

**Notice of Meeting:**

I hereby give notice that an ordinary Meeting of the Strategic Growth Committee will be held on:

**Date:** Tuesday 12 August 2025  
**Time:** 9:30 am  
**Meeting Room:** Council Chamber  
**Venue:** Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton

Lance Vervoort  
Chief Executive

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## **Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee**

### ***Te Komiti Rautaki Tipu me te Maahere Rautaki aa Rohe***

## **OPEN AGENDA**

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**Membership**

**Chairperson** Cr Sarah Thomson  
*Heamana*

**Deputy Chairperson** Cr Geoff Taylor  
*Heamana Tuarua*

<b>Members</b>	Mayor Paula Southgate	Cr Louise Hutt
	Deputy Mayor Angela O'Leary	Cr Andrew Bydder
	Cr Kesh Naidoo-Rauf	Cr Ewan Wilson
	Cr Anna Casey-Cox	Cr Emma Pike
	Cr Maxine van Oosten	Cr Tim Macindoe
	Cr Moko Tauariki	Cr Maria Huata
	Maangai Jaydene Kana	Vacancy

**Quorum:** A majority of members (including vacancies)

**Meeting Frequency:** Two Monthly

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Amy Viggers  
Mana Whakahaere  
Governance Lead

**4 August 2025**

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## Purpose

The Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee is responsible for:

1. Guiding sustainable physical development and growth of Hamilton to meet current and future needs, including oversight of strategic land-use planning, boundary alignment, and existing and alternative planning, funding and financing models for growth-related projects.
2. Driving collaboration with neighboring Councils, Iwi, private sector, and central government to meet Hamilton's growth ambitions.
3. Providing Governance leadership and direction to staff to develop amendments to the Hamilton City Operative District Plan 2017.

***In addition to the common delegations on page 10, the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee is delegated the following Terms of Reference and powers:***

### Terms of Reference:

4. To monitor and provide advice on the overall development and implementation of urban growth and development strategies, strategic land use, and spatial plans (e.g. Hamilton to Auckland Corridor and Hamilton-Waikato Metropolitan Spatial Plan), and long-term network infrastructure planning in line with national policy requirements.
5. To provide direction and monitor Council's approach to the levying and use of rates for growth, as well as development contributions.
6. To provide direction on and assess proposals for seeking alternative funding models, such as special purpose vehicles and infrastructure funding and financing.
7. To provide direction on strategic priorities for network infrastructure aligned to city development, and oversight of strategic projects associated with those activities.
8. To provide advice on the development and implementation of the Long Term Infrastructure Strategy.
9. To assess proposals for Private Developer Agreements that exceed the Chief Executive's delegations for Unfunded Growth Projects<sup>1</sup> and, if appropriate for Unfunded Growth Projects<sup>1</sup>, to recommend such agreements to the Council for approval.
10. To provide direction regarding Council's involvement in and with Urban Development Authorities, regional alliances, plans, initiatives, and forums for spatial planning (for example, Future Proof, strategic boundary land use agreements and joint council growth related discussions).
11. To consider the impacts of land use and urban development on the environment.
12. To provide clear direction on Council's strategic priorities to organisations and groups, for which Council facilitates funding, aligned with these Terms of Reference, and to oversee those funding arrangements and receive their strategic and business plans and annual performance reports.
13. To provide and approve broad strategic direction to inform and guide the development of the District Plan amendments programme of work.
14. To prepare and approve a draft set of District Plan amendments for the purpose of obtaining initial feedback and comment from the community, stakeholder, and tangata whenua groups.
15. To recommend any proposed District Plan amendments to the Council for adoption and release for formal notification.
16. To provide regular updates to the Council on the progress of the District Plan amendments programme of work.
17. To appoint representation to relevant regional strategy groups as required.

**The Committee is delegated the following powers to act:**

- Approval of purchase or disposal of land for network infrastructure, or parks and reserves for works and other purposes within this Committee's area of responsibility that exceeds the Chief Executive's delegation and is in accordance with the Annual plan or Long Term Plan.
- Approval of matters determined by the Committee within its Terms of Reference.

**The Committee is delegated the following recommendatory powers:**

- Adoption of the Long Term Infrastructure Strategy to the Council.
- Approval of additional borrowing to the Finance and Monitoring Committee.
- Approval of city boundary changes to the Council, including in respect of Strategic Boundary Land Use Agreements.
- The Committee may make recommendations to Council and other Committees.

**Recommendatory Oversight of Strategies and Plans:**

- Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy
- Central City Transformation and River Plan(s)

**Recommendatory Oversight of Policies and Bylaws:**

- Development Contributions Policy
- Growth Funding Policy
- Sale and Disposal of Council Land Policy

<sup>1</sup> Unfunded Growth Projects are defined in the Growth Funding Policy as:

- a) Not funded projects
- b) Funded projects but which are proposed to commence earlier than the sequencing and timing established in the Long Term Plan; and/or
- c) Funded projects but which are now proposed to occur beyond the scale, scope and cost prescribed or anticipated for those projects in the Long Term Plan.

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**1 Apologies – *Tono aroha***

**2 Confirmation of Agenda – *Whakatau raarangi take***

The Committee to confirm the agenda.

**3 Declaration of Interest – *Tauaakii whaipaaanga***

Members are reminded of the need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as an elected representative and any private or other external interest they might have.

**4 Public Forum – *Aatea koorero***

As per Hamilton City Council's Standing Orders, a period of up to 30 minutes has been set aside for a public forum. Each speaker during the public forum section of this meeting may speak for five minutes or longer at the discretion of the Chair.

Please note that the public forum is to be confined to those items falling within the terms of the reference of this meeting.

Speakers will be put on a Public Forum speaking list on a first come first served basis in the Committee Room prior to the start of the Meeting. A member of the Council Governance Team will be available to co-ordinate this. As many speakers as possible will be heard within the allocated time.

If you have any questions regarding Public Forum please contact Governance by telephoning 07 838 6699.

# Council Report

**Committee:** Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee

**Date:** 12 August 2025

**Author:** Keryn Phillips

**Authoriser:** Michelle Hawthorne

**Position:** Governance Advisor

**Position:** Governance and Assurance Manager

**Report Name:** Confirmation of the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee Open Minutes 10 June 2025

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## Staff Recommendation - *Tuutohu-aa-kaimahi*

That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee confirms the open minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2025 as a true and correct record.

## Attachments - *Ngaa taapirihanga*

Attachment 1 - Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee Open Unconfirmed Minutes - 10 June 2025

## Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee *Te Komiti Rautaki Tipu me te Maahere Rautaki aa Rohe* **OPEN MINUTES**

Minutes of a meeting of the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee held in Council Chamber, Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton on Tuesday 10 June 2025 at 9:30am.

### PRESENT

<b>Chairperson</b> <i>Heamana</i>	Cr Sarah Thomson
<b>Deputy Chairperson</b> <i>Heamana Tuarua</i>	Cr Geoff Taylor
<b>Members</b>	Mayor Paula Southgate Deputy Mayor Angela O'Leary Cr Anna Casey-Cox Cr Maxine van Oosten Cr Moko Tauariki (Via Audio-Visual) Cr Louise Hutt Cr Andrew Bydder Cr Ewan Wilson Cr Emma Pike Cr Tim Macindoe Maangai Jaydene Kana

*The meeting was opened with a karakia.*

- 1. Apologies – *Tono aroha***  
**Resolved:** (Cr Thomson/Cr Taylor)  
That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee accepts the apologies for full absence from Cr Naidoo-Rauf, for lateness from Cr Huata and partial attendance from Cr Tauariki.
- 2. Confirmation of Agenda – *Whakatau raarangi take***  
**Resolved:** (Cr Thomson/Cr Pike)  
That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee confirms the agenda.
- 3. Declarations of Interest – *Tauaakii whaipanga***  
No members of the Council declared a Conflict of Interest.
- 4. Public Forum – *Aatea koorero***  
**Keith Clapson** spoke to Item 6 (Chair's Report) regarding infrastructure constraints, emphasising the need to acquire land years in advance of any development and suggested the Council consider taking on more risks in the development space.

**5. Confirmation of the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee Open Minutes 8 April 2025****Resolved:** (Cr Hutt/Cr van Oosten)

That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee confirms the open minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2025 as a true and correct record.

**6. Chair's Report**

The Chair spoke to her report and noted that she had recently received positive feedback from one of the developers in the Consents Working Group, noting being really encourage by progress being made and the work staff have actioned.

**Resolved:** (Cr Thomson/Deputy Mayor O'Leary)

That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee receives the report.

**7. Strategic Issues**

The Unit Director Urban & Spatial Planning spoke to the report, noting the high number fast-track developments Council is working with. Staff responded to questions from Members concerning the potential Fast -Track developments in particular risks, public transport, master plans, and when the financial impacts be realised, aligned commercial terms for the Future Proof partners.

**Staff Action:** Staff undertook to report back Members at the 12 August 2025 Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee meeting with the implications/risk from the fast track developments going ahead in particular the effect it may have on the transport network.

**Resolved:** (Cr Thomson/Cr Casey-Cox)

That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee:

- a) receives the report
- b) approves the Chief Executive to be delegated to nominate person(s) to be put forward to represent Hamilton City Council on Fast-track Expert Panels.

*Cr Tauariki joined the meeting 10.07am during the discussion of the above item. He was present when the matter was voted on.*

**8. District Plan Update - June 2025**

The Unit Director Urban and Spatial Planning spoke to the report in particular the recent positive community consultation event regarding Percival/Ryburn Road, and that a number issues previously outlined in the Private Plan Change 17 had been resolved and hearing proceedings will begin later this year.

**Resolved:** (Cr Wilson/Cr Taylor)

That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee:

- a) receives the report;
- b) approves **Option 1** of the staff report – to initiate investigation into a plan change for the Percival/Ryburn Road area, in consultation with landowners, to rezone the area from Large Lot Residential to Ruakura Logistics Zone; and
- c) notes Council is in a position to provide conditional strategic water and wastewater servicing to the Private Plan Change 17 area, subject to the timing and type of development, and alignment to infrastructure investment.

**9. General Updates**

The General Manager Strategic Growth and Planning took the report as read. Staff responded to questions from Members concerning the 2023 Census data.

**Staff Action:** *Staff undertook to include data on the website concerning Commuting patterns so that the information was easily assessable to the wider public.*

**Staff Action:** *Staff undertook to share more insights in relation to Commuting patterns and the difference over time.*

**Resolved:** (Cr Macindoe/Cr Casey-Cox)  
That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee receives the report.

10. **Resolution to Exclude the Public**

**Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987**

**Resolved:** (Maangai Kana/Mayor Southgate)

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely consideration of the public excluded agenda.

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution follows.

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reasons for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
C1. Confirmation of the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee Public Excluded Minutes 8 April 2025	) Good reason to withhold ) information exists under ) Section 7 Local Government ) Official Information and ) Meetings Act 1987	Section 48(1)(a)
C2. Strategic Issues (Public Excluded)		
C3. Rotokauri Strategic Infrastructure Designation - Property Matters		

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public, as follows:

Item C1.	to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage	Section 7 (2) (j)
Item C2.	to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence and disclosure would likely prejudice continual supply of similar information where it is in the public interest for that information to continue to be available	Section 7 (2) (c) (i) Section 7 (2) (i) Section 7 (2) (j)
	to enable Council to carry out negotiations	

	to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage	
Item C3.	to maintain legal professional privilege	Section 7 (2) (g)
	to enable Council to carry out commercial activities without disadvantage	Section 7 (2) (h)
	to enable Council to carry out negotiations	Section 7 (2) (i)

**The meeting moved in the Public Excluded at 10.47am.**

**The meeting was declared closed at 11.47am.**

# Council Report

Item 6

**Committee:** Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee

**Date:** 12 August 2025

**Author:** Keryn Phillips

**Authoriser:** Michelle Hawthorne

**Position:** Governance Advisor

**Position:** Governance and Assurance Manager

**Report Name:** Chair's Report

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## Recommendation - *Tuutohu*

That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee:

- a) receives the report;
- b) requests staff to investigate the feasibility of setting up a fast-track building consent service aimed at supporting the development community, and report back with findings, options, and recommendations for next steps;
- c) notes the purpose of the investigation is to explore how Hamilton City Council can deliver a quicker, more efficient consenting pathway for residential building projects—while still meeting all regulatory requirements;
- d) notes the scope of investigation includes:
  - i. exploring a user-pays model to ensure the service is financially sustainable and fair;
  - ii. identifying dependencies across other Hamilton City Council departments—including any processes, policies, or resources that would need to align with or support the fast-track framework; and
  - iii. considering how this service could help Hamilton City Council stay competitive, especially with the recent introduction of a private Building Consent Authority in New Zealand.

## Attachments - *Ngaa taapirihanga*

Attachment 1 - Chair's Report

Attachment 2 - Ministry of Education Briefing Notes

# Chair's Report



12 August 2025

## Looking back

Welcome to the final Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee meeting of the term.

With everything that's going on — including major government policy changes and the Fast Track process — it's easy to be so focused on what's ahead that we forget what we've already achieved.

This term we've delivered on some significant milestones. We secured Infrastructure Acceleration Funding for the central city, advanced the emerging areas process, and notified Plan Change 14 (Flooding). We also finalised Plan Change 5 (Peacocke Structure Plan) and Plan Change 12 (Enabling Housing Supply), and have largely finalised Plan Change 9 (Historic Heritage and Natural Environment).

We're working with neighbouring councils and developers on both scheduled and proposed Fast Track developments, including commercial agreements for delivering infrastructure and potential boundary changes.

We've worked constructively with Tainui Group Holdings to advance opportunities in the Ruakura Superhub precinct, and made progress on a number of private plan changes including Te Rapa Racecourse and Te Rapa North-Industrial re-zoning.

We've made some progress on tackling wastewater constraints — with more decisions ahead — and we're having positive discussions with National Infrastructure Funding and Financing about how we can support local developers to enter into an Infrastructure Funding and Financing deal to progress a greenfield development.

I want to acknowledge all elected members and Maangai Jaydene for their work on this committee.

Thank you to Cr Geoff for his support as Deputy Chair. There's a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes — regular catch-ups, prep meetings, stakeholder engagement — and I've valued our collaboration on key issues.

Thanks also to Cr Anna for leading the Affordable Housing Working Group. Her efforts have helped shape thinking around the levers we have to support affordable housing supply.

And last but not least, a big thank you to our growth and infrastructure teams. We're incredibly fortunate to have such skilled and committed staff at Hamilton City Council who are passionate about achieving good outcomes for our city.

## Fast-tracked building consents

It's been encouraging to hear positive feedback from developers about the work our staff are doing through the Consent Working Group. They've appreciated the opportunity to share ideas on how we



can make consenting and engineering processes faster and more efficient, and some promising initiatives are being trialled.

One idea I've heard from a number of developers — although not yet explored by the Working Group — is introducing a fast-tracked building consent option.

Developers say they'd be happy to pay higher fees for faster processing times because it would save thousands in holding costs. Reducing unnecessary costs in the development process is a win for everyone.

My early thinking is this would be a user-pays system, open to anyone. The higher fees would fund additional staff capacity, enabling a quicker turnaround. To protect the existing service level for conventional consents, we could ring-fence resources for each work stream.

Of course, there are many details to work out but I think there's an exciting opportunity to innovate and lead in this space.

At the committee meeting, I'll be asking for your support to request that staff do further work on the concept and report back to the incoming Council.

#### **Wider growth issues – education facilities**

I recently met with Ministry of Education (MOE) staff and have attached a briefing they've prepared for this committee. It highlights the increasing roll pressures at some of our primary schools, particularly in areas of brownfield intensification.

In many cases, schools facing growth pressures have no further room to expand. While land acquisition is possible, it's rare. What's more, building up is expensive and not necessarily an answer (for example, I'm aware that at least one school is already needing to split lunch breaks for junior and senior students because the outdoor space available is no longer adequate).

MOE said the likely next step for schools under pressure with no further space for expansion will be to shrink their enrolment zones.

However, a subsequent discussion with one of the schools experiencing significant roll growth pressure from infill housing also made it clear that there are many complexities that come with changing zoning and it's not as straightforward as it might sound.

In terms of new schools, a developer building in Peacocke recently emphasised to me the importance of schooling in the area to attract homebuyers — and asked if we could advocate for progress on delivering a school there.

MOE confirmed that while land is designated for a school in Peacocke, there's currently no confirmed timeframe for delivery.

They explained that investment in new schools is prioritised nationally, based on a formula that factors in the number of homes and building consents in an area. With limited funding and competition from other high-growth areas like Auckland and Rolleston, new schools in Hamilton have to wait until there's enough proven demand. Unfortunately, this results in a bit of a 'chicken and egg' situation.

For Peacocke, the plan is to temporarily accommodate new students at Glenview Primary using relocatable classrooms until the numbers justify a new school being built.

I also asked about Māngakōtukutuku College (which will serve the Peacocke area), including the previous plans to partner on a joint indoor recreation facility like The Peak. MOE is currently undertaking master planning for the school and they were very positive about picking this conversation back up again.

Given the pace of our city's growth, it's important we continue to keep a close eye on infrastructure needs for education, opportunities to collaborate, and where advocacy to central government is needed.

Staff already meet regularly with MOE, but I'd like to recommend that the next Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee establish an annual opportunity for interested elected members to meet with MOE, hear updates, and ask questions directly.

It's also important we take time to reach out to some of the schools directly because both data and on-the-ground experience are needed to understand the full picture.

Recommended motion for the exploration of a fast-track building consent service

**Motion:**

That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee:

- a) receives the report;
- b) requests staff to investigate the feasibility of setting up a fast-track building consent service aimed at supporting the development community, and report back with findings, options, and recommendations for next steps;
- c) notes the purpose of the investigation is to explore how Hamilton City Council can deliver a quicker, more efficient consenting pathway for residential building projects—while still meeting all regulatory requirements;
- d) notes the scope of investigation includes:
  - i. exploring a user-pays model to ensure the service is financially sustainable and fair;
  - ii. identifying dependencies across other Hamilton City Council departments—including any processes, policies, or resources that would need to align with or support the fast-track framework; and
  - iii. considering how this service could help Hamilton City Council stay competitive, especially with the recent introduction of a private Building Consent Authority in New Zealand.

**Cr Sarah Thomson**

Chair

Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee

14/07/2025

## Update - planning for growth in Hamilton City

The Ministry of Education is responsible for the planning and management of the education system, including school property and network planning to ensure access to education for all school-aged students. In Hamilton, we undertake this work in collaboration with Council staff, with whom we have valued working relationships.

Hamilton, as the fastest-growing and most youthful city in Aotearoa, represents a significant part of regional growth planning. Parts of the local schooling network are certainly under pressure, particularly at the primary school ages:

Hamilton	Current capacity (approx.)	2024 (October) rolls	% utilised
Primary schools	19,457	19,547	100.5%
Intermediate schools	4,873	4,500	92.3%
Secondary schools	14,518	13,503	93.0%

Since 2024, every state primary and intermediate school in the city has an operative enrolment scheme, which we establish where schools are experiencing or are at risk of overcrowding.

Roll pressures are not so significant at secondary schools though we continue to monitor and prepare Mangakōtukutuku College and Fraser High School for future growth through phased investment to upgrade assets. We are currently also working with Fairfield College to implement an enrolment scheme, as the school is over capacity.

Growth planning for the Ministry is perhaps more challenging than previously, when development was concentrated in the north-east (4 primary schools and a junior-senior college having been built

in Flagstaff-Rototuna since 2002). As you will be aware, brownfield and infill development currently represent the largest proportion of new housing in the city, and greenfield growth is increasingly diffuse.

In terms of new schools and additional property investment, please refer to the Ministry's website [How we plan, prioritise and fund school property - Ministry of Education](#). Proposed projects are prioritised nationally according to need and the most pressing projects funded in each annual budget to the extent funding allows. Sufficient development and roll increases are required to justify investment and for new school builds to be funded.

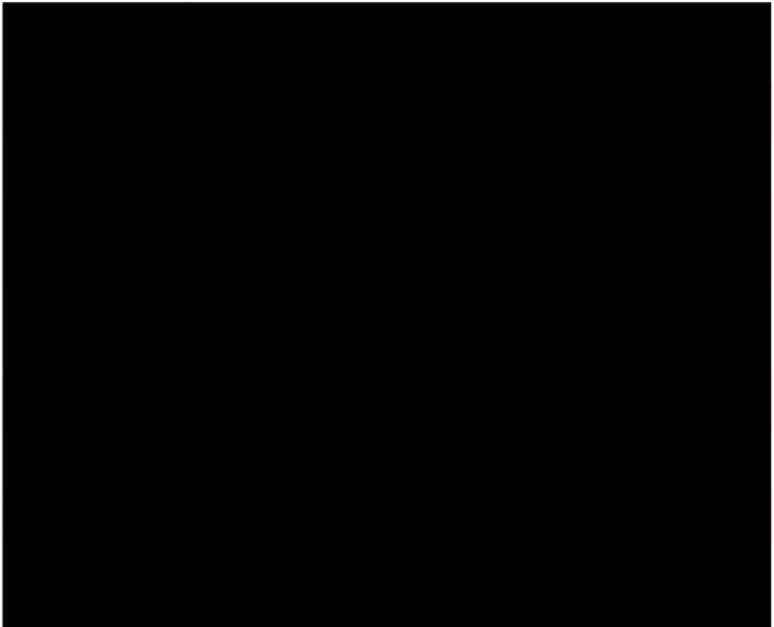
In terms of new schools, we are currently planning for the following:

	Location	Land status	Likely timeframes (rolls and budget dependent)
Peacockes South (Y1-6 primary school)	410 Peacockes Road (cnr Whatukooruru Dr) (3.15ha)	Owned and designated	Pre-2030
Peacockes North (Y1-6 primary school)	Cnr Peacockes Rd / Westbrook Place (3.7ha)	Owned	Pre-2035
Rotokauri North (Y1-8 primary school)	Former 'EDIN' development	Designated & funded - awaiting settlement	Pre-2032
Rotokauri Rise (Y1-8 primary school)	Rotokauri Rise	In programme (not yet funded)	Pre-2040
Te Wharekura o Kirikiriroa (senior campus)	Hamilton East	In programme (not yet funded)	Pre-2030

We are confident that potential growth in Te Awa Lakes, R2, HT1, Ruakura and Southern Links areas can be accommodated within the existing network, with staged roll growth investment in existing sites as required.

The intensification enabled by Plan Change 12 is likely to place pressure on existing/established school sites, such as Hamilton East School, Hamilton West School, Knighton Normal School and Whitiara School.

The following primary schools are operating at above 100 percent of Ministry-owned capacity at October 2024, the peak primary school roll. Note that many of these school's boards enrol out of zone students (at their discretion), and/or have additional buildings owned by the Board (and not considered in utilisation figures):

School	Utilisation (Oct 2024)	
Knighton Normal School		
Rotokauri School		
Woodstock School		
Frankton School		
Hamilton East School		
Silverdale Normal School		
Aberdeen School		
Hillcrest Normal School		
Hamilton West School		

We continue to monitor rolls closely and amend zones where required to direct students to sites with sufficient capacity to accommodate them; and where necessary invest in additional property at existing schools to cater for growth. This is typically in the range of +4/+6 classroom projects as roll growth triggers are met and funding allows. For example, Budget 2025 has funded 4 teaching spaces at Hamilton East School and 2 teaching spaces at Te Wharekura o Kirikiriroa.

# Council Report

**Committee:** Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee      **Date:** 12 August 2025

**Author:** Blair Bowcott      **Authoriser:** Blair Bowcott

**Position:** General Manager Strategy, Growth and Planning      **Position:** General Manager Strategy, Growth and Planning

**Report Name:** General Manager's Report

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## Purpose - *Take*

1. To inform the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee on the 2025 Strategic work programme.

## Staff Recommendation - *Tuutohu-aa-kaimahi*

2. That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee receives the report.

## Executive Summary - *Whakaraapopototanga matua*

3. At the [20 February 2025](#) Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee meeting, I laid out a strategic overview of the key matters our group was aiming to achieve this year. As this is the last meeting of 2025 – and the triennium – it is timely to review the programme and highlight achievements.
4. Staff consider the matters in this report have low significance and no known risk, and that the recommendations comply with the Council's legal requirements.

## Discussion - *Matapaki*

5. Table 1 summarises the key matters that were brought before the Committee over the course of the four Committee meetings this year (20 February, 8 April, 10 June, and 12 August).
6. Whilst a lot of the table shows projects as “ongoing”, there has been a substantial amount of progress achieved within many of these projects. In many cases, the projects are part of a multi-year workstream. The demands across our organisation to progress the various projects is extreme, and management are constantly having to reassess priorities and look for opportunities to align resources with need. An example is the demand fast-track has placed on our organisation and the commercial arrangements we are negotiating with the fast-track developers to help fund the additional resources that are working with these applicants.
7. It is also important to acknowledge the dynamic nature of our operating environment, particularly the ongoing and significant number of central government policy and legislative decisions, the macro-economic conditions and the associated changes to infrastructure and development investment and the challenges of responding to ongoing high growth demands in a manner that balances infrastructure/consenting and allocation limits with financial sustainability.

