree with installing water meters	As someone from a previous council where water was metered and charged on a usage basis. although I didn’t like paying more in general, usage charges made me use water much more carefully and I see so much more water wastage in this district because people don’t value what they don’t measure /pay for.	<p>Comment: There are many benefits of installing water meters and can be seen as a fairer approach of user pays. Reducing water wastage and therefore demand reduces treatment and storage pressures and benefits the environment.</p> <p>Response: We agree reducing wastage of treated drinking water is of benefit to the community and environment.</p>
19	Richard Wallace	I do not agree with keeping the status quo	I agree with installing water meters	Investing “as and when needed” is a recipe for disaster in deferred long term maintenance, ask Wellington. Wellingtons issues arise from "sweating the asset" attitude instigated in approx. 2010, (and a few EQs didn’t help), however the delayed maintenance is more costly to repair as it is reactionary rather than planned. Watercare in Auckland are having the	<p>Comment: Projects were assessed for priority (as workshopped), the programme balances what must be done and the affordability for ratepayers, future arrangements for delivering 3 waters projects may improve the affordability issue.</p> <p>Response: We have made significant investment in our 3 waters infrastructure in the previous 10 years,</p>

Sub.	Name	Approach 1?	Approach 2?	Comments	Analysis
				same issues that have come about with the collapse of the brick sewer. They could have lined 4 sewers for the cost of lining just one in an emergency situation.	projects are focused on managing demand and maintenance to ease rate increases. Future borrowing may be more favourable for larger renewal projects.
22	Phil Brodie	I do not agree with keeping the status quo	I agree with installing water meters	On page 13 of the CD you have four bullet points that fully justify the installation of water meters, and the following statement 'This expenditure will be funded by loan' indicates the installation project should start immediately (Yr 1, not Yr 4). 'Local Water done Well' is probably going to take 5 years to become functional and the labour force increased to the appropriate level so we're on our own in the meantime. The future viability of our District depends on our supply centres (towns) having fully functioning Three Waters services. They are also the foundation for your Housing Strategy and Vibrant Waitomo, so get after it.	<p>Comment: The timing of the water meter installation project into our capital programme of works and recognises the resources and lead-in work required for a project of this size. Our drinking water infrastructure is not a limiting factor in housing or supporting a community vibrancy (health, wellbeing, business)</p> <p>Response: We do recognise the benefits of water meters, however are constrained by staff and contractor resources, a project of this size also has considerable lead-in work for planning and procurement well before the capital works begin. For our projected household growth and support of Vibrant Waitomo, drinking water supply is not a limiting factor.</p>
26	Carol Joy Abraham	I agree with keeping the status quo with investing "as and when needed"	I agree with installing water meters	Water meters are proven to reduced demand by modifying behaviour and enhancing leak detection. Good ROI.	<p>Comment: This is a significant investment for our communities however there are long lasting benefits for network management and the environment.</p> <p>Response: We do recognise the benefits of water meters and agree this is a good investment in the future of our water supply resilience.</p>
34	Robert Corlett		I agree with installing water meters	As a Kapiti Coast resident I originally opposed water meters on the basis that water should always be free. However, the evidence of their use has changed my mind on this. Water wastage in our area has been (mostly) eliminated. Residents are more aware of their usage and hoses/sprinklers are seldom seem running all night in summer. For the last seven years we have NOT had water restrictions in the summer period - despite a growing local population.	<p>Comment: Reducing water wastage and therefore demand reduces treatment and storage pressures and benefits the environment. Climate change predictions show an increasing need for demand management.</p> <p>Response: We agree, reducing wastage of treated drinking water is of benefit to the community and environment. Reduced or no water restrictions are an expected outcome.</p>

Sub.	Name	Approach 1?	Approach 2?	Comments	Analysis
101	Lorrene Te Kanawa	I agree with keeping the status quo with investing “as and when needed”	I agree with installing water meters	From experience, once a water meter is installed you are incentivised to fix any leaks. When one was installed on our property, we received a large bill and went to find and fix leaks. Good way of managing town water supply.	<p>Comment: Reducing water wastage through leak detection (private and council-owned pipes) and therefore demand reduces treatment and storage pressures and benefits the environment.</p> <p>Response: We agree, reducing wastage through leaks of treated drinking water is of benefit to the community and environment and will be more easily detected in a metered network.</p>
105	John Burns Anderson	I agree with keeping the status quo with investing “as and when needed”	I agree with installing water meters	<p>NZ experience is that water management is extremely hampered where water meters are not installed. This would lead to a decrease in the demand on Council reservoirs and probably delay some of the work programme in the plan. Installation should be the first priority, ideally commencing this year.</p> <p>Depreciation on all 3 water assets should be fully funded, as in effect it would be under any future regulatory model. In electricity regulation depreciation was in effect indexed to inflation. Depreciation funding should be used to fund renewals, or lower debt where funding exceeds renewals, to allow debt to be used to fund future lumpy renewals. Loan funding for water meters is supported but only to the extent this cost is not covered by depreciation funding on water assets. It is noted that there is no short-term renewal programmed.</p>	<p>Comment: Reducing water wastage and therefore demand reduces treatment and storage pressures and benefits the environment. The timing of the water meter installation project into our capital programme of works and recognises the resources and lead-in work required for a project of this size.</p> <p>New 3 water assets will be fully depreciated by the end of the LTP. To ease rate increases this is phased in when the assets are new and unlikely to need any investment.</p> <p>Depreciation does fund renewals, future ‘lumpy renewals’ and offsets external debt.</p> <p>Minor renewals are programmed for 3 waters infrastructure.</p> <p>Response: We do recognise the benefits of water meters, however are constrained by staff and contractor resources, a project of this size also has considerable lead-in work for planning and procurement well before the capital works begin. We do use depreciation funding as you have described but we cannot use this fund for new capital investment as water meters would be, this would be loan funded. Minor renewals are included in our LTP budgets for water and wastewater, more extensive investment for stormwater in Te Kuiti.</p>
131	Sheree Heath	I agree with keeping the status quo with	I do not agree with installing water meters	Water meters could lead to privatisation of our water use also it 'punishes' larger families/whanau by way	<p>Comment: Current legislation prevents Council privatising water supply. Council will provide water saving advice as part of this project.</p>

Sub.	Name	Approach 1?	Approach 2?	Comments	Analysis
		investing "as and when needed"		of needed extra water use. It also is in my opinion a negative growth choice re extra rates.	Response: Current legislation prevents Council privatising water supply. Council will provide water saving advice as part of this project.

Conversation: Landfill/Sludge

Sub.	Name	Summary	Analysis
011	Siobhan	Keeping a local landfill facility as an option is important to keep future options open. I would be in favour of a new landfill cell.	Comment/Response: Council will continue to keep the landfill open while this is the most viable option.
022	Phil Brodie	I am concerned that we were shown a functioning system for harvesting and dewatering sludge 10 or 12 years ago and the 'wheels appear to have fallen off', so I hope a similar fate doesn't befall the latest options.	Comment: Council is currently investigating different disposal options using geotextile bags to dry the sludge then transport dried sludge to landfill, best case scenario would be land disposal, this would be an on-going disposal method. Response: Any solutions for sludge disposal will address the excess volume of sludge and on-going disposal needs.
129	Brett Tawse	They are not fair, because Council will have known for some time that rates were not covering your required investments in infrastructure (ie sludge in sewage) One historical issue that needs addressing is the build-up of sludge (solid component from sewage) in our Te Kūiti wastewater treatment ponds.	Comment/Response: Accumulated reserves from ratepayer contributions are being fully utilised for sludge removal. It is not unusual to only empty ponds every 10-20 years, due to low ratepayer base and increased costs the reserve fund will partially fund this work. Gradual removal could be considered however this would be more costly overall.
131	Sheree Heath	Re: landfill + sludge disposal - I leave that choice to Council to action the best course of action for residents. A huge thank you to Council for all the storm water pipe repair/replacement in George Street - these new drain measures appear to be solving the issue especially noted re very wet weather currently. Much appreciated.	Comment: Council will consider all aspects of cost and risk to determine the best outcome for the district. Response: Thank you for your acknowledgment of the work being done, we are continuing with these improvements in the current financial year that will improve some of the stormwater network in the problem areas.

What do you think about our plans for projects and activities? (open text response only)

Sub.	Name	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
22	Phil Brodie	<p>I fully endorse the Councils Housing Strategy, along with Vibrant Waitomo, so I cannot understand Councils decision to not contribute \$30k to the Maru Trust. You have abrogated your recently approved policy position and shown a very poor example to others you expect to provide time and funds towards these two strategies. A very poor decision, which should be reversed immediately. Request a provision of \$30,000 annually in the LTP for this.</p> <p>The Piopio Rising main (Yr 9) has been planned for 10 years, and along with Te Kuiti & Piopio Water meters (Yrs 4 & 5) should move to Year 1, as they are debt funded & urgently required for our towns well being.</p>	<p>Comment/Response: Council did not consider the funding of Maru Trust to be appropriate use of ratepayer funds.</p> <p>The 3 waters capital programme has been prioritised based on criticality and resourcing both internal and externally. Completing all capital works in Year 1 is not feasible and would create significant rate increases in Years 2 and 3 rather than spreading the cost over the 10 years.</p>
72	Emma Barton	<p>It is tough times and you are making them tougher for everyone. you are not helping anyone. Start thinking about the community and families that are struggling instead of what you want to appear to look like. This is not good enough. I have lived here for over 20 years. and as for the roading you had time to plan and maintain the roads, something in which you don't do. I would like to speak to the person behind this and this is not good enough. You can't charge ridiculous amounts of money to cover something you didn't plan for.</p>	<p>Comment/Response: Council do take into consideration the needs of all ratepayers and the community, only essential projects have been included in the early years of the LTP while we are all facing increasing costs.</p>
101	Lorrene Te Kanawa	<p>I am against another reservoir in Hetet St. It is a huge expenditure for the existing ratepayers. Water meters will mitigate the extra storage requirements, as well as less demand for more water from our projected declining population. With a forecasted smaller ratepayer base in the future, the debt, ongoing repairs and maintenance will be another expense the present and future community can't afford.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huge expense when not going to have a growing population. There are totara trees on the land, questions whether this makes it a significant natural area. Concern about stability of the land. • The Council has already spent \$400,000, concerned about this as doesn't think any of these land owners have given permission for access or road use. 	<p>Comment: The importance of the additional reservoir has been covered in the Te Kuiti Water Resilience project.</p> <p>The project is in planning and assessment phase, WDC staff are working with landowners.</p> <p>The \$400,000 spend relates to the whole project.</p> <p>There is some growth predicted as outlined in our Infrastructure Strategy</p> <p>Response: We have less than one day's supply of treated drinking water with our current reservoirs for Te Kuiti, even with reduced consumption it is not enough. This is considered high risk and needs to be addressed with some urgency. An additional reservoir will provide more security of supply for residents and businesses.</p>
105	John Burns Anderson	<p>Not funding depreciation is not sustainable, especially in areas where major capital investment is expected within the lifetime of the plan. It would be more financially honest to either trim costs by increasing efficiency or by admitting a higher rate increase is needed.</p>	<p>Comment: Depreciation of assets will be fully funded by later years of the LTP, this is being phased in to reduce the rate impact in the early years of the LTP</p>

Sub.	Name	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
			while those assets are still new and not requiring renewals.
131	Sheree Heath	Pretty much steady as you go but not visionary IMHO! Personally I would love to see Te Kuiti enhance its culture and history in the CBD - including similar around town "Boon Art" for example that relates to its history; for council to find affordable options to encourage tourism and divert through traffic off highway to main town centre. there are many small towns using similar art.	<p>Comment: Boon Art is likely referring to Hamilton's annual Boon Art festival where local artists are invited to paint large murals on buildings and walls around the city.</p> <p>Response: We are currently considering projects for improving town amenities and profile which include artworks.</p>

What do you think about our plans for finances and rates? (open text response only)

Sub.	Name	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
11	Siobhan	Some rates increase is inevitable with the rate of inflation, good to see Council efforts to minimise the increase.	Comment/Response: Council has cut back where possible and spend where necessary to keep the rate increase as low as possible but also keep a level of service that the community expects.
22	Phil Brodie	As a member of previous Councils that used rates affordability to justify minimal annual increases, I now realise we were very wrong. The costs to maintain and upgrade our expensive infrastructure, and the levels of service that are being legislatively set, are huge, and increasing. No white knight is coming to help meet those costs so we need to be getting the benefits of those upgrades sooner rather than later. The plans for finances and rates are what they are, and influences out side our, and your, control will dictate whether they are right or wrong.	Comment/Response: Council has cut back where possible and spent where necessary to keep the rate increase as low as possible while keeping a level of service that the community expects. The timing of projects relates to priority and resourcing while considering lead-in timeframe which for significant projects begins well before physical works.
72	Emma Barton	selfish	Comment/Response: Our financial strategy and rates are carefully considered by WDC staff and Elected Members to help us deliver our community outcomes for all ratepayers and the district.
101	Lorrene Te Kanawa	John, in 2019 you ran on a no rate rises campaign and the sky was falling when the 2018 council projected a 2.5% rate rise. You said you were experienced, so you would've known, or at least should've known the costs with running a council. I suspect you will say there are unexpected costs but every council, always, has unexpected costs.	Comment/Response: Councils across the country are facing increasing costs, the average rate increase is around 15%, many Councils also have significant double digit increases in Years 2 and 3 also. WDC has kept the rate increase as low as possible while still delivering the level of service our community expects. Where needed we are making significant investment such as stormwater and roading. The rating impact page of our consultation

Sub.	Name	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
			document outlined the main contributors for the rate increase.
131	Sheree Heath	Ugh! Though I have to defer to the financial experts and "accept" Councils knowledge re budget + costs - it does sting!! Re rates - my sole household income is superannuation roughly \$500 pw my new rates @ increase of 11.72% means increase to \$87.20 pw - sadly for me I need to consider applying for a rates rebate.	<p>Comment: The rates increase for a house in TK worth \$440,000 is \$10.36 per week. Rates rebates up to \$750 per year are available for those who have low income and meet the criteria.</p> <p>Response: Council has carefully considered what is necessary spending and saved where possible to minimise the rate impact. Superannuitants are often eligible for rates rebates, we would encourage you to apply for a rates rebate. Please contact our customer service team for advice and an application form.</p>

Summary and commentary on submissions received to draft Long Term Plan 2024-34

District Roding Rate

Proposal: introduce a targeted or differential rate on the district roding rate

Option 1 – Status-quo – no change to rating structure for forestry

Option 2 – Differential District Roding Rate (preferred)

Option 3 – Funding the additional operating rate deficit

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)
004	Marian Saxton		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A differential factor of 12 for roding rate - forestry exotic, is unfair, when you compare the tonnage across rural roads associated with other land uses. Cumulative damage from heavily laden stock trucks & fertilizer over 25 years far exceeds the damage incurred, once only, at harvest time. • I would like to comment on the consideration of a targeted rate to be charged to the forester at the time of harvest. While this seems fairer and more, "user pays", we would like assurance that the levy would be spent on our specific road and not just go into the general roding fund. • Council as a public authority they have a responsibility to encourage the capture of atmospheric carbon and to protect our waterways. Both the Waikato Regional Council and MPI's One Billion Trees programme encourage the planting of trees, particularly on grade 6 & 7 land, with these goals. • Ben Smit (CE Waitomo District Council) has communicated with rate payers that CVs of forestry properties currently have a much lower CV than pastoral properties. Does this mean that a historically pastoral farm that is subsequently covered 30% in trees has a proportional drop in CV? Maybe we are in for a rates rebate? • While I appreciate that residents maybe complaining about the logging trucks terrorizing drivers and wrecking the roads I would suggest that it is the change they are reacting to. Living on a rural road drivers accept large stock trucks as everyday occurrences but logging trucks can be novel - although short lived.
008	Ben Stubbs	Waitomo Caves Museum Society		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For forests planted in perpetuity I assume the rates would be less than forestry blocks. • There should be mechanisms available where the council supports landowners efforts to heal the land and improve water quality.
009	Jonathan Barton		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While I understand the need to address the challenges posed by forestry operations on our roads, I find the proposed measures to be discriminatory and unfairly burdensome to landowners with over 51

