

## **Tamahere-Woodlands Councillors' update April 2024: District news**

### **Draft Annual Plan**

It was good to have an opportunity to meet up with residents and ratepayers wanting to know more about the Waikato District Council's draft 2024-25 Annual Plan and other matters at public meetings held in Tamahere, Matangi and Gordonton over the past month, as well as in other parts of the district.

The draft plan proposes a general rate increase of 13.75% and a no-frills budget that will only just allow the Council to continue to provide services at the same levels as previously. This is because the Council's costs have inflated about 17% over the past three years, with the current cost of civil construction being 26% higher than three years ago. Cost factors include increasing compliance requirements, interest rates, and asset maintenance costs.

As highlighted in last month's Councillor update, submissions closed on 26 April. Hearings of submissions on the Annual Plan are scheduled for 14-17 May and deliberations scheduled for 4-8 June. Final adoption of the enhanced Annual Plan is scheduled for the Council meeting on 25 June.

### **Waikato Regional Council draft Long Term Plan – consultation closes 2 May**

Waikato Regional Council (WRC) has issued its draft Long Term Plan (LTP) 2024-34 and is seeking feedback by 4pm Thursday 2 May on five topics including a region-wide public transport rate.

WRC proposes transferring the collection of public transport rates to the Regional Council from 1 July 2025. It proposes two 'user-pays' options, which is a change to the current system. (Currently rates for public transport are collected by the District Council through general rates applied to all ratepayers which are then paid to the Regional Council.)

The options proposed would mean that a number of WRC ratepayers in Waikato district (including in Tamahere-Woodlands from Gordonton to Tamahere) would pay either:

- \$26.74 per \$100,000 of capital value (CV) if their property is within 5km of a bus route (eg. \$213.92 for an \$800k property, \$534.80 for a \$2m property, etc), or
- \$42.35 per \$100,000/CV if the property is within 800m of a bus route (eg. \$338.80 for an \$800k property, \$847.00 for a \$2m property, etc)

Properties sited further away from bus routes would be subject to a lower rate.

Waikato District Council has decided to make a submission on Waikato Regional Council's LTP on the basis that the change could be unaffordable for many of our ratepayers, and to suggest WRC consider a 3<sup>rd</sup> option that would spread the cost of public transport more evenly across all district ratepayers (as has been the case in the past) – and that has proved acceptable and affordable until now.

If you wish to make a comment or submission on Waikato Regional Council's draft LTP, make sure you do so by Thursday 2 May. You can submit by emailing Waikato Regional Council on [haveyoursay@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:haveyoursay@waikatoregion.govt.nz) or by answering the consultation questions on the WRC consultation website at <https://yourvoicematters.waikatoregion.govt.nz/2024-2034-ltp>.

### **Infrastructure challenges in Waikato district**

Infrastructure connects us, enables our economies to thrive, and maintains our quality of life.

A substantial portion of our budget, about 30% of general rates, is dedicated to maintaining and improving our roads. However, the current funding model falls short of adequately addressing our needs. Water infrastructure is equally crucial, and costs are rising, as are compliance standards which are designed to safeguard public health and the environment.

A new podcast series, "Let's talk about it," will delve into these issues and more, providing a platform for understanding. In the first episode, listen to Mayor Jacqui Church and local experts explore the state of our local roads, discussing funding, maintenance plans, and road safety initiatives. Go to [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/news](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/news) and find the link to the podcast in the article on "Tackling road and water infrastructure challenges in the Waikato district".

### **ANZAC Day**

Your Councillors felt privileged to attend ANZAC Day services in Gordonton and Eureka in the Tamahere-Woodlands Ward and to lay wreaths on behalf of the Mayor and Council.

The dawn service in Gordonton attracted about 100 or more attendees and more than 30 people attended the 10am service at Eureka.

ANZAC Day honours our returned servicemen and women, and others who have died in conflicts and peace-keeping efforts around the world. It's an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices made by generations past and present in the pursuit of peace.

### **Waikato District Heritage Day**

Waikato District Council and the Waikato District Heritage Forum (representing many local heritage groups) came together to present the very first Waikato District Heritage Day on Saturday 20 April.

Highlights of the day in Tamahere-Woodlands were open days at Woodlands Estate, Gordonton, St David's & St George's church, Matangi, St Stephen's church and historic cemetery, Tamahere, and tours of the historic Matangi Dairy Factory. An open invitation was issued to visit the carved pou on Bruntwood Rd celebrating the covenant of peace of 1865 to end the NZ land wars.

The Council and the Heritage Forum hope the event will grow in future years.

### **Contact your Tamahere-Woodlands Councillors:**

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