



BULLER
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera O Kawatiri



Have
your
say!

Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25 Consultation Document

A summary of Buller District Council's Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25

About this Document

This Consultation Document is a condensed version of the Draft Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25.

It provides a snapshot of the Council's services and activities for the next 12 months and the financials around delivering those services and activities. It outlines the two key issues we need to address over the coming 12 months and the options the Council seeks the community's feedback on. We also welcome resident's thoughts on the plan. We also welcome resident's thoughts on any other aspect of the plan.

As the name suggests, the Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25 is a one-year plan and part of a longer-term planning process. We are required to update our ten-year plan (also known as our Long-Term Plan) every three years. This plan sets out our direction and budgets for the next ten years. Usually, in the two years between the long-term plans, we produce an annual plan.

This year, we are producing an Enhanced Annual Plan that continues implementing year four of the Long-term Plan 2021-2031. The Minister for Local Government (Hon Simeon Brown) highlighted on Tuesday, February 13 2024, the coalition government's plan for the next 12-18 months to implement Local Water Done Well into legislation and to repeal the Water Services Legislation. As part of that announcement, Central Government have given three different options as to when the Council will be required to adopt the Long-Term Plan:

- **Option 1** Adopt LTP by June 30 2024
- **Option 2** 3-month deferral, adopt final by 30 September 2024
- **Option 3** Defer the LTP, which was due to be adopted on the June 30 2024 and undertake a reduced 9-year long-term plan from June 2025 - June 2034. With this option it would require an Enhanced Annual Plan for this financial year which needs to be adopted by June 2024

The Council decided to go with option 3.

The 'enhanced' annual plan highlights the activities the Council will be involved in for 2024-2025, including major issues and projects where there are variations from our original estimates from Year four of the LTP 2021-2031. It details what the Council plans to spend in the year ahead and how it will be paid for.

Specific projects and issues have been highlighted against each of the Council's activities and performance targets, enabling you to monitor progress over time. The full Draft

Have
your
say!

We are seeking submissions

The Council wants to hear your thoughts about our draft Enhanced Annual Plan. The council's draft plan and consultation document are available for public consideration from Friday, April 12, with submissions being accepted until 4:30pm Monday, May 20.

During the consultation period, there are several ways to learn more about the draft plan and give us your feedback.



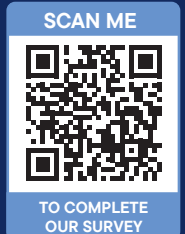
Email

You can request that the documents be sent by emailing submissions@bdc.govt.nz



Online

You can complete your submission online surveymonkey.com/r/EAP202425



Post

Buller District Council, PO Box 21, Westport 7866



Talk to us

You can talk to your elected members about the Annual Plan. Find out how to get in touch: bullerdc.govt.nz



Meet us

Drop in sessions will be held throughout the district.



Have a read

Consultation documents and submission forms can be collected from the Council's offices and libraries in Westport and Reefton, as well as i-Sites and Resource Centres across the district.

You can also read the consultation document and the draft plan online at bullerdc.govt.nz.

Message from the Mayor and CEO

Welcome to the consultation phase for Buller District's Draft Annual Plan 2024-2025. Your input becomes more crucial as we navigate the planning process for our district's future. This document reflects our aspirations and commitments for the coming year and marks a significant step in our collective journey towards growth and resilience.

Drawing from the insights of our 2021-2031 Long-Term Plan, the draft Enhanced Annual Plan represents a collaborative effort between our community, elected officials, and council staff. It outlines the Council's goals, what it aims to do in the coming year, and how we plan to pay for this. It is based on year 4 of the 2021-2031 Long-Term Plan (LTP) after the Council voted unanimously to defer the adoption of the 2024-2034 LTP.

The feedback we gathered during the initial engagement phase for the deferred Long-Term Plan has been invaluable. It has equipped our Council and staff with essential perspectives, shaping our decisions to address the district's immediate and long-term challenges. Our commitment to balancing our community's aspirations with the practical realities of managing our resources and infrastructure has never been stronger.

Since adopting the 2021 Long-Term Plan, the Buller community has faced challenges across the district. Central Government agencies have supported us as we sought a strong recovery for our people. However, the recovery period is nearing an end, and we, as a community need to shift our collective focus from recovery to growth.

There is no doubt that planning for the social, cultural, environmental, and economic future of the entire Buller District is a significant responsibility. Significantly, this year, our Council will lead the master planning for the future of Westport – a once-in-a-generation opportunity to set the future direction of the district's central hub. However, we are also undertaking this work in the context of significant reform and the current level of legislative uncertainty, especially surrounding the government's Local Water Done Well policy. Under this approach, we are required to lift our levels of compliance to meet the new standards around water supplies and the need to manage better and address our critical Infrastructure



There is no doubt that planning for the social, cultural, environmental, and economic future of the entire Buller District is a significant responsibility.

backlog whilst balancing the affordability for our community.

As we present this draft plan, we invite you to share your thoughts, insights, and visions for Buller. Your input is critical in ensuring our plans align with the community's aspirations, guiding how we allocate resources and prioritise projects that matter most to you. Let's shape a future for Buller that reflects our shared values and aspirations.

Ngā mihi
Jamie and Simon

Executive Summary

In the face of a challenging economic environment and rising cost of living, the Buller District Council presents the Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25, a document that is designed to navigate these times with resilience and foresight.

It serves as a concise overview of our proposed services, activities, and financial strategies for the forthcoming year, firmly grounded in our commitment to our community and the sustainable development of the district.

This year's Enhanced Annual Plan is distinctive. It extends beyond the usual annual planning process to incorporate insights and directives from the fourth year of our Long-Term Plan (LTP) 2021-2031.

Financial forecasts within the plan are constructed on realistic assumptions, aiming to provide transparency and accountability in how public funds are managed. Our Enhanced Annual Plan spans across key infrastructure maintenance, regulatory responsibilities, community support services, and our community facilities, ensuring a holistic approach to enhancing the quality of life in Buller.

Your input is instrumental in shaping this plan. As we undertake this journey, your feedback is invaluable, ensuring that our collective vision and efforts resonate with the Buller District's needs and aspirations.