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)
				<p>percent of their land in forestry, compared to those with less than 51 percent, even if they could still have substantial forestry area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of our roads has not been adequately upheld, despite the foreseen harvesting of trees within a 30-year timeline, as established 28 years ago. This failure to proactively address infrastructure needs in anticipation of forestry activities reflects a systemic oversight that cannot be rectified by burdening forestry properties with disproportionate rate funding. • The current assessment of forestry properties' Capital Value (CV) fails to acknowledge the multifaceted contributions they make to our community. Penalizing landowners with higher rates solely based on the percentage of forestry land overlooks the broader economic and environmental benefits they provide. • Attributing the entirety of road damage costs to forestry operations disregards the shared responsibility of all road users and fails to consider other factors contributing to road deterioration. It is unjust to impose additional financial burdens on a subset of landowners without equitable justification or consideration of alternative funding sources. • The proposed division of the district roading rate into categories based on forestry land percentage risks creating further division and inequity within our community. • It penalizes landowners with larger forestry holdings, undermining collaborative efforts toward effective governance and community development. • Moreover, the projected shortfall in covering the forecasted additional costs of logging operations over the expected life of commercial forests highlights the inadequacy of the proposed funding model. • Without exploring alternative revenue streams or fairer cost-sharing mechanisms, the proposed changes may exacerbate financial challenges in the future. • I urge to reconsider the proposed changes and explore alternative solutions that promote fairness, equity, and collaboration among all landowners. Sustainable road maintenance funding requires a comprehensive approach that acknowledges the shared responsibility of all stakeholders and considers the diverse contributions of our community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We own our land but don't own the trees, forestry right in place, income goes directly to the investor, and I receive 10%. Will likely be in debt after receiving this and cleaning up the land, been told unlikely anyone will take over the forestry right.
007	Denis Kelleher	Paraheka Holdings Ltd	Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the submitters property, where they currently pay \$6383, a 6 times charge would make the district roading rate of \$38,299 (a 262% rate increase overall), a 12 times charge makes the roading rate \$76,599 (a 458% rate increase overall). This is unreasonable. • Questions how the 6 and 12 times factors were arrived at • Trees are a crop, they are not part of the value (CV) of the land in the same way that harvests of maize and dairy (from cows) are not included in land value of these properties. Forestry will generally not have major improvements while pastoral properties will have some, causing inflation in their valuations.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categories A and B are very misleading. The example forestry block has a value of 27% of the pastoral block. This is not the situation when compared with our neighbouring pastoral blocks. Our land valuation has gone up 50% in the past 3 years, tracking pastoral properties. • Suggest comparing forestry land to bush land rather than pastoral. • This is a land tax not a road user tax. Penalising plantation owners to subsidise road users. Charged regardless of disproportionate road usage or not. • Heavier vehicles are already charged substantially higher through Road User Charges. Council benefits from these charges through Funding Assistance Rates (FAR). • Heavy forestry trucks are being specifically targeted. There are other heavy trucks on Waitomo roads, unfair forestry is charged alone. Others include for quarries, livestock transfers, petrol, construction etc. • Forestry related road activity is concentrated during 1 – 2 years over 30 years, compared to continual activity for dairy/sheep/beef. Disputes that the concentrated roading damage is disproportionate to the continual damage from other users (e.g. pastoral) who are paying less. • There may be no damage but we are being charged for damage. Our block (redwoods) will likely not be harvested for another 15 years, but this will depend on whether it is economically viable. Some forests may never be harvested. • It seems like two bites of the apple to charge for a differential over 30 years as well as a targeted rate when harvesting. • It could be considered to only charge during harvest. • If there must be a differential rate could this be applied more fairly and not go up in one jump. <p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - will the money be targeted toward logging related road damage or simply to a general fund? - Can you explain how it was calculated that we would have a funding shortfall from the differential rate?
13	Carl Dibble		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception that logging trucks are doing the damage is misleading. It takes 25 years for trees to become suitable for harvest. Other forms of farming and general road use would damage roads throughout that 25-year period. To increase rates over a 25-year period in anticipation of harvest and subsequent road usage is forward loading. It would be more reasonable to apply a charge per kilometer of road use at the time of harvest. Logging trucks keep a record of kilometers travelled and it would be straight forward for this to be made available to council as part of consent to use local roads. • For small woodlot ownership (30 hect) or less there is generally no income from that venture before harvest. An increase in road usage tax as proposed is only going to discourage small investors in woodlots at a time when we need trees to help combat global warming. • There are investors in forestry/woodlots who are farming carbon under ETS. Those trees are not pruned and thinned rendering the timber without any real value. It is not simply a matter of harvesting those trees for timber if the ETS is terminated. My point is forestry for ETS will not have logging truck involvement so why should there be an increase in road tax for that sector.

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14	Lulu Hussey	GFM Limited	Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the bigger picture, Forestry in Waitomo will stop, and approx 50- 200 people will lose jobs. Not only forestry workers, trucking companies, Waitete and claymark saw mills will close down. • And let's be real here, the money we spend on more rates isn't going to get those roads fixed, it will be spent elsewhere.
15	Blair Cooper	OFM Limited	Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are forest harvesting contractors who have had and continue to have a number of our entities working (logging) in the Waitomo district. • With large volatility in the market, I am concerned an additional charge in roading rates may trigger landowners to turn their back on Forestry. The district would lose a substantial amount of income through small and large business, communities and jobs. • Our operations alone employ locals, rent properties to staff out of town and engage a large number of service providers from the district. • I do not believe the proposal outlines the upside revenue streams well enough or discusses the fact rates are paid for 25 plus years by forest owners with little to no traffic use.
18	Andrew Leadley		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The submitter has used Road User Charges (RUC) to work out that the cost for roading repairs of a large forestry truck should be 0.0673 cents per km. For the 20km from their block to the State Highway, that would cost \$13.46 per truck or \$1615.20 for the 120 trucks used to harvest what they have previously harvested in 1998 and 2003 (5400 tonnes). • This is not even one and a half times what WDC plan to charge a year on the submitters block (\$1165.6). • see that Wairoa District Council has a forestry rate but it only applies to areas of 100 hectares. Their rate is \$36.30 per hectare, far less than what is proposed here. • In your consultation document you say that the problem is that forestry properties don't reflect the true value of trees, at current value of logs it is not economical to harvest. • What about the blocks planted for carbon credits but will never be harvested? What if a cyclone devastated the forest are you going to refund the forestry rate paid? What if the forest catches fire and is destroyed will you refund it? • Under assets roading you have a road damage deposit can you not utilise this more? Suggestion to put a charge per kilometre per truck from the nearest state highway, you are going to charge a forest that is 5km from the main road the same as one that is 40km away. • Our block on second harvest rotation, Council's only complaint last time was about mud not about damage to the road. • Increase is going to be hard to pay for, no money until trees are harvested.
19	Richard Wallace		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 24 years, rates are collected currently on the roads, and little maintenance is done. Harvest time then comes, and there are suddenly a large amount of truck movements of a section of road, however said council has spent the rates collected for the previous 24 years on something else. • NZTA on behalf of the government collect RUCs. These RUCs are designed to fund road maintenance. Has the Council approached NZTA for a larger slice of the pie? Has the council looked at

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				the efficiency and effectiveness of your council controlled contractors, because every time I drive past there are more traffic management staff, that people actually working.
20	Todd Astridge		Option 1	You are targeting one user of the roads.
21	Allan Harold McCormick		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase of the proposed rate would cost me more than my original investment in just one year. Hence not making it viable to invest in forestry. • My business along with all other transport related businesses pay a fortune in taxes and road user charges. Fuel/Milk tankers/Machinery and Earth moving contractors also use these roads. Are you proposing to charge farmer and developers a increased rate? • Consider the repercussions or alternative funding options.
22	Phil Brodie		Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a national problem with no simple solution. • Presently there is a \$0.33/t levy on all logs sold, which goes to the Forest Growers Levy Trust to fund industry good projects. Could something similar be used nationally to go toward solving this problem? • Raised more questions than answers, felt limited information was provided to make a decision.
24	Richard Stiles		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a long term investor in New Zealand Forestry based on the need to make provision for my retirement and a desire to support the fundamental principles required for minimising the effects of Climate Change, I am extremely disappointed to see the positively Draconian proposal being put before Council to support the upkeep of the rural roads. • Now is not the time to punish investors, most of whom will need to reap a reasonable gain from 30 years of support, seems to be indicative of little or no planning having been carried out by the Council over the last thirty years.
25	Stuart Kenny		Option 1	I oppose to the Roding Rate increase /Forestry Exotic, no extra charge while the trees are still growing/standing, they are not on the road.
26	Carol Joy Abraham		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal loads disproportionate costs on owners forestry land that produces no income until it is harvested. • The industry suffers from chronically low prices and returns. Similarly, other commercial rural (farming) land value is directly linked to its operating profitability. • Options 2 and 3 create no incentive on trucking companies (who directly cause the damage, not the landowner) to modify their trucks or operations to reduce impact on roads. • I recommend an alternative option of introducing levies directly on harvesting and/or trucking companies, which could be by way of local annual licences or distance-based (similar to RUC). This would incentivise them to be more efficient, reducing damage and befitting both operator and council in the long term.

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27	Noel Nancekivell		Option 1	I oppose the increase proposed for forestry
28	Kelson Quarrie		Option 1	Increasing a road tax by 1200% with no increments is unacceptable.
29	Karen Quarrie		Option 1	I oppose increasing the road tax 1200% without notice and not bringing the level up in steps.
30	Trudy Warmerdam		Option 1	We bought our 2 hectare blocks in 1996 and have been paying rates ever since in the hope to get some extra income once retiring. I oppose the 1173% increase in roading rate.
32	Colette Hanrahan		Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I agree that WDC should increase the Roading Rate for logging trucks, but only slightly. A maximum of 10% increase only should happen - definitely not 1200%. If the Roading Rate is put up too high, the logging will go elsewhere. WDC should also not be blaming road repair solely on logging trucks - what about milk trucks, trucks carrying heavy loads for building, passing through the district?
33	Nicholas Byrne		Option 1	Over a 1000% increase is just not reasonable. People who invested 40 years ago and have already cashed out have benefited more than those still in now.
34	Robert Corlett		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I oppose Options 2 and 3 because they come into force very late in the forestry cycle and IMPOSE additional costs to forestry owners that could have serious impact on returns for smaller owners. While in theory I accept that some contribution makes economic sense to the council, forestry investment has provided a lot to the district already. It seems that the mechanism for adding charges will be disproportional and excessive for some. Trucks already incur road user charges based on distance travelled. I suggest your council approach Waka Kotahi/government and propose that the council receive some of that RUC funding for your local roads impacted by the trucks that use them.
35	Dianne Riley		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STATUS QUO: I strongly oppose the proposed changes. Further more the 1200% increase to this rate being applied ANNUALLY is disproportional to the actual logging activity. These forest blocks are largely 'dormant' in that for 20-30 years while the forests grows there is no logging truck activity associated to these blocks for those years. It is also inequitable that this rate is being targeted at forestry owners in the Waitomo district yet other large vehicles (supply chain trucks and every other type of heavy transportation vehicles) that traverse the district will not be required to contribute to the roading degradation for the damage they are causing.
36	Chris Donkin		Option 1	I oppose the roading rate (exotic forestry) increase
37	Alexander Arthur Theodore Cox		Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firstly, the amount of money spent on a road needs to reflect its use. If logging trucks damage the tar seal then maybe those roads should remain gravel. Secondly Vehicle registration has reduced substantially in the last 20years. This is where the money

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				<p>needs to come from not the primary producer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forestry is already a marginal investment for the tree growers. If trucks are damaging the roads then truck operators should pay. This way the expense can be passed onto the final consumer and not create an eleventh hour unpredicted expense for those who have invested long term industry. Any rate like this needs to be implemented gradually so that industry can budget for it.
38	Darren James		Option 1	Why have you waited 25 years?
39	John Reeves		Disagree	<p>Staff have suggested to me that rates are a blunt instrument, will we see changes to this proposal in the future to include more forestry blocks?</p> <p>A more targeted approach to the damage caused on council roads will result in better outcomes. The proposal will mean that some owner will end up paying far more in rates than the potential cost of any remedial work.</p> <p>We recently harvested a 100ha forest at Mahoenui, that road (Totoro Rd) needed no remedial work after harvesting, under proposed differential the rates increase on that forest over the 25yr rotation would be \$170000.</p> <p>The lower CV of forestry blocks reflects the market value which is related to risks (markets, harvesting costs, fires, wind throw, and limited potential to change land use). Do we really want to rate based on a businesses profitability?</p> <p>Forestry profitability under pressure. Log prices currently are \$8 below 3 and 6 year averages, making harvesting of some blocks uneconomical. This rate would make more blocks uneconomic.</p> <p>As the industry matures in the District more businesses and local jobs will develop.</p> <p>The main three owners in the district understand the importance of maintaining roads and leaving them in a good state. We need to incentivise owners to limit damage, the rating system disincentivises this.</p> <p>Good harvest planning is critical. Council should work with owners for better outcomes. Needs to be options of owners doing the work themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposed to the idea of a per tonne charge as has been suggested. Work with forestry on this so that Council know when harvesting.
41	Anne Williams		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenplan (Centurion 2000) Forest Partnership No.45 currently has a District Roding rate of \$653.80 for the 2023/2024 year. WDC proposal if successful is expected to increase the Roding Rate to \$8,325.74 annually from the 2024/2025 year. This is a 1,173% increase. I feel that unloading the whole problem of roading damage onto the Forestry Industry in one year will do immeasurable damage to the industry and to the people it employs. A more equitable solution should be found.
42	Denise Woodward		Disagree	I OPPOSE the Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase.