8. The items are colour coded as follows:

	Achieved
	Ongoing
	Delayed

**Table 1:** Key matters brought to the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee

Topic / work programme / action	Likely timing / meeting
<b>THEME: LAND USE PLANNING</b>	
<b>Future-Proof</b>	
Future Proof Priority Development Areas Working Group (PDAWG) update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northwest Hamilton – Horotiu;</li> <li>Ruakura;</li> <li>Enderley-Fairfield;</li> <li>Hamilton Central City;</li> <li>Huntly/Raahui Pookeka; and</li> <li>North Waipaa – South Hamilton</li> </ul>	Reported to Future Proof Implementation Committee twice yearly (June and December) Regular updates provided to this Committee (including this agenda)
Retirement village study	Completion Q4 2025
North-Waipaa -South Hamilton Spatial Concept Plan	Completion Q4 2025
Hamilton to Tauranga Corridor Spatial Concept Plan	Completion Q4 2025
<b>Upper North Island Strategic Alliance</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Close discussions with the Infrastructure Commission on how work can be integrated with the Commission’s work, and avoiding unnecessary duplication</li> </ul>	Q2 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of an Infrastructure Plan for integration into the National Infrastructure Plan</li> </ul>	Q3 2025
<b>Planning reform</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitting on several upcoming legislative and national policy changes including overall resource management system reform. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RMA amendments</li> <li>National Policy Statement amendments</li> <li>Resource Management System reform</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Feb 2025 March 2025 August 2025 – refer to report in this agenda relating to RMA Package 4
<b>Engagement in partner planning processes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes submissions on relevant planning matters that impact the city, eg Regional Policy Statement changes, plan changes within the vicinity of the city</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Housing &amp; Business Development Capacity Assessment (HBA) (2027)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awaiting updated guidance from Central Government to then commence work on 2027 assessment</li> <li>Ongoing model refinement and development occurring</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Fast-track and Emerging Areas Project</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with successful fast-track applicant development areas: R2, SL1 Stage 1, WA, Te Awa Lakes,</li> <li>Continuing to investigate greenfield options for industrial land supply within priority development areas, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruakura East; and</li> <li>Te Kowhai East</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Ongoing Update provided in this agenda (both open report and public excluded report)
<b>Industrial zoning review</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background and analysis</li> <li>Economic study assessing economic futures and potential land use demand in Hamilton including demand for large format retail in Ruakura East</li> <li>Working with industrial developers to implement findings</li> </ul>	Delayed Information on industrial demand projects included in this agenda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope and confirm future uses of Percival Large Lot Residential</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Central city master planning</b>	

Topic / work programme / action	Likely timing / meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing work with major landowners and developers to unlock redevelopment of certain street-blocks</li> <li>Re-testing of optimal built-form typologies</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Enderley-Fairfield Development Plan</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background review</li> </ul>	Feb 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing collaboration with Kainga Ora regarding integrated redevelopment for their assets in this location</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Urban design review</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the external UD Advisory Panel (membership, terms of reference, incentives, publicity etc.)</li> </ul>	Delayed
<b>Streetscape and Gateway Policy review and new Tree Policy</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Input into Hamilton Gateways Policy and Streetscape Beautification and Verge Maintenance Policy and new Tree Policy</li> </ul>	Early 2025
<b>Wastewater update on implications for growth and land use</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to elected member request for a summary of activity in response to wastewater constraints, growth demand and investment decisions.</li> </ul>	Mid 2025 Further information provided in this agenda
<b>Sites and areas of significance to Maaori</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently on hold</li> </ul>	Delayed
<b>Going for Growth (second stage)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awaiting Central Government direction</li> </ul>	Expected late 2025 HCC submission to RMA Package 4 discussion document in this agenda
<b>THEME: DISTRICT PLAN</b>	
<b>Plan Change 9 (Historic Heritage Areas and Built Heritage)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision released, subject to Environment Court Appeals</li> </ul>	Early 2025
<b>Plan Change 9 (Significant Natural Areas)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolve outstanding appeals</li> </ul>	2025
<b>Plan Change 10 (Te Rapa North)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently on hold due to Private Plan Change 17</li> </ul>	Superseded by Private Plan Change 17
<b>Plan Change 12 (Enabling Housing)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awaiting final decision from Minister regarding financial contributions for residential amenity</li> </ul>	Decision provided early 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide guidance on new urban design criteria introduced as part of Plan Change 12</li> </ul>	Early to mid 2025
<b>Plan Change 14 (Flooding)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notification</li> </ul>	Early 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hearings</li> </ul>	Early 2026
<b>Plan Change 20 (Rototuna Town Centre)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are progressing work on a Masterplan, to inform a plan change that will update aspects of the Rototuna Structure Plan within the District Plan to reflect current roading, land use and stormwater activities within the Rototuna Town Centre to allow development to proceed in an integrated manner.</li> <li>Key Stakeholder engagement</li> <li>Anticipated notification</li> </ul>	Ongoing  Early 2025 Late 2025 (noting this is subject to seeking a Ministerial exemption to commence a new plan change)
<b>Private Plan Changes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private Plan changes are developer initiated. Several we expect to be lodged throughout 2025 are noted below.</li> </ul>	
<b>Private Plan Change 13 (Te Rapa Racecourse)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolve Environment Court appeal</li> </ul>	Early 2025



Topic / work programme / action	Likely timing / meeting
<b>Private Plan Change 15 (Tuumata)</b>	
▪ Hearing	Late 2025 (subject to discussion with TGH)
<b>Private Plan Change 17 (Te Rapa North Industrial)</b>	
▪ Public notification	Notify mid-2025
▪ Submissions and hearing	Dec 2025
<b>Private Plan Change 18 (Te Kowhai Road)</b>	
▪ Pre-lodgement work for approx 30ha re-zoning	Early 2025
<b>Private Plan Change 19 (Transpower Ruakura In-Land Port Grid alignment)</b>	
▪ Public notification, submissions and hearing	Early 2025
<b>Private Plan Change 21 (Ruakura Inland Port)</b>	
▪ Pre-lodgement work, lodgement	2025
<b>Designations</b>	
▪ Designations are lodged from time to time by requiring authorities	
<b>Rotokauri –Strategic Infrastructure</b>	
▪ Hearing	Oct 2025
<b>Fairfield Bulk Wastewater Storage Facility</b>	
▪ Lodgement and notification	Early - mid 2025
▪ Hearing	Late 2025
<b>IAF Central City water reservoir</b>	
▪ Lodgement	Q3 2025
<b>Alteration to Designation A106 (Ruakura Road West)</b>	
▪ Lodgement	Late 2025
<b>Hillcrest Reservoir Expansion</b>	
▪ Lodgement	Late 2025
<b>THEME: STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	
<b>Future Proof Waters Strategy Review</b>	
▪ Updates on project	8 April, 12 August
<b>Implementing the Metro Spatial Plan Transport Recommended Programme</b>	
▪ Future Proof Transport Working Group programme for 2025	8 April
▪ Potential update on specific corridor-based multi-modal projects (bus and freight)	10 June
<b>Southern Links</b>	
▪ Southern Links - elected member briefing on Investment Case	12 February
▪ Coordination with NZTA to inform the expected future land use	Substantially completed
<b>Eastern Transport Corridor</b>	
▪ Business case Update	8 April
<b>Connections Policy Review</b>	
▪ Updates on Policy Review	8 April, 10 June. Update provided at briefing on 6 August
<b>THEME: HOUSING</b>	
<b>Inclusionary Zoning plan change</b>	
▪ Update concept of PC16 in response to potential affordable housing agreements with fast-track developers	Delayed until outcome of appeal
<b>Affordable Housing Working Group</b>	
▪ Regular meetings throughout the year	Throughout 2025
<b>Plan Change 12 monitoring</b>	
▪ Data analysis to understand whether PC12 enabling policies are impacting affordability and supply	Throughout 2025
<b>Granny Flat Reform</b>	
▪ Potential plan change to align with central government reform of ancillary residential units (granny flats) and mixed land-use	Late 2026
<b>THEME: FUNDING AND FINANCING</b>	
<b>Develop CCO DC Policy framework</b>	

Topic / work programme / action	Likely timing / meeting
▪ Develop CCO DC Policy framework, and systems/processes in collaboration with WDC	Ongoing – in discussions with IAWAI and WDC
▪ Implementation	30 June 2026
<b>Regional Deal</b>	
▪ Submit Regional Deal proposal to government, through the Regional Council and Waikato Mayoral Forum	28 February 2025. Advised Waikato Region not selected
▪ If proposal accepted, develop a deal reflecting learnings from overseas deals and White Paper funding principles	Monitor successful deals over the next 12-24 months
<b>Financial contributions implementation</b>	
▪ Develop policy framework	Next 12 months
<b>Infrastructure Funding and Financing</b>	
▪ Respond to any IFF proposals being pursued by developers or advanced through fast-track applications	Ongoing. Update provided in this public excluded agenda
<b>THEME: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES / GROWTH PROGRAMMES</b>	
<b>Central City Transformation</b>	
▪ IAF reporting	Ongoing
▪ Central city transformation plan progress updates at each meeting	20 Feb, 8 April, 10 June, 12 Aug
<b>Greenfield Growth</b>	
▪ Greenfield Growth progress updates (new format & metrics)	20 Feb, 8 April, 10 June, 12 Aug
▪ Greenfield Growth annual progress/benefits report	Included in this agenda
▪ Peacocke MHud report	12 August
▪ PC5 implementation of Bat Strategy and Significant Natural Area and Significant Bat Habitat Areas within Peacocke.	Late 2025
<b>Climate Change &amp; Sustainability</b>	
▪ Climate change risk and hazard tool - Resilience Explorer	Resilience Explorer tool in testing phase
<b>THEME: COLLABORATION / RELATIONSHIPS</b>	
<b>Central Government partnership opportunities</b>	
▪ Working with key decision makers to shape new Govt policy and legislation (waters, resource management, etc)	Ongoing
▪ Develop long-term partnership models to unlock Hamilton's potential and deliver strategic infrastructure (including through Regional Deals)	Ongoing
▪ Develop enduring relationships with local politicians, Ministers and key Government officials to ensure Hamilton's interests are well known and championed in national forums.	Ongoing
<b>Cross-boundary relationship issues / opportunities</b>	
▪ Ensure Future Proof priorities are front-and-centre of political discussions regarding Regional Deals.	Ongoing
▪ Continue to seek agreement and align with our neighbouring councils on issues of mutual interest and shared service opportunities.	Ongoing
▪ Look at strategic boundary changes including potential amendments that may be required to implement the outcomes of planning processes, and advance/seek agreement on pathways forward.	Ongoing

9. In summary, the work programme overseen by this Committee has been extremely large, but as referenced by the Chairs report, substantial progress has been achieved in a number of areas and some major projects have been completed.

10. Looking ahead to the new triennium, the work of this committee (or its equivalent) will remain very significant, covering complex matters subject to a lot of change. Most significantly there is going to be two new pieces of legislation to replace the Resource Management Act (the scale and impact of this change cannot be underestimated), changes to core funding and financing tools, the advancement and completion of fast-track proposals, ongoing negotiations with our neighbouring Councils around boundary matters, potential future City/Regional deals and adjusting to working collaboratively with IAWAI – Flowing Waters to achieve positive outcomes.

### Financial Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro Puutea*

11. The matters covered in this report are funded through existing budgets in the Long-Term Plan.

### Legal Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa-ture*

12. Staff confirm that the staff recommendation complies with the Council's legal requirements.

### Risks – *Tuuraru*

13. There are no known risks associated with the decisions sought in this report.

### Strategic Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa- rautaki*

14. Everything we do is aimed at improving the wellbeing of Hamiltonians. Council has been working alongside our community to understand what people in our city want the future of Hamilton Kirikiriroa to look like as represented by our five priorities.
15. The promotion of the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities in the present and for the future is expressed through Council's key strategies.
16. The proposed recommendation will align with Council key documents, as identified in the Governance Structure, in the following ways.

<a href="#">Significance and Engagement Policy</a>	Staff have considered the key considerations under the Significance and Engagement Policy and have assessed that the matter(s) in this report has/have a low level of significance.  Given the low level of significance determined, the engagement level is low. No engagement is required.
<a href="#">He Pou Manawa Ora - Pillars of Wellbeing</a>	Staff have considered He Pou Manawa Ora and determined that there are no specific or relevant outcomes applicable to this report.
<a href="#">Our Climate Future</a> Te Pae Tawhiti o Kirikiriroa	There are no known climate risks or adaptation opportunities associated with the matters discussed in the report.
<a href="#">Disability Action Plan</a>	Staff have considered the Disability Action Plan and determined that there are no specific or relevant goals applicable to this report.

### Attachments - *Ngaa taapirihanga*

There are no attachments for this report.

# Council Report

**Committee:** Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee      **Date:** 12 August 2025

**Author:** Mark Davey      **Authoriser:** Blair Bowcott

**Position:** Unit Director Urban & Spatial Planning      **Position:** General Manager Strategy, Growth and Planning

**Report Name:** Council Submission – Package 4 of the Resource Management Act National Direction – Going for Housing Growth

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## Purpose - *Take*

- To seek the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee's approval of the Council submission to Package 4 of the Resource Management Act National Direction – Going for Housing Growth.

## Staff Recommendation - *Tuutohu-aa-kaimahi*

- That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee:
  - receives the report;
  - approves the **Draft 1** Council submission (**Attachment 1**) to Package 4 of the Resource Management Act National Direction – Going for Housing Growth;
  - delegates staff to work the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee to agree changes and finalise the submission, should substantive changes be required before lodging it with Parliament's Environment Committee by the 17 August 2025 closing date.

## Executive Summary - *Whakaraapopototanga matua*

- The Government is seeking feedback by 17 August 2025 on [Package 4 of the Resource Management Act National Direction – Going for Housing Growth](#).
- The [Going for Housing Growth programme](#) is part of the Government's broader plan to tackle Aotearoa New Zealand's ongoing housing shortage. It aims to improve housing affordability by significantly increasing the supply of land for housing, both inside and at the edge of our urban areas.
- Staff have developed a submission on Package 4 that reflects the views of Council (**Attachment 1**).
- There are no immediate financial implications arising from the submission itself. However, the proposals under Going for Housing Growth may have future land use planning, funding and infrastructure planning impacts, particularly in relation to planning rules, cost recovery, sequencing of development, and infrastructure readiness.

7. Staff consider the decisions in this report are of low significance and no known risk, and that the recommendations comply with the Council's legal requirements.

## **Background - *Koorero whaimaarama***

8. Hamilton City Council has provided feedback on the reform of the Resource Management system at multiple points over the last few years, since the Government appointed an expert panel led by the Hon Tony Randerson KC to review the Resource Management Act in 2019.
9. Council has consistently engaged with national resource management reforms to ensure local priorities and operational realities are reflected in national direction. This includes submissions on the Natural and Built Environment Bill, the Spatial Planning Bill, and various national policy statements and environmental standards.
10. These submissions have focused on advocating for integrated infrastructure planning, recognition of urban development needs, protection of freshwater and source water, and alignment with Treaty obligations—particularly in relation to the Waikato River Settlement.
11. Most recently, Council submitted on Packages 1-3 of RMA National Direction; this submission was considered at the 31 July Council meeting.

## **Discussion – *Matapaki***

### **Overview**

12. Package 4 seeks to address barriers to housing supply by introducing national direction tools that aim to streamline planning processes, enable more responsive land use, and improve infrastructure alignment. The proposals under Pillar 1 focus on freeing up land for urban development and removing unnecessary regulatory constraints.
13. Key proposals include:
  - i. requiring councils to zone for at least 30 years of housing demand using high-growth projections;
  - ii. removing rural-urban boundary lines from planning documents;
  - iii. strengthening intensification requirements along strategic transport corridors;
  - iv. enabling mixed-use development and removing minimum floor area and balcony requirements;
  - v. introducing more prescriptive rules for calculating housing capacity and infrastructure readiness;
  - vi. enhancing central government oversight and compliance mechanisms.
14. Council supports the intent of the Going for Housing Growth programme and acknowledges the importance of national direction in addressing housing challenges. However, the Council notes that planning reform alone will not resolve the complex issues facing high-growth cities. Years of underinvestment in infrastructure, public transport, and social services have created systemic constraints that require coordinated investment, long-term funding certainty, and strong alignment between central and local government.
15. Hamilton City Council has already taken significant steps to enable housing growth through Plan Change 12, which became operative in December 2024. Plan Change 12 aligns with many of the objectives outlined in Pillar 1 of Going for Housing Growth, including enabling intensification, revising residential zones, and removing height limits in the Central City.

16. In summary, Council supports:

- i. the intent to streamline planning processes and enable greater housing supply;
- ii. the inclusion of infrastructure funding and cost recovery mechanisms to ensure “growth pays for growth”;
- iii. the flexibility for councils to tailor walkable catchments and capacity assessments to local context, using evidence-based methods;
- iv. the introduction of a more agile land release mechanism provided infrastructure is in place before land is enabled;
- v. the proposal to align spatial planning with funding plans and to identify priority development areas;
- vi. the use of the One Network Framework (ONF) if aligned to the broader movement and place context, with the public transport layer used as a supporting element within that broader movement and place context;
- vii. the ability for councils to use their most likely growth projections when assessing infrastructure-ready capacity;
- viii. the inclusion of mechanisms that promote equitable housing outcomes, ensuring that housing quality is not determined solely by market forces and that all residents - regardless of income - have access to safe, functional, and liveable homes.

17. Council does not support:

- i. the expansion of permitted activities without adequate safeguards, which may undermine zoning and infrastructure planning;
- ii. the proposal to rely solely on Stats NZ projections for housing growth targets, which lack local specificity;
- iii. the broadening of private infrastructure solutions without clear standards or long-term accountability;
- iv. the removal of minimum floor area and balcony requirements, which may lead to substandard housing outcomes;
- v. the proposal to increase minimum building heights beyond six storeys without considering local market feasibility and infrastructure constraints;
- vi. the use of fixed-radius walkable catchments, which do not reflect actual pedestrian accessibility or urban form;
- vii. the expectation that councils front-load 30 years of business land capacity without phased implementation or funding certainty;
- viii. the proposal to focus solely on managing externalities, as it risks enabling substandard housing outcomes, particularly in lower socio-economic areas where residents may lack the financial means to demand adequate amenities.

### Key Concerns

18. Table 1 outlines the key themes and recommendations highlighted in this submission:

Theme	Key Recommendation(s)
Infrastructure funding and sequencing	As New Zealand’s fastest-growing city, Hamilton faces immense pressure on its infrastructure. We request more effective mechanisms to recover development costs.
Walkable catchments	Allow councils to define catchments using network-based analysis, not fixed radii.

Theme	Key Recommendation(s)
Height and density	Retain local discretion to determine appropriate height limits based on market feasibility and infrastructure capacity.
Offsetting	Avoid offsetting unless within the same zone or catchment with proven infrastructure capacity.
Mixed-use development	Apply scale thresholds, design standards, and infrastructure checks to manage externalities.
Minimum housing standards	Retain or replace with performance-based standards to ensure liveability (e.g. minimum floor area requirements).
Externalities and housing quality	Avoid limiting planning to externalities only; include safeguards to ensure housing quality, especially in lower-income areas.
Spatial planning and Future Development Strategy	Strengthen the legal weight of spatial plans and align them with funding mechanisms.
Fast-track Approvals Act	Reconcile the Fast-track Approvals Act with the Future Development Strategy framework to avoid undermining strategic planning.
Private infrastructure	Clarify how private solutions are assessed and ensure long-term accountability.
Housing growth targets	Allow councils to use locally appropriate projections and methodologies.
Responsiveness	Define clear triggers and funding responsibilities for out-of-sequence development.

**Table 1:** Key themes and recommendation of the submission

## Financial Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro Puutea*

19. This is a regular operating activity funded through the Long-Term Plan.

## Legal Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa-ture*

20. Staff confirm that the decisions in this report comply with the Council's legal requirements.

## Risks – *Tuuraru*

21. The matters in this report are directly linked to Strategic Risk 5 (Impacts on Growth Outcomes) and Strategic Risk 6 (Political Changes Impacting Strategic Direction).
22. There are no known risks associated with the decisions sought in this report other than if the submission is not submitted, the views of Hamilton City Council will not be considered.

## Strategic Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa- rautaki*

23. Everything we do is aimed at improving the wellbeing of Hamiltonians. Council has been working alongside our community to understand what people in our city want the future of Hamilton Kirikiriroa to look like as represented by our five priorities.
24. The promotion of the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities in the present and for the future is expressed through Council's key strategies.
25. The proposed recommendation will align with Council key documents, as identified in the Governance Structure, in the following ways.

<a href="#">Significance and Engagement Policy</a>	Staff have considered the key considerations under the Significance and Engagement Policy and have assessed that the matter(s) in this report has/have a low level of significance. Given the low level of significance determined, no engagement is required.
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## Item 8

<a href="#">He Pou Manawa Ora - Pillars of Wellbeing</a>	Staff have considered the <a href="#">He Pou Manawa Ora - Pillars of Wellbeing</a> and determined that there are no specific or relevant outcomes applicable to this report.
<a href="#">Our Climate Future Te Pae Tawhiti o Kirikiriroa</a>	Staff have considered the key considerations under the Climate Change Policy and have determined that an adaptation assessment and emissions assessment is not required for the matter(s) in this report.
<a href="#">Disability Action Plan</a>	Staff have considered the Disability Action Plan and determined that there are no specific or relevant goals applicable to this report.

### **Attachments - *Ngaa taapirihanga***

Attachment 1 - Council Submission – Package 4 of the Resource Management Act National Direction  
– Going for Housing Growth



## **Hamilton City Council – Draft 1 Submission**

### **Pillar 1 Proposals of Package 4 – Resource Management Act National Direction – Going for Housing Growth**

**Ministry of Housing and Urban Development  
and the Ministry for the Environment**

**15 August 2025**

## Improving the Wellbeing of Hamiltonians

Hamilton City Council is focused on improving the wellbeing of Hamiltonians through delivering to our five priorities of shaping:

- A city that's easy to live in
- A city where our people thrive
- A central city where our people love to be
- A fun city with lots to do
- A green city

The topic of this Council submission is aligned with all of Hamilton City Council's five priorities.

## Council Approval and Reference

This submission was approved by Hamilton City Council at the 12 August 2025 Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee meeting.

Submission # 815

## Key Messages and Recommendations

1. Hamilton City Council welcomes the intent of Going for Housing Growth (GfHG) to address the current challenges both local authorities and developers are facing under the resource management system.
2. The Council's submission draws on its experience implementing [Plan Change 12 – Enabling Housing Supply \(PC12\)](#) and managing rapid growth as New Zealand's fastest-growing city.
3. A key challenge for Hamilton City Council is that infrastructure development struggles to keep pace with the City's rapid growth. As New Zealand's fastest-growing city, Hamilton faces immense pressure on its infrastructure. To meet this demand, we require more effective mechanisms to recover development costs, ensuring the principle that "growth pays for growth" is upheld.
4. The primary constraint to enabling housing in Hamilton is infrastructure readiness. The new system must prioritise mechanisms that ensure infrastructure is funded, sequenced, and aligned with growth.
5. Councils need the ability to tailor planning responses to local conditions. A one-size-fits-all approach—particularly for walkable catchments, height limits, and zoning—risks undermining local planning efforts and community outcomes.
6. Capacity assessments must be grounded in development feasibility, not just theoretical zoning. This includes market demand, infrastructure availability, and site-specific constraints.
7. In highly enabling planning environments like Hamilton's, offsetting lost capacity is unnecessary and could lead to fragmented urban form and inefficient infrastructure investment.
8. Removing minimum floor area and balcony requirements risks incentivising substandard housing. Baseline standards or performance-based alternatives are needed to ensure quality outcomes.
9. While mixed-use development is supported, it must be accompanied by clear controls to protect residential character and maintain the integrity of the centre hierarchy.
10. The parallel pathway created by the Fast-track Approvals Act risks bypassing areas identified in Future Development Strategies (FDS), weakening the role of spatial planning.
11. The following table outlines the key themes and recommendations highlighted in this submission:

Theme	Key Recommendation(s)
Infrastructure funding and sequencing	As New Zealand's fastest-growing city, Hamilton faces immense pressure on its infrastructure. We request more effective mechanisms to recover development costs.
Walkable catchments	Allow councils to define catchments using network-based analysis, not fixed radii.
Height and density	Retain local discretion to determine appropriate height limits based on market feasibility and infrastructure capacity.
Offsetting	Avoid offsetting unless within the same zone or catchment with proven infrastructure capacity.
Mixed-use development	Apply scale thresholds, design standards, and infrastructure checks to manage externalities.

Minimum housing standards	Retain or replace with performance-based standards to ensure liveability (e.g. minimum floor area requirements).
Spatial planning and FDS	Strengthen the legal weight of spatial plans and align them with funding mechanisms.
Fast-track Approvals Act	Reconcile the FTA with the FDS framework to avoid undermining strategic planning.
Private infrastructure	Clarify how private solutions are assessed and ensure long-term accountability.
Housing growth targets	Allow councils to use locally appropriate projections and methodologies.
Responsiveness	Define clear triggers and funding responsibilities for out-of-sequence development.

**12.** The overarching statement that “all cities are not keeping up with growth and in many cases are subject to inflexible land settings” oversimplifies a complex issue. Hamilton City Council notes that current challenges stem from decades of underinvestment in critical infrastructure, public transport, and social services. These systemic issues cannot be resolved through planning reform alone. Achieving sustainable growth requires coordinated investment, long-term funding certainty, and strong alignment between central and local government.

**13.** Hamilton City Council would emphasise that clear and consistent guidance is essential, paired with local flexibility. Councils must be empowered to tailor capacity assessments to their unique urban contexts. The sufficiency test should be grounded in feasibility, with infrastructure capacity serving as a critical factor in determining whether immediate investment is required or whether constraints can be addressed progressively.

**14.** Hamilton City Council welcomes the opportunity for ongoing engagement with the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development as part of the development of Phase Three of the Resource Management Reform.

## Introduction

15. Hamilton City Council welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the Ministry for the Environment on the **Pillar 1 Proposals of Package 4 – Resource Management Act National Direction – Going for Housing Growth**.
16. Hamilton City Council takes an active interest in the resource management space, as evidenced by our recent submissions to the:
  - **Packages 1-3 (Infrastructure and Development; Primary Sector; and Freshwater) of the Resource Management Act National Direction (4 August 2025) – [Weblink](#)**
  - **Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill (10 February 2025) – [Weblink](#)**
  - **Application to have Projects Listed in Schedule 2 of the Fast Track Approvals Bill (3 May 2024)**
  - **Fast Track Approvals Bill (19 April 2024) – [Weblink](#)**
  - **Engagement Draft of the Transitional National Planning Framework Proposal (13 December 2023) – [Weblink](#)**
  - **Proposed National Policy Statement for Natural Hazard Decision-Making Discussion Document – September 2023 (16 November 2023) – [Weblink](#)**
  - **Managing the Use and Development of Highly Productive Land – Discussion Document – September 2023 (7 November 2023) – [Weblink](#)**
  - **Natural and Built Environment Bill (17 February 2023) – [Weblink](#)**
  - **Spatial Planning Bill (17 February 2023) – [Weblink](#)**
17. This submission focuses on responding to the key questions that are likely to impact on Hamilton City Council. Therefore, not all questions in the June 2025 discussion document are addressed.

## Key Submission Feedback

18. The following feedback is structured by Hamilton City Council's key themes – noting that we have only provided responses on the sections that are most relevant to Council.
19. Hamilton City Council supports the intent of Going for Housing Growth (GfHG) to remove unnecessary planning barriers and views this as a timely and important reform. While the current Resource Management Act provides flexibility for local authorities to tailor their planning systems, this has led to varied regional approaches that can limit broader development opportunities and create challenges for consistency across jurisdictions.
20. Hamilton City Council made **[Plan Change 12 – Enabling Housing Supply \(PC12\)](#)** operative on 20 December 2024. PC12 is a response to the Government's direction to enable increased intensification, which covers much of the objectives set out in Pillar 1 of GfHG.
21. A key challenge for Hamilton City Council is ensuring that infrastructure development keeps pace with the city's rapid growth. As New Zealand's fastest-growing city, Hamilton faces immense pressure on its infrastructure. To meet this demand, more effective mechanisms for recovering development costs are needed to uphold the principle that "growth pays for growth".
22. The interaction between the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTA) and the newly proposed capacity remains uncertain. The FTA has introduced a parallel pathway that may lead developers to bypass areas identified for capacity in favour of the Fast-track route. With many Fast-track applications already underway—often outside the areas identified in the Future Development Strategy (FDS)—this raises questions about the role and effectiveness of identifying additional capacity within the FDS framework.



23. Expanding the scope of permitted activities should be approached with caution. If the range of permitted activities become too broad, it could result in developments that are not adequately monitored and may conflict with existing land uses, potentially undermining the purpose of zoning. Environmental compliance and meeting public health requirements are also a risk when considering impacts of additional demand on networks such as water and wastewater. Reactive and ad hoc upgrades to networks to provide further capacity go against sustainable financial planning.
24. The overarching statement that “all cities are not keeping up with growth and in many cases are subject to inflexible land settings” presents an overly simplistic view of a complex issue. The current challenges stem from years of underinvestment in critical areas such as infrastructure, public transport, and social services. These systemic issues cannot be addressed through planning reform alone; they require coordinated investment, long-term funding certainty, and strong alignment between central and local government to ensure growth is both achievable and sustainable.
25. Hamilton City Council would emphasise that clear and consistent guidance is essential, alongside greater flexibility for councils to tailor capacity assessments to their local context. The sufficiency test should be grounded in feasibility, with infrastructure capacity serving as a critical factor in determining whether immediate investment is required or whether constraints can be addressed progressively over time.

## Providing for urban development in the new resource management system

26. Hamilton City Council acknowledges the intent behind the proposal in Point 30(b) to raise thresholds for regulatory intervention. While the Council is optimistic that this could help establish clearer bottom lines and reduce unnecessary planning barriers, we recommend that the Government provide a robust and transparent rationale for the final approach.
27. Hamilton City Council supports the intent to streamline the resource management system. The proposed introduction of standardised zones has the potential to improve national consistency, reduce complexity, and deliver efficiencies for both developers and local authorities. However, the Council is concerned that a one-size-fits-all approach may not adequately capture the unique characteristics, planning needs, and growth patterns of different cities. It is important that the system retains sufficient flexibility to accommodate local context and ensure that zoning frameworks remain responsive to community aspirations and urban development goals.
28. Hamilton City Council seeks more clarity on Point 36(e) as the proposal raises some concerns:
  - (i) The suggestion that developers would only be responsible for managing their own externalities may undermine integrated planning outcomes. If the overarching goal of the GfHG programme is to improve housing affordability and urban functionality, it is important that mechanisms are in place to ensure developers contribute to infrastructure and community outcomes beyond their immediate site boundaries.
  - (ii) The proposal does not address the potential disconnect between those undertaking development and those who will ultimately live in the resulting dwellings. In the case of residential development, there is a risk that on-site amenity provisions may be monetised, limiting access to those with greater financial means and potentially undermining equitable housing outcomes.
  - (iii) The document is unclear on which thresholds would be raised and how they will be defined or measured.
29. The proposal in Point 37 to raise the bar for imposing regulatory restrictions on property requires further detail. Given that zoning rules already permit a wide range of activities and that local authorities have limited grounds to decline consent applications, any further limitations on regulatory discretion should be carefully considered to avoid unintended consequences for urban form and the quality of the living environment.

30. Expanding permitted activities should be carefully managed. While greater flexibility can support development, overly broad permissions risk conflicting with existing land uses and limiting Council’s ability to manage cumulative effects. To avoid unintended outcomes—such as traffic congestion from uncoordinated commercial growth or infrastructure strain—clear rules and safeguards must accompany any expansion to ensure development aligns with long-term planning goals.

**Q1. What does the new resource management system need to do to enable good housing and urban development outcomes?**

31. Hamilton City Council supports growth but recognises that it must be managed within real-world constraints. Infrastructure capacity - particularly in transport, three waters, and social infrastructure - is a critical limiting factor that must be planned and sequenced appropriately within the new resource management system.