Buller District Council are aware of the challenges around affordability and the cost-of-living pressures for all our community. We understand that a total rates movement of 19.7% is a significant increase, but unfortunately, there are significant factors that contribute to this and a lot of which is outside of our control. The summary below shows the major components of the total rates movement:

- Decision to hold water rates in 2023-2024 – 5.2%
- Weighted inflation increase, over and above what is forecast by BERL (Business and Economic Research limited) – 5.6%
- NZTA work programme identified to preserve Council's roading network – 3%
- Increasing depreciation and loan servicing costs for the increased capital programme – 2.5%
- New Staff roles required to meet Council's compliance requirement – 1.5%
- Increase in 3 Waters repairs and maintenance – 1.2%

The Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25 is not merely a document of financial and operational directives, but a testament to our dedication to prudent, inclusive, and visionary governance. As we navigate these challenging times, we remain committed to fostering a sustainable, resilient, and vibrant Buller District poised for recovery, growth, and prosperity.

Council's role

The Long-Term Plan and Annual Plans are key documents that set the budget and priorities for the services the Council provides in the community – many of which are required by law, including the following.



Key infrastructure: roads, footpaths, water, wastewater, stormwater, solid waste and drainage.



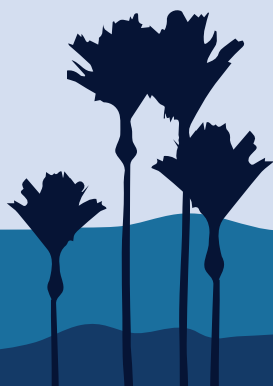
Regulatory responsibilities: Resource Management Act, animal control, policies, monitoring and consents, building consents, food and liquor.



Community services and support: community grants, libraries, theatres, cinemas, and swimming pools. Emergency management.



Community facilities: parks, reserves, housing for seniors, and council-owned properties.



Consultation Issues

Council has identified two key issues we must address over the coming 12 months. We could address each of these key issues in several ways. We want your feedback on what option is the best way forward for our community.



Consultation Issue 1 – Roothing

What do Buller District Council do if the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) do not fund as much as we applied for?

Transport presents the most significant opportunity for our district in terms of critical infrastructure. This is due to the current funding assistance provided by the central government via Waka Kotahi NZTA. This funding assistance provides the most favourable conditions and financial support we will likely see regarding value for money return on ratepayer investment.

The transport asset base is our largest replacement value, which the Council manages on behalf of our communities, excluding state highways, and is managed directly by Waka Kotahi NZTA. The local transport network includes 319km of sealed roads, 265km of unsealed roads and 87km of footpaths. This has a total value of \$421m and represents more than 70% of the Council's total asset value. Therefore, from a management and preservation perspective, investment is a priority to ensure the network condition is maintained at current levels without further deterioration.

Feedback from our communities, including engagement and surveys, confirms the desire to maintain service

levels as they currently are, with no reduction. Therefore, Transport's strategic planning and investment decisions aim to manage network resilience, provide safer travel and improve service delivery efficiencies. This will be guided by the new Central Government Policy Statement (GPS) for Land Transport and the investment level agreed with Waka Kotahi NZTA under the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP), which ultimately determines our ratepayer contributions for local roads, footpaths and bridges.

Supporting Council's position is a strong evidence base of technical data and condition assessment across our Transport network. A significant amount of technical, engineering and asset management work has been undertaken to produce the Activity Management Plan (AMP). The asset condition, performance, remaining useful life, and valuation estimates have been diligently reviewed as part of the AMP process to ensure the infrastructure's status is well understood. In addition to providing the Council with high-confidence levels in asset management, the AMP informs the prioritised investment methodology and the Programme Business

Case (PBC) prepared for our funding partner, Waka Kotahi NZTA.

The PBC and supporting evidence, including the AMP and network assessments, are used to determine their level of funding commitment. Whilst the RLTP is typically oversubscribed, Buller has consistently performed well in the contestable funding call due largely to the PBC and AMP level of detail we can demonstrate and the strong working relationship between both parties. This has been built on a proven delivery performance and following through on commitments.

The proposed investment programme incorporates operational imperatives, including repairing and maintaining sealed pavements, unsealed (gravel) roads, bridges and structures, environmental and drainage, network management, and managing our roading service level contracts. Capital works include pavement replacement, a reseal programme, unsealed metalling, bridge renewals and replacements, and footpaths.

The great news for Buller is that Waka Kotahi NZTA has confirmed that the Funding Assistance Rate (FAR) for our local roads will be 75% for the next three years. In addition, it has also been confirmed that the Karamea Special Purpose Road (SPR) will maintain its current 100% funding assistance, which significantly reduces the risk to the Council for this vulnerable section of the highway. Both favourable outcomes provide a level of financial support that enables asset preservation and service-level objectives to be achieved by the Council and our communities.



Overall, the civil construction sector and roading have experienced inflation and more than 18% of cost escalations in recent years. Despite this level of cost increase, and through a detailed examination of our prioritised investment methodology by refining our asset preservation and service levels, we have targeted an optimised programme within our affordability constraints by maximising the central government funding support. This will also deliver on our community outcomes and statutory duties.

When preparing this enhanced annual plan, the Council submitted a programme of works to Waka Kotahi NZTA for inclusion in the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) and, therefore, the RLTP. Waka Kotahi NZTA will release indicative allocations for the NLTP in late May 2024. The final budget allocations are expected on August 31st, 2024. This is partly due to changes within the new government's Policy Statement on land transport.

The key issue is whether Waka Kotahi NZTA will either agree with and support the Council's proposed PBC and budget accordingly or indicate a revised approved budget allocation. Any change is unlikely to exceed what the Council requested, but it may be less.

The Council has three options if Waka Kotahi NZTA approves a lower budget allocation. The first is to revise our ratepayer contribution by the lower approved amount under the FAR model. The second is to continue with the proposed work programme and fund the difference from rates or alternative external sources, and the third is to fund the difference in the BDC contribution to match the 25%



Consultation Issue 1 – Roothing

Option 1

Reduce the programme to match the Waka Kotahi – New Zealand Transport Agency Approved Funding.

The focus is to be confirmed, and the new Government Policy Statement requirements for Land Transport will likely be considered.

Changes to the level of service

The outcome of the Waka Kotahi (NZTA) decision will determine the way forward and the impact on the future level of service on our roading network. The programme outcome will not be known until Waka Kotahi (NZTA) confirms the budget allocations.

Financial Impact

If the Local Roads programme were reduced by \$1m per annum, the Council's share at 25% would result in a potential rate saving of \$0.25m.

Any reductions to the Special Purpose Roads (SPR) (Karamea Highway) will not impact rates as this work is fully funded by Waka Kotahi, meaning only revenue from subsidies will be reduced.

Potential change to rate increases contained in the Draft Annual Plan.

Advantages

- The advantage is that the rate contribution will not increase, and there could be a rate saving.