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43	Tony Dale		Disagree	I oppose this increase
44	WR Irvine		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I oppose the proposed differential rating proposal as it is discriminatory and inequitable. • It penalises forestry as an industry and will subsidise other farming activities that use heavy transport on rural and residential roads such as stock trucks and other commercial machinery used for farming purposes. • It fails to identify the value of forestry as a bona fide agricultural land use and the social benefit it provides the wider community.
47	Annalee and Jim White		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instead of taxing the "Forestry Exotic" why not tax every vehicle that travels on your roads by weight rather than taxing the industry that employs, feeds and houses so many in your community, and especially at such a debilitating rate. • We in Colorado have a "gas tax" to maintain our roads. And with electric vehicles becoming popular, they also included a weight tax when registering for your license plate. A different rate for each set of weight ranges. And our county is also considering a milage tax because those who use the road the most, should help pay for the maintenance..ie going to work every day over the same roads causes wear and tear maybe more so than a logging truck going over that same road once or twice a week or every day for a few weeks out of the year.
48	Bruce Burr		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened to the 30 years of rates paid by the forestry industry before harvest when no logging trucks travelled the roads. The increase will drive the forestry industry not to reinvest, in particular smaller outfits but even larger ones will reduce investment. • How will you pay to support the people who lose their jobs, their truck's and in the end their homes. Reduced road tax, reduced rates intake. • This is just a money grab to meet an immediate issue without follow through for the long-term consequences. This was to be online but as a discussion to the plan was fixed to 3 options, I find that is not to be a discussion.
50	Barry Lewis		Disagree	I OPPOSE the Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase.
52	Alan Bush		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed rise is out of proportion. I could understand a gradual rise but this (1173%) is just not fair or reasonable. • A gradual (10-15%) annual increase is far more just and sustainable for all concerned.
53	Richard Langford		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I appreciate that you want to increase the Roding Rate due to the damage that logging trucks do to the roads however a 1173% increase is an absolute joke. • If you can't find a way to find the money to cover these costs by a smaller increase or no increase at all then basically you're shit at your jobs and should resign immediately.
54	Russell Douglas		Option 1	I oppose the proposed roading levy

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55	Monica Clark	Waitomo Caves Museum Society	Unspecified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed targeted or differential roading rate to cover additional costs caused by forestry activities appears reasonable, but, if adopted, will need to be implemented fairly. • It would be disappointing if ratepayer funding is needed to support litigation arising from challenges by the forest industry. • Some forest owners in Waitomo District already get very little service, including road maintenance services, from Council. The forest industry and other organisations already cover 100% of the maintenance costs of some roads which are administered by the Waitomo District Council.
56	Murray and Vicki Crozier		Option 1	Trucks that are going to be used for harvesting already pay Road User Charges and are only using the road for our blocks once in every twenty five or so years when our forest comes into maturity. It is unfair to charge annual usage when that is not the case and also RUC already paid.
57	Lynda Murphy		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While it may seem ideal to increase the rate to logging trucks, perhaps a change can be bought in over a staggered time line. • As a small investor in the forestry sector this would make a huge difference to our investment made 25 years ago, which is about to be cut down.
58	Anthony Mead		Option 1	I OPPOSE the Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase
59	Ben Wood		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We chose many years ago to invest in forestry options in the Waikato/Waitomo region. Considerable economic benefits will have accrued to the area over many years through extensive forest planting and maintenance activity, and it is unconscionable that at this late harvest stage Council should signal an intent to penalise those who have made investment in the industry to mitigate what were, at the outset, wholly foreseeable roading costs.
61	Simon Mark Espie		Option 3	My view is that the differential factor 12 for category B is too high an increase. At the most it should be 6. But my preference is option 3.
62	Dane Brett		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising the Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) by nearly twelve hundred percent is totally unacceptable and unwarranted. • I am a dairy farmer in the Thames/Coromandel District Council who purchased a Share in the Arapito block partnership in Greenplan Forestry Ltd. If my local council was proposing such rate increases that would affect my business so detrimentally, they would find my tractor parked across their building entrance!!
63	Vincent Baker		Disagree	I OPPOSE the Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase
64	White Ridge Contracting	Mark & Jenny Bradbury	Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We strongly oppose the introduction of targeted rates towards landowners harvesting trees. • White Ridge Contracting has been in business in the Waitomo District (Aria) for 22 years and employ 26 staff. Our staff with their families have a positive outlook on life - they have money to spend money in this area, have houses and pay rates in this area, go to social events, play in sports teams, have kids that keep our schools going. Obviously we are only one business who will be affected by this - the roll on is huge with all businesses in town, the mills, other forestry and earthmoving companies being

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				<p>affected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since September last year we have been employed by FMNZ to work in the Greenplan Estate as a Roadline Crew and also to build roads. This has been a Godsend in that we have been able to keep our logging and earthmoving staff on steady hours and income since then. This is work that will provide security for many over the next ten years and if replanted for harvest will continue that cycle. • Targeted rates to forestry landowners means forests will either not be re-planted or will be locked up for carbon and not harvested. Look at the social consequences of this in the Wairarapa and East Coast with towns, schools etc having to close because people move away. • Without the forestry to support our business there is a high chance the business would not remain viable and would have to close. • A few years ago we were involved with Professional Harvesting Systems to do the earthworks for harvesting a block of trees on Takiri Road in Mokauiti for Tony Alcock. The Council was extremely helpful and let us close this road for three months while the harvest was being done. As part of the agreement the road was maintained and left in the same condition (actually better) as it was when the harvesting started. This harvest system was extremely successful for all parties. • We also did a similar style of harvest on Kohua Road where the road was closed for harvest (except for residents) and the road was left up to standard when harvesting finished. The road obviously doesn't need to be fully closed for this scenario to work effectively. • Our suggestion is that instead of targeted rates which will surely have a detrimental effect to many, look at the system the Council used at the Alcock block and allow the forestry companies to maintain the roads around their blocks while harvest is being done, leaving it in an acceptable state after harvest. The forestry companies can use their own contractors at their own cost which will also allow the Council contractors to keep working on other roads in the area which they are struggling to keep up with anyway.
65	Emma Barton (1)		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed increase in the Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) by nearly 1,200%, which would take effect on 1 July 2024. As part of Greenplan Forestry and a resident of this area for over 20 years, this proposal is deeply concerning to me on multiple levels. • My family and I have lived in this community for decades, I have personally witnessed their deterioration over time. Despite paying for road maintenance through our rates, the road has only been properly fixed twice in my lifetime. These repairs were merely small preventative fixes that inevitably collapsed within a couple of years. The council has had ample time to plan and maintain the roads effectively. Now, it seems the burden of their lack of planning and maintenance is being unfairly placed on us. • This drastic increase in rates from approximately \$4 per hectare to \$48 per hectare is not justifiable and would place an excessive financial strain on my family and other families who are already struggling to make ends meet. The proposed increase would escalate our District Roding Rate from \$653.80 to \$8,325.74 annually, which is unsustainable. • My mother recently passed away, and we are navigating through an incredibly challenging time.

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				<p>Implementing this rate increase would only exacerbate the hardship for my family and many others in our community. We are all striving to manage our expenses and maintain our livelihoods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I urge the Waitomo District Council to reconsider this proposal and explore alternative solutions. Please consider the real-life impacts this decision would have on families like mine. We want to all work together with the council to find a better solution that ensures the roads are maintained without placing an unfair financial burden on the community. Another option is that Greenplan and the council can have negotiations on a case-by-case basis rather than a targeted rate. This approach would benefit the community by ensuring that roads are maintained while also considering the specific needs and circumstances of different areas.
66	Jan Templeton		Disagree	Roading Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase - If you think a nearly 1200% increase in this rate is acceptable you are wrong. It only indicates that you have over spent in other areas and are wanting to claw it back from those of us who have invested in our futures and tried to ensure we would have something for our retirement.
67	Emma Barton (2)		Disagree	Refer to submission 056
68	Alan Templeton		Disagree	Proposed Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase is ludicrous. What justification do you have for a 1,173% increase? We have spent years paying into Greenplan Forestry to ensure we'd have something for our retirement.
69	Eleanor Barton		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am writing to oppose the proposed increase in the Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) by nearly 1,200%. I believe the council has not fully considered the overall impacts this rate hike will have on companies, families, and the environment. Many forestry companies in the area have been paying rates for years. The proposed rate increase is disproportionate and could lead to reduced investment in the local forestry sector, job losses, and negative economic consequences for the entire community. Please reconsider this proposal and explore more balanced alternatives.
70	Ethan Barton		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am writing to express our vehement opposition to the Waitomo District Council's proposed targeted rate increase on exotic forestry blocks. This proposal, which suggests a staggering 1,200% increase in the District Roding Rate from \$4 per hectare to \$48 per hectare, is not only unreasonable but also detrimental to the economic health and growth of our region. Labelling this rate increase as merely excessive would be an understatement—it is absurd. At a time when local businesses and industries are striving to recover and grow, imposing such an astronomical increase is counterproductive. It's a clear signal to the forestry sector and related businesses that their contribution to the local economy is undervalued. Forestry is not just about the trees; it involves a wide array of local contractors and businesses, from equipment suppliers to transport services, all of whom provide vital employment in our community. These are local jobs, filled by local people, pumping money back into our local economy. Council is effectively stifling growth and sending a discouraging message to every stakeholder

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				<p>invested in the prosperity of our region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I urge the Waitomo District Council to withdraw this proposal immediately and engage in a more constructive dialogue with the stakeholders to find feasible, fair, and balanced solutions to road maintenance funding. Let's focus on policies that support growth and collaboration, rather than imposing punitive measures that are bound to have far-reaching negative consequences.
71	Eugene MacFarlane		Option 1	This is just a money grab at harvest time, what about all the other years with no vehicle movements, such as the last 25 years. I will consider litigation if this goes ahead.
73	Iain Charles Haggarty		Option 1	You state in your consultation documents – 'over the past three years, our road network has been significantly impacted by severe weather events causing tens of millions of dollars worth of damage'. So let's not push this onto forest owners who already pay rates to you for 30 years for no benefit until the use of the road for a single harvest.
74	Matthew Greenhough		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I strongly oppose the Waitomo District Council's intention to increase these targeted roading rates. As part of my retirement plan, I opted to become an investor in the Te Kuiti district and purchased Radiata seedlings 25 +years ago. With my retirement due next year and having sustained a work injury, and with the trees soon to be harvested in the next 2 years, the last thing I expected was to be hit with a near 1200% increase in Council roading rates ! Imposing this sudden and extortionate rise will have a significantly negative impact on my investment and subsequent retirement. As the forestry blocks have been in place for many years, it's a bit late to be shifting the goal posts at this stage.
75	Matthew Barton		Option 1	<p>Refer to Submission 124 - Detailed 226 pages submission by Greenplan Forestry Ltd. Key concerns and recommendations below -</p> <p>Concerns with the Council's proposal summarized below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal is based on inaccurate and incomplete data and assumptions about the roading network, the land use categories, and the impacts and benefits of exotic forestry. The proposal is disproportionate and discriminatory, as it targets a specific group of rate payers and imposes an excessive and unreasonable increase in their roading contributions, without providing any justification or evidence for the differential treatment. The proposal is inconsistent and contradictory, as it contradicts the Council's own policies and objectives, as well as the national and regional strategies and regulations that govern the forestry sector and the roading network. The proposal is detrimental and counterproductive, as it will have negative environmental, financial, and social impacts on the forestry industry and the Waitomo District and will undermine the Council's vision and goals of creating a prosperous and sustainable community. <p>Recommendations :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a comprehensive and independent review and analysis of the roading network, the land use categories, and the impacts and benefits of exotic forestry, using reliable and up-to-date data and

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)
				<p>methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in genuine and constructive consultation and communication with the affected parties, including the exotic forestry owners, the forestry industry representatives, the other land use categories, and the general public, to seek their feedback and input on the roading funding options and their implications. Develop and implement a fair and balanced roading funding solution that reflects the actual demand and impact of each land use category on the roading network, and that provides adequate and equitable funding for the maintenance and improvement of the roads, without imposing undue hardship or disadvantage on any group of rate payers. Recognize and support the positive contribution that exotic forestry makes to the Waitomo District, in terms of environmental protection, economic development, cultural and social well-being, and work collaboratively with the forestry industry to promote and enhance the sustainability and viability of the sector. Greenplan proposed to maintain roads. 160 staff employed in harvesting, Greenplan engages local contractors, paying \$500 million to local harvesters. Will be ongoing employment as this is rotational forestry.
076	Antonius Rijnaarts		Option 1	A reasonable increase would be acceptable. However an increase of 1200% is outrageous and unacceptable. 1000's of people would be seriously effected by an increase like that. Please seriously review.
077	Eleanor Barton (2) (see also Sub 069)		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has not thought about the overall impacts on what implementing this new rate could do to companies/families and the environment. There are many forestry companies in the area which have been paying rates for many years and of which the council was suppose to be looking after the road for.
078	Brian Eric White		Option 1	This is an ambush tactic by council. Forests that were planted 30 years ago are now being harvested. Council should have thought of this years ago, and made appropriate provision, and not left it to this late stage when massive investment in harvesting is being made by forest owners. This wave of harvesting over the next 15 years will bring employment and other wealth enhancement to the district, which should be balanced against trying to "stiff" forest owners when they face massive cost increases everywhere.
079	Rosemary Ann Williams		Option 3	For over 30 years Council has been aware that forests will be harvested within the next few years. With a little bit of foresight provision could have been made by spreading a roading rate during the period of tree growth.
080	David Clarke		Disagree	The increase in fees for access to the forestry blocks is utterly ridiculous! Surely, this cannot have been a surprise - the forestry blocks (one of which I've invested in for nearly quarter of a century) needed to know that this was a risk? What justification is being provided for a nearly 1200% increase in the roading access?

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082	Steve Charters		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a part-owner of a forestry block in your district and my submission is to protest the proposed increase in rates. • While I acknowledge that loaded logging trucks may damage roadways not constructed to bear their weight, that does not mean that other lighter vehicles, or heavy vehicles other than logging trucks, using the roads more frequently do not also cause damage. You cannot simply state that roads have been damaged by logging vehicles alone. • A fair levy to mitigate roading costs might be imposed on all road users based on vehicle weight, mileage and roads traveled; the technology exists to calculate this. • Forests are harvested only once in their lifetime after 20-25 years. The only acceptable rationale for such an impost would be to charge it during the period in which the forest is harvested, since during the preceding 25 years roading damage has patently NOT been caused by loaded logging trucks as there haven't been any. A blanket rate doesn't allow for the possibility that a forest is never harvested because, for example, of fire, cyclone damage or shareholders decision not to harvest but instead to continue sequestering carbon. • If such a rate were imposed a rebate should also be provided for the preceding period when Forestry Block owners have not used roads but have instead made use of otherwise non-productive land to provide local employment, mitigate climate change and stimulate the wider economy. "The Waikato District is ... located in the heart of the 'golden triangle' - the economic zone encompassing Auckland, Hamilton, and Tauranga, which generates over 50% of New Zealand's gross domestic product (GDP) and is home to over 50% of NZ's population." (Taiao Strategy Document - Waikato District Council 2023) • The extensive planting of indigenous tree species in Waikato is a forestry activity, whether or not the trees are left alone, managed or used as a resource. The proposed rate increase appears to target exotic forests and must be seen as punitive and discriminatory unless indigenous forests are also liable. This alone is sufficient reason for imposing a rate increase only when forests are harvested.
84	Michele Laurie		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While I acknowledge Council's concerns over how to pay for roading maintenance, I feel the proposal seeks to remedy the issue by unfairly targeting the forestry sector in your district by increasing the District Roding rate by 1,173%. This is a cruel blow to many of the mum and dad investors who invested in forestry in the early 90's. • While the trees have grown and been managed well by the forestry company for 30 years, we have watched rising costs and compliance costs quickly erode any projected returns we may have had. Landowners have been paying their share of the rates for all of that time and I do not feel it is fair to whack a huge targeted rate increase on them now the trees are ready to be harvested. • The increased rate will be a huge disincentive for Kiwis to invest in well managed forests with negative environmental, economic and social impacts for the district. Think of the all the people employed in the district who are associated with the forestry industry. They may decide to take their specialist skills elsewhere if there is no work in Waitomo DC. That will shrink the ratepayer base even further and have a negative social impact on communities and businesses.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While I favour Option 1, I do feel Council needs to work with the affected parties to find a more equitable solution. I appreciate this will take longer than a blanket rate increase but it will ensure a more sustainable future for the roads, the forests and the people of Waitomo district.
085	Donna Pari		Option 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of Option 3 - Funding the additional operating rate deficit - The proposal to impose a targeted or differential rate on the District Roding Rate seems to disregard the impact and the employment opportunities that will be created by the harvesting of forestry blocks. I wish to “Creating a better future with vibrant communities and thriving business”. To achieve this vision we plan to make our District an attractive place that people will want to come and visit, work and live in. From this statement and in line with the strategic direction, the WDC aims to: Economic Development opportunities • Community connectivity and development - including employment partnerships • Good asset stewardship and management With an estimated 15+ years of harvest production of woodlots and forestry assets in this area, the revenue created for local contractors, transport, harvest crews, quarries, mills, accommodation, pest control and the additional spend by all employees is significant. Much of this will be circulated into our local economy by those directly involved in the harvest and by way of employment. Providing youth employment and a career pathway is exactly what we need in the greater Te Kuiti, Piopio district. All these roles can be engaged on site or trained within our region; Tree fallers, Forestry and Harvest Mangers, Engineers, Machine operators, Logistics, Environmental planners, Silviculture roles, Mechanics and the list goes on. • Engaged youth ultimately reduces crime, unemployment and social issues. It’s evident in industry circles, other businesses are assessing the viability and are investigating in pilot programmes to review the prospects of renewable resources of bi products for energy generation. Innovation in this space is limitless and an area for private and iwi partnerships to further explore. To date the early harvest production has enabled many local operators to provide secure employment with long term plans to invest further in workforce agreements and purchase machinery to support harvest operations. • It is with frustration to hear the imposing of this targeted rate. The investment into forestry blocks is a calculated risk some 25 years ago and it’s this foresight of investors, many who reside in our community that had a long term vision both as a financial investment and also a district wide to create an industry of employment. • Collaborate with these groups to find a resolution. A Differentiated District Roding Rate annual charge over the lifetime of landowners property is unjust considering no income is made until the harvest period. It would be unfair to think properties would be sustainable during the long term if this was imposed. • Funding the additional operating rate deficit should be given. An equitable agreement at the time of harvest would provide a fair reflection of infrastructure and associated costs. As a community and CFO of the WDC we need to think collectively and broaden the scope of vision instead of imposing restrictive costs which ultimately will see such investments be diverged to the Emissions Trading Scheme, where by no benefit are received by the people of our community. Whilst asset stewardship