32. Growth must be supported by infrastructure that enables safe, resilient, and well-functioning urban environments. A key challenge for Hamilton, as New Zealand’s fastest-growing city, is the inability of infrastructure to keep pace with the scale and speed of development.

33. Hamilton currently lacks sufficient water and wastewater capacity to support the volume of development underway. This issue is compounded by increasing interest from developments outside our jurisdiction seeking to connect to the city’s infrastructure network, placing additional pressure on already constrained systems.

34. The new system must also reflect the finite nature of freshwater resources.

35. As a Tier 1 Council serving approximately 190,000 residents, Hamilton City Council must allocate water resources responsibly. This includes enabling both greenfield development and brownfield intensification, particularly where rezoning to medium or high density is proposed. Over-allocation risks either halting growth or degrading resources through overuse. Planning frameworks in the new system must be designed to avoid this outcome and support long-term sustainability.

36. Hamilton City Council strongly supports the inclusion of funding and cost recovery mechanisms within Pillar 2. The current model, which places a significant financial burden on local authorities to fund infrastructure for development, is unsustainable.

37. Ensuring that “growth pays for growth” is essential to maintaining infrastructure resilience and enabling future urban development. The new system must provide councils with the tools to recover costs and invest in infrastructure that supports strategic growth.

38. Central Government should also consider the impact of construction costs on housing delivery. Apartments are generally more expensive to build than standalone homes and tend to be less appealing to prospective buyers, which may hinder uptake and affordability outcomes.

39. While developers may seek to maximise profitability by constructing multiple apartment units on a single parcel of land, this typology has not been widely embraced in Hamilton. Apartment clusters remain uncommon and may not align with community preferences or market demand.

*Table 1: QV Cost Builder Sep 2022 quarter price*

Typology	Description (from QV)	Storey	Build Cost
Standalone/ Detached	House, 90-130m <sup>2</sup> . Concrete slab or particle board floor. Kitchen, bathroom, WC. Fibre-cement weather boards, galvanised steel roof. Standard quality fittings.	1	\$2200/m <sup>2</sup>
Apartment	Small Apartment, 50-100m <sup>2</sup> Concrete floor slab. Kitchen, bathroom, WC, ensuite. Garaging. Small balcony.	5	\$5010/m <sup>2</sup>

40. The proposal to focus solely on managing externalities raises concerns about the potential for substandard housing outcomes, particularly in lower socio-economic areas. Hamilton City Council opposes this narrow approach, as it risks enabling developments where purchasers or renters lack the financial means to demand adequate amenities. The new resource management system must ensure that housing quality is not determined solely by market dynamics, and that all residents—regardless of income—have access to safe, functional, and liveable homes.

## Future development strategies and spatial planning

41. The interaction between the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 and the newly proposed capacity remains unclear. The Fast-track process bypasses conventional planning pathways, allowing developers to pursue projects that may not align with the Future Development Strategy (FDS). This creates a parallel pathway where developers may overlook areas identified for capacity and instead opt for the Fast-track route. With many applications already progressing—often outside FDS-identified areas—this raises questions about the necessity and effectiveness of identifying additional capacity within the FDS framework.
42. Hamilton City Council considers the lack of legal weight on listed plans - whether regulatory, transport, funding or water-related (the latter notable omitted in Point 44 of the discussion document) - to be a significant issue. Under the current framework, local authorities have limited ability to decline developments that conflict with established plans. Hamilton City Council would welcome reforms that strengthen the alignment between planning instruments and decision-making processes.
43. In the context of spatial planning, there is a notable misalignment between long-term strategies and short-term funding mechanisms. Councils Long-Term Plans (LTPs) are reviewed every three years and span a 10-year horizon, whereas spatial planning typically covers a 30-to-50-year timeframe. This misalignment creates challenges in ensuring that long-term spatial strategies are supported by reliable funding pathways. Furthermore, funding plans are often influenced by political cycles and shifting priorities, which can introduce uncertainty. For example, recent shifts in central government priorities have impacted funding for public transport and micromobility. To support effective spatial planning, funding mechanisms need to be more stable and enduring, providing greater certainty for long-term infrastructure investment.
44. We support the flexibility that is discussed within Point 46 of document, specifically, the provision of infrastructure prerequisites to enable “development ready” areas. As noted in our submission on the National Policy Statement for Infrastructure, this needs to include the resource itself, as opposed to simply the infrastructure that services these areas. For example, it is essential to consider whether the infrastructure provider can discharge wastewater at environmentally sustainable levels, or whether there is sufficient water supply to support growth without adversely affecting the source.
45. Hamilton City Council has the following concerns regarding the new system proposed in Point 49:
- (i) Hamilton City Council supports the proposal in Point 49(a) for spatial planning to inform funding plans, as this would improve the integration of land use and infrastructure planning. However, the practical implementation of this integration remains unclear and requires further detail.
  - (ii) The proposal in Point 49(b) to extend development capacity planning from 30 to 50 years raises concerns about practicality. Such an extension would require significant additional resources and may lead to inefficiencies if long-term projections prove inaccurate. Spatial planning should be applied at varying scales, each with an appropriate level of detail, and the new resource management system should reflect this flexibility.
  - (iii) Hamilton City Council supports the proposal in Point 49(c) to expand the list of matters that must inform spatial planning. The matters identified appear comprehensive and appropriate.



- (iv) Hamilton City Council welcomes the requirement to identify priority development areas, as this would support more strategic decision-making, particularly in the context of constrained resources. Through the Future Proof Partnership, Hamilton City Council has **already identified several areas where housing and community outcomes are being prioritised.**

**Q2. How should spatial planning requirements be designed to promote good housing and urban outcomes in the new resource management system?**

46. Extending the planned capacity to a longer horizon should be supported by clear policy rationale or robust data, as long-term projections tend to carry a higher degree of uncertainty.
47. From a demand perspective, New Zealand requires a more effective approach to social housing to improve overall housing outcomes. It is important to recognise that affordability is a highly variable concept, and many individuals will continue to require substantial support regardless of land pricing.
48. From a supply perspective, greater support can be directed toward first-home buyers, with a deeper understanding of their housing preferences and affordability thresholds. The insight is essential for shaping policies that incentivise developers to deliver appropriate housing in suitable locations. While increasing supply is important, it must be complemented by demand-side measures such as improved access to borrowing, targeted financial assistance, investment in social housing, and other support. New Zealand may also benefit from examining successful international models, such as Finland's approach, which encourages saving for home ownership through tax-free interest incentives.
49. In addition, the proposed system must place greater emphasis on cost recovery mechanisms. As noted in the **Regulatory Impact Statement for GfHG**, infrastructure costs are currently under-recovered (pages 16–17), which poses long-term sustainability challenges for Hamilton City Council.
50. With respect to priority development areas, stronger incentives are needed to encourage developers to focus on these identified areas. Without targeted support or benefits, there is a risk that development will continue to occur in a fragmented manner, undermining strategic planning efforts.

## Housing growth targets

51. Hamilton City Council supports the growth targets outlined in Point 54. Under PC12, the Residential Zones have been revised to provide realistic long-term (30-year) development capacity through a range of measures, including:
  - (i) Unlimited residential heights in the Central City.
  - (ii) New residential zone framework of high, medium and low-density zones.
  - (iii) High Density (up to six stories) within walking distance of the Central City.
  - (iv) Medium Density (up to five stories) within walking distance of the Sub-regional Centre Zones at Chartwell and the Suburban Centres Zones at Thomas Road, Lynden Court, Five Cross Roads, Clyde Street East, Hamilton East, Glenview, Frankton, Dinsdale, and Peacocke.
  - (v) Enabling residential developments above ground floor in most commercial areas.
52. Hamilton City Council has concerns regarding the proposal in Point 56 to expand the scope for private infrastructure solutions. The Council has encountered numerous decentralised wastewater proposals that, while cost-effective for developers, often fail to meet required design, construction, and operational standards. Hamilton City Council has consistently stated that it will not accept private infrastructure assets for vesting into Council ownership.
53. It is also unclear how privately funded infrastructure solutions are accounted for when assessing sufficiently credible infrastructure capacity. In practice, developers may have short-term

infrastructure solutions in place at the time of application, but are often reluctant to commit to medium- or long-term infrastructure investments due to the significant associated costs.

54. While Hamilton City Council supports the intent to be more responsive to unanticipated or out-of-sequence development in Point 57, the implementation details remain unclear. This is particularly concerning given the Council's current resourcing constraints, which have been exacerbated by recent structural changes resulting in a leaner workforce.

**Q3. Do you support the proposed high-level design of the housing growth targets? Why or why not?**

55. Overall, Hamilton City Council supports the proposed housing targets, as they align with the objectives and provisions outlined in PC12.
56. However, further clarification is needed regarding the scope expansion for private infrastructure solutions and the mechanisms for responding to unanticipated or out-of-sequence development.
57. We note that the development of housing growth targets (including their prioritisation) will assist infrastructure providers and prioritising those areas where growth is to happen first. What will be critical is ensuring that development happens in sequence (we touch on this as part of our response for the next question).

### Providing an agile land release mechanism

58. Hamilton City Council supports the proposal to introduce a more agile mechanism for land release. Under current practice, the triggers and prerequisites for enabling land would usually be established within a structure plan.
59. We do note, however, that protections must be put into place which do not release land prior to it being ready for development. Such mechanisms can be built into whatever tool central governments deemed to be appropriate, and can include:
- (i) Land not been enabled for release until construction of infrastructure has been enabled (in other words, it is not enough to simply fund infrastructure as funding can be taken away). The alternative to this is where a Private Development Agreement which secures the construction of the infrastructure required to service the land proposed to be enabled.
  - (ii) The communication of infrastructure constraints through the provision of online tools.
  - (iii) A "full network" approach adopted for assessing infrastructure capacity.
60. Council would welcome further guidance on how these triggers should be defined to ensure consistency and clarity. Additionally, Hamilton City Council would also recommend that the Government direct how developers respond to said triggers.
61. Notably, we consider that any land that does not meet the minimum threshold should be locked from development of a form that may compromise the ability for the land to be developed efficiently and effectively.
62. Hamilton City Council supports the proposed system outlined in Point 61. Council would emphasise the need for more guidance within the upcoming framework on the following aspects:
- (i) What should be enabled on the land prior to comprehensive development.
  - (ii) What criteria could be used to determine when land can be released.
  - (iii) How the infrastructure constraint (and the impact on the ability to develop land) is communicated to plan users.

**Q4. How can the new resource management system better enable a streamlined release of land previously identified as suitable for urban development or a greater intensity of development?**

63. Hamilton City Council recommends the development of clearer guidance, or ideally a standardised approach, for drafting structure plans. Consistency in structure plan preparation and clear definitions for release triggers would enable more effective planning outcomes.

**Determining housing growth targets**

64. Whilst Hamilton City Council supports having each local authority determine its own housing targets in principle, the methodology proposed by the Government remains unclear:
- (i) Changing population projections is not a straightforward process; for example, Hamilton City Council currently uses projections from NIDEA, and any shift would require formal agreement from elected members.
  - (ii) It is unclear whether the conversion from households to dwellings must follow a certain methodology or if councils have the flexibility to apply their own approach. Additionally, it is unclear whether the 30-year demand needs to be assessed across different timeframes—namely short, medium, and long term.
  - (iii) It is not clear whether the 20% margin must be applied across the entire study period, and whether it remains necessary if the selected housing growth target already exceeds Stats NZ's SA2 high growth projection plus the 20% margin.

**Q5. Do you agree with the proposed methodology for how housing growth targets are calculated and applied across councils?**

65. In principle, we do not support the proposed methodology. Stats NZ projections have always adopted a “top-down” approach to demographic projections. This means that projections are first completed at the national level and are then filtered down to regions, territorial authorities and suburbs. This top-down projection approach does not consider local nuances, such as internal migration, population growth, consenting trends and urban planning initiatives.
66. Currently, the Stats NZ's SA2 projections only cover 2018-2048 with five-year intervals. It means that Council must disaggregate it to annual intervals by some self-defined approaches to be able to compare the annual trend. However, Council also requires projections over 30 years from present (2054) for planning purpose and infrastructure strategy. Therefore, Stats NZ's SA2 projection highlights a big gap in this implementation.
67. Stats NZ in the past has published household projections a year earlier than the population projections. This means Stats NZ's household projections are not well aligned to their population projections or with their stated assumption that household size is declining and there will be an increasing number of one-person households in the future. Data shows that the projected number of households is increasing at a slower pace than Hamilton's projected population increase, suggesting that Hamilton households are expected to increase in size as opposed to decreasing. This misalignment is a critical gap and will lead to inconsistent policy decisions.
68. As a result of the misalignment, projection period and lack of local insights, Hamilton City Council concluded that the Stats NZ projections are not the appropriate dwelling demands to be used for Hamilton.

**Q6. Are there other methods that might be more appropriate for determining housing growth targets?**

69. The Council should retain flexibility in selecting the most appropriate projection for its needs. Although it is important to have one standard of adoption across the regions, Stats NZ's SA2 household projections are too granular and lack local specificity and insights, making them unsuitable as a baseline at least for Hamilton. Also, the granularity of SA2 projections may introduce greater error margins. Hamilton City Council currently uses Te Ngira's Territorial Authority (TA) household projections—commonly referred to as **NIDEA**—which incorporate local data and have historically provided more reliable outcomes.

**Calculating development capacity**

70. The notion to “provide sufficient infrastructure-ready capacity to meet the level of growth anticipated” is commendable but highly ambitious - particularly given the requirement for local authorities to adopt high-growth projections. As infrastructure providers, Hamilton City Council offers the following observations:
- (i) As discussed throughout this submission, securing adequate funding is critical to delivering infrastructure-ready capacity. This is especially true for brownfield developments, which face more complex urban constraints and significantly higher costs compared to greenfield areas. Without a robust and reliable funding framework, the goal of infrastructure readiness will remain difficult to achieve.
  - (ii) We note that Point 59 of the discussion document alludes to infrastructure being a major consideration for agile land release, while Point 65 suggest that infrastructure ready capacity needs to be provided upfront. These two positions appear to contradict each other and the objectives that are trying to be achieved by central government.
71. Regarding Point 70, Hamilton City Council does not support the inclusion of land covenants as a requirement in land capacity assessments. While covenants can influence development potential, their complexity and lack of comprehensive data make them impractical for systematic inclusion. Covenants vary widely in scope, enforceability, and duration, and often impose restrictions such as minimum lot sizes, building height limits, or land use exclusions. However, these covenants are often privately held, inconsistently recorded, and not centrally catalogued, making it difficult to systematically account for them in land capacity assessments.
72. The dynamic nature of covenants—some of which may be modified, waived, or expire—adds further uncertainty. Incorporating them into capacity models would require extensive legal review and data collection, which is resource-intensive and may still yield incomplete or outdated information. While covenants may be relevant at the parcel level, their inclusion in broader land capacity measures is currently impractical and may lead to misleading conclusions.



**Q7. How should feasibility be defined in the new system?**

- 73. Commercial feasibility is highly sensitive to current economic conditions, which fluctuate over time due to factors like interest rates, construction costs, and financing—many of which are outside local government control. As a result, assessing feasibility at a single point in time does not accurately reflect the long-term impact of council policies.
- 74. Relying on feasibility to measure capacity over a 30-year horizon may not align with the goals of the GfHG initiative. If feasibility is to be used, it must be clarified whether it should reflect only current conditions or also project future feasibility. In the latter case, a clear approach is needed for handling inflation within the modelling framework.
- 75. Hamilton City Council would suggest a multi-criteria assessment framework to evaluate feasibility. This framework should distinguish between critical factors - such as significant hazard risks or site contamination - that can render a project unfeasible on their own, and secondary factors, which may only impact feasibility when compounded with other issues.

**Q8. If the design of feasibility is based on profitability, should feasibility modelling be able to allow for changing costs or prices or both?**

- 76. While Hamilton City Council supports incorporating changing costs into the feasibility model for practicality, it is important to acknowledge that developments such as social housing will not be profitable due to their inherent nature and objectives. Additionally, calculating profitability at a single time point does not accurately reflect market behaviour, given the dynamic nature of both prices and costs over time. Therefore, applying reasonable adjustments is generally more appropriate for long-term assessments, provided that clear and consistent guidelines are established to support their implementation.
- 77. Profitability should vary depending on the context. Profit thresholds should be adjusted in accordance with prevailing market conditions at the time of analysis. It is recommended that the government conduct a comprehensive study of profit thresholds used by developers across different regions. Variations in profitability expectations—some areas may exhibit higher or lower thresholds—should be acknowledged, and clear, nationally consistent guidelines should be provided. (For example, a 10% profit margin for multi-dwelling development may offer stronger incentives than the 20% margin for few-dwelling development).

**Q9. Do you agree with the proposal to replace the current 'reasonably expected to be realised' test with a higher-level requirement for capacity to be 'realistic'?**

- 78. It is impossible to declare a capacity target "realistic" without proper context. The effectiveness of this change will depend heavily on the detail and clarity of the accompanying guidance. There are factors that clearly support or undermine the realism of development capacity (such as covenants, slope, or existing land use), but many situations will involve shades of grey. As such, we do not consider the change of phrasing to make much of a difference.
- 79. Elements such as flooding and liquefaction should be incorporated into any calculation of plan-enabled capacity, as they directly affect the development feasibility. In contrast, realistic capacity is tied to market deliverability. For example, while high-density four-storey walk-up apartments are viable in Auckland, they are less feasible in Hamilton given the current market preference.
- 80. Further clarification is needed regarding the definition of 'realistic' capacity. Specifically, is the requirement to meet the projected 30-year demand at all times, or only for the current assessment year? Without a clear definition and accompanying guidelines, it is difficult to determine whether the proposed design is appropriate.

**Q10. What aspects of capacity assessments would benefit from greater prescription and consistency?**

- 81.** Hamilton City Council would welcome the adoption of standardised formats for reports and mapping outputs.
- 82.** In addition, Hamilton City Council would recommend standardised calculation methodologies that incorporate consistent assumptions for development yield ranges and material costs. These methodologies should also account for frequently overlooked factors such as geotechnical investigations and flood management requirements, which can significantly influence ground preparation costs.

**Infrastructure requirements**

- 83.** The discussion document does not specifically outline the responsibilities between councils and waters entities. With new water entities now managing infrastructure investment and operations across multiple councils, infrastructure planning is likely to shift from a localised (e.g., Hamilton City Council) to a more regional approach. This change has implications for how serviced infrastructure is measured and assessed. It is important that the new resource management system reflects this evolving governance structure and ensures coordination between entities.
- 84.** The proposal outlined in Point 72 appears to introduce a tension with earlier statements. If housing growth targets are to be based on high-growth projections, it would be logical for infrastructure planning to align with those same assumptions to ensure consistency and deliverability. However, we acknowledge the practical challenge that commissioning infrastructure ahead of actual demand (particularly given the high capital and operational costs) can lead to inefficiencies.
- 85.** Infrastructure providers should plan based on the most probable growth scenario to ensure investment is both efficient and sustainable. However, where central government policy decisions - such as housing initiatives or regional development strategies - significantly alter expected population demand, there must be a shared responsibility for adjusting infrastructure provision. In such cases, central government should support local authorities in adjusting infrastructure provision to meet revised expectations, including through funding, policy alignment, and transitional support.
- 86.** Point 73 outlines the intention of central government to set minimum requirements for infrastructure capacity assessments. Standardising requirements for infrastructure capacity assessments implies standardised outcomes and impacts of infrastructure failure. For example, the Waikato Region is subject to the Waikato River Settlement Act, and therefore the application of Te Ture Whaimana applies. This means that any wastewater overflow, for example would likely breach environmental obligations. Meanwhile, the Auckland Region has several engineered wastewater overflows, implying a higher level of tolerance towards wastewater infrastructure failure. Any consideration of standardise infrastructure capacity assessments needs to consider the likely environment in which the infrastructure exists.

**Q11. Should councils be able to use the growth projection they consider to be most likely for assessing whether there is sufficient infrastructure-ready capacity?**

- 87.** In principle, yes - councils are best placed to understand the growth dynamics within their jurisdictions. Therefore, this approach appears to be a more appropriate approach than standardising growth predictions across the motu. However, the question is what happens if high growth projections become realised and infrastructure capacity is restricted? It is not unrealistic to expect central government policy positions to drive growth into a particular area, whether intentionally or unintentionally.
- 88.** Hamilton City Council agrees that it would be expensive and unnecessary to adopt an additional margin (e.g. 20%) to an infrastructure target, and the council-adopted most likely growth projection is sufficient. Maintaining an infrastructure buffer will incur unnecessary operational and maintenance cost burden on the existing ratepayer, as well as increasing the financing cost burden associated with paying off the infrastructure itself due to increased time between infrastructure delivery and development.

**Q12. How can we balance the need to set minimum levels of quality for demonstrating infrastructure capacity with the flexibility required to ensure they are implementable by all applicable councils?**

- 89.** Infrastructure assessment requirements should be clearly defined, with explicit guidance provided on when and where broader strategic networks must be considered.
- 90.** The proposal for councils to provide evidence-based figures - including privately funded infrastructure - to demonstrate their ability to meet the most likely demand scenario is reasonable, provided the requirements for long-term infrastructure are not overly stringent. It should not be expected that infrastructure beyond the 20- to 30-year horizon is fully funded. Where councils have identified such infrastructure in their FDS, particularly for projects beyond the 10-year mark, this should be considered a sufficient indication of intent and planning.
- 91.** Requiring firm commitments over longer periods imposes significant financial burdens on councils, particularly for lower-confidence, higher-risk projects, and may reduce their ability to respond flexibly to out-of-sequence development opportunities.

**Q13. What level of detail should be required when assessing whether capacity is infrastructure-ready? For instance, should this be limited to plant equipment (e.g. treatment plants, pumping stations) and trunk mains/key roads, or should it also include local pipes and roads?**

- 92.** Council considers that a high level of detail should be required to enable a capacity assessment, whilst ensuring that the information sought is actually available, depending on the scale of development.
- 93.** As a Tier 1 organisation that is facing significant capacity constraints with regard to three waters infrastructure, we have been developing tools and an accompanying policy which sets out the level of detail required for infrastructure capacity assessments, the extent of a network to which it applies, and how this detail is communicated to our development community. Hamilton City Council is willing to share its findings with the Ministry upon request.
- 94.** In addition, the assessment can incorporate the need for social and community infrastructure (as outlined in the NPS-UD). Housing development should foster well-functioning neighbourhoods with access to schools, parks and open spaces, employment opportunities, and social services.

## Responding to price efficiency indicators

95. Market monitoring is typically undertaken by private developers. Platforms such as OneRoof and TradeMe, along with quarterly reports from Harcourts and Bayleys, all offer extensive market insights.
96. It is important to recognise that the housing market is inherently volatile, and local authorities operate within structured processes which lack mobility. Given the stable nature of the public sector, it is unlikely that such plans could adapt swiftly or effectively to short-term market fluctuations.

### Q14. Do you agree with the proposed requirement for council planning decisions to be responsive to price efficiency indicators?

97. The volatile nature of the market makes this difficult to answer. It remains unclear whether Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga (HUD) will independently generate the price efficiency indicators or continue to rely on councils to supply the necessary data and information. The data published should be specific to a particular market rather than one universal standard number as different region will have different market condition.
98. There is also uncertainty regarding whether HUD will release this information in alignment with the timing of capacity assessments, as well as the frequency of data publication. Ensuring that up-to-date data is available at the time of assessment is essential for producing accurate and realistic assessments.
99. In addition, it is important to consider the potential market impacts of Fast-track areas. These areas may create a cannibalisation effect, leading to greater price differentials between Fast-track and non-Fast-track locations.

## Business land requirements

100. Hamilton's business land capacity is addressed in the [Business Development Capacity Assessment 2023](#), which accounts for long-term (30 years) demand. However, it remains ambiguous how the Government expects local authorities to "front load" this capacity.

### Q15. Do you agree that councils should be required to provide enough development capacity for business land to meet 30 years of demand?

101. Hamilton City Council supports the proposal in principle but seeks further clarification on how the proposed capacity is intended to be enabled, as the current wording suggests immediate implementation.
102. Through the Future Proof partnership with neighbouring councils, subregional business capacity has been identified in the Business Development Capacity Assessment 2023, which considers long-term demand over a 30-year horizon. This capacity is phased across multiple timeframes due to resource constraints, making it impractical to activate all capacity simultaneously.
103. In addition, basing full enablement on a single point-in-time projection risks either under- or over-provisioning, potentially leading to inefficient use of resources.

## Responsive planning

104. The proposal to enhance responsiveness is difficult to assess without further detail, as increased responsiveness would likely require additional personnel. Given that Hamilton City Council currently operates under a lean and efficient structure, it is not possible to provide a definitive position on this proposal at this stage.
105. Notwithstanding this, Hamilton City Council's preferred approach is for development to occur in sequence. Out of sequence developments can create a range of operational and financial challenges for councils, including the need to reprioritise funding, insufficient preparation for infrastructure



delivery, and increased operational costs. These impacts can strain council resources and disrupt long-term planning.

106. Hamilton City Council considers how the responsiveness policy aligns with the principle that “growth pay for growth” to be a critical issue. Ideally, the Government should provide clear guidance on how the infrastructure triggers are defined.

**Q16. Are mechanisms needed in the new resource management system to ensure councils are responsive to unanticipated or out-of-sequence developments? If so, how should these be designed?**

107. Hamilton City Council considers that the core issue is not the absence of mechanisms, but rather a shortage of personnel to implement them effectively.

108. In addition, “responsive” is not well-defined in the document. Being responsive should not mean that councils are compelled to accept developer-proposed infrastructure without robust consideration from engineers, for example.

**Q17. How should any responsiveness requirements in the new system incorporate the direction for ‘growth to pay for growth’?**

109. Establishing clear and appropriate triggers for determining financial responsibility, specifically, who pays for what, should be the starting point for discussions.

110. For example, while a project may require infrastructure such as a stormwater pipe or stream armouring as part of its volume mitigation strategy, the solutions are benefitting a broader area beyond the immediate project. The equitable distribution of costs among all stakeholders is a difficult issue to resolve under the current system.

111. In addition, out of sequence growth often indicates that the necessary infrastructure to support development in the proposed area may not be funded. It is essential to establish a robust development levy mechanism that enables councils to appropriately account for the growth component, including bulk infrastructure and potentially operational expenditure, while maintaining responsiveness. Fundamentally, any framework developed should empower councils to ensure that developers contribute appropriately towards delivering sufficient infrastructure to enable development.

## Rural-urban boundaries

112. Hamilton’s rural-urban boundary effectively aligns with the City Boundary, as all land within the city is zoned for urban purposes. However, it is important to note that Hamilton City Council includes areas such as Future Urban Zones and Large Lot Residential Zones, which—while not currently used for intensive urban development—are also not rural in nature. These zones represent transitional areas that are planned for future urbanisation and are subject to strategic infrastructure and land use planning.

113. Given this context, Hamilton City Council seeks further clarification on how such transitional zones are treated under the proposed framework, particularly in situations where a defined ‘hard boundary’ is in place. Clear guidance would assist councils in managing growth and infrastructure investment in areas that are urban in intent but not yet urban in form.

## Intensification

**114.** Hamilton City Council has made **Plan Change 12 – Enabling Housing Supply (PC12)** operative on 20 December 2024. PC12 is a response to the Government’s direction to enable increased intensification, which covers much of the objectives set out in this section.

**Q21. Do you agree with the proposed definitions for the two categories of ‘key public transport corridors’? If not, why not?**

**115.** Hamilton City Council supports the use of the One Network Framework principles for defining “key public transport corridors”. However, we do not support relying solely on the ONF Detailed Design Table 5 – Public Transport. Suggesting that intensification apply to Rapid/Frequent or Spine/Primary in isolation misses the point that the ONF is far more nuanced.

**116.** The core principle of the ONF is understanding the “movement” and “place” functions of the network (ONF street type, Place score etc). Understanding how the street context (Place) interacts with other modes under intensification, particularly walking networks as they are a key component of public transport (PT), is missed by only focusing on the PT table in isolation.

**117.** We support the use of the One Network Framework (ONF), however it must be correctly aligned to the broader movement and place context. The public transport layer would then be used as a supporting element within that broader movement and place context.

**Q22. Do you agree with the intensification provisions applying to each category? If not, what should the requirements be?**

**118.** We recommend reconsidering the use of Category 1 and Category 2 as defined in the public transport table. In the table, ‘Spine’ and ‘Primary’ are intended as variations on each other (Spine = multiple routes as a collective, and Primary = one frequent route).

**119.** We recommend that Category 1 include both ‘Spine’ and ‘Primary’ services, and Category 2 should then apply to ‘Secondary’ service levels.