Disadvantages

- The Council may have to reduce the work programme to match the funding. This may have implications for the levels of service delivery, which means doing less work.
- This may increase the risks of the main assets being affected by underinvestment, which could lead to further issues and impact resilience and asset preservation (the backlog gap will widen).
- Roothing was the communities' number one priority in the pre-engagement.

Potential change to rates increases if this option was chosen

The example right, stated that for \$1m less work on the local roads, saving \$250k Council Contribution

	In Draft Annual Plan	Option 1	Change
General rates increase	16.7%	14.5%	-2.2%
Total rates increase	19.7%	18.4%	-1.3%

Consultation Issue 1 – Roothing

Option 2

Continue with the submitted programme, and council rate funds any difference for local roads and commits to higher rates for the next two rating years. The quantum of \$ and rates % increase is variable depending on the funding shortfall/work programme delivered.

Focus is on asset preservation and current levels of service.

Changes to levels of service

The outcome of the Waka Kotahi (NZTA) decision will determine the way forward.

Under Option 2, the Council assumes that only local roads would be considered for additional rates funding, so the proposed levels of service for local roads remain the same.

Karamea Highway (SPR) would be excluded as these roads are 100% funded by Waka Kotahi (NZTA).

Financial Impact

If the Local Roads programme approved by Waka Kotahi were reduced by \$1m per annum, Waka Kotahi's share at 75% would reduce subsidies by \$0.75m. To continue with the submitted programme, the Council would have to fund this shortfall either by a direct increase in general rates or through borrowings.

Loan servicing costs for a \$0.75m ten-year loan at the forecast rate for the Annual Plan are \$0.09m per annum from 2025/2026. As the programme would need to be funded for three years of shortfalls, cumulatively, this will add \$0.28m per annum to general rates by 2027/2028.

Any reductions to SPR have no impact on rates, as Waka

Advantages

- Roothing was the communities' number one priority in the pre-engagement.
- Current levels of service delivery will be maintained.
- Reduces the principal risks of assets being affected by an under-investment, which could lead to further issues.
- Helps to preserve assets, sustain, and improve resilience.
- Helps to keep pace with inflation.

Disadvantages

- To retain the submitted programme, the Council would need to increase the portion of the rates above the indicative rate increase
- This would impact further on rates affordability.
- It would impact other non-roading high-priority projects.
- Council locks in rates increases in the next two financial years to meet the funding shortfall; \$ and % increase is dependent on the final funding agreed upon but could be significant.

Kotahi fully funds this work. Therefore, reducing the spending budgeted for SPR will reduce revenue from subsidies.

Potential change to rate increases contained in the Draft Annual Plan.

Potential change to rates increases if this option was chosen

The example right, stated that for \$1m less work on the Local Roads, increasing \$750k Council Contribution

	In Draft Annual Plan	Option 2 Rates funded	Change
General rates increase	16.7%	23.3%	+6.7%
Total rates increase	19.7%	23.7%	+4.0%

Consultation Issue 1 – Roothing

Option 3

Keep Council's level of funding as contained in the draft AP but reduce the overall programme to reflect Waka Kotahi's level of investment.

Changes to the level of service

The outcome of the Waka Kotahi (NZTA) decision will determine the way forward and the impact on the future level of service on our roading network. The programme outcome will not be known until Waka Kotahi (NZTA) confirms the budget allocations.

Financial Impact

As the proposal is to leave the Council's level of funding the same, there is no impact on rates under Option 3.

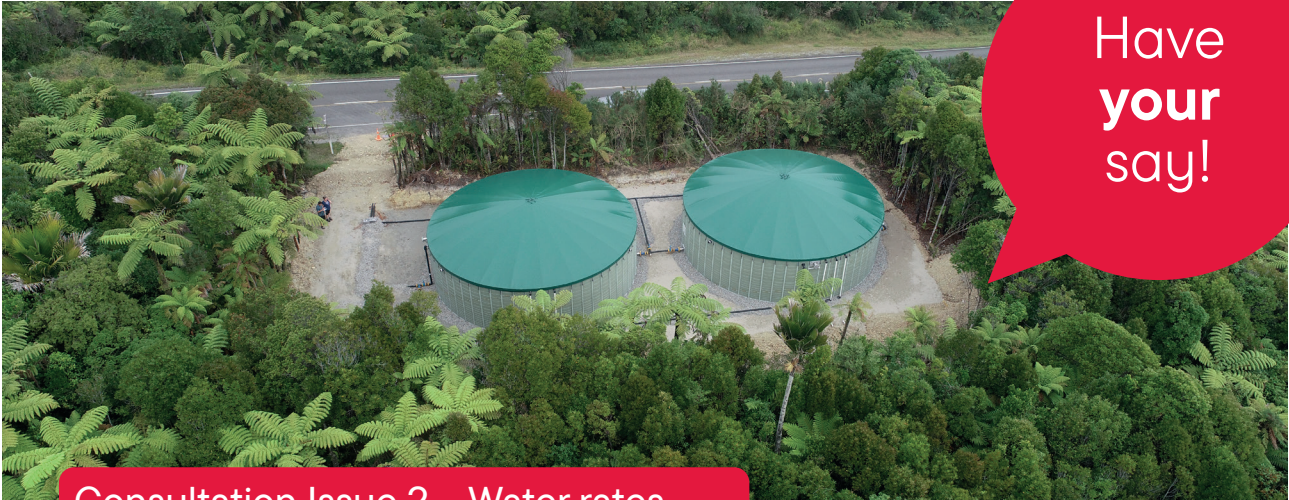
Any reductions to SPR have no impact on rates as Waka Kotahi fully funds this work. Therefore, revenue from subsidies will be reduced in accordance with a reduction in the level of spending budgeted for SPR.

Advantages

- Roothing was the communities' number one priority in the pre-engagement.
- The level of service won't be reduced as much.
- It will have less of an impact on the assets; however, the investment would still not be what is required.
- It helps preserve assets but will only partially maintain them, sustain them, and improve resilience.

Disadvantages

- The Council will have to reduce the programme of work but will still take on some more than funded.
- This may increase the risks of the main assets being affected by underinvestment, which could lead to further issues and impact resilience and asset preservation (the backlog gap will widen).
- Roothing was the communities' number one priority in the pre-engagement, so it will need to be considered.
- Our assets will not have the required investment.



Consultation Issue 2 – Water rates

Policy on rates – how drinking water and wastewater rates are applied

Council is seeking feedback on the policy for how to rate water and wastewater rates.

Council is considering changing the way “multi residential” and “multi commercial” “differentials” for water and wastewater targeted rates, as well as “major users” rates are charged, and aligning the policy more closely with the methods for charging targeted rates as set out in the Local Government (Rating) Act 2022.