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				and management is one of the directives of this council, we also need to align this with the Economic Development opportunities and Community connectivity and development and the value of Employment partnerships. This community for some time has called for valuable employment opportunities for our youth, iwi groups, and local people.
086	Gemma Dickson		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be no change to rating structure for forestry. The benefits of long term investment in forestry for the country's carbon neutral/carbon negative future are vast and numerous and must be protected. • Any differentiated district roading rate will drive down investment in a green future. Forestry investors are doing you, Council, and the whole of New Zealand, a huge environmental favour. • Any additional costs associated with use of the roads by logging trucks are completely offset by the positive benefit to the environment that these forestry trees provide to the community and nationally to New Zealand as a whole. • Forestry trucks drive not only on roads managed by this Council, but by many councils by the time they drive to their destination, including nationally maintained roads. Given the national environmental benefit to New Zealand provided by forestry, as Council, instead of increasing rates differentially, you instead need to offset any additional roading costs by obtaining funding from national government.
087	Theo Muller		Disagree	I oppose the Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase. Council has known for 30 years that these forests were being developed.
088	Philip Webb		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having for a good part of my life been a small shareholder with Greenplan Forestry, now in my 70's I was looking forward this year to a final return on forestry unit 45 (Greenplan) on it's harvesting. Now you propose to increase the forestry road rate to a ridiculous, unreasonable amount with very short notice, obviously to raise your roading funds in time for Greenplan's next harvest. • You set the precedent nation wide which will potentially destroy the NZ forestry industry. And I as a small shareholder I receive next to nothing for my years of investment. I do hope you will consider at least reducing your unreasonable and unfair road rates for forestry in your area.
089	Janet Randall		Disagree	As a shareholder in several forests in the district, that seems one hell of an increase. I would like to know how can this be justified. In the meantime, please record my opposition.
090	R Brodie		Disagree	I OPPOSE the Roding Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase. I have set this investment aside for my grand children to enjoy. Your interference is not required
091	Matt Doyle	Forest Management NZ Ltd	Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We write to you with strong opposition to the proposed differential rating factor and the targeted rate concerning land classed for forestry use in the Waitomo District. • Forest Management NZ Ltd (FMNZ) manage approximately 50,000ha of plantation forest across various regions in New Zealand. We have been contracted to manage the harvest of the Greenplan estate spanning approximately 8,000ha across the Waitomo and Ruapehu Districts. • In alignment with Greenplan Forestry Ltd, FMNZ is committed to engaging local contractors for the duration of the harvest, thereby injecting over 500 million dollars into the regional economy.

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				<p>Additionally, FMNZ will establish an office and employ several staff members in Te Kuiti contributing to the local community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our concern lies in the proposed targeted rates, particularly in their requirement for properties to pay inflated rates for infrastructure, such as roads, with limited relevance to forestry operations over a 25 year rotation. The comparatively short harvest window for production forests means that those properties do not realise the value of rates paid over that period. The major flaw in targeted rates is that council is required to use funding in the same year that it is generated, therefore the rates raised during the period of low road usage are no longer available when logging traffic increases. This ultimately leads to inefficiencies in resource allocation. • In FMNZ's experience, regions implementing targeted rates on forestry land have witnessed a devaluation on all properties. Targeted rates limit land owners' flexibility and diversification options due to increased costs incurred over the rotation period. • We strongly urge the Waitomo District Council to engage in collaborative dialogue with all landowners to formulate a more equitable, sustainable and long-term solution for maintaining public road infrastructure. Targeted rates, although initially proposed as a solution, are inherently short-term and fail to address the underlying issues while potentially yielding unintended adverse consequences, ultimately resulting in decreased land values across the district. • We trust that the council will carefully consider all submissions presented, ensuring that the final decision is fair and equitable for all stakeholders involved.
092	Cam Kendrick	GFM Ltd (see also Subs 014 and 098)	Disagree	<p>Giving verbal submission.</p> <p>I am the managing director of GFM, a Te Kuiti based contractor and forest manager. I have over 5 years experience managing Greenplan forests, 15 years building forestry infrastructure and harvesting locally, as well as being the Greenplan forest manager and a contractor in harvesting operations down Mapara south Rd. we are a local employer. The basis of my submission is around serious discussion of a sustainable long-term solution, a truthful discussion around the value for money that we are seeing form the current maintenance contractors and the suitability of them to maintain a road to suitable standard.</p>
093	Richard Seemann	ABI Rehabilitation NZ Ltd	Option 2	<p>Option 2 (our preferred option) - I am a forestry block owner through Greenplan Forestry Limited. While I understand the need to more accurately reflect actual costs related to logging trucks on these roads, I consider that the proposed rise in costs is unwarranted. <i>Assuming that the data is correct for the fair and actual costs of logging activity, then this type of cost increase needs to be slowly phased in over a number of years.</i></p>
094	Jessica Eccles		Option 2	<p><i>I have a share in an exotic forestry block that operates in the Waitomo area. I support the adoption of a differential roading rate as I think it is fair that the parties that cause damage to roading should pay for it.</i></p>
096	Natalie Kirton		Disagree	<p>I wish to make a submission in opposition to the proposed increase in roading charges to be applied to forestry operations. While roading is clearly a significant part of Council's budget, both in capital and operating expenditure, and the need to generate funds in these challenging times is apparent, I</p>

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				<p>feel that the proposal is not balanced or reasonable. My reasons for opposing this are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your proposal notes that damage is caused 'as they transport logs across the district'. However, your proposal appears to be an annual charge, whether or not logs are being harvested - forestry owners will pay the charge for the approximately 30 years trees are growing while only impacting the roading network for the brief period during which trees are being removed. I understand that Greenplan Forestry for example will use only 37 kilometres of roads for all forestry blocks over the next 20 years, some blocks using less than 1.5 kilometres of local roads during the extraction process lasting only several months, yet will be penalised with significant charges for the full period. This increase appears to be targeted at operations with less than 51% of properties in pasture. Surely, if 'forestry' is considered to be putting undue demand on the roading budget, all forestry operations using public roads should be equally rated. One could also ask why forestry is being penalised for the damage done by large and heavy vehicles, while other operations using comparable vehicles (dairy companies, farming operations, stock transport companies and the like) are not being targeted. The costs involved in this industry must be balanced by the benefits it brings to the district and local communities. These benefits are environmental, social and financial. I understand that upward of 40 workers/contractors are employed by Waitomo forestry companies themselves, with local sawmills adding another 70 or so employees, so the contribution to local employment is considerable. Companies are careful about avoiding environmental damage and reinstate land used for forestry when harvesting is complete. It is also frequently land which is unsuitable for pastoral farming so the choice becomes unproductive land, production forestry or carbon forestry - the latter having a devastating effect on communities as farming, schooling, banking, medical, and commercial ventures are withdrawn through lack of people. While it cannot be denied that forestry places considerable demand on local roading for brief periods, it does not seem that this proposed rating change is equitable or reasonable. Having a targeted rate which is applied during harvesting, and expanding the increase across all sectors using the network seems much more appropriate and fair.
098	Cam Kendrick	GFM Ltd <i>(see also Subs 014 and 092)</i>	Option 1	As a locally based contractor and employer working in the forestry sector locally for 10 years, I strongly oppose the proposed increase. I'd like to speak to my proposal to expand on the reasons why based on my local experience and my knowledge on the mapara south site and the impact of your proposed preferred changes.
099	Jeffrey Williams		Option 1	I believe introducing a specific charge for forestry roading will reduce forestry investment and hence reduce our ability to limit green house gases. Forestry plays an important role in reducing NZ CO2 output and should be encouraged. Higher roading charges will discourage investment.

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100	Veronica Anne Hoeberechts		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On behalf of the Hoeberechts Family Trust investors, we oppose the Roothing Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase. • We oppose the extreme rooding rate increase of nearly 1,200% per annum for exotic forestry. As investors with Greenplan Forestry for many years, this increase of the rooding rate in one year is diabolical. • The exotic forests provide economic investment to the Waitomo region and with more cost to the investor, most long-term investors may look outside of your region to invest their money. • Though the logging trucks may increase the damage to public roads, isn't this paid for with their road user charges - like all other commercial (diesel and now electric) vehicles. • If there is an increase of the rooding rate for exotic forests, the percentage of increase should only be double the current rooding rate (e.g. from \$4.00 per hectare to \$8.00 per hectare) to allow for the current 'cost of living' increases to everything.
101	Lorrene Te Kanawa		Option 2	Good luck though, the forestry industry are not in a good financial position themselves.
105	John Burns Anderson		Option 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally the full repair cost should be re-couped from forestry owners. Council is not in a position where it can afford to fund this cost. • Proposals to inappropriately fund renewals set out later in the plan are not sustainable. A more sustainable approach would be to maximise funding from those causing road damage. This would also have the benefit of sending an appropriate economic signal for potential forestry developments. Hopefully the work alluded to be other councils may be useful.
106	Peter Jackman		Option 1	Ask the loggers to tidy up the roads.
107	Benjamin Price		Option 1	<p>As a forestry investor, the rate increase proposed is so ridiculously exorbitant that there is no choice but to outright oppose it. Few points to be considered -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logging trucks are only using the roads at time of harvest, it isn't an everyday occurrence. • The roads are not sealed highways; the maintenance costs are comparatively low. • There is a massive difference between "increasing" the rate to help towards maintenance (even if it meant DOUBLING the rate), and increasing it by a ludicrous near on 1200%. • If the council gets a reputation for such insane increases, then the economic benefit to the region of investments such as forestry will start to vanish. New forests will just start to be planted elsewhere (and once they're in the ground, that investment isn't coming back to the region for at least 30 years); further to that, people will start to move their other investments elsewhere as well, as they won't trust what else the council will suddenly make too expensive. • A short sighted decision now, will likely have massive long terms effects.
108	Greg Tuffey		Disagree	I note that the letter I have received as the director of Awakau Forrest Limited dated 9 April 2024 states "Our Limited rooding budget does not provide for rooding damage from logging trucks during harvesting operations".

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have been the director of Awakau Forrest since 2002, in the past 22 years the forest has yet to have any such harvesting, with the potential to have one harvest within the next ten years (time frame of the LTP). • As per my phone call and subsequent text message from Ben Smit on 13 May 2024 the proposed changes will increase the roading costs from \$221 (23/24 year) to \$2808 (24/25 year) that is a 1,170.58% increase. Over ten year this will be an approx. additional cost of \$25,870 (not taking into account any inflation to rate charged). • Please note the distance from State Highway 3 to the beginning of the forest and first skid site is 1.6km, the maximum distance from State Highway 3 to a skid site that any logging truck would be used to transport the harvest from the forest is 4.8km. There are no bridges to be crossed by any logging truck in the harvest of Awakau Forest. • I would also like to note other heavy vehicle usage of Awakau road for perspective, there is a milk tanker on this road every second day for approx. 9 months of the year for milk collection. Equating to approx. 135 return trips per year and 1350 for the span of ten years. There is also the year-round usage for stock truck and trailer units. Both of which cross the bridge on Awakau Road, as the road is not sealed and largely uphill there is often large ruts and washouts occurring. • I do not believe that the projected singular harvest of Awakau Forrest over the next ten years warrants such an increase in fees, this effectively means for a maximum road usage of 4.8km Awakau Forrest will be forced to pay \$25,870 at minimum, \$5389.58 (excluding inflation) per kilometre for a total of one harvest. • Meaning all forestry under the Category C will pay significantly more than a Category A property of the same size, on the same road but at a further distance from the main road, with regular heavy vehicle usage causing ongoing and continuous damage to the roads. • There needs to be a fair and just system in place to accommodate the need for revenue collecting. • Have you considered how large the property is vs how much is in forest land and then adding in the distance of road used and current road quality to determine costs? What considerations have been made to the weight of the trucks using the road? As an example it is possible a logging truck only could be used to harvest on Awakau Road and the usage of the trailer may not be deemed necessary, therefore drastically reducing the weight and any damage being caused to the road specifically weight related.
109	Bernadette Hoeberechts		Option 1	The proposed increase of almost 1200% increase is an extreme amount.
111	Jackie Egan	NZ Forestry Managers	Disagree	<p>See submission for further detail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NZFM manage forests on behalf of 6 different forest owners, totalling 9% of total forest area in Waitomo District. Estimate to be about 9-10% of total forest in District. • Opposes the differentiated roading rate proposed. Concerns relate to lack of information provided with consultation documents about extend of roading damage and the costs these impose, the

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				<p>methodology used to address the issues of damaged road through harvest activity and the proposed allocation of the differential roading rate. Factors of 6 and 12 not well described.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry is targeted as a land use not targeted to harvesting. This will disincentivise forestry and push people toward carbon farming. • Trees like redwood have a different harvesting sequence than pine. • NZFM have worked with Council previously on road maintenance like upgrading entrances when harvesting the Tregoweth Block. • Some blocks will be located on a SH and use local roads for harvest and vice versa. • Acknowledge that there is wear and tear on roads during harvest but propose that alternative methods exist to achieve better maintenance outcomes for local roads used for harvest activity. • So much variation for different types of roads so it works best to engage with forestry directly to address issues during harvest. This also matches revenue periods for forestry. • Council can use the NEFD to see harvest schedules, usually notify earlier than the required 20 days.
112	Grant Naider		Option 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand the rationale for the users pays approach, however the sudden introduction is a very significant change that I (as a forestry unit owner) wasn't aware of. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Could there be a modified model where an annual targeted rate is introduced at a lower level, recognising that majority of the forest lifespan is relatively low impact and then a targeted rate around harvest time. This aligns the costs for repairs with the sale of the timber matching revenue and costs.</i> • <i>As an alternative consider a fixed per hectare costs split over say three years around the expected harvest time, irrespective of that actual harvest, this would aid in budget smoothing.</i>
113	Martin Ruddick		Option 1	No this shouldn't happen
114	Mary Willson		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As an owner of forestry via a number of hectares in Greenplan partnership I am very concerned about the proposed increase in costs associated with the proposed options 2 and 3. • There is insufficient detail provided on how these additional roading costs have been calculated. What other central government funding is received via RUC charges? Are you taking into account that the blocks will have no impact on the roads until harvest so for 30yrs a levy will be charged for no associated use/damage? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having these blocks bring additional revenue into the region in the form of employment via maintenance etc. The return is low, these additional costs will make even less attractive to plant in the region in future. • I understand there is additional cost with the damage associated with heavy vehicles however this needs to be fairly and transparently calculated and provided in order for ratepayers/affected parties to make truly informed decisions whether to support changes to the status quo or an alternative. This has not been provided.