**Q23. Do you agree with councils being responsible for determining which corridors meet the definition of each of these categories?**

**120.** Hamilton City Council finds this question difficult to answer due to ambiguity in the terminology used throughout the document. The repeated use of the term "council(s)" lacks specificity and may refer to various functions within local government—such as the consenting authority, the Road Controlling Authority (RCA), or the Regional Council responsible for public transport. This lack of specificity makes it difficult to determine which body is intended to make these determinations.

**121.** Further clarification is also needed regarding the role of Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (NZTA), particularly in its capacity as the state highway RCA. It is unclear what responsibilities NZTA currently holds or should hold in supporting housing growth under GfHG. Clear guidance on this would help ensure coordinated infrastructure planning and delivery.

**122.** Additionally, the use of the term "rapid" in reference to key public transport corridors appears to draw from Regional Public Transport Plans, where "rapid" is used as a service-level descriptor. However, the document also references the ONF, which categorises corridors as "Spine" and "Primary" and uses the term "frequent" instead. In the ONF, "rapid" is specifically reserved for "Dedicated" public transport service levels, which are not mentioned under either Category 1 or Category 2.

**123.** We recommend that all descriptors and definitions used in the document be aligned with the ONF terminology.

## Intensification catchments sizes

**124.** While Hamilton City Council uses Option 1 (800 metres) in PC12, it is important to acknowledge that other local authorities may adopt different figures based on their local context.

### Q24. Do you support Option 1, Option 2 or something else? Why?

**125.** Hamilton City Council does not support a standardised approach proposed under the Going for Housing Growth Phase 3 Discussion Document, which suggests a fixed walkable catchment from different zones. Instead, we propose a context-sensitive method for defining walkable catchments, as outlined in the PC12 Walkable Catchment Report.

**126.** The PC12 report demonstrates that walkability is influenced by multiple factors beyond simple radial distance—including street connectivity, topography, pedestrian infrastructure, and barriers to movement. It recommends using network-based analysis to define catchments, which more accurately reflects how people move through the urban environment. This approach results in catchments that vary in shape and size depending on local conditions, rather than applying a uniform radius.

**127.** For Hamilton, the report found that an 800-metre network-based catchment is generally appropriate, but only when applied with consideration of actual walking routes and barriers. A blanket buffer—as proposed by central government - does not account for many cities' urban form and could lead to unrealistic or inaccessible intensification areas.

**128.** Hamilton City Council therefore recommends that the Government enable councils to define walkable catchments using locally appropriate, evidence-based methods, rather than imposing a fixed national standard. This will ensure intensification is both feasible and aligned with actual urban conditions, supporting better planning outcomes and community acceptance.

## Minimum building heights to be enabled

**129.** Hamilton City Council has already taken steps to enable greater housing capacity through Plan Change 12 (PC12), including the removal of height limits in the Central City. However, enabling taller buildings is only one part of the equation. The delivery of apartment buildings and other high-rise developments typically faces several practical and economic barriers that must be addressed to realise the intended outcomes.

### Q25. What are the key barriers to the delivery of four-to-six storey developments at present?

**130.** The key barriers to delivering mid-rise developments include:

- (i) Apartment construction typically incurs higher costs than standalone homes.
- (ii) Despite the removal of zoning restrictions, developers remain cautious due to the absence of financial or regulatory incentives that would offset the higher risks and costs.
- (iii) In Hamilton, there is currently limited appetite among buyers for apartment living, which affects developer confidence and feasibility.
- (iv) Taller buildings require upgrades to water supply and wastewater systems, particularly to meet fire-fighting standards (e.g. increased water pressure, larger pipes, and pump station capacity).
- (v) A lack of personnel with appropriate expertise and experience to design and construct mid-rise developments.

**Q26. For areas where councils are currently required to enable at least six storeys, should this be increased to more than six storeys? If so, what should it be increased to? Would this have a material impact on what is built?**

- 131.** Hamilton City Council currently enables unlimited residential heights in the Central City and six or more storeys in High Density Residential Zone. This approach reflects a deliberate shift toward enabling high-density development in areas with strong access to public transport, employment, and amenities.
- 132.** However, enabling greater heights through zoning does not automatically result in taller buildings being constructed. The market response is influenced by a range of factors including feasibility and cost, infrastructure readiness and market maturity.
- 133.** Given that PC12 has only recently become operative, it is too early to assess the material impact on development outcomes. Council is monitoring uptake and will evaluate whether additional interventions—such as incentives or infrastructure investment—are needed to support the delivery of taller buildings.
- 134.** We do not recommend increasing the minimum height requirement beyond six storeys at this time. Instead, we advocate for a flexible, place-based approach that allows councils to respond to local market conditions and infrastructure capacity. This ensures that planning provisions are enabling but not prescriptive, and that development is both feasible and context sensitive.

**Q27. For areas where councils are currently required to enable at least six storeys, what would be the costs and risks (if any) of requiring councils to enable more than six storeys?**

- 135.** The cost for constructing tall buildings primarily falls on developers. For local authorities, the principal concern lies in the potential loss of quality of the living environment and character, which varies depending on context. For example, heritage areas are more susceptible to such changes, whereas the central city would experience minimal disruption.
- 136.** From an infrastructure perspective, Hamilton City Council would need to revisit growth projections and infrastructure planning assumptions within high-density zones. However, the fundamental constraints of water and wastewater capacity would still apply, and upgrades may be required to support the increased demand.
- 137.** Higher-density development also places a greater demand on public transport and multimodal infrastructure to ensure accessibility and reduce reliance on private vehicles. Meeting these expectations will require additional investment, and the funding challenges associated with scaling infrastructure to support intensification must be acknowledged and addressed in the design of the new system.

### Offsetting the loss of development capacity

- 138.** We acknowledge the intent behind the proposed mechanism to offset development capacity lost through heritage protection or other planning constraints. The concept resembles a Floor Area Transfer (FAT) system, commonly used in parts of Asia, Europe and America, where unused development rights from constrained sites (e.g. heritage buildings) are transferred to other sites to incentivise preservation and enable greater density elsewhere.
- 139.** In principle, the mechanism operates as follows:
- (i) Site A is designated as a heritage building. Site A, under its zoning, should be able to build up to six storeys and have a total floor area of X, but it only uses a small portion, leaving an excess of floor area.
  - (ii) A developer with a new project wants to build a taller building. It applies to the local authority to “adopt” this heritage building, guaranteeing its future maintenance (costs, tidying up, etc). In exchange, it can transfer unused floor area to their own project.
- 140.** The authority examines the project and determines the final amount transferred (a limit is usually



placed to prevent of quality of the living environment and character loss and there is a cap to how much can be transferred). An agreement is signed, and the developer can now build a taller building.

**141.** While the mechanism (or other similar approaches) has merits, the transfer mechanic is likely unfeasible in New Zealand. For such a mechanism to be effective, two key conditions must be met:

- (i) There must be demand to purchase additional development capacity—typically in areas where planning rules restrict height or density, and developers are willing to pay for the right to build more.
- (ii) District plans must limit development sufficiently to create scarcity, making the transfer of additional floor area a valuable proposition.

**Q28. Is offsetting for the loss of capacity in directed intensification areas required in the new resource management system?**

**142.** We do not consider offset is necessary yet for the following reasons:

- (i) The planning framework is already enabling. The expansion of key public transport corridors (Category 1 and 2) significantly broadens the areas where intensification is expected. This provides councils with sufficient flexibility to enable density in appropriate locations without needing to offset capacity elsewhere. Where councils are able to meet the required housing growth targets, we do not consider offsetting to be required.
- (ii) Higher densities are strategically located around infrastructure that is purpose-built to support them. Requiring offsetting into other areas risks placing growth where infrastructure is not designed to accommodate it, leading to inefficiencies, higher costs, and potential service shortfalls. If offsetting is to be considered, it should be strictly limited to sites within the same zone or a clearly defined catchment where infrastructure capacity has already been assessed and is capable of supporting additional development.
- (iii) Offsetting could lead to poor urban design outcomes. Transferring development capacity to areas that lack the accessibility, quality of the living environment, or infrastructure of the original location may result in disconnected, car-dependent, or underserved communities. This undermines the principles of well-functioning urban environments and risks creating long-term planning inefficiencies.
- (iv) Spreading development capacity across multiple areas may prevent the realisation of meaningful density anywhere. This can lead to fragmented urban form, underutilised infrastructure, and missed opportunities to support viable public transport and walkable communities.

**Q29. If offsetting is required, how should an equivalent area be determined?**

**143.** If offsetting is introduced as a requirement, Hamilton City Council recommends that any equivalent area be determined using a multi-criteria, evidence-based approach that ensures the receiving area can realistically accommodate the transferred capacity. Key criteria should include:

- (i) The area must have sufficient capacity in water, wastewater, stormwater, and transport networks to support additional development.
- (ii) Locations should support walkability, public transport access, and proximity to jobs and services.
- (iii) The receiving area must be able to accommodate increased density without compromising character or liveability.
- (iv) The area should be identified in council spatial plans or growth strategies as suitable for intensification.

**144.** In Hamilton's context, offsetting is currently considered unnecessary, as Plan Change 12 already provides for long-term housing capacity in strategically located, infrastructure-ready areas.

## Intensification in other areas

- 145.** Hamilton City Council cautions against intensifying development in areas with limited accessibility, particularly when the goal is to deliver affordable housing. While such an approach may be viable in affluent communities where reliance on public transport is minimal, accessibility should be a fundamental consideration for affordable housing projects.
- 146.** Neglecting accessibility risks creating isolated communities, with consequences ranging from minor inconveniences—such as long travel times to essential services—to more serious issues, including limited evacuation options during emergencies. These outcomes undermine the principles of well-functioning urban environments and equitable access.

### **Q30. Is an equivalent to the NPS-UD's policy 3(d) (as originally scoped) needed in the new resource management system? If so, are any changes needed to the policy to make it easier to implement?**

- 147.** Yes. We support retaining an equivalent to Policy 3(d) of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD), which directs intensification to areas with good accessibility to employment, services, and public transport.
- 148.** Given that the purpose GfHG is to support the delivery of affordable housing, accessibility should remain a key consideration in decision-making. This is particularly important for middle and low-income households, who are more likely to rely on public and active transport and less able to absorb the costs associated with car dependency or poor service access.
- 149.** Higher-income groups may have greater flexibility in choosing where and how they live, but for those most affected by housing affordability, proximity to jobs, education, healthcare, and daily services is essential to ensuring equitable and sustainable urban outcomes.
- 150.** To improve implementation, Hamilton City Council recommends that the new policy:
- (i) Clarify how accessibility should be assessed, including metrics such as walkability, transit frequency, and proximity to essential services.
  - (ii) Ensure alignment with spatial planning and infrastructure investment, so that intensification occurs in areas that are ready to support increased population.
  - (iii) Avoid enabling intensification in poorly connected areas, which risks creating isolated, car-dependent communities and undermines the goals of affordability and urban efficiency.

## Enabling a mix of uses across urban environments

- 151.** We support the principle of mixed-use development, which is a well-established feature in many European and Asian cities. Integrating small-scale commercial activities - such as cafés and convenience stores - into residential areas can enhance walkability, provide greater flexibility for developers, support local economies, and contribute to vibrant, liveable neighbourhood.
- 152.** However, it is important to distinguish between different types of commercial activities. For example, dairies and convenience stores differ significantly in terms of scale, operating hours, and potential impacts on surrounding residential areas. Under Hamilton's Operative District Plan, dairies are provided for as a restricted discretionary activity in Residential Zones, but uptake has been limited—suggesting that permissiveness alone does not guarantee successful integration.
- 153.** The proposal would benefit from greater clarity around the scale and nature of the permitted commercial activities. If the regulations become too permissive, there is a risk of undermining existing commercial areas and weakening the intent of zoning rules.
- 154.** Hamilton City Council is concerned that the implications outlined in Point 118 could undermine the established centre hierarchy. The hierarchy of centres play a critical role in managing land use compatibility, particularly given the levels of noise and vibration typically associated with these areas, which can be disruptive for residential areas.

155. Currently, local authorities periodically review District Plans to ensure zoning remains responsive to evolving areas while maintaining appropriate development standards. However, if too many areas transition into high-intensity centres, this could place significant pressure on infrastructure and contribute to adverse outcomes such as increased traffic congestion and environmental degradation.
156. Moreover, dispersing development capacity across multiple areas risks diluting the intended benefits of intensification. Rather than achieving meaningful density in strategic locations, development may be spread too thinly, resulting in underutilised infrastructure, fragmented urban form, and missed opportunities to support viable public transport and walkable communities. This undermines the efficiency of spatial planning and the creation of well-functioning urban environments.
157. Hamilton's 2017 Operative District Plan (ODP) marked a strategic shift in managing the city's physical resources, addressing the adverse effects of previously unplanned dispersal of retail and office development. This earlier approach had contributed to the underperformance of key business centres, impacting their function, amenity, and vitality.
158. The introduction of a centres hierarchy was a key outcome of the ODP, designed to proactively manage the location and distribution of commercial activities. The central city is clearly identified as the Metropolitan Centre at the top of this hierarchy.
159. These distinguishing elements of the plan have been introduced to address the dispersal of commercial activities from Hamilton's commercial centres, resulting in the underperformance of the central city and other centres that had been generated under the previous planning regime.
160. The centres hierarchy has been introduced to ensure that future retail and office development can first be directed to existing centres within the current urban environment and in strategically planned for but as yet undeveloped centres to service Hamilton's greenfield areas.
161. The centres hierarchy is a foundational tool for achieving a compact, efficient, and resilient urban form. By concentrating commercial activities in designated centres, it supports coordinated infrastructure investment, fosters economic vitality, and enables more efficient public transport networks. This approach also helps protect residential amenity by reducing land use conflicts and ensures that growth aligns with long-term spatial planning objectives.

**Q31. What controls need to be put in place to allow residential, commercial and community activities to take place in proximity to each other without significant negative externalities?**

162. It is essential to establish clear and context-sensitive limits on the scale and nature of newly permitted activities within mixed-use environments. Overly permissive activity tables risk undermining the core objectives of zoning policies, which are designed to manage land use compatibility, protect the quality of the living environment, and support strategic urban form.
163. We recommend the following controls:
- (i) **Scale thresholds:** Define maximum floor areas, operating hours, and delivery times for commercial and community activities to minimise noise, traffic, and disruption in residential zones.
  - (ii) **Activity-specific provisions:** Differentiate between low-impact uses which directly support the local community (e.g. cafés, convenience stores) and higher-impact uses (e.g. bars, takeaways), with appropriate consent pathways and mitigation requirements.
  - (iii) **Design and interface standards:** Require high-quality urban design, including acoustic treatment, screening, and pedestrian-friendly frontages, to manage the interface between residential and non-residential uses.
  - (iv) **Infrastructure capacity checks:** Ensure that local infrastructure—particularly transport, parking, and servicing—is capable of supporting mixed-use activity without causing congestion or degradation.

- (v) **Protection of centre hierarchy:** Avoid enabling commercial creep into residential areas that could undermine the viability and function of established centres, which are designed to concentrate activity and investment.

## Minimum floor area and balcony requirements

164. We acknowledge the intent behind removing minimum floor area requirements to improve development flexibility. However, this raises concerns about the potential emergence of extremely compact units - also known as “**coffin homes**” - which may compromise liveability and long-term wellbeing.
165. While Hamilton City Council remains open to innovation in housing typologies, we recommend retaining minimum standards for floor area to ensure a baseline of quality of the living environment and functionality for future residents. These standards are particularly important in areas where market pressures may incentivise the delivery of smaller, less functional units.

### Q33. Which rules under the current system do you consider would either not meet the definition of an externality or have a disproportionate impact on development feasibility?

166. We do not consider the current minimum floor area and balcony requirements to have a disproportionate impact on development feasibility. These standards serve as a baseline for assessment, and in practice, developers often exceed them to enhance market appeal and meet the expectations of prospective buyers.
167. Council also notes that removing these requirements could shift the burden of ensuring liveability onto local authorities, particularly in high-growth areas. Without clear standards, councils may face increased pressure to address the social and health impacts of substandard housing, which could undermine broader urban development goals.
168. Moreover, the absence of minimum standards risks normalising poor-quality housing, especially in competitive markets where affordability pressures drive down unit size. This could lead to long-term consequences for resident wellbeing, community cohesion, and housing equity.
169. We therefore recommend that the new system retain minimum floor area and balcony provisions, or alternatively, introduce performance-based design standards that ensure liveability without being overly prescriptive.



## Other matters

**Q36. Do you have any other feedback on Going for Housing Growth proposals and how they should be reflected in the new resource management system?**

- 170.** Hamilton City Council emphasises the importance of clear, consistent national guidance paired with flexibility for councils to tailor implementation to local conditions. This balance is essential to ensure that housing capacity assessments are both technically robust and practically grounded.
- 171.** In particular, the sufficiency test should be based not only on theoretical zoning capacity but also on development feasibility—including market demand, infrastructure readiness, and site-specific constraints. Infrastructure capacity should be treated as a critical factor in determining whether land is realistically available for development, and whether investment is needed immediately or can be staged over time.
- 172.** Hamilton City Council would emphasise that clear and consistent guidance is essential, alongside greater flexibility for councils to tailor capacity assessments to their local context. The sufficiency test should be grounded in feasibility, with infrastructure capacity serving as a critical factor in determining whether immediate investment is required or whether constraints can be addressed progressively over time.
- 173.** In Hamilton, for instance, while infrastructure constraints do exist, some parcels within constrained zones may still be feasible for development if infrastructure-ready services are enabled. It is critical to first assess supply from a feasibility standpoint, and then identify which areas are limited by infrastructure constraints. This approach enables more effective planning and infrastructure investment decisions.

## Transitioning to Phase Three

**Q37. Should Tier 1 and 2 councils be required to prepare or review their HBA and FDS in accordance with current NPS-UD requirements ahead of 2027 long-term plans? Why or why not?**

- 174.** Hamilton City Council considers that there is insufficient time for Tier 1 and Tier 2 councils to fully review and update their HBA and FDS ahead of the 2027 Long-Term Plans.
- 175.** Reviewing and updating related documents would require robust data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and alignment with infrastructure and funding strategies. Given the constrained resources within local authorities, it is unrealistic to complete this work within the available timeframe, particularly considering ongoing reforms.
- 176.** Hamilton City Council recommends that the Government provide clear transitional guidance and allow for flexibility in timing and scope of updates.

## Further Information and Opportunity to Discuss our Submission

- 177.** Should the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the Ministry for the Environment require clarification of the submission from Hamilton City Council, or additional information, please contact **Mark Davey** (Unit Director Urban and Spatial Planning) on **021 242 8024**, or email [Mark.Davey@hcc.govt.nz](mailto:Mark.Davey@hcc.govt.nz) in the first instance.
- 178.** We would also welcome the opportunity to have ongoing discussions around the key areas of this submission with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the Ministry for the Environment.

Yours faithfully

**Lance Vervoort**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

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# Council Report

**Committee:** Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee

**Date:** 12 August 2025

**Author:** Blair Bowcott

**Authoriser:** Blair Bowcott

**Position:** General Manager Strategy, Growth and Planning

**Position:** General Manager Strategy, Growth and Planning

**Report Name:** Strategic Issues

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## Purpose - *Take*

1. To inform the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee on issues of high significance and areas of concern that need to be brought to Members' attention, but do not warrant a separate report.
2. To inform the Committee of the first Greenfield Growth Programme Annual Benefits Report.

## Staff Recommendation - *Tuutohu-aa-kaimahi*

3. That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee receives the report.

## Executive Summary - *Whakaraapopototanga matua*

4. This report provides updates to the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee on the following matters:

<b>Sustainable Communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenfield Growth Programme Annual Benefits Report</li> <li>• Central City Transformation update</li> </ul>
<b>Land use planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast-track applications and process</li> <li>• Future Proof workstreams</li> <li>• Industrial land analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metro Spatial Plan Transport Recommended Programme and Fast-track</li> <li>• Southern Links update</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration / relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNISA Infrastructure Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waikato Housing Initiative</li> </ul>

5. The first Greenfield Growth Programme Annual Benefits Report is attached to this report (see **Attachment 1**). It provides an update on housing and employment outcomes in the existing greenfield growth areas inside the city boundaries including Rototuna, Ruakura, Rotokauri-Northwest and Peacocke.

6. This report provides updates to the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee on land use planning matters including:
  - i. **Industrial land demand supply study:** The 2023 Housing and Business Assessment projected a 30-year industrial land demand of 457 hectares. However, the latest study by Formative indicates that long-term demand could range between 622 and 1,022 hectares – representing a 36% to 123% increase over previous estimates. This significant uplift is driven by three key non-business-as-usual factors:
    - a. **spill-over effects from Auckland**, as businesses seek more affordable or strategically located sites;
    - b. **induced demand** resulting from the Fast-track process, which enables greater industrial land supply; and
    - c. **the transformative impact of Ruakura**, which is reshaping freight and logistics patterns across the Upper North Island’s “Golden Triangle.”

These findings suggest that future planning must carefully consider how to accommodate this potential surge in industrial land demand.
  - ii. **Fast-track applications and process:** Proactive engagement with fast-track developers continues through the established Future-Proof partnership, including collaboration with new developments seeking fast-track referral.
7. Staff consider the decisions in the report are of low significance and low risk, and that the recommendations comply with Council’s legal requirements.

## Discussion – *Matapaki*

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES – GROWTH PROGRAMMES

#### Greenfield Growth Programme

##### Annual Benefits Report

8. The first Greenfield Growth Programme Annual Benefits Report is **Attachment 1** to this report. It provides an update on housing and employment outcomes and progress of key infrastructure and amenities in the existing greenfield growth areas inside the city boundaries including Rototuna, Ruakura, Rotokauri-Northwest and Peacocke.
9. In summary, Hamilton has a good supply of developable greenfield growth land with capacity for thousands of homes to be constructed to support our growing population. Construction of homes has slowed in recent years due to economic and market conditions; consenting is forecast to pick up in 2026 with an uptick in consenting activity already underway.
10. The strategic planning and long-term Council and partner investment into infrastructure has unlocked significant economic benefits in greenfield areas such as Ruakura and Rotokauri-northwest. There is currently enough zoned and developable greenfield industrial land in the short-term. The Fast-track areas, outside the city boundaries, may provide further longer-term supply.
11. Central Government has introduced new legislation and policy settings that are changing the way greenfield growth is planned and zoned. This is likely to significantly increase the area of greenfield growth land across Hamilton and may alter the uptake, location and speed of developments. Staff will continue to closely monitor the risks, opportunities and impacts that this may bring.
12. The next Greenfield Growth Programme Annual Benefits Report will be presented to the relevant Committee in 2026.

### Peacocke Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Specific Benefits

13. The final HIF drawdown occurred on 31 May 2024. This brought the total value to the \$180.3 million limit under the Facility agreement between the Crown and Council.
14. The fund was drawn down over a 6-year period and comprises 24 separate drawdown amounts. Each amount is treated as standalone loan, and each is for a 10-year interest free period. At the end of the 10-year period, any loan balance remaining will convert to interest-bearing debt.
15. The facility agreement allows for repayments to start in 2026/27. A series of lump sum amounts are registered within the Facility Agreement. These repayments have been incorporated into the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan and will be funded from the estimated Development Contributions revenue projections. The current projections that were used for the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan indicated that the Development Contributions revenue is more than adequate to meet the lump sum repayment amounts.
16. The benefit of the interest-free period for Council has been calculated at \$72 million; this is the interest value Council has saved in not using interest-bearing debt.

### Central City Transformation Programme

17. The vision for the Central City Transformation Programme is to create a central city where people love to be.
18. Key changes to programme activity since the last update to the Committee on 8 April 2025 include:
  - i. Progress with the central city beautification programme including a new garden in Garden Place, directional signage, Matariki Statue replacement and Hood Street rain garden and poles. Replacement of street furniture is currently in progress. Further planning is currently being undertaken for projects this financial year;
  - ii. The Business Improvement District Policy has been approved by the Council;
  - iii. Engagement with the community for the Infrastructure Acceleration Fund (IAF) Reservoir (refer to the IAF programme update below for more information);
  - iv. More homes completed in the central city and surrounds – see **Attachment 2** for an update on development activity including a map of developments. The Infrastructure Acceleration Fund Housing Outcomes are currently on track with a total of 342 homes completed since 2022;
  - v. Continued construction and refurbishment of significant buildings including Waikato Regional Theatre, the Ward Street Pullman Hotel, North Bloc on Tristram, and 500 Victoria Street and Hinemoa Apartments. Additionally Stark Properties has purchased buildings adjacent to North Bloc on Tristram for a large-scale redevelopment in the long term; and
  - vi. Proactive development response planning to minimise impacts on community and businesses in preparation for multiple projects commencing in 2026.

### Central City Strategic Infrastructure – IAF Programme

19. The Infrastructure Acceleration Fund (IAF) Infrastructure Programme is funded by a \$150.6 million Crown grant that was formerly managed by Kāinga Ora. As of 1 July 2025, it now sits with the National Infrastructure Funding and Financing Company (NIFFCo). In summary, the overall programme is progressing to plan. Our first report to NIFFCo has been submitted.
20. **Reservoir** – Community and stakeholder pre-engagement for the Ruakiwi Reservoir location and design has begun with drop-in sessions held for key affected residents and public.

Gathering input from these groups is essential to ensuring that the reservoir design aligns with community expectations and operational requirements. Construction is currently planned to commence mid-2026 with an approximate two-and-a-half-year build time.

21. **Pipes for Growth** – work on the bulk water reticulation project (now known as Pipes for Growth) has now commenced, with a dedicated project manager assigned to oversee delivery and coordination with other infrastructure projects. Planning is underway; this includes ensuring quality stakeholder management with businesses and residents.
22. **IAF Reactive Works** – Reactive Works has now confirmed several eligible projects including multiple local water network upsizing of pipes, and a pumpstation diversion to create capacity in the central interceptor to accommodate development in the Central City. The funding is being balanced between Council finding opportunities to install infrastructure to unlock housing potential and Council waiting to see where developers will construct and infrastructure needs for that location.
23. Other IAF Projects underway include wastewater network planning, the development of an integrated catchment management plan for Waitawhiriwhiri and City Centre, and the Anglesea Street Investigation work, all of which are progressing well.

#### **Central City Transformation Programme Risks**

24. There is a risk that businesses and the central city community may be negatively impacted by the combined effects of multiple projects and developments being delivered commencing from 2026. Staff are taking this risk seriously. While we can accept some disruption, it is important that we work to minimise this as much as possible while important projects take place. Several actions are being planned or are underway including:
  - i. A Central City Development Response Plan has been created, using insights from a survey of the central city community and including the principles endorsed by Elected Members at the briefing held on 6 November 2024. This plan provides staff guidance on the overall response with individual projects required to prepare detailed plans specific to their project areas.
  - ii. Assessment of resourcing – this includes looking at resources dedicated to central city stakeholder management and detailed programme planning and coordination delivery. This is critical to manage engagement, dependencies and to identify risks and opportunities.
  - iii. Establishing connections with other Councils such as Auckland, Tauranga, Wellington and Christchurch to gather lessons learned from their central city transformation programmes.
  - iv. Reviewing and re-establishing staff central city programme governance structures, including General Management alignment, programme steering and dedicated cross-organisational working group.
  - v. Planning a campaign for the central city community to showcase a long-term view of projects that will help shape our central city into a place where people love to be. Exploring ambassadorship opportunities.
25. Current market conditions, including construction costs and economic uncertainty, present a risk to the rate of growth in the central city. These factors may impact developer confidence and project timelines. Council has several mitigations and incentives in place to direct growth to the central city including developer engagement, making it easier to develop in central city through Plan Change 12 and development contribution remissions for tall buildings.

## LAND USE PLANNING

### Fast-track applications

#### Context and scale of development

26. Hamilton is currently facing an unprecedented scale of potential development through the Fast-track consenting process. Around 470 hectares of residential land (with capacity for approximately 10,500 homes) and 654 hectares of industrial land have been proposed around the city's periphery. This brings the total land area potentially subject to Fast-track consents to 1,229 hectares.
27. Even if only half of these applications are approved and realised, the transformation of Hamilton's edges would be significant and rapid – unlike anything previously experienced by the city.

#### Fast-track application requirements

28. Preparing a Fast-track application is a substantial undertaking. Panels appointed to assess these applications are expected to demand a high level of completeness and procedural accuracy, for two key reasons:
  - i. Completeness enables developments to proceed quickly, aligning with the legislation's intent to accelerate delivery.
  - ii. Procedural accuracy helps reduce the risk of Judicial Review. While appeal rights are limited under the legislation, overseas experience (e.g. the United Kingdom) shows that opponents often shift to challenging the process itself. Judicial Review focuses on procedural robustness, but flaws can become proxies for merit-based opposition. Panels will therefore scrutinise how well applications address key matters and comply with legislative requirements.