The proposed change considers a per “Separately Used or Inhabited Part of a rating unit” application of charges, using District Valuation Roll data. District Valuation Roll data is collated by Quotable Value NZ and provided to Council; therefore, Council could use this data instead of the “charges tables” in the current water and wastewater charges section of the 2023-2024 rating policy.

The proposed change also considers charging all schemes for availability of supply. This means if a connection could be made to the supply because it is within a set distance of the supply it would be charged 50% of the full charges made for full connection. This would align the treatment of all water and sewer supplies in the district. Currently there are inconsistencies as Punakaiki Water supply and Inangahua Water supply are charged half rates for availability of connection, and Little Wanganui Water and Wastewater are charged half rates for availability of connection, whereas other supplies are not presently charged in this way. The policy also considers applying water meters to significant users in areas outside of Westport.

Because Council cannot meter wastewater, the proposed

change considers introducing a per urinal/pan charge for commercial accommodation, schools and health providers.

The scheme rates materially affected by this change in the Annual Plan are the Westport and Reefton Wastewater and Water Supply. There is minimal to no change to the rate per connection for the other schemes calculated in this Draft Annual Plan.

The policy change does not impact the total budgeted revenues required to fund the activities, what it does is increase the number of rateable connections to calculate the rate per connection. By redistributing the required rate take over more connections the impact to individual ratepayers already paying for one connection will pay less than they otherwise would be required if the policy change did not proceed, those with multiple connections or not previously paying will pay more.

The impact of the proposal varies between ratepayers, it is the Reefton and Westport supplies that have the most notable change. Most ratepayers in these supplies would pay less rates if this proposal were adopted, and a smaller number would pay more because there would no longer be a discount given for multiple dwellings or activities on each rating unit.

Council has prepared the Forecast Funding Impact Statement on the basis of the proposed new policy. The full policy can be found in the Draft Enhanced Annual Plan document.

The current rating policy can be found on Councils website in the 2023-2024 Annual Plan.

Consultation Issue 2 – Water rates

Option 1

Adopt a revised policy on how water and wastewater targeted rates are charged.

The Council is considering changing the way “multi-residential” and “multi-commercial” “differentials” for water and wastewater targeted rates, as well as “major users” rates are charged, and aligning the policy more

closely with the methods for charging targeted rates as set out in the Local Government (Rating) Act 2022.

Changes to level of service

The levels of service would remain the same if this policy were adopted.

Advantages

- A clear, compliant policy is applied consistently across all water and wastewater schemes in the Buller District.
- Policy application is driven by external valuer information collated in the Rates Information Database. Therefore, it is not subject to the interpretation and application of many different targeted rate policies as per the current policy.
- Rates charges would be on a one-for-one basis, which would be more impartial/equitable.
- The amount collected benefits ratepayers who do not need to pay as much targeted rates as otherwise would need to be set to meet the costs of each water or wastewater supply.

Disadvantages

- Changed policy means that some ratepayers with two or more separately used or inhabited portions of a rating unit would be charged more targeted rates than in the past.
- The policy will be driven by external valuer information collated in the Rates Information Database, and the data may need to be updated for a selected group of properties. This will require a valuer to visit each property to assess units of use and urinal/pan count. Therefore, consistent application of a new rating system may need to be phased in over two years. This may be seen as inequitable for consumers captured in the first year of transition.
- Some water and wastewater ratepayers will pay higher rates because, in the past, they paid one charge or a reduced charge for many units or separately used or inhabited portions or did not pay for available use.
- The amount collected redistributes the targeted rate burden to ratepayers who have historically been charged reduced or nil rates; the impact on those ratepayers may be significant.

Impact of proposed policy change to water and wastewater targeted rates by most affected schemes

Type of Targeted Rate	Location			
	Westport	Westport	Reefton	Reefton
	Water	Wastewater	Water	Wastewater
Total Count of Rates Charges Under Existing Policy	2,835	2,596	664	589
Total Count of Rate Charges Under Proposed Policy	3,125	2,842	723	642
Change in Total Count of Rate Charges	290	246	59	53
Rate per Connection, including GST, Under Existing Policy	\$1,463	\$1,237	\$1,408	\$930
Rate per Connection, including GST, Under the Proposed Policy	\$1,361	\$1,130	\$1,293	\$854
Reduction in Rate per Connection, including GST, under the Proposed Policy	-\$102	-\$107	-\$115	-\$76
Increase in Rate per Connection, including GST, under Existing Policy	\$102	\$107	\$115	\$76
Total Rate Take including GST Under Existing Policy	\$4,147,605	\$3,210,757	\$934,490	\$548,142
Total Rate Take including GST Under Proposed Policy	\$4,253,669	\$3,210,985	\$935,020	\$548,541
Change in Total Rate Take between policies	\$106,064	\$228	\$530	\$399
Estimated Reduced Water Metering Revenues	-\$105,000	\$228	\$530	\$399
Change in Total Revenues required to fund the scheme	\$1,064	\$228	\$530	\$399

Note: The above tables include GST.

Rating examples

For **One** Separately Used or Inhabited Portion Under Proposed Changed Policy

Sector	Location				
	Westport	Carters Beach	Reefton	Westport	Reefton
	Res 106	Res 108	Res 115	Com 134	Com 140
Land Value	\$106,000	\$160,000	\$100,000	\$265,000	\$195,000
General Rates	1,119.23	1,016.15	466.71	12,371.32	2,569.36
UAGC	580.00	580.00	580.00	580.00	580.00
Targeted Water Rate	1,362.00	1,362.00	1,293.00	1,362.00	1,293.00
Targeted Wastewater Rate	1,129.00	1,129.00	854.00	1,129.00	854.00
Targeted Solid Waste Rate	199.00	199.00	199.00	199.00	199.00
NET RATES	\$4,389.23	\$4,286.15	\$3,392.71	\$15,641.32	\$5,495.36
Previous Year	\$3,861.27	\$3,775.69	\$3,025.50	\$13,203.62	\$4,771.28
% Change to Previous Year	13.67%	13.52%	12.14%	18.46%	15.18%