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115	Heather Beddow		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I requested a call back from the relevant Waikato District Council representative regarding this proposal as I wanted to better understand it before I did my submission, but that didn't happen, so my submission is based on what I have seen in the proposal only. • I have found the information in the draft proposal very unclear as to the actual impact of implementing Options 2 or 3. There is reference to a differential factor, but no specifics as to what that means, and what the actual % increase of the current fees is. I have heard that it is over 1200% increase. How can this even be possible without going through a detailed impact assessment for those affected by such a ridiculous increase. Or without providing specific information regarding what the differential means so that people can make an informed decision in relation to the proposal or submissions. • I vehemently oppose option 2 based on my very little understanding of what it means, and both options 2 and 3 need a much wider and in depth consultation process before they should be considered or proposed. • The impact on forestry investors will be such that this change could end up costing them more than their initial investment. Pushing this change through without providing more detailed information for which a decision should be based would be highly unethical, and I for one would be raising it as a major issue with the local government representative.
117	Chantal Brunner		Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am an individual investor in a Greenplan partnership. • The proposal to introduce a differential rate on the District Rooding Rate that would increase Rooding Rates (Forestry Exotic) by nearly twelve hundred percent (1,173%) from 1 July 2024 is alarming and unreasonable. From your consultation document this would result in an increase from \$923.60 to \$11,762 for a forestry property with a CV of 777,000. • Does an increase of this magnitude really seem reasonable or proportionate to you? It will have an immediate negative impact on the forestry businesses which bring much needed jobs and income to the local economy, and will have a negative impact on the mums and dads who invest in forestry in the region. • A gradual increase over time seems more reasonable, enable property owners to plan / budget for staged, planned increases would be preferable.
118	Manulife Forest Management	Sally Strang	Disagree	<p>For detailed submission (which includes maps, graphs and examples) from Manulife Investment Management Forest Management (NZ) Ltd (MFM NZ), please refer to their 7 pages submission document - Sub No 118. Key points below -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFM NZ acknowledges the challenges that all rural councils are facing with rapidly increasing costs and the pressure this places on a limited ratepayer base. We also acknowledge that forestry has a material impact on the district council's road maintenance costs, during the period when harvesting takes place and that this can be challenging for the council to manage, particularly where maintenance has not been budgeted for by the Council. • We are however strongly opposed to the proposal in the Draft Long Term Plan to introduce a substantial targeted forestry rate. For the forests that we manage, we have estimated that this will

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				<p>increase our client's rates contribution by over 400%, to approx. \$333,000 per annum at current valuations. At the levels proposed the rate has the potential to create significant inequity and is potentially financially crippling to some forest owners, far exceeding the actual costs their operations impose on the district councils roads.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted rates are a very blunt instrument for allocating costs. It assumes that all forests have a similar call on district roads which is clearly not the case. For one of our forests, Maraeroa C, the proposed rates option 2 will amount to a rates bill of \$222,000 per year, which over the full rotation (28 years) will amount to over \$6 million at the proposed rates levels, at current land values. This exceeds the cost to of maintaining the short access road into the forest by orders of magnitude. Once the lease expires and the land is handed back to the landowners, this high level of rates be financially crippling for the landowners. The system proposed of identifying 'forestry' properties based on the percentage cover on a property has the potential to benefit large farm owners with woodlots. A large farm property with an area of forest <50% of their land area will be exempt from the rate, whereas a small property owner with a smaller area of forest but higher percentage of their total property would attract the rate. The discussion document is also silent on how carbon forestry is to be treated, but presumably permanent forests will be exempt. It would be completely inequitable to apply a targeted forestry rate of this magnitude on carbon forest land that makes no use of any roads other than occasional light vehicle access. MFM NZ submits that alternative methods exist for WDC to achieve better maintenance outcomes for local roads. We would welcome the opportunity to work with WDC and other forest owners in the District to achieve a more workable and equitable outcome. We recognise that the Council faces a funding shortfall that needs to be addressed. Where our operations impose a significant cost on the district and it can be demonstrated that this exceeds our direct and indirect contributions through rates and road user charges, our preference is to continue the current arrangement where we make direct contributions to road upgrades or maintenance. This ensures that the necessary work is carried out when and where it is required to enable harvesting to take place, and that the significant costs involved are borne at the time the forest is generating an income. If we are having a rate Council would have to fix the road during harvest. Have had bad experience in other council areas, forestry ends up fixing the roads anyway because it isn't in the council budget to fix it.
119	Waikato Farm Forestry Association	Murray Downs	Option 1	<p>We have 10-12 members that identify with Waitomo District, of the 77 current "Waikato" members. Some of them have a non Waitomo address where they live, so can be hard to identify. We will outline the basis of our submission, noting that we will include more depth when we come to make a verbal submission, and also when we obtain details of the basis and actual calculation of the estimated forest roading costs that Waitomo District CEO Ben Smit has promised this afternoon, that he will send, as the only staff member authorised to speak to enquiries on this matter.</p>

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We affirm that trees are correctly NOT included in capital values. • We affirm that metal roads such as Mapara South Road, with large forest properties at the end of the road do create problems with road damage during the harvest period of a forest cycle. • This can be offset to some extent by positive other values. • Increased biodiversity, in both plant life and animal life. Many native birds do very well in pine forests, Erosion protection, Water quality improvements – no fertiliser use, Minimal to nil use of many other General rate services. • There are many variations to a standard radiata exotic forest that make the imposition of the roading rates very distorted including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% Carbon forests – never any intention to harvest the forest - Special purpose species, many of which have much lower volumes recovered and a wait for 35- 50 years before ready - Conservation plantings like poplar, or shelterbelts for timber. - Sustainably managed forests – continual selective harvesting, low quantity, done annually. - Some forests can be harvested at anytime from 20-25 years of age, depending on management. • With qualifications, we favour use of option 2, BUT: • emphasise the need for rating calculations to take into account the expected/surveyed annual district harvest date, and thus the age of the trees. There has been a large number 1990’s radiata plantings but many factors affect the harvest time decision, and it has been much more spread out than the years of planting suggested. Keeping an annual data base of planting years and surveying harvest intentions are important proactive council considerations when striking a forest roading rate. <p>Submitter clarified at the Hearings that they now supported Option 1.</p> <p>And note three other options should be acted upon.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let responsible forest harvest managers (engaged by the rate payer) look after the council road, particularly metal ones, as they usually have expert experience in this field. 2. Recommend that rather than the council differentially rating, COUNCILS support the existing forest growers levy system, and promote all councils unitedly vote to support a forest levy rate on all tonnage harvested eg 12c /tonne paid to the council, perhaps with the harvest manager getting first go at claiming refunds for looking after council road as per 1 above? 3. Councils and Central Government try to reduce their roading bureaucracy, and be efficient and commercially responsive and understanding of their forest customers/rate payers, rather than standard process “tick box” service. <p>1-3 above comes from discussions with one of the most forest roading experienced and involved commercial forester, also on the NZ Forest Owners board, Marcus Musson, of Forest 360.</p>
120	Ewen Smith		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unfair to increase rates for forestry land. Where is the evidence that the damage caused by logging trucks at the time of harvest is greater or even equivalent to 25 years of continuous road use,

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)
				<p>by other agricultural land uses? The maximum weight for a truck in New Zealand is 53 tonnes, surely it makes no difference what contributes that weight?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My point is that for 25 years (average growing time for harvesting pine trees) there would have been no road usage while a dry stock or dairy farm would have regular, usually daily traffic movements. The cumulative damage from heavily laden stock trucks & fertilizer over 25 years would cause more wear & tear on the roads, than logging. • The Council obviously needs to raise more rates but this increase should be shared by all land uses and no one group singled out. • Forestry gets 'bad press' in traditional sheep & beef farming areas therefore making it easy for the Waitomo Council to push this change. • All ratepayers and Council members should be cognizant of our collective responsibility to reduce/capture our carbon emissions. • One Billion Trees programme has been active in the Waitomo district encouraging the planting of exotics on Grade 6 & 7 land. With the wisdom of hindsight steep land that was originally cleared for pastoral farming is now recognized as a risk to our waterways and the environment. Planting steep areas makes sense and with good forestry management can protect waterways - another responsibility of Council. • By rating forestry land at a higher rate than other land uses the Council would be sending all the wrong messages. Another issue that will affect some forestry blocks is the land management system of agroforestry where the trees are more sparsely planted and sheep graze underneath. Does the Council intend to rate these blocks as forestry?
121	Paul Clarke		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry plays an important part in the New Economy creating many jobs and being one of our largest export earners. Because of the very long-term nature of forestry investments one of the things that investors need is certainty that things won't get changed by government over the several decades that the trees take to grow. • One of the areas of certainty that investors need is the area of local authority rates. Although it is well published that local authorities are squeezed for cash, it is important that these demands for cash are not put onto the forestry industry. Growing trees don't consume tap water and they don't create sewage and they don't use civic services etc. So as a forestry investor I was shocked to hear that the Waitomo District Council are imposing one thousand and one hundred and seventy three percent (1,173%) rates hike on forestry land. The basis of this was that logging trucks to contribute to the repair of roads in the area. • The problem I have with this is that logging trucks are already charged RUC based on their weight and that they should then not be effectively double taxed by local authorities for their road use. • If more money is needed it should be addressed via the existing RUC system and a start there would be not to siphon off road taxes for things like public transport and cycleways -but to actually use that money on the roads and not other things. • Local authorities should require money to maintain roads for things like logging trucks from the

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)
				<p>NZTA who collect the RUC taxes from the truck owners and that a fit and proper use for RUC tax would be paying local councils for the damage caused by logging trucks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sets an extremely dangerous precedent of using rates to fund roading work on top of the already very high RUC fees collected from truck owners. New Zealand investors need long term certainty when investing and massive and unpredictable rate rises are only to cause severe damage to the economy as investors move their money overseas instead of investing it in New Zealand.
122	Barbara Quickenden		Disagree	I OPPOSE the Roothing Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase
123	Matthew Quickenden		Disagree	I OPPOSE the Roothing Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase
124	Greenplan Forestry Ltd.		Disagree	<p>Refer to detailed 226 pages submission by Greenplan Forestry Ltd. Key concerns and recommendations below -</p> <p>Concerns with the Council's proposal summarized below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal is based on inaccurate and incomplete data and assumptions about the roading network, the land use categories, and the impacts and benefits of exotic forestry. • The proposal is disproportionate and discriminatory, as it targets a specific group of rate payers and imposes an excessive and unreasonable increase in their roading contributions, without providing any justification or evidence for the differential treatment. • The proposal is inconsistent and contradictory, as it contradicts the Council's own policies and objectives, as well as the national and regional strategies and regulations that govern the forestry sector and the roading network. • The proposal is detrimental and counterproductive, as it will have negative environmental, financial, and social impacts on the forestry industry and the Waitomo District and will undermine the Council's vision and goals of creating a prosperous and sustainable community. <p>Recommendations :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a comprehensive and independent review and analysis of the roading network, the land use categories, and the impacts and benefits of exotic forestry, using reliable and up-to-date data and methods. • Engage in genuine and constructive consultation and communication with the affected parties, including the exotic forestry owners, the forestry industry representatives, the other land use categories, and the general public, to seek their feedback and input on the roading funding options and their implications. • Develop and implement a fair and balanced roading funding solution that reflects the actual demand and impact of each land use category on the roading network, and that provides adequate and equitable funding for the maintenance and improvement of the roads, without imposing undue hardship or disadvantage on any group of rate payers. • Recognize and support the positive contribution that exotic forestry makes to the Waitomo

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)
				District, in terms of environmental protection, economic development, cultural and social well-being, and work collaboratively with the forestry industry to promote and enhance the sustainability and viability of the sector.
127	Federated Farmers	Kelly Langton	Agree	<p>For detailed submission, please refer Federated Farmers Submission No. 127</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That WDC introduces an appropriate targeted or differential roading rate for forestry without delay. • That the targeted or differential roading rate is proportionate to the costs associated with maintaining and upgrading roads impacted by forestry operations.
128	Te Ruru Family Trust	Ryan Duffy	Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have just been advised of your desire to implement the proposed Differentiated District Roading Rate. I am very much in favour of user pays, and don't believe any sector of the road transport economy should be subsidised. • My understanding is that it is the heavy trucks that are responsible for the damage to the surface of our roads, and that this is cumulative. • Obviously there is intensive use of a road when a forestry block is harvested, but this surely must be considered in the context of the total time from the planting of the trees, to the harvest. A loaded logging truck is no more destructive to a road surface than a milk tanker and trailer, or any other loaded truck. During the 25 - 30 years that a forestry block is growing there is virtually no trucking activity. A dairy farm will have a large truck unit pulling in and out once a day, say 250 times per year, for 25 years. This is 6,250 milk truck visits while the trees are growing in a forest and there are virtually no truck visits. • Obviously the forestry impact happens all at once and is therefore highly visible, however it surely needs to be considered in a 25 year context as rates have been paid but the roads have not been used for those 25 years. I don't know what the roading rate for other users of heavy transport units, such as farmers, is, but the rate charged should be equitable across all users over relevant time frames. • The fairest way to achieve this would likely be through the Road User Charge tax, but this is a nationwide system and an individual council needs another mechanism to adjust for local requirements. If you wish to use a property rate to fund roading costs then this should be applied to all users of heavy transport equally, otherwise it is no more than a bias against the forestry sector. • I completely support any measure that will reduce the amount of exotic forest development - which I see as having a hugely negative impact on our backcountry areas in many different ways, but the application of this rate cost needs to be fair and equitable across all the industry sectors that use heavy transport, not simply a punitive 'tax' to penalise and punish a single sector that the Waitomo Council wish to discourage in their region. • I have no problem paying any charge that can be shown to be fair and equitable across all contributors/users.
129	Brett Tawse		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have read you're 'The Shape of things to come' Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Consultation document. I am an investor in Greenplan Forestry, hence I have an interest in your proposal/s via the rates we pay.

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand the proposed roading (Forestry exotic) rates increase is 1173%. You will of course know that many Councils are suffering, as nearly all households are, under the effects of the last Governments mis-management leading to severe inflation, and other issues. Some of the other issues are the lack of investment Councils have themselves undertaken to ‘keep up with greater capacity’ required due to a bigger population, even with wider base on which to levy rates. In my view your rating increases are neither fair, nor equitable. • Your proposal is not equitable in terms of the overly increased weighting for Roading charges. (forestry exotics) You will be aware of the changes to RUC in relation to electric vehicles. This is another example of prior inequity, which is now being addressed for National Highways, which roads pass through your District, and which forestry logging trucks already pay a significant contribution to. You are getting benefit from this industry. • What is inequitable in your new rates roading increase is that Council is proposing a 1173% increase on this rateable item, but is proposing much lessor rate increases on other rateable items. It is unfair that with the knowledge you have had for nearly 30 years of this forestry industries investment in to your District you are now proposing to slam the industry in one foul swoop, while previous Councils have sat on their hands and ignored it. It is unfair that you are ‘dealing this industry a body blow’ at the eleventh hour, without better and ongoing consultation historically and a gradual increase process over the years, and it is inequitable to consider applying a disproportionate increase on this rateable item, viz a viz others. • Sure, nobody likes an increase, and I trust the increasing and larger rating base has been levied wisely and equitably. Seemingly that hasn’t happened (viz Some property owners who benefit from the network are not contributing to its operation or maintenance) Accordingly, to propose to try and obtain recovery of poor past levying, by whacking one industry, just as it comes to maturity seems to be a rates grab, placing undue pressure on this industry. But given some increases are needed then these need to be gradual, and in the case where you are proposing a 1173% increase, then any increase (certainly not 1173%) should be discussed well before it is introduced so those affected can plan for it and put it into their budgets, and then increased gradually over time. A 1173% immediate increase absolutely does not comply with this sense of reasonableness. • I strongly oppose the manner in which, and the extent of the proposed roading levy increase. If it were to be applied equitably to all rural land owners, how do you think pastoral famers will handle this per hectare levy? • Because you have made this a targeted levy, you need to talk with representatives of the target, and agree a proportionate increase which is relative to all other levy increases, and introduce this over a reasonable time period (ie the thirty years growing period). • It is not the industry’s fault that Council didn’t do this earlier, so Council should live and die by the consequences of its own action/inactions, and not kill an industry through an abrupt shock due to past Council inaction. Please get around the table and agree a gradual and long-term rate change,

Sub.	Name	Org	Preferred option	Comments (or summary of)
				relative to all other rate changes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I OPPOSE the Roading Rate (Forestry Exotic) increase.
131	Sheree Amber Heath		Option 2	Logging companies need to contribute to repairs/maintenance of "high use" roading and said damage of these roads.
132	John Kaati		Disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No damage in the 25-30 years prior to harvesting. Consideration should be given to value of a commercial forest, financial gain for community and nation. • Commercial trees should be treated the same as other forms of farm produce (i.e. sheep, milk), including heavy transportation travelling from mines. • Trees have always been before climate change; it does not differ from other farming produce. Reasonable roading must be given the highest rating by this council. • Roads are the most important commodity in people lives. All properties must be rated the same for roading purposes on property, not charges, and not by category. • The dedicated roading rate should be a source to future proof sufficient funding to maintain Waitomo roads at a cost-effective level.