#### Resourcing and prioritisation

29. Given the volume of applications – now at 12 and counting, the highest of any local authority in New Zealand except Queenstown – Hamilton City Council, along with Waikato District Council and Waipā District Council as part of a Future Proof Programme, must prioritise its engagement. This marks a shift from earlier advice to the Committee, when full engagement was recommended for a smaller number of applications.
30. Staff are currently undertaking a prioritisation exercise to determine where limited staff resources can be most effectively allocated. Not all areas will receive the same level of involvement, and reduced engagement carries risks. In particular, limited Council input may result in adverse outcomes for the city, especially regarding greenfield development costs, which are discussed in a separate report in the public excluded agenda.

#### Next steps

31. Staff will keep Council informed as the prioritisation exercise progresses and as new Fast-track applications receive ministerial referral. Only once projects are formally referred can staff accurately assess resource impacts and timing.



## Current Status of Fast-track Applications

Applicant	Project Name		Sector	Update
<b>Scheduled: Within the boundary</b>				
Tainui Group Holdings Limited	<b><u>Tuumata</u></b> Ruakura Tuumata Residential and Commercial (Large Format Retail)		Housing and Land Development	Likely to be dealt with as a Plan Change.
<b>Scheduled: Partially within the boundary</b>				
Te Awa Lakes Unincorporated Joint Venture	<b><u>TAL</u></b> Te Awa Lakes		Housing and Land Development	Preparatory discussions proceeding.
<b>Scheduled: Outside the boundary</b>				
CDL Land New Zealand Limited	<b><u>R2</u></b> CDL – Ruakura 2 Growth Cell		Housing and Land Development (residential and industrial)	Intensive interaction has started.
Malcolm's Rest Limited, Lloyd Seeney and Kathryn Seeney	<b><u>WA</u></b> Wallace Road Stage 1A and 1B subdivision and land use consent with associated roading and infrastructure.		Housing and Land Development	Staff are advised by the consultant that work has been placed on hold by the applicants.
Colliers Project Leader is the client representative for the SL1 Consortium	<b><u>SL1</u></b> Southern Links 1		Housing and Land Development (residential and industrial)	Finalising engagement arrangements.
New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi	Hamilton Southern Links		Infrastructure	HCC Staff continue to be involved in detailed workshops on the form and function of the road, and the interaction of the road with surrounding land.
<b>Seeking referral</b>				
Te Kowhai East LP	<b><u>TKE</u></b> Partnership between Bluehaven and Kilroy Group – industrial development		Housing and Land Development (industrial)	Has not been referred yet. Continuing to actively engage pursuant to Committee resolutions.

## Item 9

Brymer	<b><u>Brymer</u></b> Pragma Homes – retirement village		Housing and Land Development (residential)	Referral application has been lodged. HCC has been asked to provide a letter commenting on the application. This is in preparation and will note inter alia that the site cannot be connected to the City's reticulated networks, has access challenges, and is subject to peat and stormwater constraints.
Colin Litt	<b><u>HT1</u></b>		Housing and Land Development (residential)	It is understood Colin Litt is in discussions with an adjoining landowner on potentially collaborating on an enlarged FT application.
SL1 Rogerson Block	Part of SL1 (west of the Stage 1 Industrial Block)		Housing and Land Development (residential and industrial)	It is understood a Referral application has been lodged. If approved for Fast Track will likely be dealt with by HCC as a combined enlarged SL1 application.
SL1 South (Chinamans Hill (Porter Group) and (Jones / Stevenson family))	SL1 South		Housing and Land Development (mix of residential, industrial and retirement village land use)	Pre-lodgement engagement and workshops.
Several landowners	Taha Industrial		Industrial	Mobilising for Fast Track Referral application.

### Future Proof workstreams

#### Priority Development Areas

32. The Future Proof Priority Development Areas Working Group (PDAWG) presented the 6-monthly Priority Development Areas trackers to Future Proof Implementation Committee in June 2025.
33. There are six focus Priority Development Areas that are reported on including:
  - i. Huntly/Raahui Pookeka
  - ii. Northwest Hamilton-Horotiu
  - iii. Hamilton Central City
  - iv. Fairfield-Enderley
  - v. Ruakura
  - vi. North Waipā-South Hamilton.
34. See the [5 June 2025 agenda](#) of the Future Proof Implementation Committee meeting for the Priority Development Areas Tracker Report.

## North Waipā - South Hamilton Spatial Study, and Hamilton to Tauranga Corridor Spatial Study

35. Vision statements and gap analyses have been put out for public comment and are available to be viewed on the [Future Proof website](#).
36. Due to resourcing constraints, the timetable has been lengthened slightly. It was originally intended to complete both projects by January 2026; this has been pushed out slightly to March 2026.

## Industrial land demand analysis

37. Industrial land demand has been a consistent area of interest for this Committee over several years, most recently raised by the Chair in her Chair's Report to the [10 June 2025 meeting](#). In response, Council has commissioned specialist economic advice from Formative to better understand potential demand scenarios for industrial land in Hamilton over the medium (3–10 years) and long term (10–30 years).
38. Hamilton's industrial landscape is evolving rapidly. Significant tracts of land may be rezoned under the Fast-track and Emerging Areas frameworks, and major infrastructure upgrades – such as the Waikato Expressway – are expected to induce demand. In parallel, constrained industrial land supply in Auckland and Tauranga is likely to result in spillover demand to Hamilton. However, this spillover is expected to be temporary, as those markets respond with new supply options to meet their own needs.
39. A major catalyst for change is the Ruakura Inland Port and Superhub, projected to generate a significant number of new jobs in warehousing, freight, and logistics. This development represents a significant economic shock, disrupting business-as-usual activity and rebalancing freight flows across the upper North Island and the “golden triangle.”
40. The latest study moves beyond traditional business-as-usual projections and models demand under a range of non- business-as-usual scenarios, incorporating three key drivers:
  - i. induced demand from rezoning and infrastructure upgrades;
  - ii. spillover effects from neighbouring constrained markets; and
  - iii. economic shock from the Ruakura development.
41. Three scenarios – medium, high, and very high growth – were assessed across both medium and long-term horizons. A low-growth non- business-as-usual scenario was not modelled, as it would closely resemble the business-as-usual baseline.
42. By exploring these plausible real-world scenarios, the study provides a more comprehensive view of potential industrial land demand. It is important to note that the Very High scenario serves as a contingency envelope – an upper-bound estimate rather than a default planning target.
43. The findings indicate that, under each scenario and across both timeframes, industrial land demand could significantly exceed projections made under the Housing and Business Assessment (HBA). This has important implications for Council's strategic planning, infrastructure investment, and land use policy.

**Table 1:** Updated Industrial demand scenarios

2025 Industrial Demand Scenarios	Medium term (3-10 yrs)	Long term (10-30 yrs)
Medium	250ha	627ha
High	337ha	751ha
Very High	434ha	1,022ha

44. The findings from the latest demand study correlate strongly with earlier market-based analysis undertaken by Martin Udale in 2023. That study, which included qualitative research with development professionals and ground-truthing of available industrial land, projected demand of approximately 317 hectares in the medium term – comparable to the High scenario in the current study. In the long term, the Udale study estimated demand of up to 1,110 hectares, aligning with the Very High scenario.
45. Currently, approximately 654 hectares of industrial land is proposed through scheduled Fast-track developments and applicants seeking Fast-track referral. This is roughly equivalent to the High scenario projection, suggesting that if all Fast-track areas are approved Hamilton and the surrounding areas of land on the city's boundary will have sufficient long-term industrial land supply under that scenario.
46. The study also explored economic futures, identifying industrial sub-sectors currently under-represented in Hamilton that could expand if more conducive conditions are created. This analysis assumes that outperforming a business-as-usual scenario will require enabling new industry types and activities within emerging industrial areas.
47. Understanding the composition of future industry helps Council determine optimal locations for these activities, based on factors such as proximity to infrastructure (e.g. interchanges or water sources). This insight supports more responsive spatial planning, district plan rules, and infrastructure investment.
48. The research also examined locational preferences, drawing on data from New Zealand's major centres. Key findings include:
  - i. a strong preference for proximity to state highways;
  - ii. a desire to be distant from sensitive residential areas to avoid reverse sensitivity issues; and
  - iii. a tendency for industry to cluster near other industrial activities.
49. The Future Development Strategy 2024, which sets the urban settlement pattern for Hamilton and the sub-region, was informed by the Housing and Business Assessment (HBA) undertaken by Market Economics (2024). The HBA adopted a business-as-usual approach, assuming existing demand and supply patterns persist. Its industrial demand projections are summarised below:

**Table 2:** HBA 2024 Industrial Demand by Time Period

Time Period	Industrial Demand (ha)
Short Term (1–3 yrs)	61.3
Medium Term (3–10 yrs)	200.3
Long Term (10–30 yrs)	457.4

50. In summary, this investigation has shown that plausible future scenarios could exceed the industrial land demand projected under the HBA. These findings provide an upper limit of total demand over the next 30 years and offer a valuable reference for:
  - i. future land resource planning;
  - ii. zoning and land use decisions;
  - iii. enabling emerging industries; and
  - iv. locational planning preferences.
51. This work also informs broader Council activities, including economic development, rating incentives, and infrastructure servicing and investment decisions.

## STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE

### Metro Spatial Plan Transport recommended programme and Fast-track

52. At the 10 June 2025 Committee meeting, staff were asked to report back to the 12 August 2025 meeting regarding the following risk posed by Fast-track:

***Growth and infrastructure investment:*** *The number of fast-track areas will also impact future growth strategies and the City's investment approach to growth infrastructure, enabling more areas will change spatially how and where growth occurs. This will require Council to re-consider existing related strategies like Access Hamilton that have been based off a more consolidated city form. With multiple areas being enabled for urban development Council will also need to consider how and where it invests in infrastructure. There will be a risk if Council chooses to invest in one area over another and if growth then does not materialise where planned.*

53. The risk itself is primarily around the change of a land use approach used to develop a recommended programme or strategy by:
- i. diluting the identified benefits of the existing strategy or programme;
  - ii. affecting the timing of realising the benefits of said programme or strategy.
54. A good example of this would be Council delivering on strategic transport objectives, based on addressing problems identified in recent business cases processes, and the above risks of both effectiveness and timing manifesting.
55. Discussion at the 10 June 2025 meeting noted the Hamilton-Waikato Metro Spatial Plan recommended programme implementation was vulnerable to these risks. Other programmes would have similar concerns.
56. For context, the Metro Spatial Plan recommended programme identified a series of issues the metro areas need to address as we plan (with our partners) for the future growth of our city and adjacent areas. These include but are not limited to:
- i. high car dependency;
  - ii. congestion issues;
  - iii. effects of this on productivity and freight efficiency;
  - iv. safety for all transport network users;
  - v. health and housing issues;
  - vi. climate change related impact.
57. Most pertinent in considering these issues is the fact that new central government directives such as Fast-track are a move away from compact urban form as directed by our own growth strategy (HUGS).
58. To expand on this last point, every strategy that identifies projects to address growth-related problems (mentioned above), has to adopt a land use base from which a recommended programme of interventions (projects) can be identified and prioritised, often over a long period of time e.g. the Metro Spatial Plan Transport Programme covers 50+ years.
59. At the time of developing the Metro Spatial Plan transport programme, staff had a newly produced Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy (HUGS) to apply, which followed a broad compact city approach with a 70/30 brownfield / greenfield split. Our Metro Spatial Plan programme, and the benefits attached to fulfilling that programme, were based on this land use scenario.

- 60. A more dispersed land use scenario that Fast-track inspires could potentially challenge assumptions by delaying the timing of benefit realisation, and by diluting those benefits, as previously noted.
- 61. An example of this could be that certain transport interventions or levels of service (greater frequency of bus services) are triggered by land use changes and the number of people that live in an area/corridor e.g. the number of people who live within a catchment of a public transport corridor increases due to greater intensification, thus it is easier to justify a greater level of bus service; jobs is also another indicator we use often.
- 62. However, if that intensification or job creation slows due to a more dispersed residential and industrial commercial distribution, this dispersion of growth will have a knock-on effect. Benefits will happen e.g. greater number of people using buses leading to less congestion, but it will take longer to get those benefits from our investments.

### **Southern Links update**

- 63. Since the last update at the 8 April 2025 Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee meeting ([agenda](#)), Council liaison with NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) has continued as the Investment Case nears completion. Current direction from NZTA is that the Board will decide on next steps in August or September 2025. This is when announcements are expected to be made and there is little else to update on from a process perspective.
- 64. Technically, staff from Council, other Future Proof partners and local developers have continued to work with the NZTA project team on several tasks related to design, land use, landowner concerns and future network operation, and most recently revocation discussions, which remain on-going.
- 65. The only other significant point of note is a slight addition to the original scope that increased the study area to incorporate points between Kahikatea Drive and Killarney Road. This allowed some additional design options to be developed for consideration in the recommendations to be presented to their Board by NZTA staff later this year.

## **COLLABORATION / RELATIONSHIPS**

### **UNISA**

- 66. The Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA) continues to progress the work programme for the triennium, including identifying significant infrastructure required to deliver on the potential of the Upper North Island.
- 67. At their meeting on 9 May 2025, UNISA Chief Executives supported the development of a UNISA-wide Infrastructure Development Plan. The Infrastructure Development Plan will show the prioritised key infrastructure projects spatially.
- 68. The Infrastructure Development Plan will be valuable as a vehicle for interacting and negotiating with Central Government; it presents an opportunity to demonstrate that UNISA is a credible partner and that its members can work together in a boundaryless way.
- 69. An important component of the Infrastructure Development Plan will be a prioritisation framework that robustly and transparently leads to identifying the set of agreed prioritised projects (that deliver benefits at a North Island scale), that is agnostic to whomever is the government of the day.
- 70. The resulting set of projects will be included in a submission that will be made to the National Infrastructure Commission and to inform discussion with key Central Government stakeholders.
- 71. It is important to note that projects identified in the Infrastructure Development Plan will be those already prioritised by each individual council through other processes.

72. The draft Plan will be taken to the Mayors and Chairs' meeting on 29 August 2025.

## HOUSING

### Waikato Housing Initiative

73. Council is collaborating and providing in-kind support to the Waikato Housing Initiative and Waikato Wellbeing Project on an affordable housing study. The purpose of the work is to identify real-world local solutions for affordable housing – specifically focusing on how to make affordable housing commercially feasible for developers (including private, community/for purpose and iwi developers).
74. This work will develop a practical, data-driven investment model that identifies commercially feasible pathways for delivering affordable rental and ownership housing to middle-income households (earning \$60,000–\$150,000 annually) in the Waikato region. The model will use Enderley-Fairfield as a case study for affordable development in urban areas. Case studies for peri-urban and rural communities have been selected from other districts in the region.
75. Council has also contributed to national conversations about affordable housing through staff attending the 2025 Affordable Housing Development & Investment Summit. Staff delivered a presentation examining housing supply and demand in Auckland and Hamilton. This involved analysing annual new buildings consents, census data and house price data for the two centres. The key findings of this presentation:
- i. There is a correlation between higher amounts of plan-enabled infrastructure-ready land, higher annual building consents and smaller annual increases in house prices.
  - ii. Auckland's favourable policies enabled rapid delivery of housing during high demand periods. This cushioned the impact on house prices.
  - iii. Metro centres, including Hamilton, need a significantly higher multiplier of plan-enabled infrastructure-ready land to support housing affordability.

### Financial Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro Puutea*

76. The Fast-track Approvals Act includes provisions for cost recovery. Refer discussion in the [20 February 2025 Strategic Issues report](#) (see p25).
77. There are several Fast-track urban development proposals on the edge of Hamilton. Strategic boundary agreements are in place to transition these areas into the city. Before initiating these agreements, Council needs to understand the financial cost implications on the Council and ratepayers of initiating these land transfers or not. See discussion in the Strategic Issues report in the public excluded agenda.

### Legal Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa-ture*

78. Staff confirm that these matters comply with Council's legal and policy requirements.
79. Staff advise that they are complying with legal obligations the Fast-track Approvals Act places on Council.

### Risks – *Tuuraru*

80. There are no known risks associated with the decision sought in this report.
81. The matters in this report relate to SR2 – Significant negative impact on financial strategy and SR5 – Failure to deliver growth outcomes.

82. Below is a list of key risk considerations as staff respond to the Fast-track programme.

- i. **Up-front financial costs:** Council's funding capacity is significantly constrained as evidenced through the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan cycle. Council does not have the funding identified in the Long-Term Plan to contribute to upsizing networks to support these new growth areas. Capital investment to support growth in existing areas within the city boundary were significantly reduced.
- ii. **Long-run financial costs:** as identified through the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan, long-run operating and maintenance costs of servicing new growth areas need to be better understood and reflected in how Council's charging models are applied in these new growth areas to ensure costs are being equitably distributed.
- iii. **Boundary change:** Fast-track brings forward consideration of changing boundaries with adjoining territorial authorities. Changing boundaries may be necessary to allow Hamilton City Council to levy development charges on the new consented areas to allow appropriate recovery of the costs of the significant additional strategic upgrades to city networks triggered by the Fast-Track consents, and the ongoing operational expenditure required for the maintenance of vested infrastructure.

However, there are several political and financial risks to Council attached to boundary change that need to be carefully worked through before a decision is made. The key risk is that the Fast-track process does not make available the space for such consideration, and outcomes are imposed on Council by granting of Fast-track consent, to which Council must retrospectively react. For example, there is the risk that Fast Track consents are granted prior to the boundary change being completed (given it takes 1-2 years) which will require mitigation through a plan/signed PDA in place that can recover costs in the interim period. Experience shared from another council is that such mechanisms in themselves are complicated and time consuming to establish.

- iv. **Three waters servicing:** Council does not have the capacity to integrate all Fast-tracks currently. Additional funding, upgrades, allocation limits and consents are needed. For example, the City will need additional water-take consents.
- v. **Climate change:** allowing development to proceed without Council input risks poor long-term urban form outcomes which are costly to manage, lock in high emission growth and are not climate resilient.
- vi. **Affordable housing:** affordable housing is a critical matter for Council, through proactive engagement now, before the leverage point dissipates later in the process there.
- vii. **Infrastructure delivery:** the question of who delivers infrastructure will need to be considered.
- viii. **Resource allocation:** There is insufficient staff resourcing to focus on Fast-track Areas along with existing committed work programmes. The consequence of pausing existing work programmes (due to their nature) would cause significant legal risk.
- ix. **Cannibalising growth:** Addition of new Fast-track Areas may divert market interest away from committed areas, affecting Council's sunk investment in those areas.
- x. **Growth and infrastructure investment:** The number of fast-track areas will also impact future growth strategies and the City's investment approach to growth infrastructure, enabling more areas will change spatially how and where growth occurs. This will require Council to re-consider existing related strategies like Access Hamilton that have been based off a more consolidated city form. With multiple areas being enabled for urban development Council will also need to consider how and where it invests in



infrastructure. There will be a risk if Council chooses to invest in one area over another and if growth then does not materialise where planned.

- xi. **3-waters reform:** A new Waikato-Hamilton Council-Controlled Organisation for waters might assist with servicing Fast-track developments as it will likely operate in a 'boundaryless' manner and with greater organisational scale.

83. See the body of the report for a discussion on risk **ix. Growth and Infrastructure Investment**.

### Strategic Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa- rautaki*

- 84. Everything we do is aimed at improving the wellbeing of Hamiltonians. Council has been working alongside our community to understand what people in our city want the future of Hamilton Kirikiriroa to look like as represented by our five priorities.
- 85. The promotion of the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities in the present and for the future is expressed through Council's key strategies.
- 86. The proposed recommendation will align with Council key documents, as identified in the Governance Structure, in the following ways.

<a href="#">Significance and Engagement Policy</a>	Staff have considered the key considerations under the Significance and Engagement Policy and have assessed that the matter(s) in this report has/have a low level of significance. Given the low level of significance determined, the engagement level is low. No engagement is required
<a href="#">He Pou Manawa Ora - Pillars of Wellbeing</a>	Staff have considered He Pou Manawa Ora and determined that there are no specific or relevant outcomes applicable to this report.
<a href="#">Our Climate Future Te Pae Tawhiti o Kirikiriroa</a>	Staff have considered the key considerations under the Climate Change Policy and have determined that an adaptation assessment and emissions assessment is not required for the matter(s) in this report.
<a href="#">Disability Action Plan</a>	Staff have considered the Disability Action Plan and determined that there are no specific or relevant goals applicable to this report.
<a href="#">Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy</a>	The discussion on the Metro Spatial Plan Transport Recommended Programme and Fast-track relates to the Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy (HUGS).

### Attachments - *Ngaa taapirihanga*

Attachment 1 - Greenfield Growth Programme Annual Benefits Report

Attachment 2 - Central City Development Activity

# Greenfield Growth programme

## Annual Benefits Report

July 2025



**Hamilton  
City Council**  
Te kaunihera o Kiriikiriroa



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## Executive Summary

This is Hamilton City Council's first annual Greenfield Growth Benefits Report. It provides an update on how Rototuna, Ruakura, Peacocke and Rotokauri-northwest are tracking against housing and employment outcomes in the Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy (HUGS) and greenfield business case benefits.

### Key Highlights

- Hamilton has a good supply of developable greenfield growth land with capacity for thousands of homes to be constructed to support our growing population.
- This has been enabled by long-term planning and delivery of strategic infrastructure. Key enablers include:
  - Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) and NZTA transport subsidies unlocking land for approximately 7400 homes.
  - Shovel-ready funding (\$40 million) and Provincial Growth Fund (\$16.8 million) unlocking Tainui Group Holdings (TGH) Ruakura Superhub and significant regional economic growth.
  - COVID-19 fast-track consenting processes accelerating development in Rotokauri North.
- Construction of homes has slowed in recent years due to economic and market conditions, falling from a peak of 749 new homes completed in the year to June to 296 new homes in year to June 2025. Consenting is forecast to pick up in 2026, with an uptick in consenting activity already under way.
- There is sufficient zoned and enabled greenfield land in Hamilton to meet projected growth demand in the short- to medium-term. While fast-track processes may introduce additional greenfield land supply, Hamilton is not reliant on these areas for residential growth. See Greenfield Estimated Residential Capacity Snapshot on page 6.
- The strategic planning and long-term Council and partner investment into infrastructure has unlocked significant economic benefits in greenfield areas such as Ruakura and Rotokauri-northwest. There is currently enough zoned and developable greenfield industrial land in the short-term.

### Growth Area Snapshots

**Rototuna** is a leading example of a quality greenfield growth area, offering a mix of housing typologies alongside high-quality and award-winning amenities including Te Kete Aronui Library, playgrounds, gully networks, sports parks, The Peak Recreation Centre, schools, and public transport connections. The completion of the final major transport connection, Borman Road, has improved accessibility and enhanced integration with the wider transport network.

**Ruakura** is emerging as a nationally significant logistics, employment, and residential growth hub on Hamilton's eastern edge. Anchored by the operational inland port and logistics centre within the Ruakura Superhub, the area combines large-scale industrial development with planned residential neighbourhoods, research and innovation zones, and ecological restoration initiatives. The future delivery of the Eastern Transport Corridor is a key enabler that will unlock the full development potential of this strategically located area.

**Peacocke** is now unlocked for further development of up to 7,400 homes, with the final HIF-funded strategic transport connection – Whatukooruru Drive – due for completion in 2026. Construction of homes continues in the southern precincts, with a strong pipeline of consents and earthworks now underway in the north. Community development planning includes provision for new schools, neighbourhood centres, and open spaces. Further strategic infrastructure investment is required for the north-south arterial in the long-term.

**Rotokauri Northwest** is progressing through strong partnerships between Council and private developers, unlocking approximately 3500 homes in Rotokauri Stage 1 and enabling future growth in Rotokauri Stage 2. The Rotokauri Structure Plan integrates provision for new schools, transport infrastructure, stormwater management, and open space networks. The broader northwest corridor includes growth at Te Awa Lakes and Te Rapa North, where private development and strategic rezoning are supporting additional residential and industrial development.

**Table 1. Greenfield Growth Development Activity as at 30 June 2025**

Strategic Growth Area	From date	Getting sections ready		Construction of homes	
		Subdivision consents In Progress (sections)	Sections Granted Subdivision Consent	Homes granted building consent but not yet completed	Homes completed (granted Code of Compliance)
<b>Rototuna</b>	2005	162	3434	208	7430
<b>Rotokauri-northwest</b>	2014	573	376	54	263
<b>Ruakura</b>	2015	-	284	67	807
<b>Peacocke</b>	2018	899	1345	100	394

### Non-residential Development Activity Summary

Consenting activity for greenfield non-residential development has slowed in line with broader economic conditions. In 2024, a total of 10860m<sup>2</sup> of gross floor area was consented across commercial (860m<sup>2</sup>) and industrial (10,000m<sup>2</sup>) uses. However, in 2025, only 1480m<sup>2</sup> has been consented to date, note we are mid-way through the calendar year. This decline mirrors national trends, where non-residential consenting fell by 69% in the year to September 2024, driven by higher interest rates and business conservatism around debt and cashflow.

Looking ahead

Emerging Policy and Planning Context

Central Government has introduced new legislation and policy settings that are changing the way greenfield growth is planned and zoned, for example Fast track consenting and changes to the Resource Management Act. This is likely to significantly increase the area of greenfield growth land across Hamilton and may alter the uptake and speed of developments.

This Greenfield Growth Benefits Report highlights that there is currently sufficient zoned and enabled greenfield land in Hamilton to meet projected short- to medium-term housing demand. While emerging policy may introduce additional land supply, Council is not reliant on these areas for growth delivery.

These shifts will be monitored, and their impact will be reported through future Greenfield Growth Benefits Reports to ensure alignment with city-wide planning and infrastructure delivery.

Risks and Opportunities

While Hamilton’s greenfield growth programme presents substantial opportunities, it also involves strategic risks that require active management.

Key opportunities	Key risks
Leveraging funding and financing tools such as IFF	Economic volatility impacting housing and infrastructure demand
Building partnerships to accelerate infrastructure delivery	Central Government policy and funding changes
Supporting climate-ready, low-carbon neighbourhoods	Engagement and communication misalignment affecting delivery
	Resourcing pressures and competing priorities
	Investment misalignment between Council, private sector, and central government
	Fast-track consenting may introduce new growth areas, which could fragment delivery or misalign with infrastructure planning if not closely monitored.

Economic update

The Hamilton housing market, like the New Zealand housing market, has been impacted by a period of high interest rates and an economic slowdown. House prices and house price movement is one of the key drivers of development activity. Consenting across the city has fallen 40% since the market peaked in 2021 and remains 33% below the 10-year average of 1300 dwellings consented each year.

Greenfield consenting tends to have a higher price point than redevelopment builds in our existing suburbs with a median house sales price of \$960,000 compared to \$690,000 in both 2024 and 2025. As a result, greenfield consenting has fallen 64% since 2021.

The fall in house prices and subsequently in consenting activity has been dramatic, however, construction in New Zealand has historically had boom-bust cycles. Long-term projections smooth out some of the unexpected sharp rises and falls and look at the long-run trends. Over



the long-term, Council expects around 1200 new dwellings each year. Since 2018 when these projections were first considered, Hamilton has seen an average of 1375 new dwellings consented each year and a net total of 1223 more dwellings consented than expected – even with low consenting activity in 2024. So, while the current downturn is tough for those in the construction sector, it does not undermine our long-term expectations for growth in Hamilton.

Greenfield Residential Capacity

Hamilton city currently has 8.6 years of capacity for residential zoned land (i.e. developer ready and commercially feasible) across both greenfield and infill. This means there is sufficient zoned, enabled and infrastructure ready greenfield land in Hamilton to meet projected growth demand in the short- to medium-term.

Across the greenfield areas (Rototuna, Ruakura, Peacocke and Rotokauri-northwest) there is developer ready land for approximately 8,700 homes and commercially feasible and developer ready land for approximately 4,650 homes as follows:

Table 2. Greenfield Growth Residential Capacity Summary as at 30 June 2025

Greenfield Growth Area	Short-term developer ready land to 2027	Short-term commercially feasible and developer ready land to 2027
Rototuna	1,836	1,265
Ruakura	1,760	1,700
Peacocke	4,865	1,611
Rotokauri Northwest	274	80
Total	8,735	4,656

While fast-track processes may introduce additional greenfield land supply, Hamilton is not reliant on these areas for residential growth.

See Greenfield Estimated Residential Capacity Snapshot on page 7.

Industrial Land Supply

Hamilton currently has 4.7 years of zoned industrial land that is serviced and ready for development, exceeding the minimum target of 3 years. While this represents a stable short-term position, the margin is narrow and highlights the city’s limited buffer for future demand. The figure is only marginally down from January 2025 (4.8 years), reflecting steady but tight availability.

