

16 April 2025

Waikato Regional Council
160 Ward Street
Hamilton Central
Hamilton 3204

Teena koutou katoa,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on Waikato Regional Council's 2025/26 Annual Plan.

Waikato District Council (Council) submission responds to, and supports, the following two proposals outlined in your 2025/2026 Annual Plan;

- a) a simplified region-wide approach to public transport rating
- b) a new river and catchment management programme for the Wharekawa Coast (Kaiaua)

Public transport

Council supports a single system for the collection of rates for regional public transport services, which will ensure that public transport is managed in a more unified and strategic way. The proposed approach with a common rate collection method will be more efficient and remove unnecessary complexity.

Council also supports the per-property charge being applied to the entire Waikato District, which is covered by both Option 1 and Option 2 in the consultation document.

In addition to the proposed changes in the consultation document, Council recommends that Waikato Regional Council consider the funding of future bus trial services as part of the Regional Public Transport Rating Model. Connecting our rural communities to public transport needs to be an integral part of a regional transport model.

Regarding public transport capital infrastructure investment, Council may not be able to provide all new bus shelters due to the reduction in co-funding from the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) Waka Kotahi. Council will continue to work with Waikato Regional Council staff on public transport coordination and will ensure that appropriate safety considerations are given in demarcating and sign-posting bus stops.

Wharekawa Coast (Kaiaua) catchment

Council supports the new river and catchment management programme for the Wharekawa Coast to improve the community's resilience to extreme weather events by providing active and ongoing river and catchment activities.

The programme will help strengthen community resilience and support a number of goals in Council's Taiao (Nature) in the Waikato Strategy, including;

- Maintain, create and improve a full range of natural healthy habitats and ecosystems to a healthy functioning state across their natural range and genetic diversity,
- Support actions to conserve, maintain and restore healthy ecosystems and their ecological linkages,
- Seek collaboration opportunities to work with others, including mana whenua, to achieve the Taiao in the Waikato vision.

We acknowledge and appreciate the work you have done and continue to do, working with ratepayers, community (in developing the Wharekawa Coast 2120 Community Plan) and Council develop this programme of work. We expect your targeted consultation with residents and ratepayers will provide advice on whether the proposed rating scheme for the programme is acceptable.

Further information

If you have any queries regarding this submission, please contact Maggie Ford - Strategy Manager by email maggie.ford@waidc.govt.nz. Council representatives wish to speak at the hearings currently scheduled for 19-22 May 2025.

Ngaa mihi,



Jacqui Church
Mayor