Summary and commentary on submissions received to draft Long Term Plan 2024-34

Any other topic

Submissions relating to community facilities and recreation

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Summary	Analysis
012	Rajeshwari	<p>Having the library open for a few hours on Saturdays really helps parents (especially those who work full time during the week) to take their children to the library.</p> <p>Library and pools are two main places where kids love to spend time. I take my kids to Ōtorohanga library on Saturdays, would love to see Waitomo District Library open again on Saturdays for the public.</p>	<p>Comment: Prior to Covid-19 the library was open on Saturdays between 9.30am and 12.30pm</p> <p>A decision was made to reduce the hours to Monday to Friday only due to low patronage numbers in the Library on a Saturday.</p> <p>Whilst this does not address Saturday opening and an ability for children and families to visit the library, a click-and-collect service has been put in place to provide library book collections outside of opening hours. The library catalogue is available online and orders can be placed via an online form. Alternatively customers can phone or email the library to place an order.</p> <p>Opening the Library on a Saturday would require staffing considerations, this could be looked at within current budget or additional budget may be required.</p>
083	Triyoga Dharmautami	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope that the road works across from our house (Kent Street) will be done well and be long lasting. Would love to see clean, tidy, safe and environmentally friendly Te Kuiti areas. • Suggestion that the Miles (Les) Munro building could be used for more community events and activities, with some discounts and more affordable fees, complete facilities and safety. Suggestion that sponsorships from local businesses may help. Perhaps there could be more public facilities for children, families, and people with disabilities to enjoy together. • Wonder whether wheelie bins will be made available. <p>A hope that the rates can be not as high with what's been planned, life is expensive with rising costs across the board at the moment.</p>	<p>Comment: Later in 2024 we will be consulting with the community on improving the utilisation of the Les Munro Centre.</p> <p>The proposed fees and charges for the Les Munro Centre have been changed to make them more useable and to allow for 50% discount for community groups.</p> <p>The LTP considers the investigation of kerbside collection of refuse and recyclables. This will involve the feasibility of using wheelie bins.</p> <p>Council is very aware of the increasing cost of rates and has tried and will continue to try to look for opportunities to keep rates increases as low as they can be.</p>

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Summary	Analysis
102	Matthew Cooper, Sport Waikato	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Centennial Park revitalisation project - Sport Waikato supports funding for the Centennial Park revitalisation project, including the outlined investment into play assets at the park highlighted in the Long-Term Plan. - Improve our playgrounds - Sport Waikato supports funding outlined for playground projects in the Long-Term Plan. - 32% of people within Waitomo District are using existing playgrounds. Only 7% of playground users are either very or extremely satisfied with these spaces (suggestions made that they are not fit for purpose. Not family friendly, accessible and not able to use for varying ages). Safety and security were also mentioned as barriers to satisfaction. - Waitomo District Aquatic Centre - Sport Waikato recognise and support ongoing investment outlined in the long-term plan for the Waitomo District Aquatic Centre. - Waitomo respondents of the Community Survey 22% indicated they were either dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied with the current provision of aquatics facilities (versus 7% very or extremely satisfied). • Recommendation from Waikato Regional Active Spaces Plan for Playgrounds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on optimising and maintaining existing assets. - Focus on flexible, accessible, and inclusive provision for all, including low participation groups and aging population including adults play opportunities. - Exploration of accessibility to school network and facilitate a strategy to increase access - Considerations around future playground planning should occur alongside planning for destination spaces (via town concept planning an alike) and key locations which cater for a large volume of active recreation. - Where playgrounds are highlighted to be renewed, consideration for co-design of engaging age-appropriate play opportunities (inclusion of Adult Play) 	<p>Comment: Thank you for your support and advice for the Centennial Park project, ongoing playground funding, and the aquatic centre. Your strategic input is valued.</p> <p>Council is looking at the development of a number of our playgrounds, in partnership with schools and communities, to improve their useability, accessibility and appeal. The need for playgrounds for people of all ages and with disabilities will be part of these engagement processes.</p> <p>To note that our own annual survey result from 2023 suggest that 83% of residents are satisfied with our parks and open spaces. Almost half of the 17% of respondents who were unsatisfied attributed this to playgrounds needing upgrading.</p> <p>The results of the same survey showed that 86% of residents were satisfied with the facilities at the District Aquatic Centre with only 14% dissatisfied.</p>

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recommendation from Waikato Regional Active Spaces Plan for Aquatic Centre - Investigate sub regional supply and cross boundary partnerships to continue network approach – taking into consideration the outcomes of any investment Otorohanga Memorial Pool Complex - Optimise and maintain existing assets - consider age and condition of pools prior to any upgrade/refurbishment - Maintain existing operational pools based on asset management plans - Explore partnerships with schools and tertiary institutions 	
011	Peter Richard Henry Voyce (Waitomo Aero Club)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expressing concern at proposed landing fees from \$10 to \$15 and proposal to charge Aero Club members who have previously been exempt. ● Historically landing fees were only used to charge commercial users but this soon spread to all planes. ● Rather than using companies who monitor traffic and charge retrospectively, a return to the honesty box system but using modern technology to allow for internet banking would make more sense (to get around the risk of theft from honesty boxes). ● There is a risk that the fuel facility will be removed by the fuel company if it becomes unprofitable for them. ● An increase in landing fee of \$5 may do the opposite of increase revenue. If other fields nearby increase their fees but Te Kuiti doesn't, it will be to Te Kuiti's advantage as it will be seen as a destination ● Regarding the exception for Waitomo Aero Club, Te Kuiti is our home base so it doesn't seem right that we should have to pay to get in. Lease of building is already paid through subs. ● Our activities bring business to the township, mainly hospitality. Training is provided to anyone interested including young people interested in an aviation career. ● I believe the revenue gathered off the field is more than sufficient to cover the costs, no valid reason for this gamble in the hope of collecting a few extra dollars. 	<p>Comment: The airfield supports the local aeroclub, commercial and other causal users. A significant share of the commercial users support the district's top-dressing industry. Current forecasts indicate that there will need to be an annual \$60,000 general rate requirement to support the operations of the airfield.</p> <p>Two fuel providers provide fuel for the airfield users. This is a significant attraction for users. Staff are in negotiation with these providers to increase the charges to them to help support the airfield operations.</p> <p>A number of conversations have been had with the Aeroclub. They appear to have a preference to move to an annual landing fee for members and a honesty box / on-line payment process for causal users.</p> <p>A significant factor in this decision is Council's requirement to operate an airfield monitoring system to provide statistics to Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The current AIMS system monitoring aircraft movements. This costs (\$7,000 p.a.). Landings at the airfield have dropped significantly in recent years to be 500 to 800 per year (estimate 600 for 2023/24). This is likely to be because of the cost of fuel, the economic climate (especially fertilizer spreading), less pilot training in the region and impact of post covid changes in behaviour.</p>

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please think carefully before approving this proposal. <p><i>Also considered as a Fees and charges submission</i></p>	<p>Staff are investigating the detail on what is required for CAA reporting and other methods of monitoring aircraft movements if this reporting is still required.</p> <p>One option is to set the landing fees at what was proposed in the LTP (\$15 per private and \$20 for commercial users) unless individual contracts can be negotiated with individual groups. A suggestion around annual landing charge fees would promote airfield use, give users certainty of cost and Council certainty of income. This is dependent on staff concluding discussions around CAA reporting and the investigation of different aircraft movement systems.</p>
017	Waitomo Aero Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land for the aerodrome was gifted to the then council and crown in 1961 for the purpose of an aerodrome. The Aero club considers the facility as a community recreation facility like the pool, and other sports and rec facilities. It is also a site for agricultural and economic operations. Its attributable benefit to the area it serves is therefore far greater than the 20% tabled in the LTP. Providing a base for agricultural aircraft operations it has played a significant part in development of greater rural area and generating wealth to contribute to WDC's rate base. For some time Aerodrome members have been exempt from landing fees, this has been appreciated and contributed to our increase in membership (today at 33). Members are classes as regular, non-regular, seldom, and never, so it would be hard to strike a fair and equitable process. Prior to Covid there were extensive movements within flight training institutions, if captured could result in revenue collected to offset aerodrome costs. After council system to do just this failed, an agency has been employed to monitor and collect this info for staff to process and charge accordingly. This is a costly system to administer, there hasn't been a return to pre covid activity to justify its use. 	<p>See response to submission 011</p>

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options include users paying an annual one off fee (rather than using recording provider) with honesty options for casuals to pay online. This would be acceptable but requires council to give users an opportunity to pay monthly or quarterly fees based on historic data. Regular members of the club could pay a \$200 annual fee and casual members could pay with the honesty box. • Te Kuiti is an important fuel stop for transitioning aircraft, added benefit as council collects on fuel uplifted. • Recreational flying is the club's main activity, along with flying competitions. The club is not as buoyant as it was but if council insists on raising fees we will lose this membership, the fuel levy will reduce and the club house vacant. • Council installed a camera 4 years ago to monitor and collect monies but this scheme hasn't continued. It is time consuming and costly to administer. Other aero clubs in similar situations (non-registered) have elected to stop recording as this is not required for non-registered air fields (as Te Kuiti is). <p><i>Also considered as submission to Fees and Charges (submission 004)</i></p>	
45	John Lissington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Airport at Te Kuiti - You say you want to increase income from it to help defray expenses in keeping the airport going. You don't appear to be encouraging the growth of the airport. That's four ground rentals that you are not getting. • In my own case I gave up waiting to build, because nothing was being done on site so I could start. I had already had the kitset ordered and paid for. • As for the landing fees. I am in favour of paying a annual bulk amount for the local members, with a daily landing fee for others. • Signs could be erected near the clubhouse and the fuel pumps with a honesty box and a bank number so people have the option on how to pay. Then you could stop using the collection agency to collect, and save at least \$6000 + 	See response to submission 011

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<p>This should be no more than \$10 + gst, for the gross weight of a light aircraft. (more for a heavy aircraft). For example I flew to New Plymouth recently, and the landing fee was \$10, and they have everything there.</p> <p><i>Also considered as submission to Fees and Charges (submission 014)</i></p>	

Submissions related to community and recreation

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Summary	Analysis
101	Lorrene Te Kanawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm disappointed of the development of the Brook Park sections. Will they be affordable housing? • I'm dismayed at the lack of progress with the Lawrence St sections when there was so many glowing articles with the mayor about this affordable housing project. It was a shame you didn't co-fund with The Lines Co heating for Waitomo homes, especially when you had funding available. It doesn't matter if homes are owned by landlords, you will have warmer and healthier homes for Waitomo residents. • Thank you for getting behind the NZ Shears Committee to support them with the Running of the Sheep Day. 	<p>Comment: As part of the Waitomo District Housing Strategy, Council is looking at opportunities, and is working with other parties, to consider the development of affordable homes in the Waitomo District. We appreciate that the lack of homes, particularly affordable homes, is a major issue in our district. The Lawrence Street property has been sold to Kāinga Ora for the development of social housing. The development of that progress is in their hands.</p>
116	Sam Newton, Recreation Aotearoa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports proposed investment in Active Recreation infrastructure and services, outlined in the Draft LTP • Supports Council's commitment to investment in active transport infrastructure. • Support for the investment in Play by Waitomo District Council. Recreation Aotearoa notes that co-design kaupapa for Play infrastructure often results in a desirable bias towards less structured and informal modes of play. • Cautions against deferred maintenance and upgrades of playgrounds, specifically. It is essential that investments in 	<p>Comment: Council is looking at the development of a number of our playgrounds, in partnership with schools and communities to improve their useability, accessibility and appeal. The needs of playgrounds for people of all ages and with disabilities will be part of these engagement processes. Council continues to work with its inspection programmes and asset management plans to help ensure facilities are kept at an appropriate standard.</p>

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<p>public toilets, walkways and connecting green spaces are also implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cautions of a predictable lag-effect of participant uptake in the utilisation of new recreational facilities. Recreation Aotearoa urges Waitomo District Council to be patient with regard to how quickly and fully new facilities are utilised by different recreational groups. • Increase investment in the accessibility of playgrounds and parks. • Undertake inclusive consultation processes within the design, development, and upgrades of the recreation and play spaces specified within the LTP. • Collaboration with people with disabilities throughout the duration of such projects and warn of the risk of only consulting with end-users at the beginning of a project, or after it is too late. Maintaining ongoing input from the disability community and advisory groups at regular intervals, is an essential principle to imbed within the project developments. • Concern that cost escalation in undertaking these investments may be inadequately accounted for. • ‘Build it and they will come’ approach doesn’t always work. Simply building infrastructure is not enough. Recreational assets need to be activated and programmed to make them more appealing and to break down barriers for the hard-to-reach areas of the community. 	