Rating examples

For **Two** Separately Used or Inhabited Portions
Under Proposed Changed Policy

Sector	Location				
	Westport	Carters Beach	Reefton	Westport	Reefton
	Res 106	Res 108	Res 115	Com 134	Com 140
Land Value	\$106,000	\$160,000	\$100,000	\$265,000	\$195,000
General Rates	1,119.23	1,016.15	466.71	12,371.32	2,569.36
UAGC	580.00	580.00	580.00	580.00	580.00
Targeted Water Rate	2,724.00	2,724.00	2,586.00	2,724.00	2,586.00
Targeted Wastewater Rate	2,258.00	2,258.00	1,708.00	2,258.00	1,708.00
Targeted Solid Waste Rate	199.00	199.00	199.00	199.00	199.00
NET RATES	\$6,880.23	\$6,777.15	\$5,539.71	\$18,132.32	\$7,642.36
Previous Year	\$5,404.07	\$5,318.49	\$4,362.50	\$14,746.42	\$6,108.28
% Change to Previous Year	27.32%	27.43%	26.98%	22.96%	25.11%

Rating examples

For **Three** Separately Used or Inhabited Portions
Under Proposed Changed Policy

Sector	Location				
	Westport	Carters Beach	Reefton	Westport	Reefton
	Res 106	Res 108	Res 115	Com 134	Com 140
Land Value	\$106,000	\$160,000	\$100,000	\$265,000	\$195,000
General Rates	1,119.23	1,016.15	466.71	12,371.32	2,569.36
UAGC	580.00	580.00	580.00	580.00	580.00
Targeted Water Rate	4,086.00	4,086.00	3,879.00	4,086.00	3,879.00
Targeted Wastewater Rate	3,387.00	3,387.00	2,562.00	3,387.00	2,562.00
Targeted Solid Waste Rate	199.00	199.00	199.00	199.00	199.00
NET RATES	9,371.23	9,268.15	7,686.71	20,623.32	9,789.36
Previous Year	\$6,726.47	\$6,640.89	\$5,508.50	\$14,637.52	\$7,254.28
% Change to Previous Year	39.32%	39.56%	39.54%	40.89%	34.95%

Note: The above tables include GST.

In addition to the above changes, metered water charges are expected to be reduced, as the increased connections will cover those charges. This would not increase rates revenues. It would change how the water schemes are funded, with a mix of water rates and water metering revenues.

Consultation Issue 2 – Water rates

Option 2

Keep the policy the same on how water and wastewater targeted rates are charged.

Under this option, rates on municipal water and wastewater supplies would not be distributed amongst targeted ratepayers differently.

Changes to level of service

The levels of service would remain the same if this policy was adopted.

Advantages

- Targeted rates for Westport Water, Westport Sewer, Reefton Water, and Reefton Sewer would continue to be similar amounts for all ratepayers, who are less likely to object to the application of rates because of the historical practice of charging rates in this way.

Disadvantages

- Targeted rates for Westport Water, Westport Sewer, Reefton Water, and Reefton Sewer would be higher for these ratepayers because the existing rates policy would capture fewer consumers
- The application of rating policy remains subject to interpretation, is difficult to follow, and needs to be aligned with the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.
- Rates for similar properties are charged inequitably depending on their location, and the “charging tables” in the existing policy are interpreted inequitably.

Option Two - Status Quo

Schemes Most Affected	Number of connections	Rate per connection incl, GST	Rate Take incl GST
Westport Wastewater	2,596	\$1,237	\$3,210,757
Reefton Wastewater	589	\$930	\$548,142
Westport Water Supply	2,835	\$1,463	\$4,147,605
Reefton Water Supply	664	\$1,408	\$934,490

Key highlights of this Enhanced Annual Plan

The Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25 (the Annual Plan) is the fourth Annual Plan following the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan (the Long Term Plan).

Council continues to follow the original strategy set out in the Long Term Plan, and as such, this Annual Plan does not significantly differ from it.

The following commentary explains the variations to the budgets for 2024-2025 that are arising from matters that the Council were not aware of in preparing the Long Term Plan, such as changes in economic conditions, the impact of extreme weather events on the Council's financials, and the impact of Three Waters reform and other Central Government reforms.

One of the requirements of the Enhanced Annual Plan Option was that the Council had to consult on the 2024-2025 Enhanced Annual Plan. Council acknowledges that it would have chosen to consult under the normal Annual Plan legislative requirements given some material changes in the long-term plan. These have been driven via new capital projects identified that are after the Long Term Plan, meaning that the net debt limit of \$25m set out in the Financial Strategy would be breached, with predicted net debt on June 30th June 2025, being \$37.8m and rates increases of 19.7% compared to 4.8% in the same period of the Long Term Plan.

Overall, the Council proposes a 19.7% increase in total rates revenue compared to 4.8% in the same year in the Long-Term Plan. The increase in total rates compared to the Long-Term Plan reflects the significantly higher interest and inflation rates experienced compared to market predictions available when preparing

the Long-Term Plan in 2021. It also includes a 5.2% jump in water and wastewater rates, as these were not increased in 2023-2024, which is a significant driver of the total rate increase. The increase also reflects the impacts of Central Government reforms and regulations requiring greater Local Government Investment, particularly in the Three Waters activities and the cost of continuing to invest in our roading network, an area that the community indicated during the latest round of consultation was an area of importance for Council to focus on.

As a comparison, the long-run Local Government cost index applicable when preparing the Long-Term Plan was 2.2%; the Business and Economics Research Ltd (BERL) cost adjusters 2023 update saw this increase to 2.4%. The Council's weighted average inflation increase for the Enhanced Annual Plan is closer to 5.6% due to the outcome of infrastructure maintenance contract reviews with major suppliers. Significant expenditure items such as insurance, electricity and employee expenses all experience actual increases greater than the BERL cost adjusters, and those real revised rates have been used as the basis for the 2024-2025 Enhanced Annual Plan.

When preparing the Long-Term Plan, Westpac's economic forecasts predicted that the official cash rate (OCR) would remain 0.25% until December 2025. Updated forecasts prepared in March 2024 predict that for the 2024-2025 financial year, the OCR will remain at 5.5% until June 2024, reducing to 4.5% by June 2025, with the current rate being 5.5%.