Importantly, the city fell below its industrial land target during stronger market conditions in late 2023, indicating that the current surplus is largely a function of subdued demand. As economic conditions improve, Hamilton is likely to face industrial land shortages again unless proactive measures are taken now to increase future supply.

Council is progressing several key initiatives to boost industrial land capacity in greenfield areas:

- Private Plan Change 17 for Fonterra’s site in Te Rapa North is advancing, with further submissions expected.

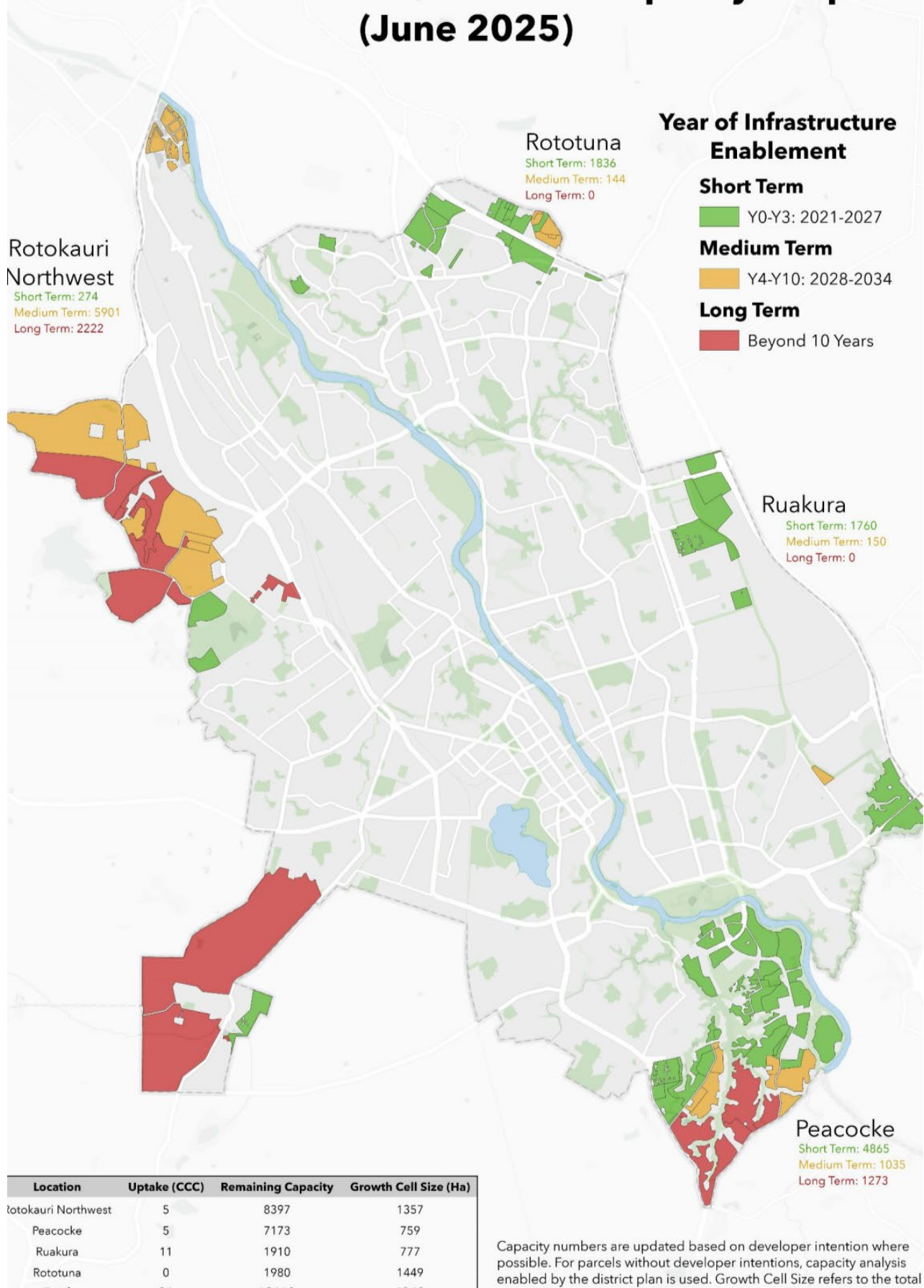
- Council is also preparing a Council-initiated plan change for industrial development in the proposed Percival–Ryburn Road Enclave, adjacent to the Ruakura Superhub.
- Council continues to engage with developers progressing projects through the Fast Track consenting process, with approximately 650ha of additional industrial land currently being proposed—well above what the latest Housing and Business Capacity Assessment (HBA) identifies as needed.

In summary, while current capacity meets Council’s industrial land supply targets, the margin is tight and reactive. Strategic planning and continued partnerships with developers will be essential to ensure Hamilton has enough industrial land to support economic growth as market demand recovers.



*Ruakura looking east over Waikato Expressway showing Ruakura Superhub and Te Wairepo wetland.*

# Greenfield Estimated Residential Capacity Snapshot (June 2025)



Item 9

Attachment 1







## Rototuna

<b>Status</b>	Almost complete
<b>Land area</b>	1400 ha
<b>Homes since 2005</b>	7430 homes
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Te Kete Aronui</li> <li>• Hare Puke Park</li> <li>• Borman Road extension</li> <li>• Reservoir</li> </ul>



### Summary of Key Outcomes

Rototuna has been developing over the last 20 years and is almost complete. Ongoing infill housing and smaller-scale developments continue in the area. Up to 2000 homes for 5000 more people are expected to be built over the next 30 years.

### Housing

Since 2005, 7430 homes have been built, and 162 subdivision consents are in progress. Notable developments include Pragma Property Group and BDL (developments consented and in construction), and Kirkdale Investments (consented). Refer to the below Rototuna Development Activity map for more detail.

### Economic and Employment

The Rototuna Town Centre is established as an employment and economic hub, offering jobs across a range of industries, as well as commercial opportunities. Economic and employment growth will be further supported by the proposed Plan Change 20, which will enable residential intensification alongside commercial development and transport network improvements.

### Strategic Infrastructure

Key infrastructure is well established, including transport and three waters, community facilities and strategic roading networks. Small scale upgrades will continue, including upgrades to walking, cycling and public transport connections and maintenance through the LTP.

### Community and Wellbeing

Rototuna is Hamilton's most established greenfield growth area for delivering community and wellbeing outcomes. The area benefits from a full suite of essential community services, including Te Kete Aronui Library, The Peak Recreation Centre, and a strong network of local schools and parks. Public transport links and ongoing investment in walking and cycling infrastructure support accessibility and social equity.

Environmental resilience is a key focus, with stormwater management upgrades like Lake Magellan improving water quality and flood mitigation. Climate adaptation initiatives in Rototuna include the integration of green infrastructure such as stormwater gullies and wetlands, enhanced pedestrian and cycling connectivity to promote low-carbon travel, and design provisions that align with Te Ture Whaimana o te Waikato Awa outcomes to restore and protect the health of the river and surrounding ecosystems.

### Rototuna Benefits and Key Enablers

#	Name	Description	Benefit Status	Commentary
1	More homes	Capacity for 2000 more homes enabled with ongoing residential intensification through the proposed Plan Change 20 and established infrastructure.	In progress	Rototuna continues to have a strong housing pipeline with stable market activity and community demand.
2	Employment	Local employment hub in retail, education, and services anchored by Rototuna Town Centre.	In progress	Employment growth steady, supported by established commercial precincts to service the community.
<b>Key Enablers</b>				
3	Water & Transport Infrastructure	Fully serviced with transport networks, three waters, and strategic arterial connections.		Final upgrades planned for improved walking, cycling, and public transport access.
4	Community Infrastructure	Rototuna Town Centre provides library, recreation center, parks, and neighbourhood amenities.	In progress	Community facilities well established and integrated with residential development e.g. Te Kete Aronui, The Peak, parks.
5	Climate change & resilience	Gully protection, stormwater management, and low-carbon transport options in place.		Strong baseline resilience measures through established infrastructure. Micromobility, walking and cycling facilities to support transport choices.
6	Education & schooling	Multiple schools already operating with future growth provided for in planning		Education infrastructure sufficient for current growth phase. Rototuna High School, Te Totara Primary School, Hamilton Christian School

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## Ruakura

<b>Status</b>	Underway
<b>Land area</b>	800 ha
<b>Homes since 2015</b>	807 Homes
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Ruakura Superhub and inland port Te Wairepo Wetland Eastern Transport Corridor Key transport connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reservoirs x 2</li> </ul> Waikato Expressway



### Summary of Key Outcomes

Ruakura is developing area that will be an engine for economic growth and employment for Hamilton. With capacity for 1900 homes, for 4000 more people in the next 40 years.

### Housing

Since 2015, 807 homes have been built, and 284 subdivision consents have been granted. Notable developments include Greenhill Park and Tuumata Block (in construction). Refer to the below Ruakura Development Activity map for more detail.

### Economic and Employment

Ruakura is a major employment and economic hub for Hamilton and the wider Waikato region. It supports a growing number of jobs in logistics, warehousing, manufacturing, with industrial land development progressing at pace. Tainui Group Holdings (TGH), in partnership with Brookfield, is delivering the Ruakura Superhub—including the Inland Port, logistics precincts, and future commercial areas. A proposed plan change to the Percival/Ryburn Road enclave would further increase the supply of industrial land. Innovation Park, located within the Ruakura area, plays a pivotal role in fostering high-value employment by supporting research-driven enterprises and attracting science and technology-based businesses to the region.

Once complete, the Ruakura Inland Port and Logistics Hub is projected to contribute approximately \$1 billion per annum in productivity gains to the Waikato region and \$5.4 billion in national economic benefit. The Eastern Transport Corridor (ETC), together with the completed Waikato Expressway (2022), is critical to unlocking the full potential of the hub, ensuring seamless freight connections and enabling future expansion to land east of the expressway.

The establishment of the Graduate Medical School at the University of Waikato, located adjacent to the Ruakura growth area, will further enhance regional economic growth. It will create high-skilled jobs, attract students and staff from across the country, and support the development of research, education, and health sector partnerships, complementing the innovation and employment objectives of the Ruakura Superhub.

### Strategic Infrastructure

Ruakura's strategic infrastructure is largely in place, enabling rapid development. This includes three waters servicing, one of two reservoirs, completed sections of the local roading network, and the Waikato Expressway, which was a critical enabler for unlocking Ruakura's development potential when completed in 2022. Stage 1 of the Ruakura Inland Port is operational, with both road and rail infrastructure connecting to national freight corridors.

The Eastern Transport Corridor is currently in detailed design and consenting, supported by joint funding from NZTA Waka Kotahi. This includes the Fifth Avenue extension and a north-south arterial connection between Powells Road and Silverdale Road, which will provide long-term capacity for freight, housing, and employment growth across the wider Ruakura structure plan area.

### Community and Wellbeing

Waikato Tainui and Tainui Group Holdings aspires for Ruakura to be the most environmentally sustainable port in the Southern Hemisphere. As part of this vision, over one million native trees have been planted, particularly in and around Te Wairepo wetland, a 10-hectare stormwater and ecological enhancement zone. These efforts contribute to local biodiversity, stormwater treatment, and the wider outcomes of Te Ture Whaimana o te Waikato Awa.

Future residential areas in Ruakura East are being planned with a strong environmental and community focus. They will include local parks, walkways, and shared paths to support connected, compact neighbourhoods. The operational Inland Port is expected to remove up to 65,000 truck movements per year, reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an estimated 13,100 tonnes annually, supporting Hamilton's climate response goals.

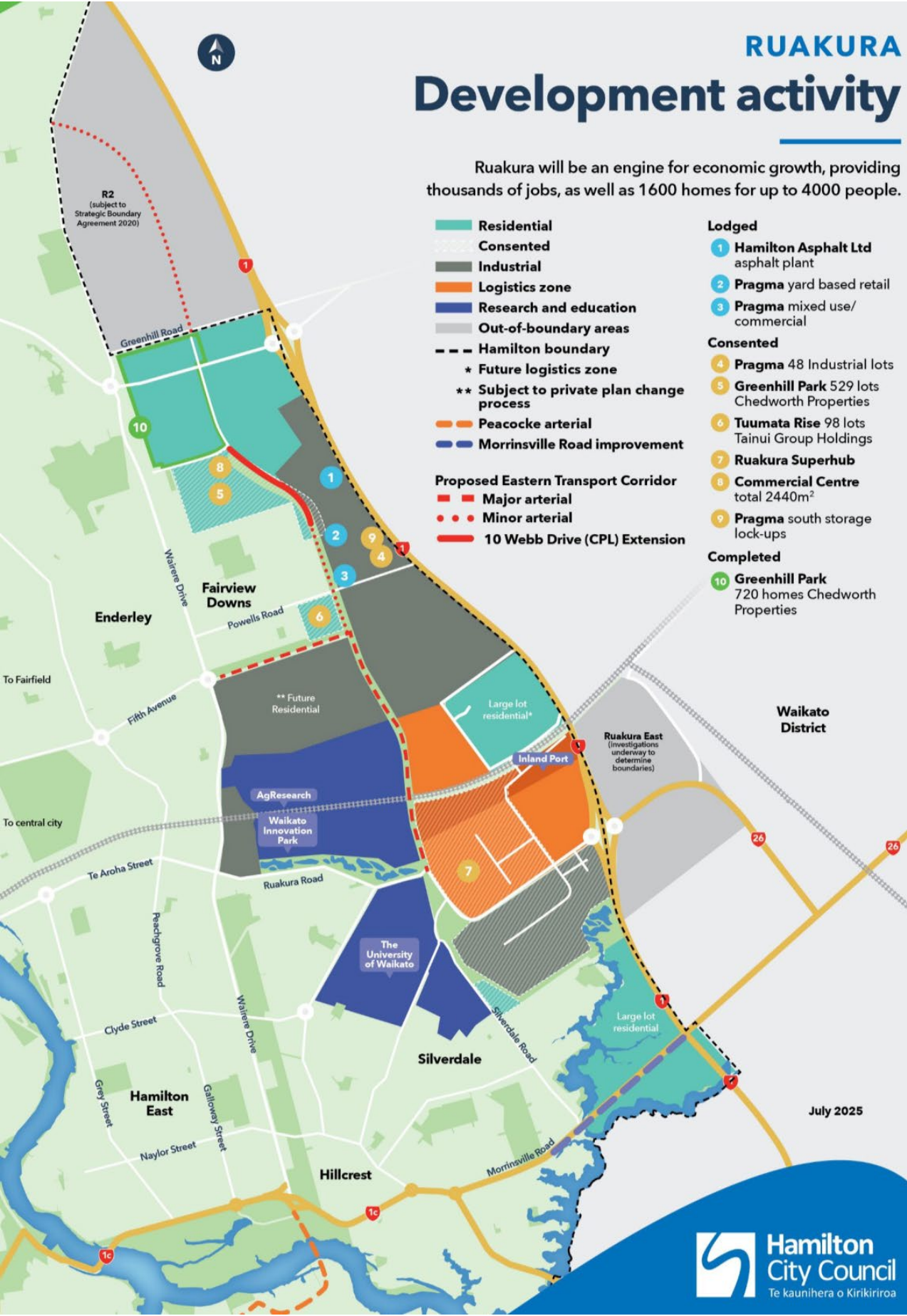
In addition, stormwater management upgrades at Greenhill Park are helping to enhance local water quality and resilience to climate impacts.

## Ruakura Benefits and Key Enablers

#	Name	Description	Benefit Status	Commentary
<b>Ruakura Board of Inquiry (2014)</b>				
1	<b>More homes</b>	Up to 4,500 homes planned under BOI structure plan across Ruakura residential precincts.	In Progress	Residential development progressing well in Greenhill Park and Tuumata with more than 800 homes built and capacity for up to 1900 homes. Infrastructure alignment in progress. Private Plan Change 15, which is currently on hold awaiting TGH direction, proposes up to 1300 homes.
2	<b>Employment - Industrial and logistics development</b>	Ruakura Superhub logistics, industrial, and commercial development delivering up to 11,000 jobs.	In Progress	Ruakura Inland Port operational, supporting logistics and freight-related employment. Key tenants eg. Kmart Distribution Centre.  Note: Number of expected jobs has been revised and reduced due to nature of logistics and technology.
<b>Ruakura Shovel-Ready Business Case (2020)</b>				
3	<b>Enabling transport and waters infrastructure</b>	Completion of enabling works unlocking Ruakura Superhub		Upgrades to Ruakura Road, and Silverdale Road, Freight access to Ruakura Inland Port, connectivity to Waikato Expressway, Wastewater upgrades, stormwater infrastructure (wetlands).
<b>Key Enablers</b>				
4	<b>Transport &amp; Water Infrastructure</b>	Arterial roads and inland port operational; ETC detailed design underway	In Progress – funding for ETC needed.	Second 21M water reservoir to support future residents in early 2030's. Eastern Transport Corridor detailed consenting and design in progress and construction funding still needed.
5	<b>Community Infrastructure</b>	Planned local parks, walkways, and neighbourhood centers.		Community facilities to be delivered as residential areas expand.
6	<b>Climate change &amp; resilience</b>	Wetland stormwater solutions and ecological restoration tied to iwi values.		Strong environmental performance embedded in development approach. 10ha Te Wairepo wetland. Inland port expected to remove up to 65,000 truck movements per year, reducing CO2 emission.
7	<b>Education &amp; Schooling</b>	Proximity to University of Waikato; new schooling planned in Ruakura East.		Education needs monitored as housing development scales up. A new Graduate Medical School at the University of Waikato has been announced.

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# Peacocke

Item 9

Attachment 1





## Peacocke

<b>Status</b>	Enabled for homes
<b>Land area</b>	740 ha
<b>Homes since 2018</b>	394 Homes
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Te Ara Pekapeka Bridge and strategic transport connections Wastewater transfer station Wastewater pipelines SH3/Ohaupo Road intersection



### Summary of Key Outcomes

Peacocke is a vibrant new community with major strategic infrastructure in place that has unlocked capacity for 7400 homes for up to 20,000 people in the next 40 years.

### Housing

Since 2018 (when the HIF Infrastructure Investment began), 394 homes have been built, and 100 building consents in progress. Subdivision consents are in place for 1345 homes, with consent applications in progress for another 900 homes. This is in addition to the 371 homes that have been constructed pre-2018 in the Peacocke Stage 1 area. Notable developments include Cornerstone Developments, Northview Aurora Developments, Peacocke South Limited (in progress), and Amberfield, and Qestral Broadwater Retirement Village (consented). Refer to the below Peacocke Development Activity map for more detail.

The impact of high interest rates and a broader economic downturn has slowed the pace of development in Peacocke. In 2024, 57 dwellings were completed, well below the Long-Term Plan (LTP) projection of 257 dwellings. While this represents a lag against forecasted growth, the slowdown is consistent with city-wide and national housing market trends. As economic conditions improve, development activity in Peacocke is expected to accelerate.

### Economic and Employment

A 7.8ha town centre is planned in Peacocke, in the long term, which will create jobs, attract new businesses, and provide essential services for residents. Infrastructure development has created, and will continue to create jobs, supporting broader city growth.

### Strategic Infrastructure

Peacocke is the prime example of planning for long term growth and building infrastructure in the right place at the right time. The \$180.3 million Housing Infrastructure Fund and \$110.1 million from Waka Kotahi NZTA has been essential in unlocking Peacocke's development potential, including Te Ara Pekapeka Bridge, sections of the Southern Links transport corridors, and three waters infrastructure.



### Community and Wellbeing

Peacocke's programmes and plans have a strong emphasis on community wellbeing. Early subdivisions include parks, playgrounds, and reserves, and options to travel the city in different modes. Peacocke is Hamilton's largest-ever environmental investment into a growth area. Biodiversity will be protected through designated bat corridors and artificial roosts, predator control, lizard habitat restoration, stream restoration, and planting over 200,000 native plants in addition to developer plantings. Cultural history is reflected in both infrastructure design and community spaces. 30 stormwater wetlands are planned, with several already delivered, to regenerate the natural environment, improve resilience to climate impacts, and deliver on Te Ture Whaimana o te Waikato Awa outcomes.



*Aurora Development in Peacocke South*

## Peacocke Benefits and Key Enablers

#	Name	Description	Benefit Status	Commentary
<b>Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Detailed Business Case Benefits (2017)</b>				
1	<b>More homes</b>	The development of 3750 dwellings over 10 years and approximately 8,400 over 30 years.	In progress	Structure Plan (PC5) now operative. Some activity to date and high developer interest. Delays associated with major consents, market conditions and increases in infill development have slowed the timing of uptake. Projections have been updated to 7,400 homes over 40 years following PC5.
2	<b>Interest savings</b>	The ability to use HIF Funding to fund wastewater and transport infrastructure and the associated interest saving benefits of approximately \$70 million		High-level analysis indicates that the current projected interest savings benefit will be approximately \$72 million to Council (ahead of target). This supports investment for long term growth.
3	<b>Funding Assistance</b>	The ability to apply for a Funding Assistance Rate (FAR) of 51% from Waka Kotahi NZTA for transport projects in Peacocke that connect to new subdivisions		Waka Kotahi NZTA funded \$110.1m towards the strategic transport infrastructure as part of HIF.
4	<b>Opening of Southern Links</b>	The opening of Southern Links, a regionally significant transport corridor and network.		Delivery of strategic infrastructure is on track. The opening of this network also 'unlocks' the growth area for new homes.
<b>Key Enablers</b>				
5	<b>Infrastructure Water &amp; Transport</b>	Transport and three waters infrastructure		Majority delivered. Completion of final transport connection, Whatukooruru Drive, expected 2026. Wastewater strategic storage and main pipeline trunk delivered. Ongoing stormwater treatment systems, and utility service on track as development phases progress.
6	<b>Community Infrastructure</b>	Community facilities		Land purchased for parks. Funding planned for future years. Ongoing roll out of local parks. Community facility provision tied to neighbourhood center development.
7	<b>Climate change and resilience</b>	Climate ready community	On track	Well-designed urban development and transport connections will enable low-carbon living.
8	<b>Education &amp; schooling</b>	Have education and schooling facilities enabled by 2030	In Progress	Two new primary schools are planned – southern site designated. Population demand will drive timing of school build.







## Rotokauri-northwest

<b>Status</b>	Underway
<b>Land area</b>	1350 ha
<b>Homes since 2014</b>	263 Homes
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hamilton Zoo</li> <li>• Waiwhakareke</li> <li>• Rotokauri Transport Hub</li> <li>• Greenway Corridor, Strategic arterial network</li> </ul>



### Summary of key outcomes

Rotokauri-northwest is a key growth area in a prime position for urban development. Capacity for 8500 homes for 21,000 people in the next 50 years.

### Housing

Since 2014, 263 homes have been completed and 263 subdivision consents granted in Rotokauri-northwest. Notable developments include Hounsell Holding Ltd, Te Awa Lakes, and Empire Group (in progress), and RDL (consented). While much of Rotokauri Stage 1 is zoned for residential development, progress has historically been constrained by the lack of strategic infrastructure and limited funding. This has since been addressed through partnerships with private developers, such as Hounsell Holdings, and the exploration of innovative funding and financing solutions to support further growth. Refer to the below Rotokauri-northwest Development Activity map for more detail.

### Economic and Employment

Rotokauri-northwest is a strategically zoned growth area that supports a balance between residential development and employment-generating land uses. Approximately 14.5 hectares of industrial and employment land is being delivered across Rotokauri and Te Rapa North. This land is projected to accommodate approximately 660 new businesses and generate over 10,000 jobs once fully developed. Much of this capacity is underpinned by proposed Plan Change 17, which will enable industrial development in Te Rapa North and supports Hamilton's long-term freight and logistics network.

### Strategic Infrastructure

Rotokauri's key transport links—including access to the Waikato Expressway and Te Rapa industrial area—are already operational. The Rotokauri Transport Hub offers integrated bus and rail services, improving access to citywide employment and education hubs. Initial three waters infrastructure is in place to support early residential and industrial development.

The stormwater Greenway Corridor in Rotokauri Stage 1 is being delivered through a Private Developer Agreement with a developer and is critical for stormwater management through a nature-based, climate-resilient way. Council has completed the Onion Road realignment



designation, it is now developing the detail design through a Private Developer's Agreement with a developer. Council is seeking a designation through key north-south and east-west arterial corridors including strategic infrastructure across Rotokauri. Council is co-funding design and consenting for these strategic corridors during the first two years of the Long-Term Plan (LTP). However, due to limitations under the Water Services Entities Act, funding for delivery beyond Year 2 has not been programmed at this stage.

### Community and Wellbeing

Environmental protection and resilience are key focuses in Rotokauri. Existing wetlands are being protected and restored, and strategies are in place to protect the endangered mudfish and their habitats. The Rotokauri Transport Hub provides reliable public transport options that support community mobility and lower-carbon commuting. Planning for future neighbourhood centers and local open spaces is already in place alongside residential development.



*Rotokauri area, 2023.*

## Rotokauri-northwest Benefits and Key Enablers

#	Name	Description	Benefit Status	Commentary
<b>Rotokauri Detailed Business Case (2019)</b>				
1	<b>More homes</b>	Capacity for up to 3400-3750 homes (Rotokauri Stage1) through staged structure plan and LTP business case. Full build across Rotokauri growth area is 8500 homes.	In progress	Construction of the greenway corridor will unlock and increase developable land in Rotokauri Stage 1. Residential uptake increasing, especially in northern precincts.
2	<b>Employment</b>	Strategic industrial zoning including Te Rapa North and Rotokauri employment areas.		Employment growth linked to freight and logistics sectors. Plan Change 17 will increase industrial zoning and employment opportunities.
<b>Key enablers</b>				
3	<b>Water &amp; Transport Infrastructure</b>	Staged infrastructure delivery - Transport Hub operational; Greenway Corridor and arterial upgrades staged.	In progress	Key infrastructure in place, and construction of the greenway corridor due to commence 2025. North-south and east-west arterial designations in progress. Further stages require developer partnership.
4	<b>Community Infrastructure</b>	Planned reserves, stormwater parks, neighbourhood centres under structure plan.		Incremental delivery tied to residential growth activity. Open space and park development – predator fencing around Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park
5	<b>Climate change &amp; resilience</b>	Greenway Corridor for stormwater and ecological protection; wetland management.		Resilience integrated into core infrastructure planning. Environmental protection and resilience are key focuses in Rotokauri. Existing wetlands are protected and restored to deliver on Te Ture Whaimana o te Waikato Awa outcomes.
6	<b>Education &amp; schooling</b>	Wintec Rotokauri Campus and planned school provisions.	In progress	Education needs reviewed as community growth advances



## Rotokauri-Northwest Development activity

Rotokauri-northwest is a key area for growth in Hamilton and has a total capacity of 8500 homes for up to 21,000 people.

- Rotokauri Stage 1
- Rotokauri Stage 2
- Rotokauri North Private Plan Change
- Te Rapa North Plan Change 10
- State Highway
- Proposed road
- Proposed bridge
- Rotokauri Greenway
- Residential
- Industrial
- Research and education

### Lodged

- 1 Hounsell holdings 293 lots
- 2 Fosters mixed use retail/office and neighbourhood centre
- 3 Brymer Heights 29 lots
- 4 MTM 20 lots

### Consented

- 5 GJ Gardner Homes 79 homes
- 6 Downey Construction 9 lots
- 7 Everton Heights 114 lots - Stage 3 to 7
- 8 Rotokauri North Holdings 314 lots
- 9 AJKL 39 lots
- 10 Te Awa Lakes 10 super lots
- 11 Empire 7 lots
- 12 Brymer Heights 196 lots
- 13 Porter Properties 61 lots
- 14 Te Wetini Developments 5 lots
- 15 Te Wetini Developments 43 units industrial/ancillary residential & commercial
- 16 Various owners 41 lots
- 17 RDL 2 lots
- 18 Station Corner Ltd commercial mixed use
- 19 Greenway corridor

### Land subdivision completed

- 20 Te Rapa Gateway 116 lots
- 21 Max Verran 18 lots
- 22 AP Trust 15 lots
- 23 Gilbek Developments 12 lots
- 24 Tristar One 6 lots
- 25 RDL 183 lots
- 26 Everton Heights 39 lots - Stage 1 and 2
- 27 Te Rapa Gateway 5 lots
- 28 WTS Tasman Ltd 11 lots

July 2025 1 Max is conceptual





# Council Report

**Committee:** Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee  
**Date:** 12 August 2025  
**Author:** Mark Davey  
**Authoriser:** Blair Bowcott  
**Position:** Unit Director Urban & Spatial Planning  
**Position:** General Manager Strategy, Growth and Planning  
**Report Name:** District Plan Update - August 2025

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## Purpose - *Take*

1. To inform the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee on work relating to the Hamilton City District Plan.
2. To seek a recommendation from the Committee that the Council approves Private Plan Change 19 be made operative.