Submissions relating to funding contributions

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
001	Mark Morgan, Waikato Regional Airport Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WDC should commit to current investment in Hamilton Waikato Tourism (HWT) at \$72,338 with annual CPI increases. • Waikato Regional Airport is a 100% shareholder of HWT. • This should be seen as investment as a portion of the \$101million visitor spend in the district each year is directly attributable to the activities and co-ordination by HWT. • This spend will be at risk if HWT are required to restructure its resources and service delivery model or disband entirely. • Across the six Waikato funding councils the proposed funding reductions is -41%. • When the previous Tourism Waikato was disestablished in 2006 there was a significant decline in domestic and international expenditure and overnight stays. • A well-resourced tourism organisation is needed to support any future business cases to secure international flights to the region. • Expansions of the JetPark Hotel have been considered but Waikato Regional Airport Ltd would be mindful of any significant investment in the hotel without a functioning regional tourism organisation. • If HWT is unable to continue, experience will be lost from within the team. Council receives disproportionate benefit from the funding put in. 	See response to submission 003
003	Nicola Greenwell, Hamilton & Waikato Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council urged to reinstate funding levels for the Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) for the 2025-35 LTP to \$72,338. No funding increase is sought. • Hamilton Waikato Tourism (HWT) is funded through partnership with the regions tourism industry and six councils: Waitomo, Hamilton, Matamata-Piako, Ōtorohanga, Waikato, and Waipā. Services are agreed to within a signed Service Level Agreement. • Per capita the funding HWT receive places it 28th out of the country's 31 RTOs. • Visitors contribute \$101 million to the Waitomo district economy for the year to October 2023 (visitor is someone who has travelled further than 50km away from home). \$37 million from international and \$65 million from domestic visitors. This is \$277,000 of new money into the district's 	<p>Comment: Council has funded HWT for regional tourism services since July 2011.</p> <p>The role of HWT is to generate competitive economic benefit through regional tourism marketing, visitor sector strategies and development activities focused on increasing visitor length of stay and spend for the region. Current Service Level Agreement expires 30 June 2024. Parties to the Agreement are HWT, Hamilton City Council, Waikato District Council, Waipa District Council, Matamata-Piako District Council,</p>

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<p>economy each day and a return of \$1402 for each dollar contributed by WDC to HWT's work. No measure for how much of this is contributed to by HWT, at a conservative 3%, HWT directly contributes \$3 million – for an investment of just \$72,000.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HWT's role is to grow tourism revenue by attracting more visitors and encouraging longer stay. Partnering with HWT ensures the region is represented effectively. • HWT build sector capability, regional product development, and promotion of the region to leisure and business event visitors, media and travel trade. We collaborate with Creative Waikato, Te Waka, Waikato Screen etc. • Increasing profile of Waitomo through HWT is good for visitors and residents, benefits the community across 4 wellbeing pillars. • A 60% reduction in funding will result in significantly less services from HWT, resulting in fewer visitors and reduced revenue into Waitomo. The board and shareholders agree the minimum contribution is \$70,000, contribution below this is not viable. This has potential to be an in or out decision. • This funding has minimal impact on your budget at just 0.015% of spending but very large impact on HWT's viability. • 12,200 are employed in visitor sector in region. HWT achieve 6.3% market share of visitor spend across NZ, reduced HWT activity and a market drop of just half a percent, \$149million less would be spent with the potential to impact 985 jobs in Waikato community. • Impact will also be felt on business events. • RTOs supported tourism after/during Covid-19 with: domestic campaign, 'Waitomo Weekends'; RTO funding for EAP services for Waitomo village operators; Waitomo to Taranaki Way (curated map and itinerary); Tiaki in Waitomo (care for people and place); begun work on digital online experience within Te Kūiti. • Thermal Explorer Regional Events fund utilised for Waitomo Trail Event will not be available without HWT. • Assistance also provided during emergency weather events representing visitor sector. • HWT surveys suggest residents value and benefit from tourism. 	<p>Otorohanga District Council and Waitomo District Council.</p> <p>Each of the other six Waikato councils have proposed cuts to their funding for HWT in their draft LTPs.</p> <p>Schedule of Service forms part of Agreement with eight KPI's in place.</p> <p>KPI's are on target or complete.</p> <p>KPI's relate to growing industry contribution, growing commercial accommodation market share, growing visitor expenditure market share, growing business events market share, media and travel trade activity, and capability building for operators.</p> <p>This may be an in or out decision rather than just reducing the funding as proposed.</p> <p>Tiaki Promise</p> <p>This is about encouraging visitors to travel conscientiously, looking after the environment. HWT activated this with local operators by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing support in introducing Tiaki; • Providing access to collateral; • Personalising Waikato Region Marketing Campaign that aligns with national Tiaki Promise initiatives. <p>'Tiaki in Waitomo' pilot was promoted across several websites, social media platforms and the local King Country newspapers Aug 2023.</p> <p>Digital Experience</p> <p>HWT with WDC staff are developing a digital experience within Google. Various sites along Rora St (including Millennium Pavilion, Sir Colin Meads Statue, Legends Gallery, Japanese Garden, Heritage</p>

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Waikato Regional Airport Limited is HWT's shareholder, the WRAL board will make decision on viability of HWT. This should be seen as a service you buy not a grant. The sector will expect support from council if HWT not there to deliver it, council will need to be resourced. Waitomo operators contribute a combined \$55,546 (GST exclusive) annually through partnerships, visitor guide advertising and inkind contributions. 	<p>House, and Shearing Statue) are included. This allows potential visitors to look at these sites in more detailed and read about them online before visiting. Filming began in April with completion date TBD.</p> <p>Response: Council has decided to fund/not fund HTW</p>
005	David Perks, Regional Tourism New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Tourism New Zealand (RTNZ) recommends that WDC investment in Hamilton Waikato Tourism (HWT) is retained at its current level, with consideration given to funding keeping pace with inflation and operational cost increases to provide certainty for sustainable growth and development. Regional tourism organisations like HWT are key coordinators of tourism activities within regions. They provide valuable support and capability. Destination promotion and stewardship is an important investment that no district can afford not to make without damaging economic and social wellbeing. HWT promotional work goes alongside Tourism NZ's work, so that regions can attract their share of high spending visitors. Tourism NZ relies on HWT's on the ground knowledge. All regions have developed Destination Management Plans reflecting a region's future aspirations, through this HWT have developed a contract with the community, it is important this is supported. Regional tourism organisations support visitor assets and work closely with councils to optimise the value and return that they get for ratepayers through out-of-town visitation. Work is underway through the Tourism Industry Aotearoa's Tourism Strategy to address the role, structure, and funding of regional tourism organisations. However this will take time, so WDC is strongly recommended to retain its commitment to funding until this is implemented. 	See response to submission 003

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial challenges are acknowledged but this funding should be seen as an investment not a cost. For every rate payer dollar WDC make in HWT it returns \$1,396. Any reduction in funding would be a major step backward for the region, at a worse case scenario Waikato could once again cease to have a regional tourism operator. 	
010	Daniel Thorne, Discover Waitomo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discover Waitomo operates the Waitomo Glowworm Cave, Ruakuri Cave, Black Water Rafting Co., Aranui Cave, The Homestead Cabins, and the Homestead Café/Restaurant, employing over 180 people. Oppose reduction in funding to HWT. An example of HWT success was advocating for games during FIFA world cup and the positioning of USA games between Wellington and Auckland which drove record self-drive USA visitation to the Waitomo Valley. Losing Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) representation for Waitomo may exclude the region from central government funding such as Regional Events Fund. The loss may also impact on connection to Tourism NZ leading to exclusion from global and nationwide campaigns. The investment will generate increased council revenues via economic activity and creation of local jobs. As an NZX listed company Discover Waitomo have global support marketing and sales teams who promote Waitomo as a world class destination. With support from HWT, the district can attract more high value international and domestic visitors. Discover Waitomo are a Gold Platinum member of HWT and pay for this partnership, amount to be advised to Council. 	See response to submission 003
016	Lynley Twyman, Timber Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council does not acknowledge support for the tourism industry in this process. Tourism plays key role in district's economy, society, and environment. HWT showcases regions assets, driving economic growth and community development. Proposed reductions could have detrimental effects on local businesses, specifically visibility of attractions like the Timber Trail which benefits Maniaiti/Benneydale community. Ensuring good governance and sustainability for the Timber Trail Great Ride is a critical consideration for the district. 	See response to submission 003

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HWT provide access to data and markets that we otherwise couldn't access. HWT is to us like what MPI or MFAT does for farmers. A lifeline for small business we can't afford to lose. • Reconsider and cuts to tourism funding, invest in sustaining and promoting regions tourism industry. 	
046	Pete and Libby, Spellbound Glowworm and Cave Tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to express our concern that Waitomo District Council proposes to cut support to Hamilton Waikato Tourism down to \$30 000 pa. We are asking the council to continue to support our R.T.O. to at least the level they have been, \$72k pa. • One of the roles of the R.T.O is to market and network in overseas regions where smaller operators such as ours could never afford to go. Through their size, expertise and reputation they can effectively promote our region. • Hamilton Waikato Tourism reports that the Waikato Region attracts \$1.9 billion per year in tourism spend, \$56 million is directly attributable to their activities. • Successful tourism depends entirely on networking and marketing, our region has to compete hard for customers with the South Island and the rest of the Pacific. It would be naive to think our success will continue at the same level without the continued work of Hamilton Waikato Tourism. • The Waitomo District has a growing number of small tourism operators. The tourism rebound from covid is almost complete and there is improved confidence among operators, accommodation providers and restaurants. We are hearing of a burgeoning number of small accommodation enterprises setting up or expanding. All individually promote their own businesses and also benefit significantly from the activities of our R.T.O. • Our business has been in operation long enough to remember the loss of Tourism Waikato, (H.W.T.'s predecessor) They had to close completely because of loss of funding in 2007. The GFC followed soon after and this was a double blow to Waitomo's tourism businesses. Our income fell by 40%. This implies the wider district's tourism dollar probably also fell by around 40%. We were very relieved to see Hamilton Waikato Tourism established in 2011, tourism grew steadily again until covid closed borders to international visitors. 	See response to submission 003

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We advise Waitomo District Council to continue its support of Hamilton Waikato Tourism to at least at current levels. We want to reassure the council that Hamilton Waikato Tourism makes a valuable contribution to our industry. We advise that \$72 000 is a good investment to make on behalf of our district, it may also help keep our district buoyant in these economically interesting times. 	
095	Damian Sicely, Tawa Limited/Waitomo Top 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shouldn't be dropping the funding towards tourism as this will have a large negative impact in the future for the region. 	See response to submission 003
097	Peter and Anna Crawford, Tawa Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for Hamilton Waikato Tourism (Regional Tourism Office) is maintained at the current funding level and not reduced. Tawa Limited owns two accommodation properties in the Waitomo Caves Village including the Waitomo Top 10 Holiday Park. We are a New Zealand family-owned company with 10 years of experience running accommodation properties in the North Island. In the Waitomo Village our teams host over 40,000 guest nights per year. We currently employ 18 Waitomo/Otorohanga locals, with more in summer. In addition the park uses local contractors (e.g. plumbers) whenever needed. Hamilton Waikato Tourism data shows that if our current market share should drop just half a percent, that would mean \$149 million less spent in the region per annum; or \$400,000 dollars less per day into our communities. The data suggests, on average, one job is created or sustained for every \$151,254 that visitors spend in our region. If our market share drops by that half a per cent then it potentially equates to 980 less jobs in the region. There is not a large population in Waitomo compared to large international market trying to reach, need support to promote and attract visitors, rely heavily on HWT and Council to promote that for us. This is a recession time, it isn't the time to cut back on advertising. Important for small operators to have HWT bring people in. 	See response to submission 003

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We pay \$1,500 in an annual partnership fee to HWT. An example of this benefit for us is HWT inviting us to trade travel events which is a great way to promote ourselves and opens up opportunities. 	
126	Suzie Denize, Hairy Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expressing concern with proposed reduction in budget for HWT. Urge council to carefully consider the implication of reducing this funding. Any decrease in funding could have negative effects on tourism numbers and on tourism business. This will lead to job losses, decreased local spending, and would undermine the vibrancy and livelihood of our community. 	See response to submission 003
104	Dr Jeremy Mayall, Creative Waikato	<p>Specific Recommendations: We request ongoing strategic investment of \$30K per annum, as part a service agreement with contribution to:</p> <p>a) Continued development and implementation of the Waikato Arts Navigator Strategy, along with an ‘Arts Action Plan’ for Waitomo council to provide a high-level strategy for how Council can further integrate arts, culture and creativity into what they do</p> <p>b) Additional Investment to deliver:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Cultural wellbeing outcomes with community ii .Regional arts strategic activation iii. Creative capability building in local communities iv. Contribution to local and regional research and insights (including the Waikato Creative Infrastructure Plan). <p>c) A high-level proposal and scope can be provided if required.</p> <p>Funding would allow for a deeper dive into what’s happening in the arts in the district. Have delivered locally: Elevate creative careers programme and delivered programmes with artists on things like business development.</p>	<p>Comments:</p> <p>We do not current fund Creative Waikato.</p> <p>WDC manages the distribution of around \$20,000 of community funding for local arts and creative initiatives, funded by the Central Government Creative Communities Scheme.</p>
006	Larissa Allan, Waikato Screen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waikato Screen are seeking an inclusion in the LTP with an annual funding allocation of \$3000. The \$3000 is sought from Waikato Council’s to in total match the amount granted by the Regional Council. It is hard to get funding for operations and for economic development, more funding available for specific workshops. The organisation plays a crucial role in driving the growth of the screen sector in the Waikato Region. Funding will enable strategic initiatives, partnerships, and economic development efforts to continue. 	<p>Comments:</p> <p>We currently fund Waikato Screen \$2446 per annum through a joint service agreement with other local councils. This agreement comes to an end with the final payment for 2024/25 in July 2024. The funding was agreed to after the Mayoral Forum in 2022. Prior to this Waikato Screen had unsuccessfully applied to the LTP 2021-2031, and to the Community Partnership Fund.</p>

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WS are essentially an economic development agency for film industry. Low overheads, no offices and voluntary boards. Attract and market the region for film locations, connect productions to local business for economic growth, connect to local iwi and hapū for cultural support when filming. • \$170 million (2019) spent by the industry in the Waikato. • Without adequate funding and resources, we risk losing out to competing regions, forfeiting economic gains and the ability to showcase cultural richness and natural beauty of the Waikato region on a global stage. 	

Submissions relating to infrastructure

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
008	Benjamin Stubbs, Waitomo Caves Museum Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Waitomo Caves water treatment and wastewater treatment systems need to be better supported by council in order to future proof the successful delivery of Tourism in this village. At present our fragile ecosystem is at risk. • It is great to see \$50,000 set aside in the long term plan to help upgrade the Waitomo Caves Museum toilets. This facility is heavily used by the public and well located in the centre of Waitomo village. • I believe we can do more to encourage visitors to the area to explore our unique landscape and engage with new and existing events. The Museum with support could play a part in this idea. 	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water services in village have been provided by the private tourism provider because of the large impact the Waitomo Caves have on the village's waters infrastructure. There is currently a lot of uncertainty in delivery of water services, we will support Waitomo Caves Village as new water delivery model is worked on by councils. • \$50,000 is set aside in the LTP to help the society upgrade the public toilets and make them 24 / 7 accessible.
039	John Reeves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on delivering water services with neighbouring councils could lead to more debate on full amalgamation. Feel this will be and should be debated in the next ten years. • If we are to amalgamate as far as Waipa DC, very restrictive rules on subdivision, we need to consider what is important for our communities. 	<p>Comments:</p> <p>Conversations are ongoing with other Waikato Council's on creating a CCO model for delivering water services. Council amalgamation is not a part of this project but is always a possibility in the future.</p> <p>District Plans govern land use so each town / district would still have the ability to set its own subdivision rules even under an amalgamated council model.</p>

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
040	John Reeves, Turere Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subdivision rules need to be put into perspective as unlikely to be large scale housing development in district. • We have seen more people coming into the area due to high housing costs in northern regions. House price growth will slow, more people are working from home and moving away from large urban areas, tourism is recovering. This will bring employment opportunities and growth which should be encouraged. • We should be careful not to be too restrictive with subdivision rules, there will be more demand for sections close to Piopio and Te Kuiti. Important for growth that we still allow subdivision down to 2500m2 in our rural zones. High cost of compliance and building will restrict amount paid for sections, which will restrict amount of land being developed for subdivision. • Do not believe there is a risk of wholesale encroachment of lifestyle blocks on productive farmland. 	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LTP does not address subdivision rules. The District plan is still very permissive in regard to urban and rural subdivision. The District Plan is closed for new submissions.
055	Monica Clark, Waitomo Caves Museum Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important that Waitomo District Council (WDC) provides equitable and affordable services to all residents and rate payers. If we wish our Council to support a prosperous and resilient district, the key industries of pastoral farming, forestry and tourism all need to be recognised and appropriately supported by Council. • Tourism is a significant contributor to the Waitomo District economy and needs to be more consistently factored into Waitomo District Council planning. In addition to the maintenance costs created by heavy traffic (referred to in the LTP), there are significant safety issues arising from heavy machinery on WDC roads, especially those roads with high volumes of tourist traffic. The Waitomo Museum submits that WDC should work with tourism and community bodies to improve road safety for locals and tourists alike. • The Waitomo Village community gets very little council support for the services and infrastructure requirements which in most communities are provided by Council. This includes services such as water treatment and supply, sewage services and community halls. 	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve traffic and road safety in Waitomo. Council does its best to maximise the funding it gets from NZTA (75% for subsidised roads) and rates to supply the best quality roads possible for the funding available. Rapidly rising costs have not helped this. • Water services in village have been provided by the private tourism provider because of the large impact the Waitomo Caves have on the village's waters infrastructure. There is currently a lot of uncertainty in delivery of water services, we will support Waitomo Caves Village as new water delivery model is worked on by councils. • During the LTP process Council has engaged with hall committees to plan for the future ownership and management of each of the district's halls. Positive feedback and conversations have resulted.