BULLER DISTRICT FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Total Rates Increase

19.7%

Forecast Net Debt

\$37.9m

Forecast Capital Spend

\$19.4m

The 19.7% is a total rates movement across the district, this will not necessarily be the case for everyone. It's important to note that the total rates are made up of the following areas:

General Rates

16.7%

Targeted Rates

24.3%

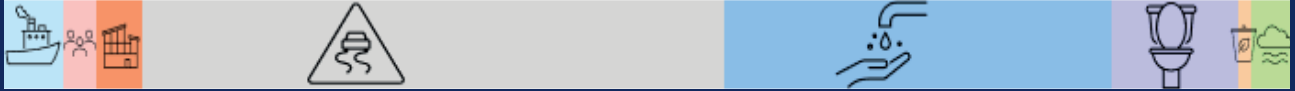
Total Rates Movement

19.7%

Where the money goes

Capital Expenditure

- to purchase or create assets



■ Commercial Infrastructure \$0.9m	■ Community, Regulatory and Services \$0.5m
■ Community Facilities \$0.7m	■ Roads and Urban Development \$8.7m
■ Water Supplies \$5.8m	■ Wastewater \$1.9m
■ Waste Management \$0.2m	■ Stormwater \$0.6m

Operational Expenditure

- the costs of providing ongoing services



■ Governance \$2.3m	■ Community Facilities \$3.7m
■ Community Services \$4.9m	■ Wastewater \$3.4m
■ Water Supplies \$5.4m	■ Regulatory Services \$3.2m
■ Stormwater \$1m	■ Roads and Urban Development \$11.3
■ Commercial Infrastructure \$3.5m	■ Waste Management \$1.9m

Funded by Rates

- how much rates contribute to each activity



■ Governance \$1.9m	■ Waste Management \$1.5m
■ Community Facilities \$1.7m	■ Community Services \$3.8m
■ Wastewater \$3.3m	■ Water Supplies \$5.1m
■ Regulatory Services \$1.6m	■ Stormwater \$0.9m
■ Roads and Urban Development \$2.4m	

Financial Performance and Measures

Operating Result

Council is budgeting an operating surplus of \$2.75m in the 2024-2025 Annual Plan, an increase of \$0.28 m compared to the proposed operating surplus of \$2.47m for the same year in the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan.

Operating revenue is predicted to increase by \$9.4m compared to the Long-Term Plan made up of:

- a \$4.37m increase in grants and subsidies, \$6.9m from Waka Kotahi for the increased roading programme, less \$2.2m provided in the Long-Term Plan for a new water treatment plant and intake source at Punakaiki that was assumed to be externally funded by the government,
- a \$3.5m increase in rates revenue, \$1.9m increase in general rates and \$1.75m in targeted rates, and
- \$1.57m increase in other operating revenue made up of \$0.5m rental revenue from Council's Senior Housing portfolio assumed to be continued from 2024/2025 in the Long-Term Plan and new income from leasing houses in Paparoa Way located in conjunction with the Ministry of Business and Innovation post flood, along with \$0.3m higher external interest revenue reflecting higher interest rates and higher Regulatory fees revenue from a combination of fees increases and higher levels of activity in building and resource consenting activities.

Offset by a \$9.2m increase in operating Expenditure due to:

- Predicted increases in other expenses of \$3.8m, of which \$1.6m relates to the roading programme and \$0.8m to three waters contracted and general repairs and maintenance,
- Employee benefit expenses of \$2.0m, \$0.7m relate to the project management office made permanent subsequent to the Long-Term Plan and funded by capital project budgets not directly by rates, external funding from the Department of Internal Affairs for staff to respond to the additional workload from the proposed three waters transition, and two new roading roles as part of the increased roading programme that are 75% funded by Waka Kotahi NZTA subsidies, \$0.6m relates to the cumulative impact of higher market movements than forecast in the Long-Term Plan, along with new roles required for Council to maintain it's delivery of services and compliance requirements.
- depreciation of \$1.8m, and
- finance costs \$1.4m.

Financial performance	2023-2024 Annual Plan \$000	2024-2025 Long Term Plan \$000	2024-2025 Draft Annual Plan \$000
Operating Revenue	\$54,449	\$34,694	\$44,135
Operating Expenses	\$36,152	\$32,221	\$41,381
Operating Surplus/ (Deficit)	\$18,297	\$2,473	\$2,754

Performance Measures

Financial Prudence Benchmarks		Planned	Achieved
Rates increases affordability benchmark	Planned rates increases are no ore than the long run cost local government cost index increase (2.4% BERL update 2023; 2.2% in LTP).	19.7%	●
Debt affordability benchmark	Planned net debt (debt less term deposits) is less than \$25m.	\$379m	●
Balanced budget benchmark	Planned total revenue less excluded items is equal to or greater than operating expenditure less excluded items.	106.5%	●
Essential services benchmark	Planned capital expenditure on network services is equal to or greater than depreciation on network services.	226.6%	●
Debt servicing benchmark	Planned borrowing costs are equal or less than 10% of planned revenue.	4.9%	●

● Not achieved ● Achieved

- The Council predicts it will not meet the rates affordability and debt affordability benchmarks in its 2024-2025 Annual Plan.
- The Council forecast that it would meet all financial prudence measures in the Long-Term Plan except for the rate increase measure, which is forecasted to be 4.8%.
- The forecast rate increase measure has risen from 4.8% in year 4 of the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan to 19.7% in this Annual Plan. Drivers for the rate increases are:
 - › The largest increase of 5.2% is due to the decision to hold the 3 Waters targeted rates in the 2023-2024 Annual Plan and running \$1.2m of deficits compared to only \$0.2m of deficits in the 2024-2025 Annual Plan,
 - › Council is facing a weighted inflationary increase of around 5.6% on its costs, with local pressures over and above what is forecast by Business and Economics Research Ltd (BERL)
 - › 3% relates to the Waka Kotahi – New Zealand Transport Agency work programme identified to preserve the Council’s roading network and for some key safety improvements,
 - › 2.5% relates to increasing depreciation and loan servicing costs relating to Council’s increased capital programme and revaluations,
 - › 1.5% relates to new staff roles required to meet the Council’s compliance requirements and
 - › 1.2% increase in 3 Waters repairs and maintenance and routine maintenance contracts.
- Forecast net debt breaches the limit set in the Long-Term Plan financial strategy by \$12.5m. The Long-Term Plan forecasts net debt to be \$23.8m on June 30th and 2025, made up of \$37.5m of external debt-less term deposits of \$13.7m. The 2024-2025 Annual Plan forecasts net debt to be \$379m, made up of \$45.4m of external debt, less term deposits of \$7.5m.
 - › Subsequent Annual Plans saw new external debt requirements totalling \$79m being required.
 - › The 2022-2023 Annual Plan included new loans for the Westport water trunk main extension, \$1.65 m revised down to \$1m, and the Westport Wastewater resource consent renewal and discharge upgrade, \$2.24 m revised down to \$1.8m.
 - › The 2023-2024 Annual Plan saw \$1.3m of loan funding for Westport Water resilience work,

an increase in Stormwater upgrades of \$1m, and the carryover loan for the Waimangaroa Water Supply treatment project of \$1.45m in the Long-Term Plan after the floods became a resilience project with loan funding of \$2m.