## Staff Recommendation - *Tuutohu-aa-kaimahi* (Recommendation to the Council)

That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee:

- a) receives the report;
- b) recommends that the Council approves Private Plan Change 19 – Ruakura Electricity National Grid Corridor be made operative on 11 September 2025, in accordance with Clause 20 of Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (Option 2 of the staff report); and
- c) notes that staff have responded to a request on behalf of four submitters to pause Plan Change 14 – Flooding that their request has not been accepted for the reasons outlined in the staff report.

## Executive Summary - *Whakaraapopototanga matua*

3. This report focuses on matters of significance in the planning space and a provides an update on the wider work programme.
4. Staff seek the Council's approval of Private Plan Change 19 (PPC 19), which proposes to amend the National Grid Corridor in the District Plan for the Ruakura area. The purpose of PPC 19 is to align the District Plan with infrastructure that has already been consented and constructed.
5. PPC 19 was limited notified on 20 February 2025 and no submissions were received. As a result, no hearing was required. An independent hearing commissioner has recommended that PPC 19 be approved without modification under Clause 29(4) of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).
6. Feedback from engagement with the Percival-Ryburn Road community largely supports progressing a future plan change to transition this land from large-lot residential to industrial.



7. The report also comments on the [recent announcement](#) by Hon Chris Bishop on stopping council plan changes in advance of the new planning system coming into force, and notes that a request from submitters to pause Plan Change 14 – Flooding has been denied. The announcement specially exempts natural hazards from the stoppage, and Plan Change 14 is aligned with the proposed National Policy Statement on Natural Hazards.
8. Staff consider the decisions in the report are of low significance and low risk, and that the recommendations comply with Council’s legal requirements.

## Discussion – Matapaki

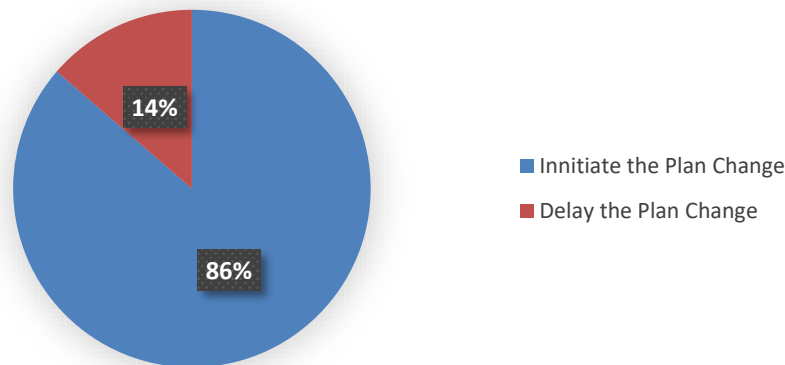
### Private Plan Change 19

9. The purpose of Private Plan Change 19 (PPC 19) was to amend the National Grid Corridor in the District Plan for a section of the Hamilton Deviation A (HAM-DEV A) 220kV transmission line in Ruakura to align the District Plan with what is already on the ground. The transmission line changes were granted a resource consent in 2022 and have been constructed in their new location.
10. The Private Plan Change involved:
  - i. updating the District Plan Planning Maps to reflect the new location of the section of the transmission line (see **Attachment 1**);
  - ii. new bespoke outer widths of the Electricity National Grid Corridor modelled by Transpower to reflect the actual predicted line swing; and
  - iii. modifying the District Plan definition of the National Grid Corridor to recognise the amended width of the corridor.
11. In accordance with Clause 5A of the Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991 PPC 19 was notified on a limited basis to affected parties on 20 February 2025. No submissions were received. Accordingly, no hearings were required and a decision from an independent hearing commissioner was received on 13 May 2025 to approve PPC 19 without modification.
12. To complete the process, under Clause 20 of the RMA, PPC 19 must be made operative and publicly notified, which requires Council’s approval and affixing the Council Seal to the private plan change. Council is required to publicly notify the date on which a plan change will become operative five working days before it is made operative. Based on the matter being approved at the 28 August 2025 Council meeting, the public notice will appear on 4 September 2025 and PPC 19 will become operative on 11 September 2025.

### Proposed Plan Change – Percival-Ryburn Road Enclave – community feedback

13. The Percival-Ryburn Road Enclave is located in the Ruakura area adjacent to the Ruakura Inland Port and the Waikato Expressway (WEX). Following the Ruakura Board of Inquiry (BOI) in 2014, the Percival-Ryburn Road Enclave was to retain its Large Lot Residential zoning, but with a Future Ruakura Logistics Area overlay indicating that this area would be rezoned as logistics in the future.
14. On 14 May 2025, Council staff engaged with members of the community from Percival-Ryburn Road Enclave to brief them on the development happening in the area, answer their questions, and to understand the community’s appetite for progressing the Percival-Ryburn Road Enclave proposed plan change.
15. Following the community engagement meeting, staff sent an engagement package to the residents, which included a survey asking them if they would like to progress the plan change now or delay it into the future. Council received 22 responses from the survey, 19 of which were in favour of starting the plan change process now with 3 preferring to delay the process.

## Residents' Feedback



**Figure 1:** Summary of Responses received from Percival/Ryburn Road residents about timing for a Plan Change

16. The feedback confirms that most of the community members who completed the survey support progressing the plan change.
17. Staff are currently identifying the technical studies required to initiate the plan change process and will begin scoping background investigations to support the rezoning of the Percival-Ryburn Road Enclave. These studies will help inform the planning framework and ensure that any proposed changes are robust, evidence-based, and aligned with the wider Ruakura Structure Plan.

### Suspension of Council Plan Changes

18. Central Government intends to free up council resources so they can focus on preparing for the new, streamlined resource management system. The Government aims to temporarily halt certain plan-making activities under the Resource Management Act (RMA). These changes will be introduced before the end of 2025.
19. According to the 16 July 2025 announcement by Hon Chris Bishop –  
*“Plan reviews and changes will be stopped through an Amendment Paper to the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill, which is expected to become law next month.”*
20. Key changes will include:
  - i. suspension of the 10-year review of the District Plan and the implementation of National Planning Standards; and
  - ii. halting the notification of any new plan changes or the progressing of any notified plan changes that have not reached the hearing stage.
21. Plan Changes with hearings scheduled within 5 days of the enactment of the bill or are already underway will be allowed to continue.
22. The following will be automatically exempted from the legislation:
  - i. Streamlined planning processes;
  - ii. Private plan changes;
  - iii. Changes implementing national direction provisions before 31 Dec 2027;
  - iv. Minister-directed or nationally significant proposals;
  - v. Plans related to natural hazards or Treaty obligations.

23. Council may apply to the Minister for the Environment for exemption, with any exemption being made within 3 months of the law's enactment. Minister Bishop said in his announcement:

*"I want to be clear that stopping plan changes does not mean stopping progress on work that supports the Government's priorities in areas like housing, intensification and urban development, and councils will have pathways to continue with work that unlocks housing growth".*

24. From a Council perspective, the introduction of this legislation would mean that staff will continue to process current and any new Private Plan Changes as well as continue with Plan Change 14 as it relates to natural hazards.
25. Once the legislation is enacted, staff will seek Council's approval to apply to the Minister for an exception to continue with the plan changes to update Rototuna Town Centre (Plan Change 20) and the proposed plan change to rezone Percival-Ryburn Road Enclave. Until that time, staff will continue to progress these plan changes as they support housing, intensification and urban development.

#### **Request for Plan Change 14 – Flooding to be put on hold**

26. Council has received request on behalf of four submitters to Plan Change 14 to place it on hold, primarily on the basis that it should await the National Policy Statement (NPS) on Natural Hazards becoming operative.
27. Legal advice is that a decision to place a Council-initiated plan change on hold ultimately sits with Council.
28. Natural hazards have been explicitly identified as an exception to pausing plan changes, as recently announced by the Government:

*"The Government believes it's also important that councils can continue work on proposed plans, or parts of proposed plans, that relate to natural hazard management..."*

29. This signals a continued policy priority in this area. Additionally, the Plan Change 14 process is already well advanced, with evidence due on 1 August 2025. The provisions have had immediate legal effect since notification on 21 January 2025, and substantial progress has been made through development and consultation.
30. Although the NPS on Natural Hazards is still subject to change, the proposed provisions in Plan Change 14 are strongly aligned with the direction outlined in the current discussion document. This alignment supports continuing with the plan change process without delay.
31. Staff have declined the request, explaining the reasons as outlined above in a memorandum to the hearing commissioners.

#### **Wider work programme**

32. Council's wide-reaching District Plan work schedule includes multiple plan changes to the District Plan as well as notices of requirement for designations. All plan changes and other key District Plan related matters specific to the Hamilton District Plan are listed below.

Plan Change/project	Status	Commentary
Plan Change 9 (Historic Heritage and Natural Environment)	Progressing	Staff are currently working with the appeal parties to try and resolve the four appeals. Court-assisted mediation has been set down for the week of 18 August 2025.
Private Plan Change 13 (Te Rapa Racecourse private plan change)	Progressing	Court-assisted mediation has now been completed; all parties have agreed to settle the appeals. A memorandum of consent has been filed with the Environment Court on 15 July 2025.



Plan Change/project	Status	Commentary
Plan Change 14 (Flooding)	Hearings scheduled for October 2025	Staff are currently preparing evidence for hearings.
Private Plan Change 15 (Tuumata)	On hold	An extension for decisions on Plan Change 15 has been granted until 18 October 2026.
Private Plan Change 17 (Te Rapa North – Industrial)	Hearings set for December 2025	The further submission period for Private Plan Change 17 ran from 24 June to 9 July 2025.
Private Plan Change 19 (Ruakura – Transpower)	Seek approval to make operative	See item in body of report.
Plan Change 20 – (Rototuna Structure Plan)	Progressing	Traffic modelling is currently underway to test the efficiency of future transport network options. Landowner consultation also is in progress. NB PC20 may be affected by the central Government's proposal to stop council plan changes.
Enderley-Fairfield Development Plan	Progressing	Staff continue to work collaboratively with Kāinga Ora to scope and plan the investigations needed to inform future redevelopment opportunities in the area.
Rotokauri Strategic Infrastructure Designation (previously known as Rotokauri Arterial Network Designation)	Hearing scheduled October 2025	Statements of evidence on behalf of the Requiring Authority were lodged on 27 June 2025, responding to matters raised in the Section 42A report by territorial authority specialists and through submissions. Submitter evidence is due by 25 July 2025.
Proposed Plan Change Percival-Ryburn Road Enclave	Progressing	See item in body of report. NB This proposed plan change may be affected by the central Government's proposal to stop council plan changes.

### Options – *Koowhiringa*

33. There are two reasonable and viable options for the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee to consider:

**Option 1:** Do not approve the recommendation to make Private Plan Change 19 operative (status quo);

**Option 2:** Approve the recommendation to make Private Plan Change 19 operative.

34. Staff recommend **Option 2** because amending the National Grid Corridor in the District Plan for a section of the Hamilton Deviation A transmission line in Ruakura will align the District Plan with what is already on the ground.

### Financial Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro Puutea*

35. The Urban and Spatial Unit's work programme is funded through the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan. Council recoups most costs incurred for processing private plan changes and notices of requirement, after lodgement from the applicants.
36. Regarding the preparation of a potential plan change for the Percival/Ryburn Road area, the costs are yet to be determined due to the need to identify all necessary studies and obtain fee estimates. No costs associated to start scoping studies and continue engagement are expected for FY25.

FY25	YTD Actuals (as at 23 July 2025)	Sum of Annual Budget (FY2025)
Unit Programme	\$1,434,969	\$2,157,297

## Legal Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa-ture*

37. Staff confirm that the matters covered in this report, including the staff recommendation that the Committee recommends to the Council that Private Plan Change 19 be made operative – comply with Council’s legal requirements. Staff operate within the Resource Management Act 1991 for these plan changes and comply with the relevant processes.
38. Staff confirm that the District Plan Programme responds to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (2020) and the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act (2021).

## Risks – *Tuuraru*

39. If the Committee does not approve the recommendation to the Council to approve Private Plan Change 19 – Ruakura Electricity National Grid Corridor – be made operative, the planning maps in the District Plan will not align with what is already on the ground, which could result in misinformed decisions being made.
40. At both project and programme level, risks are tracked, reviewed and updated regularly with the wider team and key stakeholders. Key risks to the Urban & Spatial Planning programme are outlined in **Attachment 2**.
41. This District Plan Update report relates directly to Strategic Risk 4 (Climate Change) and Strategic Risk 5 (Impact on Growth Outcomes). As reported previously, staff note the changing policy landscape as a result of the Going for Housing Growth Policy that will impact Council’s regulations under Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act (HSAA) (2021) and The National Policy Statement for Urban Development (NPS-UD) 2020.

## Strategic Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa- rautaki*

42. Everything we do is aimed at improving the wellbeing of Hamiltonians. Council has been working alongside our community to understand what people in our city want the future of Hamilton Kirikiriroa to look like as represented by our five priorities.
43. The promotion of the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities in the present and for the future is expressed through Council’s key strategies.
44. The proposed recommendation will align with Council key documents, as identified in the Governance Structure, in the following ways.

<a href="#">Significance and Engagement Policy</a>	Having considered the Significance and Engagement Policy, staff have assessed that the decisions sought in this report have low significance, and the engagement process is determined by the Resource Management Act (Schedule 1).
<a href="#">He Pou Manawa Ora - Pillars of Wellbeing</a>	Staff have considered He Pou Manawa Ora - Pillars of Wellbeing and determined that there are no specific or relevant outcomes applicable to this report.
<a href="#">Our Climate Future Te Pae Tawhiti o Kirikiriroa</a>	Staff have assessed this option and determined that no adaption assessment is required. Climate change is addressed in each of the plan changes referred to in this report.  Climate change related matters form a central part of the purpose, principles and matters of national importance outlined in the Resource Management Act 1991 – the legislation under which district planning is undertaken. The effects of climate change are something that those operating under the Act “shall

**Item 10**

	have particular regard to.”
<a href="#">Disability Action Plan</a>	Staff have considered the Disability Action Plan and determined that there are no specific or relevant goals applicable to this report.

**Attachments - *Ngaa taapirihanga***

Attachment 1 - Proposed Changes to Operative District Plan Features Map

Attachment 2 - Urban & Spatial Planning Risk Register - August 2025



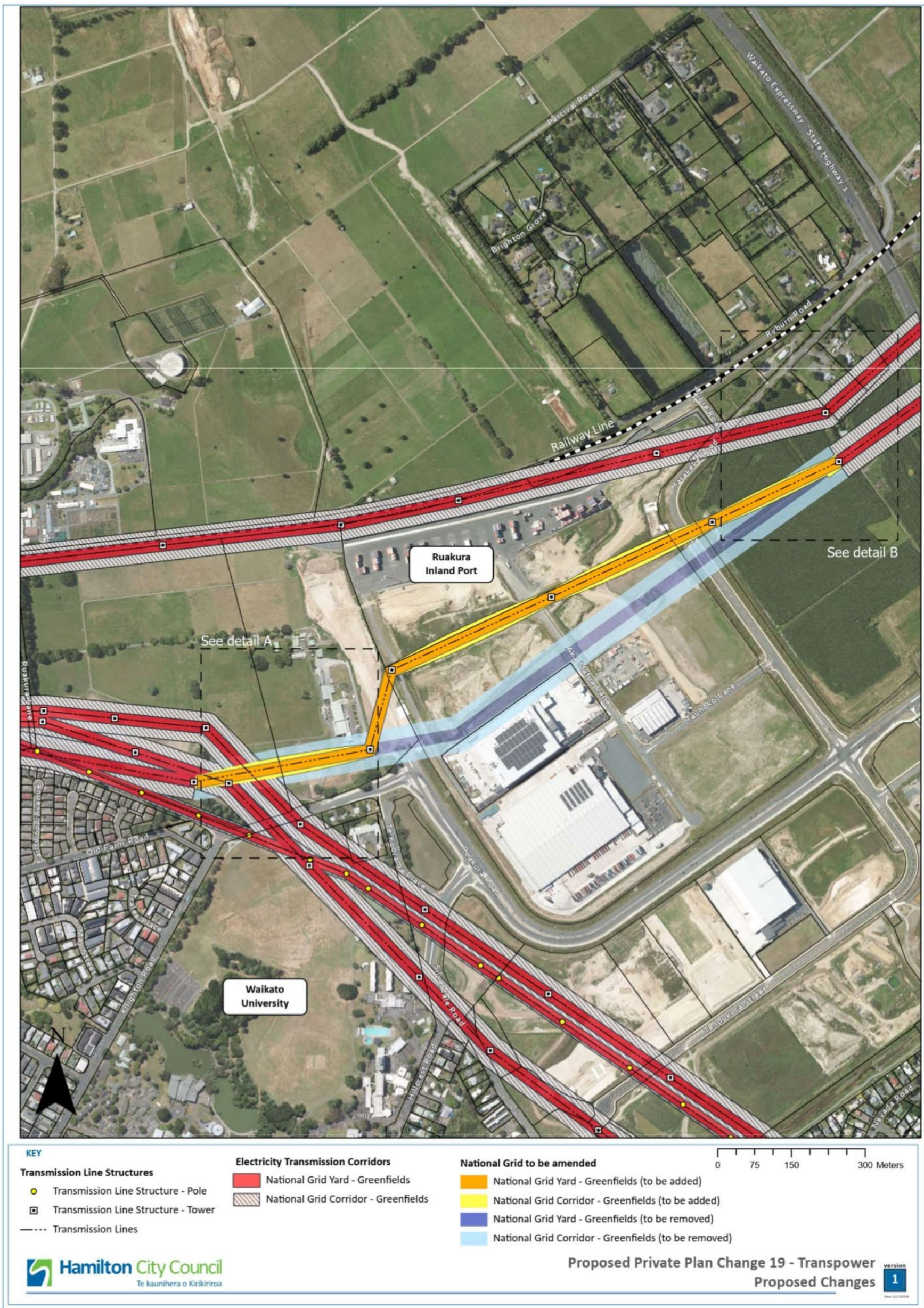


Figure 2: Proposed Private Plan Change 19 – Proposed Changes to ODP Features Map







Risk ID	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood (residual)	Consequence (residual)	Risk rating	Treatment
680	<p><b>Funding limitation</b></p> <p>Risk: Approved unit budget may be exceeded.</p> <p><u>Cause:</u></p> <p>The work programme is fully funded, budget is capped and there is no contingency.</p> <p>Fast Track Approval Act may result in non-recoverable expenditures.</p> <p>High percentage of the total workload's scope and programme are externally generated and mandated, thus cannot be fully anticipated or scheduled by the unit.</p> <p><u>Consequence:</u></p> <p>Financial: Any new work or any change to work programme (e.g. scope change, timing change or new work) could result in exceeding budget.</p> <p>Service delivery: delaying non-mandatory work due to lack of budget.</p> <p>Reputational: Reprioritization or delay of work can result in negative impact on reputation of unit and HCC in term of delivery</p>	<p>Budget management and tracking on unit and project level</p> <p>Consultant management to complete work within budget</p> <p>Cost recovery agreement with developers</p> <p>Doing more work in-house particularly cost recoverable work</p> <p>Re-allocation of funding and re-prioritisation of work</p> <p>Re-prioritisation of work programme where possible</p>	Almost Certain	Serious	Very high	<p>Mitigation:</p> <p>Developing and introducing to our work partners within and outside of HCC contracting and invoicing protocols</p>

Risk ID	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood (residual)	Consequence (residual)	Risk rating	Treatment
	Legal: delay to work could lead to a breach of statutory timeframes.					
673	<p><b>Resourcing capacity limitation</b> Risk: limited resource availability within unit effects delivery.</p> <p><u>Cause:</u> Planned workload relative to resource capacity is full. There is no contingency, any increase in work would exceed capacity. Any loss of staff or unfilled position would reduce capacity. Situation cannot be directly remedied by external resource due to set unit budget. High percentage of the total workload's scope and programme are externally generated and mandated, thus cannot be fully anticipated or scheduled by the unit. Fast-track Approvals Act has increased demand for resources, taking staff away from business as usual (BAU) projects, further reducing capacity as well as flexibility to respond to changes in work demand.</p> <p><u>Consequence:</u></p>	<p>Continuous monitoring of staff workload</p> <p>Continuous assessment of staff assignments</p> <p>Unit Culture</p> <p>Mentoring</p> <p>Succession planning</p> <p>Managing unit's work programme, reprioritizing or delaying work</p> <p>Finding more efficient ways of doing the same things.</p>	Likely	Major	Very high	<p>Mitigation:</p> <p>Coordinating work with other units for collaboration, creating processes around this coordination, expected result is in increased efficiency, reduced friction.</p> <p>Augmenting Fast-track staff with consultants</p>

Risk ID	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood (residual)	Consequence (residual)	Risk rating	Treatment
	<p>Service delivery: Delaying non-mandatory work. If work cannot be delayed, outsourcing work can increase capacity, but at the risk of effecting budget.</p> <p>People: Higher stress on the team potentially leading to burnout.</p> <p>Reputational: risk of poor working environment being known in the profession and, therefore, difficulty of hiring new staff.</p> <p>Project delay can have negative effect on reputation for unit and HCC in terms of delivery.</p> <p>Legal: delay to work could lead to a breach of statutory timeframes.</p>					
676	<p><b>Political (Local)</b></p> <p>Risk: Local election will result in newly elected representatives, who may have different priorities.</p> <p>Elected Members may make changes to strategic direction, priorities or work programme.</p> <p><u>Cause:</u></p> <p>Democratic process, election cycle.</p> <p>Any response or mitigation is constrained by Risks ID 1 and 2.</p>	<p>Business as Usual regarding service delivery</p> <p>Communication with Elected Members and the public.</p> <p>Managing unit's work programme, reprioritizing</p>	Likely	Major	Very high	Accept

Risk ID	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood (residual)	Consequence (residual)	Risk rating	Treatment
	<u>Consequence:</u> Political: negative public reaction Strategic: Could shift internal priorities. Service delivery: Affects program delivery.					
679	<b>Political (Central Government)</b> Risk: Central Government has confirmed the Scheduled projects of the Fast-track Approvals Act; however, additional projects are being scheduled in 2025. <u>Cause:</u> Central Government continue refining policy direction, changes expected through 2025. <u>Consequence:</u> Strategic: Can affect local execution of national policy. Service delivery: New projects scheduled affects program delivery.	Fast-track programme management Extensive, early coordination within HCC and with external partners Regular update to elected members	Almost Certain	Major	Extreme	Mitigate: Continue developing processes
681	<b>Legal challenge to our execution of the RMA process</b> Risk: Our processes are challenged in court.	Business as Usual regarding service delivery. Seeking legal advice as early in the process.	Unlikely	Moderate to Serious	Medium	Mitigation: Developing and introducing to our work



Risk ID	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood (residual)	Consequence (residual)	Risk rating	Treatment
	<p><u>Cause:</u> Disagreement of challenge to our processes.</p> <p><u>Consequence:</u></p> <p>Financial: HCC would have to defend itself in court. See risk #1.</p> <p>Service delivery: Court defense would create additional work that would need to be incorporated into existing work programme. See risk #2.</p> <p>Reputational: Legal challenge would negatively impact on the reputation of unit and HCC in term of delivery. Public outrage, some coverage in regional news.</p>					partners within and outside of HCC quality control and approval protocols
610	<p><b>Retention and Recruitment</b></p> <p>Risk: Burnout of staff, staff leaving.</p> <p><u>Cause:</u> high workload, inflexibility of work programme, high-pressure, dynamic complex work environment, specialized roles, labour market.</p> <p><u>Consequence:</u></p> <p>People: Reduced efficiency, loss of focus, high stress resulting in health impact, unit culture shifting, staff leaving.</p>	<p>Continuous monitoring of staff workload</p> <p>Continuous assessment of staff assignments</p> <p>Unit Culture</p> <p>Mentoring</p> <p>Succession planning</p> <p>Managing unit's work programme, reprioritizing or delaying work</p>	Likely	Serious	Medium	<p>Mitigation:</p> <p>Refining continuous assessment of staff's workload</p> <p>Augmenting Fast-track staff with consultants</p>

Risk ID	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood (residual)	Consequence (residual)	Risk rating	Treatment
	<p>Burnout of staff from increased work pressure could result in high staff turnover.</p> <p>Service delivery: loss of staff could lead to impact on service delivery. See risk #2.</p> <p>Reputational: perception of poor working environment being known in the profession and, therefore, difficulty of hiring new staff.</p>					
1011	<p><b>Limits on internal collaboration</b></p> <p>Risk: Unit cannot progress work due to lack of or delay of input from other units within HCC.</p> <p><u>Cause:</u> other units' lack of resources, differing project priorities between units. Strategic misalignment of units or projects.</p> <p>Limited unit budget to obtain information via outsourcing.</p> <p><u>Consequence:</u></p> <p>Strategic: Can affect execution of HCC's policy or resolutions.</p> <p>Service delivery: delay in project delivery. Reprioritization of projects.</p>	<p>Business as Usual regarding service delivery.</p> <p>Out-sourcing work to consultants</p>	Possible	Moderate to Serious	Medium to High	<p>Mitigation:</p> <p>Developing Service Level Agreements between units.</p> <p>Developing forward work programme coordination processes</p>

Risk ID	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood (residual)	Consequence (residual)	Risk rating	Treatment
	<p>Financial: input needs to be obtained via outsourcing that can affect unit budget.</p> <p>People: increased stress for staff.</p> <p>Legal: poor collaboration could lead to work delays, which in turn could lead to a breach of statutory timeframes.</p>					

# Council Report

**Committee:** Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee

**Date:** 12 August 2025

**Author:** Hannah Windle

**Authoriser:** Blair Bowcott

**Position:** Unit Director Strategic Planning & Advocacy

**Position:** General Manager Strategy, Growth and Planning

**Report Name:** General Updates - Information Only

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## Purpose - *Take*

- To inform the the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee of general updates and matters staff want to bring to Members' attention that do not require discussion.

## Staff Recommendation - *Tuutohu-aa-kaimahi*

- That the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee receives the report.

## Executive Summary - *Whakaraapopototanga matua*

- This report provides general updates to Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee Members on activities, actions or projects for which this Committee and the relevant General Managers have responsibility.
- This report covers:

Theme	Topic
<b>Collaborative relationships</b>	Regional, National and Central Government round-up
<b>Strategic Infrastructure</b>	Future Proof Waters Strategy update
<b>Data and Analytics</b>	Further commuting data – qualification, occupation, employment sector and income
<b>Funding / financing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Contributions – developing a policy framework</li> <li>City and Regional Deals</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban Design Panel update</li> <li>Quarterly Development Contribution remissions</li> <li>Consents Working Group update</li> </ul>

- Staff consider the matters in this report have low significance and no known risks, and that the recommendation complies with Council's legal requirements.

## Discussion – *Matapaki*

### COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

6. Members and staff continue to participate in collaborative forums across the sub-region, region, and at a national level.
7. These meetings consider a range of topics, including central government reform, opportunities for shared work programmes, cross-boundary issues and opportunities, and information sharing.
8. The groups in which Council participates include:
  - i. Waikato Mayoral Forum;
  - ii. Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA);
  - iii. Zone 2;
  - iv. Metro Sector;
  - v. National Council;
  - vi. Cross-boundary discussions with Waikato District Council, Waipā District Council and Waikato Regional Council (WRC); and
  - vii. engagement with other growth councils.

### Latest meetings

9. An informal cross-boundary meeting was held between Hamilton City Council and Waikato District Council elected members and senior staff on Friday 4 July 2025.
10. The meeting discussed a number of work programmes impacting both councils including Fast-track applications in the Hamilton periphery and ongoing work on shared services.
11. No other cross-boundary collaborative governance meetings have occurred since the last Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee meeting on 10 June 2025. The next round of meetings is scheduled to occur in September 2025. These will be the last cross-boundary meetings of this triennium.
12. The UNISA Mayors and Chairs met on 6 June 2025 and discussed several topics, focusing on Civil Defence, resilience and lifelines across the Upper North Island, and the proposed Infrastructure Development Plan. The Infrastructure Development Plan is discussed in further detail in the Strategic Issues report to this meeting.
13. UNISA has one final meeting for the triennium on 29 August 2025.

### STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE

#### Future Proof Waters Strategy Review

14. The review of the Future Proof Water Strategy was placed on hold while concerns about the review running in parallel to water services Council Controlled Organisations (CCOs) establishment were resolved.
15. At its May 2025 meeting, the Future Proof Chief Executives Advisory Group (CEAG), having been satisfied that the review can be managed alongside Water CCO establishment, gave approval in principle to moving ahead with the review subject to project management planning and resource scheduling. CEAG also assumed the role of Project Control Group.
16. An updated Project Management plan, including resourcing schedule, has been prepared and will be provided to the August 2025 CEAG meeting ahead of seeking final endorsement from the Future Proof Implementation Committee at their September 2025 meeting.



