

Hamilton City Council – Staff Feedback

Future Bus Services for the Waikato Region

Waikato Regional Council

22 July 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 staff feedback is aligned with all of Hamilton City Council's five priorities.

Council Approval and Reference

This staff feedback was approved by Hamilton City Council's Chief Executive on 22 July 2025.

Feedback # 808

It should be noted that the following feedback is from staff at Hamilton City Council and does not, therefore, necessarily represent the views of the Council itself.

Introduction

1. Hamilton City Council staff welcome the opportunity to provide feedback to the Waikato Regional Council on **Future Bus Services for the Waikato Region**.

Key Messages

2. We continue to support the vision and objectives of the **Waikato Regional Public Transport Plan 2022-2032**.
3. We look forward to continuing to strengthen the collaborative working partnership we have with the Waikato Regional Council in our role as a key partner in the Public Transport (PT) space.
4. We recognise the critical role that PT will play in achieving the provision of transport choices for Hamiltonians and visitors to our city.
5. We support and recognise the need to deliver a public transport network that supports a growing city, with a focus on moving towards a ridership model where needed.
6. We recognise our obligation to provide bus stop infrastructure, including bus hubs, to support future public transport routes, particularly the high-frequency and rapid services.

Partnership Approach for Public Transport Planning

7. We would like to thank the Waikato Regional Council representatives who supported Hamilton City Council staff in presenting information around public transport planning at the Council's 13 May 2025 Infrastructure and Transport Committee meeting. This included an update on additional public transport routes, expectations of Waka Kotahi policy, equitable transport access, visitor destinations transport options, community consultations, the Rototuna high-frequency service expected spending, and efficiency projections.
8. We would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the collaborative work being undertaken between Hamilton City Council and Waikato Regional Council on ongoing public transport planning. This partnership approach is bringing the following benefits to the city:
 - **Integrated Planning:** Working together is ensuring that public transport strategies align with broader regional growth plans, such as the Hamilton–Waikato Metro Spatial Plan. This is helping create a cohesive transport network that will support urban development and connectivity.
 - **Efficient Resource Use:** By pooling the expertise in the public transport field, both councils are optimising funding and infrastructure opportunities, reducing duplication of work, and delivering cost-effective solutions that are helping make public transport a more realistic transport choice for many more Hamiltonians.
 - **Improved Accessibility:** Joint efforts are enhancing access to jobs, education, healthcare, and recreational activities.

- **Sustainability Goals:** Collaborative planning is helping to make public transport more accessible to more Hamiltonians, enabling them to make environmentally friendly transport choices, thereby contributing to reduced carbon emissions.
- **Community-Centric Solutions:** Engaging with a cross-section of stakeholder groups in Hamilton ensures public transport services reflect the diverse needs and aspirations of the city.
- **Enhanced Connectivity:** Coordinated efforts are improving interregional connections, such as the Te Huia rail service linking Waikato and Auckland.

9. This ongoing partnership approach is helping foster a more inclusive, accessible, and sustainable transport system for Hamilton and the wider Waikato Region.

Support for Hamilton City's Transport Rate to be Based on the Capital Value of Property

10. We also wish to reiterate the key messages made in Hamilton City Council's 2 May 2025 submission to the Waikato Regional Council's 2025-26 Annual Plan Consultation:

- *We acknowledge the Government's directive to increase public transport farebox recovery, but are cognisant that there is a fine balance required to ensure any future price increases don't subsequently result in people changing their current use of public transport to using private transport options.*
- *We support **Option 2** outlined on pages 6-9 of the Waikato Regional Council's consultation document, which notes that:*
 - *Option two is for the rate in Hamilton to be based on the capital value of a property. This recognises that currently Hamilton's public transport rating is based on a property's capital value, so option two is less likely to be a significant change to the current rates that you pay.*
 - *In central and regional Waikato, within the described rating categories, every property pays the same. Within Hamilton, the rate is based on property capital value.*

Rototuna Rocket

11. Hamilton City Council, at its 13 May 2025 Infrastructure and Transport Committee meeting, resolved the following: *"Advocates that Waikato Regional Council expedites the completion of the Rototuna Rocket high-frequency service to be operating by 30 June 2027".*

12. We support and recognise the need to deliver a reliable and efficient public transport network that supports a growing city. Therefore, we support the focus on moving towards a high frequency ridership model in identified transport 'hot spots' as soon as practical – this includes a high frequency service from Rototuna to the Central City.

13. Our role will be to ensure the right type of public transport infrastructure is provided in a timely manner to support the introduction of new and amended public transport routes.

Further Information and Opportunity to Discuss our Feedback

14. Should the Waikato Regional Council require clarification of the feedback from Hamilton City Council staff, or additional information, please contact **Martin Parkes** (Urban Transport Manager, Operate and Maintain) on **07 838 6427**, or email Martin.Parkes@hcc.govt.nz in the first instance.
15. Hamilton City Council representatives would welcome the opportunity to discuss the content of this feedback in more detail with the Waikato Regional Council.

Yours faithfully



Lance Vervoort
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

FURTHER INFORMATION

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