Sub.	Name and organisation	Summary	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Waitomo Museum is regularly used for community meetings and meets many of the needs which are met by Council supported halls in other communities. Halls play an important role in maintaining community connectedness. The Waitomo Caves Museum holds taonga incredibly significant to our area. • We acknowledge (and are grateful for) the proposed commitment of \$50,000 for upgrading public toilets at the Waitomo Museum but note that this is supporting one specific community need and not the wider costs which Council traditionally supports with other halls and community centres. • In the past WDC has supported the Waitomo Catchment Trust Board which has played a key role in building and maintaining a resilient and viable farming and tourism-based community at Waitomo. <p><i>Portions of this submission is related to the District Roading Rate.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$50,000 has been set aside in the LTP to help the society upgrade the public toilets and make them 24 / 7 accessible. • Council, during this LTP engagement process has had significant discussions and received significant feedback on the most equitable method of funding damage to roads impacted by forestry logging.
125	WDC Staff Submission	<p>The Roading Maintenance Contract went out for tender for implementation 1 July 2024. At the time Long Term Plan submissions closed, the preferred tenderer's bid was still higher than the amount included in the proposed Long Term Plan budget. Options being considered by staff are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the level of service contracted to the preferred tenderer for the roading maintenance contract to align with the proposed budget OR 2. Increasing the budgeted cost for the roading maintenance budget in the Long Term Plan. This will require increased funding from New Zealand Transport Agency of 75% of the subsidised programme with 25% coming from roading rates and 100% of the unsubsidised roading programme changes coming from roading rates. 3. combination of the above. 	<p>Comments: Options are being developed and will be presented to Elected Members.</p>

Submissions related to town enhancements and entry points

Sub.	Name	Summary	Analysis
051	Russell Armitage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The King Country Te Rohe Potae is a very distinct region with a very historical background. Yet in the media and in many people's minds who do not live there it is often referred to or regarded as part of the Waikato. • I have spoken to several people in The King Country and they want this situation to change. I have written a play called The Wellspring of Tears. It starts in The King Country. I have an interest in getting this lack of knowledge improved. • This is a play that could be performed regularly at the marae for tourists visiting. Good opportunity for material to be at the museum also. • One of the easiest ways to raise the profile of the region is to have large signs on all the roads leading into the King Country which state that this is the border. This clearly a role for the Councils in the region. • Suggest that this signage should say "you are now entering the King Country" in English and Te Reo which reflects the history of the area. Could be a competition for secondary school students to design signage. 	<p>Comments: It is important to recognise the King Country Te Rohe Potae as a special place which is unique and different from the rest of the Waikato. The district entry signage (at each point of entry into the district) are being renewed. This will support Waitomo District as having a separate identity.</p> <p>Waitomo is part of the Waikato Region for a number of central government, sporting and other regional organisations (especially Waikato Regional Council area) so this is where a lot of the narrative about Waitomo being part of the Waikato comes from.</p>
131	Sheree Amber Heath	<p>Re: landfill + sludge disposal - I leave that choice to Council to action the best course of action for residents.</p> <p>A huge thank you to Council for all the storm water pipe repair/replacement in George Street - these new drain measures appear to be solving the issue especially noted re very wet weather currently. Much appreciated.</p>	<p>Comments: Council will engage with the community on the future of the landfill if changes occur from what is planned i.e. keeping the landfill open and developing a new cell.</p>

Summary and commentary on submissions received to draft Fees & Charges 2024-25

Eleven submissions were received to Fees and Charges, three of which are being considered here as Fees and Charges submissions, eight of these are related to Long Term Plan topics and are being considered there. Portions of four Long Term Plan submissions are being considered here as Fees and Charges topics.

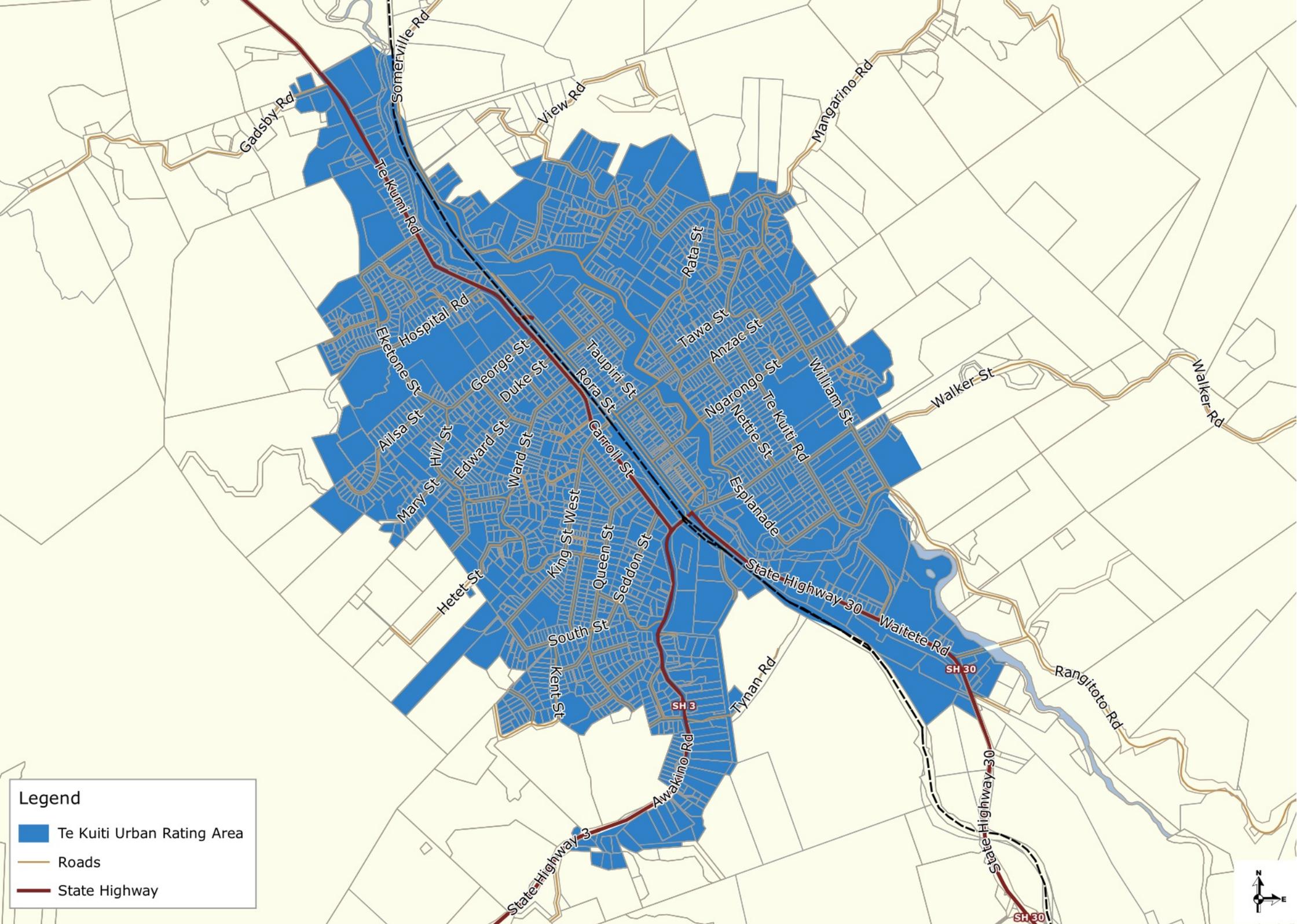
Sub.	Name and Organisation	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
001	Maardi Mulligan-Green	If you are to increase our rates, I think us a rate payers need to be able to have a discounted rate when using these facilities i.e. refuse station, swimming pools, council refuse bags.	<p>Officer’s comments Fees for residents could be discounted, but as there are far fewer non-residents using these services, the difference would likely have to be picked up in the rates. So residents wouldn’t see any true savings.</p> <p>Suggested response Any discount for fees would have to be covered by ratepayers so to offer discounts rates would need to be increased further.</p>
002	Ben Stubbs (Waitomo Caves Museum Society)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would seem that the increases made are reasonable considering our communities needs and increased costs. <p><i>Additional points mentioned in this submission are being considered through the LTP as submission number 008.</i></p>	<p>Comment: Fees and charges have been increased in line with inflation to ensure that costs are recovered so that Council services are not subsidised further by rates. Where possible FCs have not been increased, and where necessary FCs have been increased more than inflation to recover increased costs.</p> <p>Suggested response Yes, by and large we have made increases in line with inflation to keep up with rising costs. Thank you for your submission.</p>
003	A & M Leadley	<i>Considered as an LTP submission number 018 as comments relate to district roading rate.</i>	

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
004	Waitomo Aero Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The land for the aerodrome was gifted to the then council and crown in 1961 for the purpose of an aerodrome. • The Aero club considers the facility as a community recreation facility like the pool, and other sports and rec facilities. Its attributable benefit to the area it serves is therefore far greater than the 20% tabled in the LTP. • Providing a base for agricultural aircraft operations it has played a significant part in development of greater rural area and generating wealth to contribute to WDC's rate base. • For some time Aerodrome members have been exempt from landing fees, this has been appreciated and contributed to our increase in membership (today at 33). • Members are classes as regular, non-regular, seldom, and never, so it would be hard to strike a fair and equitable process. • Prior to Covid there were extensive movements within flight training institutions, if captured could result in revenue collected to offset aerodrome costs. • After council system to do just this failed, an agency has been employed to monitor and collect this info for staff to process and charge accordingly. This is a costly system to administer, there hasn't been a return to pre covid activity to justify its use. • Options include users paying an annual one off fee (rather than using recording provider) with honesty options for casuals to pay online. This would be acceptable but requires council to give users an opportunity to pay monthly or quarterly fees based on historic data. • Te Kuiti is an important fuel stop for transitioning aircraft, added benefit as council collects on fuel uplifted. • Recreational flying is the club's main activity, along with flying competitions. The club is not as buoyant as it was but if council insists on raising fees we will lose this membership, the fuel levy will reduce and the club house vacant. 	<p>Comment: The airfield supports the local aeroclub, commercial and other causal users. A significant share of the commercial users support the district's top-dressing industry. Current forecasts indicate that there will need to be an annual \$60,000 general rate requirement to support the operations of the airfield.</p> <p>Two fuel providers provide fuel for the airfield users. This is a significant attraction for users. Staff are in negotiation with these providers to increase the charges to them to help support the airfield operations.</p> <p>A number of conversations have been had with the Aeroclub. They appear to have a preference to move to an annual landing fee for members and a honesty box / on-line payment process for casual users.</p> <p>A significant factor in this decision is Council's requirement to operate an airfield monitoring system to provide statistics to Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The current AIMs system monitoring aircraft movements. This costs (\$7,000 p.a.).</p> <p>Landings at the airfield have dropped significantly in recent years to be 500 to 800 per year (estimate 600 for 2023/24). This is likely to be because of the cost of fuel, the economic climate (especially fertilizer spreading), less pilot training in the region and impact of post covid changes in behaviour.</p> <p>Staff are investigating the detail on what is required for CAA reporting and other methods of monitoring aircraft movements if this reporting is still required.</p> <p>One option is to set the landing fees at what was proposed in the LTP (\$15 per private and \$20 for commercial users) unless individual contracts can be negotiated with individual groups. A suggestion around annual landing charge fees would promote airfield use, give users certainty of cost and Council certainty of income. This is dependent on staff concluding discussions around CAA reporting and the investigation of different aircraft movement systems.</p>

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
005	Dane Brett	<i>Considered as an LTP submission number 062 as comments relate to district roading rate.</i>	
006	Vincent Baker	<i>Considered as an LTP submission number 063 as comments relate to district roading rate.</i>	
007	Jan Templeton	<i>Considered as an LTP submission number 066 as comments relate to district roading rate.</i>	
008	Emma Barton	<i>Considered as an LTP submission number 067 as comments relate to district roading rate.</i>	
009	Alan Templeton	<i>Considered as an LTP submission number 068 as comments relate to district roading rate.</i>	
010	David Clarke	<i>Considered as an LTP submission number 080 as comments relate to district roading rate.</i>	
011	Peter Richard Henry Voyce (Waitomo Aero Club)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing concern at proposed landing fees from \$10 to \$15 and proposal to charge Aero Club members who have previously been exempt. • Historically landing fees were only used to charge commercial users but this soon spread to all planes. • Rather than using companies who monitor traffic and charge retrospectively, a return to the honesty box system but using modern technology to allow for internet banking would make more sense (to get around the risk of theft from honesty boxes). • There is a risk that the fuel facility will be removed by the fuel company if it becomes unprofitable for them. • An increase in landing fee of \$5 may do the opposite of increase revenue. If other fields nearby increase their fees but Te Kuiti doesn't, it will be to Te Kuiti's advantage as it will be seen as a destination • Regarding the exception for Waitomo Aero Club, Te Kuiti is our home base so it doesn't seem right that we should have to pay to get in. Lease of building is already paid through subs. 	See comment to submission 004

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our activities bring business to the township, mainly hospitality. Training is provided to anyone interested including young people interested in an aviation career. • I believe the revenue gathered off the field is more than sufficient to cover the costs, no valid reason for this gamble in the hope of collecting a few extra dollars. • Please think carefully before approving this proposal. 	
012	Triyoga Dharmautami	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be good if for the building fee there could be a negation in consultation with owners. Especially when related to home repairs for old buildings and abandoned land. <p><i>Additional points mentioned in this submission are being considered through the LTP as submission number 083.</i></p>	<p>Officers comments In order to provide surety to the customer in terms of what the charge will be for the building consent, and to ensure that the actual council cost is recovered it is necessary to set a fee.</p> <p>Suggested response The consent fee is fixed to ensure we recover the actual staff costs and can provide customers with a fee that has certainty on what we provide and what it will cost.</p>
013	Sport Waikato	<p>We acknowledge the geopolitical environment and rising cost of living, so we support the pragmatic and fair approach to increase fees and charges at a rate that is hopefully manageable for user groups, while at the same time allowing for key community assets to be maintained and continue to service play, active recreation and sport outcomes. We also recognise the rising pressures for families where reduced disposable income could result in a widening activity gap, particularly among high-deprivation communities, resulting in fewer options and opportunities for them to engage in play, active recreation, and sport.</p>	<p>Officers comments Fees and charges have been increased in line with inflation to ensure that costs are recovered so that Council services are not subsidised further by rates. Where possible FCs have not been increased, and where necessary FCs have been increased more than inflation to recover increased costs.</p> <p>Response Yes, by and large we have made increases in line with inflation to keep up with rising costs. Thank you for your submission.</p>
014	John Lissington	<p>On Airport at Te Kuiti - You say you want to increase income from it to help defray expenses in keeping the airport going. You don't appear to be encouraging the growth of the airport. That's four ground rentals that you are not getting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my own case I gave up waiting to build, because nothing was being done on site so I could start. I had already had the kitset ordered and paid for. • As for the landing fees. I am in favour of paying a annual bulk amount for the local members, with a daily landing fee for others. 	<p>See comment to submission 004</p>

Sub.	Name and Organisation	Comments (or summary of)	Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs could be erected near the clubhouse and the fuel pumps with a honesty box and a bank number so people have the option on how to pay. Then you could stop using the collection agency to collect, and save at least \$6000 + • This should be no more than \$10 + gst, for the gross weight of a light aircraft. (more for a heavy aircraft). For example I flew to New Plymouth recently, and the landing fee was \$10, and they have everything there. 	



Legend

- Te Kuiti Urban Rating Area
- Roads
- State Highway