17. These approvals will enable the review to progress to pre-consultation on a draft revised strategy, at which time CEAG and Future Proof Implementation Committee endorsement will again be required.
18. With an enhanced role in the review, CEAG is also provided with the stage 1 outputs to be reported to Future Proof Implementation Committee at their September 2025 meeting. Under the review's Terms of Reference, approval from Future Proof Implementation Committee is required to move into stage 2 of the review.
19. In terms of progressing the work from initiation to substantive review, the Waters Working Group is in the process of procuring a project management resource. A procurement plan has been completed along with a request for tender.
20. The project team continues to meet fortnightly, providing an opportunity for staff to coordinate regarding regulatory and legislative changes that may affect the review.

## DATA AND ANALYTICS

### Commuting insights

21. The 10 June 2025 Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee [agenda](#) included strategic insights into commuting patterns, which highlighted the importance of understanding commuter flows for urban planning, infrastructure and service delivery.
22. Staff were requested to include the data on the website so that the information was easily accessible to the wider public. Staff are collecting more data and feedback on the best way to share this information.
23. Staff were also requested to share more insights on commuting patterns and the difference between 2023 and 2018 census years. **Attachment 1** responds to that request.
24. In summary, Hamilton's commuting patterns reflect a diverse and dynamic labour market. Of the 22,100 inbound commuters, most work in healthcare, manufacturing, and construction sectors, which also dominate Hamilton's economy. Of the 13,100 outbound commuters, the majority are primarily employed in construction, manufacturing, and education. Meanwhile, limited job opportunities in agriculture prompt some residents to seek employment outside the city.
25. Occupational data shows that 50% of inbound commuters work in managerial and professional roles, compared to 40% of outbound commuters. The most common inbound occupations include specialist managers and health professionals, indicating that high-skilled workers are more likely to commute, possibly due to limited local opportunities, competitive salaries or lifestyle preferences. Hamilton also exports more labourers, reinforcing its role as a net importer of talent.
26. Most commuters earn between \$50,000 and \$100,000 annually, with inbound commuters more likely to be high-income earners. This reflects Hamilton's economic appeal and its ability to offer strong opportunities for skilled professionals with higher earning potential.
27. Qualification data shows that 34% of inbound commuters and 31% of outbound commuters hold higher degrees, while over 50% have Level 1–6 Certificates. Notwithstanding this, individuals with lower-level qualifications may still work in managerial and professional roles due to extensive industry experience. Inbound commuters tend to be more qualified than outbound ones, highlighting Hamilton's capacity to attract talent across a broad educational spectrum.

28. Commuting data underscores Hamilton's role as a vital regional employment hub. While commuters contribute significantly to the city's economic growth, they also place growing pressure on local infrastructure and amenities. These insights are essential for supporting informed decisions around land use, zoning, and infrastructure investment. By leveraging this data, Hamilton can plan strategically to ensure sustained growth and maintain its competitive edge in the region.
29. Further demographic data on commuters, housing data, and internal migration movement data with demographic and economic information are also available from the Commercial and Analytics Unit.

## **FUNDING / FINANCING**

### **Financial Contributions – developing a policy framework**

30. At its [11 February 2025](#) meeting, the Council approved development of a Financial Contributions Policy. The Policy will recover financial contributions to fund 50% of the capital and operational costs for projects related to Te Ture Whaimana.
31. Work on developing the Policy is underway. Staff are working closely across Council to ensure that the Policy and the process of implementing financial contributions are aligned. Staff are also exploring calculation and record keeping tools. A draft Policy will be brought to Council in the new triennium with public consultation in the new year. Staff continue to work towards an implementation date of 1 July 2026.

## **OTHER**

### **Urban Design Advisory Panel update**

32. While Council continues to support the operation of our external [Urban Design Advisory Panel](#), engagement has been limited over the past 6-12 months due to a lack of large-scale resource consent proposals coming through, reflective of the current market.
33. However, the use of Council staff's urban design capability has been active in a range of projects such as Plan Change 20 (Rototuna Structure Plan), Plan Change 14 (Flood Hazards), tree planting guides, Environment Court appeals, several large-scale Fast-track applications, and providing technical urban design input into several smaller-scale resource consents.
34. Two future Panel meetings are planned – the first regarding the design of the Central City Water Reservoir is scheduled for 30 July 2025; the second regarding the redevelopment of the property at 121 Anglesea Street (Central City) is to be confirmed. As per Council direction, engaging with the Panel is a pre-requisite to obtaining a Central City Development Contributions remission.
35. In terms of the future operation of the Panel, staff intend to bring a position paper to the new Council in the first quarter of 2026.

### **Quarterly Development Contribution remissions**

36. The remissions in this report are determined in accordance with the Development Contributions Policy and delegated authority. All development contributions amounts in this report are exclusive of GST.

### **Remissions**

37. Across Q3 and Q4 2025, one actual demand Development Contributions remission was approved with a total value of \$135,102 (see **Attachment 2**).

38. Development Contributions remissions are calculated by individual activity components. The table below shows the dollars and percentages of the total remissions granted attributed to each Development Contributions activity.

REMISSIONS Q3 & Q4 2025							
	Water	Wastewater	Stormwater	Transport	Community	Reserves	Total
Remitted \$ per activity	\$ -	\$ 57,912	\$ -	\$ 77,189	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 135,102
% of total remitted \$	0%	43%	0%	57%	0%	0%	100%

### Consents Working Group update

39. Unit Directors of Planning Guidance, Building Control and Infrastructure and Assets met with several developers to gain their perspective and insights into actions that could be taken to reduce time and ultimately cost in the development process. Meetings were held with the Jones Group, Pragma, Grafraell Properties and Fosters, along with informal discussions with other developers (Tainui Group Holdings).
40. The key themes that emerged included (but are not limited to):
- importance of relationships and connections (both technical and decision makers) within Council across the development process;
  - processes that are clearly defined and consistently applied;
  - ability to provide clear advice and resolve risk at an early stage in the development processes;
  - technical reviews (internal and external) of assessments and material – perceived as being too conservative;
  - bespoke consent processes for specific developments/developers – fast track consenting service (building and resource consents);
  - concurrent lodgement and approvals of land use/subdivision, engineering design and works clearance 223/224 processes.
41. In response, three planning and engineering projects are being investigated. The first two projects are designed to test whether concurrent lodgement of various applications will generate processing efficiencies and reduce the overall development process. This examination will also inform whether these processes can become standard practice or applied to specific development (i.e. brownfield).
- Examining whether concurrent lodgement of engineering works clearance and 223/224(c) applications will assist in reducing financial/commercial pressures at the back end of the development process. Staff are currently testing this approach with a one of the above developers.
  - Testing whether land use, subdivision and engineering design applications can be lodged and approved concurrently with another developer.
  - A bespoke partnership approach to processing resource consents applications (land use and subdivision) for city forming/agreed developments. Central to this approach is a set of agreed parameters (design/outcomes, timeframes, costs, resourcing) between the parties and a series of intensive workshops. It will also require a streamlined planning assessment and decision-making process utilising technology such as AI. Staff are designing this approach with another member of the Consents Working Group. Initial thinking is that this approach will apply only to mutually agreed developments that meet a number of specific criteria (to be defined); it is not anticipated to be adopted as standard practice.

42. Further reporting on the additional focus areas and the above projects will be provided as appropriate in the new triennium.

### **Financial Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro Puutea***

43. There are no financial implications in relation to the information provided in this report.

### **Legal Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa-ture***

44. Staff confirm that the recommendation complies with the Council's legal requirements.

### **Risks – *Tuuraru***

45. There are no known risks associated with the decisions sought in this report.

### **Strategic Considerations - *Whaiwhakaaro-aa- rautaki***

46. Everything we do is aimed at improving the wellbeing of Hamiltonians. Council has been working alongside our community to understand what people in our city want the future of Hamilton Kirikiriroa to look like as represented by our five priorities.
47. The promotion of the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities in the present and for the future is expressed through Council's key strategies.
48. The proposed recommendation will align with Council key documents, as identified in the Governance Structure, in the following ways.

<a href="#">Significance and Engagement Policy</a>	Community views and preferences are already known to the Council through Given the low level of significance determined, the engagement level is low. No engagement is required.
<a href="#">He Pou Manawa Ora - Pillars of Wellbeing</a>	Staff have considered He Pou Manawa Ora and determined that there are no specific or relevant outcomes applicable to this report.
<a href="#">Our Climate Future Te Pae Tawhiti o Kirikiriroa</a>	There are no known climate risks or adaptation opportunities associated with the matters discussed in the report.
<a href="#">Disability Action Plan</a>	Staff have considered the Disability Action Plan and determined that there are no specific or relevant goals applicable to this report.

### **Attachments - *Ngaa taapirihanga***

Attachment 1 - Commuting Data Report

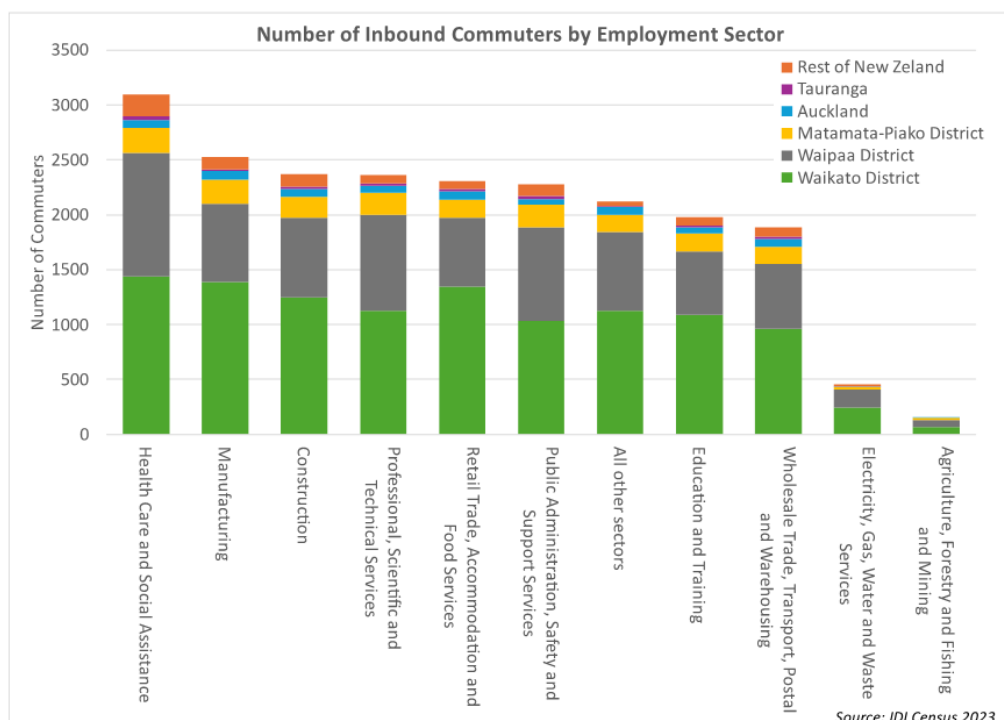
Attachment 2 - 2025 Q3 and Q4 Remissions Report

## Commuting Data

1. This report is the second and final insights report looking at individuals who commute to and from Hamilton for work. Specifically, it explores the key profiles of commuters in terms of employment sector, income distribution, occupation, and educational qualification.
2. All data is sourced from Stats NZ's highly secure Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) lab, which is not publicly accessible. The IDI data contains comprehensive administrative datasets covering the entire New Zealand population, making it an invaluable resource for in-depth research, particularly for understanding population movement and their profiles, such as commuting patterns.
3. These statistics offer valuable insights for shaping more effective strategies to:
  - support urban growth;
  - attract the right skilled talent for both new and existing businesses;
  - inform planning and infrastructure investment decisions; and
  - enhance resource efficiency through deeper regional collaboration.
4. Collectively, these efforts can help elevate Hamilton's profile nationally.

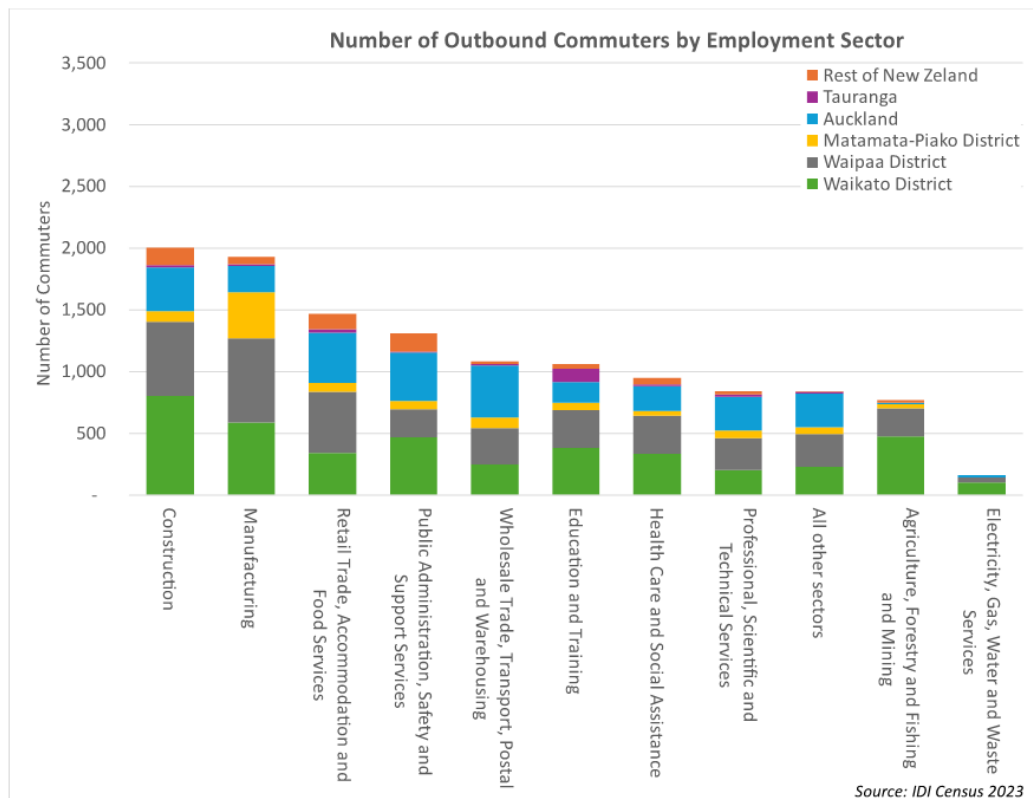
### Employment Sector

5. The figure below illustrates the number of inbound commuters by employment sector. Of the 22,000 inbound commuters, approximately 3,100 (15%) work in the healthcare and social assistance sector, making it the largest sector for inbound commuting. This is followed by the manufacturing (2,500) and construction sectors (2,400). These three sectors also represent the top employment sectors in Hamilton.





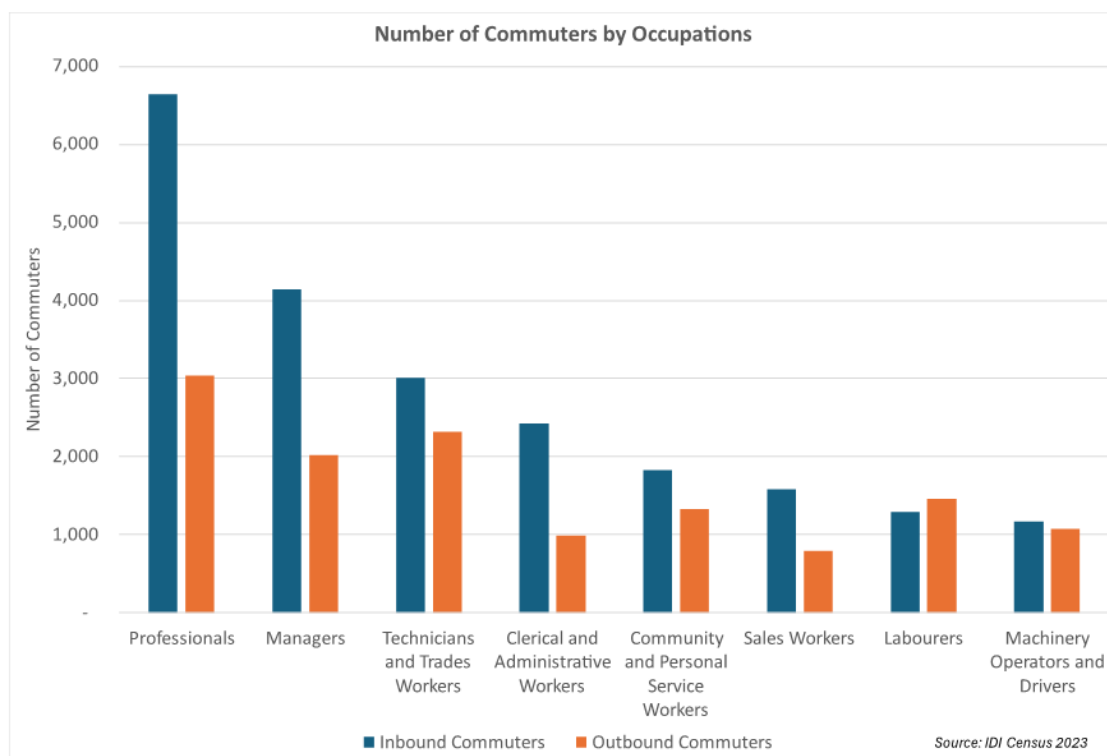
6. Inbound commuters account for approximately 20% of Hamilton's employment across key sectors. Notably, 83% of these commuters travel from Waikato and Waipaa Districts, underscoring Hamilton's role as a central employment hub, particularly for health professionals and manufacturing workers from the wider region.
7. For outbound commuters (13,100), the figure below shows that the leading sectors are construction (2,000), manufacturing (1,930), and Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services (1,470).



8. In rural sectors such as agriculture, forestry and fishing, and mining, around 770 Hamilton residents commute out of the city for work, compared to just 160 commuting in. While the total demand for jobs in these sectors is about 1,600 people within Hamilton, only 1,000 jobs are available in these sectors locally. This gap highlights limited employment opportunities in these industries within the city, prompting many residents to seek jobs elsewhere.
9. In the Future Proof area, the wholesale trade, transport, postal, and warehousing sector accounts for the highest proportion (24%) of Hamilton's outbound commuters. Many of these individuals may be employed in industries located near the Airport precinct, highlighting Hamilton's critical role in meeting regional labour demands.
10. Sector-based commuter data further highlights the diversity of Hamilton's labour market and the broad geographic sources of its workforce.

## Occupation

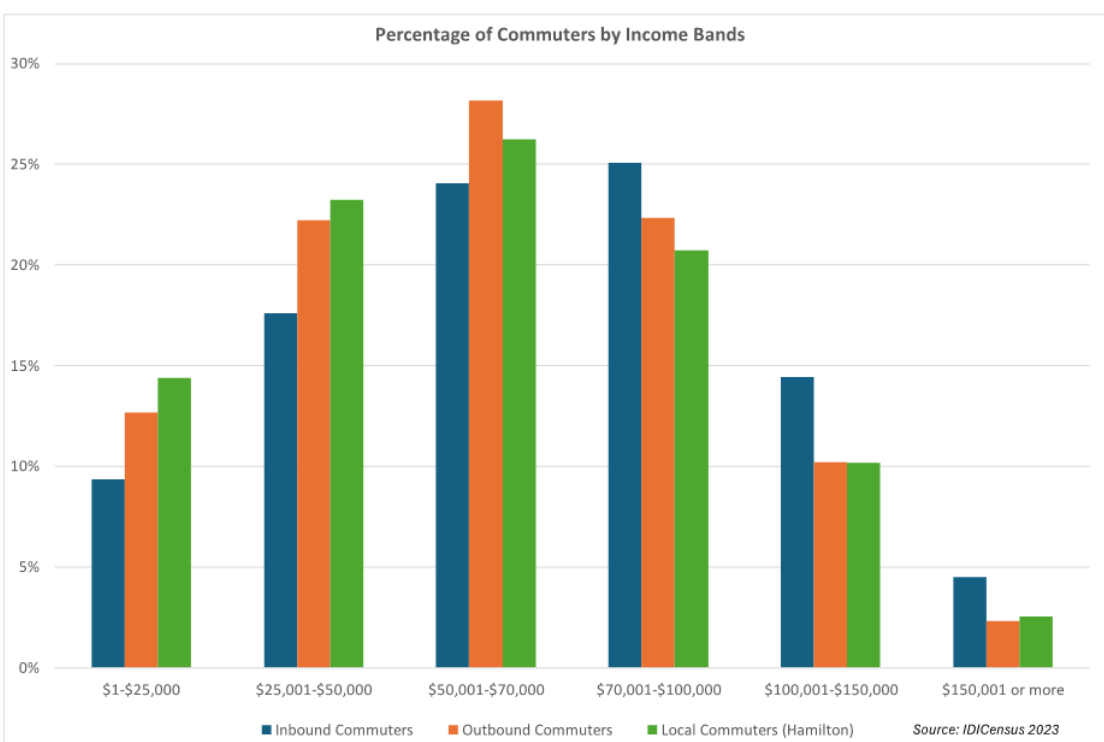
11. The figure below presents a detailed breakdown of the occupations of both inbound and outbound commuters. It reveals that the most common occupation among both inbound and outbound commuters is professional roles.
12. In particular, there is also a notably high number of managers, technicians and trades workers among both inbound and outbound commuters. These roles include individuals working in health and business-related fields.



13. Approximately 50% of inbound commuters are employed in managerial and professional roles, compared to 40% of outbound commuters. This indicates that individuals in professional occupations are more inclined to commute, potentially due to limited local employment opportunities, competitive salaries, or lifestyle preference.
14. Hamilton attracts a higher number of skilled workers, with inbound commuters in professional roles nearly double those commuting out. Conversely, the city sends out more labourers than it receives, indicating a net inflow of talent in higher-skilled occupations.
15. These insights highlight Hamilton's occupational structure, reinforcing its position as a key provider of skilled employment and showcasing the diversity of its labour market. They can inform targeted strategies to attract and retain professionals, strengthen the local talent pool, and promote Hamilton as a hub for high-value employment. In turn, this can support sustained business investment and drive regional growth.

# Income

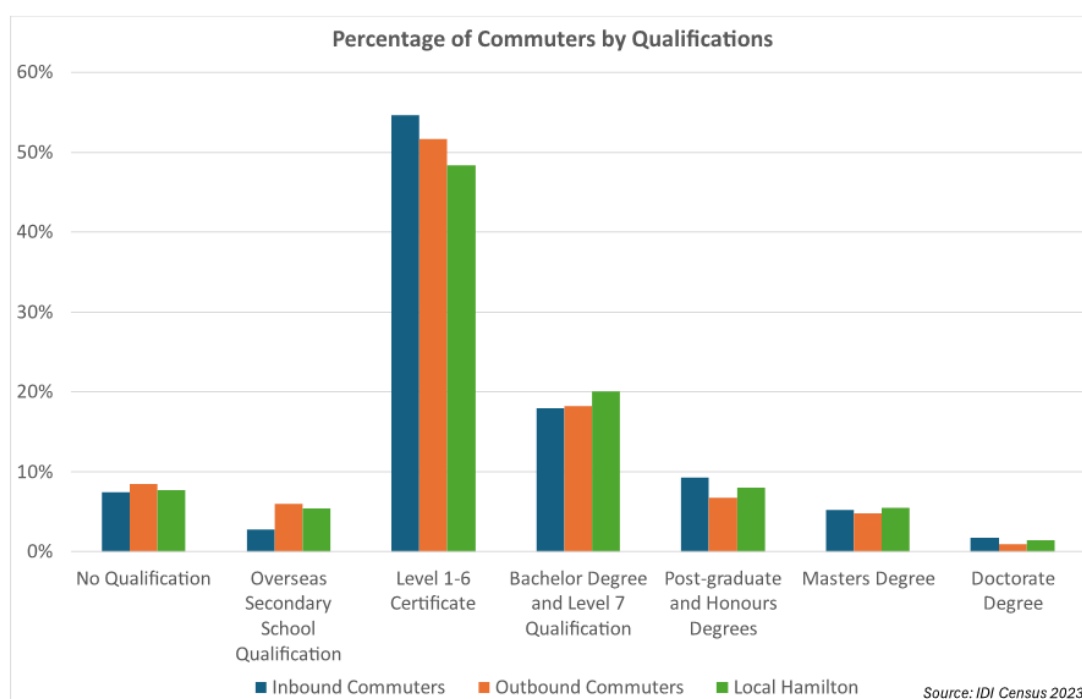
16. The figure below provides a comparison of income bands as a percentage of the total by commuter types. Income data reveals that most commuters earn from \$50,000 to \$100,000, with similar distributions across inbound, outbound, and local commuters (Hamiltonians working locally).
17. However, Hamilton appears to attract a higher proportion of high-income earners: around 45% of inbound commuters earn above the national median wage (\$70,000), compared to 35% of outbound commuters. There is also a notable proportion of commuters earning less than \$25,000 annually, which may be attributed to part-time employment.
18. Inbound commuters tend to have slightly higher incomes compared to outbound commuters and local commuters. This suggests that Hamilton is a magnet for high-income professionals and managers willing to commute longer distances, possibly due to specialised job opportunities or competitive salaries in Hamilton.
19. Income data can also imply commuter skill levels, spending power, housing preferences, and affordability, which are crucial for informed urban planning and policy development.



# Qualification

20. The data shows that the distribution of qualifications among inbound and outbound commuters is quite similar. Approximately 34% of inbound commuters and 31% of outbound commuters hold higher degrees, while over 50% have Level 1–6 Certificates as their highest qualification.

21. Despite holding Level 1–6 Certificates, many individuals could be employed in managerial or professional roles, as indicated by occupational data. This is largely attributed to substantial industry experience, which can compensate for formal academic qualifications in career advancement.
22. Compared to local commuters, inbound commuters tend to have a higher proportion of individuals with postgraduate qualifications, whereas outbound commuters show a greater share of lower-level qualifications. This suggests that Hamilton attracts more highly qualified individuals than it sends out.
23. Overall, Hamilton demonstrates demand for workers across all qualification levels, reflecting a diverse labour market that offers opportunities for individuals with a wide range of educational backgrounds.



## Conclusion

24. Commuting data offers valuable insights into the structure and diversity of Hamilton's labour market. The city serves as both a magnet for talent from surrounding areas and a source of skilled workers for other regions, reflecting a flexible, mobile, and interdependent regional workforce.
25. These insights help guide land use, zoning, and infrastructure investment decisions to attract the right business and talent, while addressing rising population growth and development capacity constraints. This supports Hamilton's goal of building a resilient and competitive workforce.
26. The data also highlights strong economic interdependence across the region, reinforcing the importance of policy development that fosters deeper regional collaboration and coordinated workforce strategies.

27. Further demographic data on commuters, including age, gender, ethnicity, and relationship status, housing data, and internal migration movement data with demographic and economic information are also available from the Commercial and Analytics Unit.

**Item 11**

**Attachment 1**



Address	Developer	Development description & Development Contributions Officer details/comments	Consent Number	Amount remitted (\$ excl. GST)										Final DC assessment	Remission granted
				Applicable policy	Original DC assessment	Water	Wastewater	Stormwater	Transport	Community	Reserves				
6 Chafer Place	Te Rapa Gateway Limited	Proposed industrial warehouse with associated offices.	007.2023.00046638.001	2023/2024	\$ 259,518	\$ -	\$ 57,912	\$ -	\$ 77,189	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 124,416	\$ 135,102	
					\$ 259,518	\$ -	\$ 57,912	\$ -	\$ 77,189	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 124,416	\$ 135,102	

## Resolution to Exclude the Public

### Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

The following motion is submitted for consideration:

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely consideration of the public excluded agenda.

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution follows.

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reasons for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
C1. Confirmation of the Strategic Growth and District Plan Committee Public Excluded Minutes 10 June 2025	) Good reason to withhold ) information exists under ) Section 7 Local Government ) Official Information and ) Meetings Act 1987	Section 48(1)(a)
C2. Strategic Issues (Public Excluded)		
C3. Rotokauri Strategic Infrastructure Designation – Property Matters		

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public, as follows:

Item C1.	to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage	Section 7 (2) (j)
Item C2.	to enable Council to carry out commercial activities without disadvantage to enable Council to carry out negotiations to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage	Section 7 (2) (h) Section 7 (2) (i) Section 7 (2) (j)
Item C3.	to maintain legal professional privilege to enable Council to carry out commercial activities without disadvantage to enable Council to carry out negotiations	Section 7 (2) (g) Section 7 (2) (h) Section 7 (2) (i)