- » The current plan includes new external debt for Westport water supply proposed capital of \$3.8m mainly for completing the trunk main renewal project and an increase in Council's loan for share purchases in Buller Holdings Limited of \$1.6m to fund past capital investment into the Pusle Recreation Facility by BHL. These new external loans are offset by the \$1.9m loan for the Brougham House upgrade being reduced to \$0.7m funded from term deposits due to a reduction in the scope of this project, and the local re-processor

plant of \$1.4m not proceeding in 2024-2025 as signalled in the Long-Term Plan.

- › Term deposits are forecast to be \$6.2m lower than the same period in the Long-Term Plan due to:
 - » Utilising term deposits as internal loans to fund a forecast of \$3.7m more capital works than provided for in the Long Term Plan,
 - » the decision in the 2023-2024 Annual Plan to fund \$1.75m of flood response and recovery costs out of term deposits that were not able to be funded out of the central government flood recovery funding package,
 - » along with the \$1.2m deficits in the three waters activities from stabilising the targeted rates in 2023-2024.

Impact of roading bid

When preparing this enhanced annual plan, the Council has submitted a three-year programme of works for 2024-2027 to Waka Kotahi – New Zealand Transport Agency for inclusion in the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP).

The bid's focus is on asset preservation and maintaining current service levels. Due to price escalation in roading contractors and materials, along with the work identified as required in the next three years, the cost to undertake this in 2024-2025 will increase by \$7.5m from the 2023-2024 Annual Plan budgets.

Just over half of this increase relates to work undertaken on the Karamea Highway, a Special Purpose Road that Waka Kotahi NZTA has confirmed will continue to fund at 100% until June 30 2027. Therefore, it has no impact on rates.

The remainder is to be spent on local roads, and Waka Kotahi NZTA has increased its share of funding from

72% to 75% from 2024-2027. The impact of the roading programme is an additional \$0.56m of general rates required in 2024-2025 to fund the Council's share, which represents a 5% increase in general rates, and a 3% increase in total rates revenue.

Waka Kotahi will not release indicative approved budgets for the NLTP until late May 2024, and the final budgets are not expected until August 2024. This is partly due to the lack of a new Government Policy on Land Transport.

Advantages of the submitted bid:

- Roading was the communities' number one priority in the pre-engagement.
- Current levels of service delivery will be maintained.
- Reduces the main risks of assets being affected by an under-investment, which could lead to further issues.
- Helps to preserve assets, sustain, and improve resilience.
- Helps to keep pace with inflation.

The year ahead

– significant capital expenditure

We are forecasting a total capital expenditure of \$19.4 million in 2024 – 2025, a significant increase over the past two years.

The table above details \$18.1m of the total planned capital expenditure of \$19.4 m. The remaining budgeted capital expenditure of \$1.3m is across Council’s business as usual functions for items that are individually planned to be less than \$100,000 for the year.

Here are some of some of the larger capital projects scheduled in 2024-2025

Roading



Local road renewals

75% Waka Kotahi subsidies
25% general rates

\$4.5m



Karamea Highway renewals

100% Waka Kotahi subsidies

\$4.1m

Wastewater



Westport Sewer renewals and upgrades

Internal loan \$0.8m depreciation funding \$0.5m; funded from targeted rates

\$1.3m



Reefton Sewer renewals and upgrades

Internal loan \$0.4m depreciation funding \$0.1m; funded from targeted rates

\$0.5m

Stormwater



Stormwater upgrades and replacements

External loan \$0.3m depreciation funding \$0.3m; funded from general rates

\$0.6m

Commercial Infrastructure



Kawatiri Dredge

DOP pump installation and engine upgrades

Self funding

\$0.8m

Community Facilities



Civil Defence EOC upgrade investigations

Depreciation funding funded by general rates

\$0.2m



Sue Thomson Casey Memorial Library exterior repaint

Depreciation funding funded from general rates

\$0.2m

Water



Westport water supply

- Trunkmain renewal
- Renewals
- Backflow prevention rollout
- Raw water bypass and bulk flow meters
- Water resilience upgrade and assessments and strategies

External loan \$0.25m depreciation funding \$0.75m; funded from targeted rates

\$4.4m



Reefton Water

- Renewals
- Backflow prevention rollout

Internal loan \$0.3m depreciation funding \$0.1m; funded from targeted rates

\$0.4m



Little Wanganui

Water easement for private property intake and drinking water standards compliance improvements

Internal loan funded from targeted rates

\$0.1m



Mokihinui

Water repairs to leaking pipes and access track, easement for private property intake and drinking water standards compliance improvements

Internal loan funded from targeted rates

\$0.1m



Waimangaroa

Water security fencing and drinking water standards compliance improvements

Internal loan funded from targeted rates

\$0.1m



Punakaiki

Water complete chlorination, and finalisation of private land access

Internal loan funded from targeted rates

\$0.4m



Inangahua Junction

Water main renewals and generator

Internal loan funded from targeted rates

\$0.1m

Total externally funded

\$7.5m

includes Waka Kotahi subsidies

Total Council funded

\$10.5m

Total Significant Capital

\$18.1m

Solid Waste



Contracted Refuse (litter bins and transfer stations)

Depreciation funding funded from general rates

\$0.2m

Changes in district rates

The total general and targeted rates budgeted increase is 14.9% higher than for the same year in the Long Term Plan, with an overall predicted 2024-2025 Annual Plan increase of 19.7%.

General rates are proposed to increase by 16.7%. Council collects its general rates revenue through a mix of a Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) that is a fixed amount per rating unit, with the remainder collected by a variable rate assessed on the land value of all rateable land in the district, on a differential basis based on location, area, land use and the activities that are permitted for the area in which the land is situated as per the District Plan.

Council proposes to lift the UAGC from the current rate of \$550 including GST to \$580 including GST from 1 July 2024 an increase of 5.5%. Increases in the UAGC impact more on lower value properties overall rates increases.

The differential charges are proposed to increase by 20.4%, as this is based on land value increases in these rates impact more on higher value properties overall rates increases.

Targeted rates for Water Supply schemes are facing proposed increases of between 0% for Ngakawau-Hector, 18% for Reefton up to 30% or Mokihinui, with the remaining schemes looking at around a 20-24% increase.

Targeted rates to Wastewater Disposal schemes have proposed increases of 2% Westport, 5% Reefton and 7% Little Wanganui.

Targeted rates for Waste Management schemes have proposed increases of 12% Zone 1, 0% Zone 2 (Karamea) and 22% Zone 3 (Mariua).

As illustrated by the below sample of properties the impact of the rates increases and how they impact individual properties total rates increase depends on a number of factors such as where a property is situated, their land value, and what services they receive from Council.

The below properties show a range of proposed increases from 9.32% for a residential property in Karamea with a land value of \$145,000 through to 18.88% for a rural property in Mai Mai with a land value of \$1,500,000.

Understanding your rates

› Rates assessment

Rates assessments consist of two types of rates: general rates and targeted rates.

› General rates

Everybody pays a general rate, which is based, first, on the land value of their property. General rates are value-based, and the amount payable rises in accordance with the land value. General rates are also affected by the use category defined for each property. Some categories pay higher rates, and some pay lower rates.

› Targeted rates

Targeted rates are payable by properties in a certain geographical area or those deemed to be in receipt of a particular benefit. They can be calculated on a value basis or a uniform basis. All of the Council's targeted rates are calculated uniform or flat, whereby all ratepayers, irrespective of the value of their property, pay the same amount.

› Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC)

There is only one target rate that applies to all properties, and this is known as the Uniform Annual General Charge or UAGC. The UAGC for year one of the draft Long-Term Plan is \$435 (GST exclusive).

EXAMPLES OF RATE CHANGES

These are a sample of some properties to demonstrate how the draft 2024-2025 Enhance Annual Plan changes will affect rates in these areas. 2023/2024 rates are what is currently being paid, with the rates for 2024/2025 showing what rates are proposed to be and the change in dollar and percentage terms for each property.

Location	Land Value	Rates including GST		Variation	
		2023/2024	2024/2025	\$	%
Res 101 Karamea	\$145,000	\$995	\$1,087	\$93	9.32%
Res 103 Little Wanganui	\$125,000	\$2,249	\$2,481	\$232	10.32%
Res 103 Mokihiui	\$90,000	\$1,354	\$1,567	\$214	15.78%
Res 103 Seddonville	\$70,000	\$928	\$1,020	\$92	9.91%
Res 104 Hector	\$110,000	\$1,382	\$1,494	\$112	8.08%
Res 104 Waimangaroa	\$80,000	\$2,037	\$2,350	\$313	15.37%
Res 106 Brougham Street	\$106,000	\$3,861	\$4,389	\$528	13.67%
Res 106 Russell Street	\$104,000	\$3,844	\$4,368	\$524	13.64%
Res 108 Carters Beach	\$160,000	\$3,776	\$4,286	\$510	13.52%
Res 113 Charleston	\$136,000	\$1,229	\$1,382	\$153	12.48%
Res 114 Punakaiki	\$290,000	\$3,246	\$3,806	\$560	17.25%
Res 101 Ikamatua	\$74,000	\$884	\$967	\$83	9.38%
Res 115 Reefton	\$100,000	\$3,026	\$3,393	\$367	12.14%
Res 101 Springs Junction	\$85,000	\$1,032	\$1,165	\$134	12.96%
Com 131 Karamea	\$300,000	\$4,865	\$5,749	\$884	18.17%
Com 134 Westport	\$265,000	\$13,204	\$15,641	\$2,438	18.46%
Com 140 Reefton	\$195,000	\$4,771	\$5,495	\$724	15.18%
Rur 141 Karamea	\$860,000	\$3,859	\$4,538	\$678	17.58%
Our 143 Cape Foulwind	\$1,030,000	\$3,621	\$4,248	\$627	17.32%
Rur 141 Mai Mai	\$1,500,000	\$6,260	\$7,441	\$1,182	18.88%
RR 151 Karamea	\$290,000	\$1,653	\$1,880	\$227	13.75%
RR 152 Granity	\$149,000	\$1,203	\$1,352	\$148	12.31%
RR 151 Westport	\$240,000	\$1,527	\$1,741	\$214	14.03%
RR 152 Westport	\$275,000	\$1,428	\$1,637	\$209	14.67%

RATE INCREASES

Rate movements	2023-2024 Annual Plan \$000	2024-2025 Long Term Plan \$000	2024-2025 Draft Enhanced Annual Plan \$000
Total rates	\$18,755	\$18,836	\$22,452
Rateable properties	7,525	7,517	7,566
Average rates	\$2,492	\$2,506	\$2,967
Rates movements	+9.5%	+4.8%	+19.1%

Note:

- The annual average rate is the sum of the general and targeted rates divided by the number of ratepayers.
- There will be properties that pay less and others that pay more, depending on the services they receive.
- Total forecast rates revenue to be collected increased by 19.7%, but the increase in average rates per property is lower due to growth in the number of rateable properties.

We are seeking submissions

The Council wants to hear your thoughts about our draft Enhanced Annual Plan. The council's draft plan and consultation document are available for public consideration from Friday, April 12, with submissions being accepted until 4:30pm Monday, May 20.

During the consultation period, there are several ways to learn more about the draft plan and give us your feedback.



Email

You can request that the documents be sent by emailing submissions@bdc.govt.nz.



Online

You can complete your submission online surveymonkey.com/r/EAP202425



Post

Buller District Council,
PO Box 21, Westport 7866



Talk to us

You can talk to your elected members about the Annual Plan. Find out how to get in touch: bullerdc.govt.nz



Meet us

Drop in sessions will be held throughout the district.



Have a read

Consultation documents and submission forms can be collected from the Council's offices and libraries in Westport and Reefton, as well as i-Sites and Resource Centres across the district.

You can also read the consultation document and the draft plan online at bullerdc.govt.nz.



KEY DATES FOR THE ENHANCED ANNUAL PLAN 2024/25

Friday 12 April 2024

Submissions open

Monday 20 May 2024

Submissions close at 4:30pm

Wednesday 5 - Friday 7 June 2024

Hearings will be held. If you indicated on your submission form that you wish to make a verbal submission, you will be contacted with a time to speak closer to the date - This is an opportunity to provide additional information to Councillors.

Tuesday 11 - Thursday

13 June, 2024

Deliberations will be held. Councillors will consider all submissions and make any necessary changes to the Draft EAP.

Wednesday 26 June 2024

Enhanced Annual Plan is due to be adopted.

Monday 1 July 2024

The document will come into effect.

Supporting information

Draft Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25

Supporting information is available at Council facilities in Westport and Reefton, as well as the Sue Thomson Casey Memorial Library in Westport, the DoC Visitor Centre in Punakaiki, the Karamea Information Centre, and the Northern Buller Resource Centre.



What about fees and charges?

We have completed our annual review of fees and charges and are proposing some changes for 2024-2025. To view the draft and provide feedback, please go to bullerdc.govt.nz.



BULLER
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera O Kawatiri

 Nomad Audio and Video

**We are seeking
submissions
and want your
feedback.**

Our Draft Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25 is the guiding document for our district over the next financial year, and we want your feedback during the consultation period.



**Have
your
say!**

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