

From: Official Information
To: Section 7 | @yahoo.co.nz
Cc: Official Information
Subject: Final response - LGDIMA 439994 - Section 7 | - Rates breakdown
Date: Tuesday, 26 November 2024 2:00:37 pm
Attachments: image001.png
image002.png
image003.png
image004.png
image005.png
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image007.gif

Kia ora,

We refer to your information request below. Hamilton City Council provides the following response.

Your request:

Apologies for the delay in replying to your email dated 5th September 2024.

Please don't take this as an offence and I am not angry with what I have written below and is not meant to hurt you in any way as they are personal views.

I completely understand the challenges Council faces countrywide but how about us? You think we don't have challenges. Every time there is a hike in council rates, insurance premiums, you name it, doesn't it affect the common man? Reasonable hikes are okay but in the case of Council and also the Waikato Regional Council, you all have all hiked your rates of late and I know it's not going to stop here. Where are we going to get the extra money to pay for all these costs which keep growing all the time? You provide me with an alternative and I would be more than grateful to you. Since the last few years, we have cut down costs wherever we can just to pay these taxes.

Also, I was going through your invoice and it says that the rates are calculated based on the capital value which is \$840,000. Well, the latest home estimate of my house is between \$625K to \$685K. Can you please explain to me how did you arrive at the capital value \$840,000 when the properties in and around where I live are in the price bracket of \$625K to \$700K. Say for example, even if you go around the capital value of \$7,00,00, the rates I will be paying will be far less than what I am paying now. If the Council feels that my house is worth \$840,000, then it would be worth selling it and downsize so that we don't have to pay that high rates.

Also, in your invoice, it says funding goes to Civil Defence, Natural Heritage, and Customer Services. Well, even Waikato Regional Council has included some of these fundings in their invoice too. Could you please clarify this for me and let me know why we have been charged twice for the same service? Also with the Hamilton Zoo, the Council has already started charging an entry fee, so not too sure why property owners should be paying for it, again. Also, I am not too sure in this modern technology age, anyone hardly goes to the library (please excuse me if I am wrong on this), so I would appreciate it if you could provide me a count of the total libraries which are managed by the Council and how much money is spent on it.

I have no issue with rate increases as long as everyone can afford to pay them without much difficulty in these challenging times. I know it doesn't impact the people working in the council or any high profile jobs, but please try and consider a common man's woes like me who has to do 2 jobs to make ends meet.

Our response:

Libraries

Hamilton City Council provides seven libraries across the city (Central, Dinsdale, St Andrews, Te Kete Aronui, Chartwell, Hillcrest and Glenview). The libraries are well used by the community with visitation numbers increasing in recent years. Last year (23/24) the libraries had 928,552 in person visits and 1,685,540 visits to its online platforms. The direct cost of delivering Library services in 23/24 was \$7.4mil.

Hamilton City Council and Waikato Regional Council rates

Hamilton City Council and Waikato Regional Council charge rates separately, for different services. You can read about where your rates go at Hamilton City Council here: <https://hamilton.govt.nz/property-rates-and-building-rates/understanding-your-rates/>

You can also read about our Long-Term plan here: <https://hamilton.govt.nz/strategies-plans-and-projects/long-term-plan/>

Waikato Regional Council has information online about their rates here: <https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/council/rates/ratesfaq/>

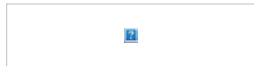
Support if you are having difficulty paying rates

To assist ratepayers who are having difficulty paying rates, Hamilton City Council offers a rates remission of up to \$788 a year called the 'Council Rates Rebate' to assist ratepayers on a low income. This is additional to the \$790 a year rates rebate offered by Government. You can find out more here: <https://hamilton.govt.nz/do-it-online/apply-for-it/rebates/>

We also assist ratepayers by offering flexible ways to pay. We've recently improved our rates payment system by introducing new, even easier and more flexible ways to pay rates through a digital platform called 'Payble.' Our new platform gives Hamilton ratepayers the freedom to manage their rates payments to suit them. Ratepayers can decide what day to make their rates payments, for example to align with their pay day. They can also see their payment balances, and set up a personalised payment schedule, such as to pay smaller amounts weekly, or pay in full if they prefer. You can find out more here: <https://hamilton.govt.nz/do-it-online/pay-it/pay-your-rates/>

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nga mihi
Keeley Faulkner
Official Information Advisor & Legal Support Officer
Legal services
Governance & Assurance Team | Partnerships, communication & Maori
Email: officialinformation@hcc.govt.nz



Hamilton City Council | Private Bag 3010 | Hamilton 3240 | www.hamilton.govt.nz

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I support flexibility at work. While it suits me to send this email now, I don't expect a response outside of your own working hours.

From: Rates Enquiry <Rates@hcc.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, November 7, 2024 9:42 AM
To: Section 7 (2) (a) | @yahoo.co.nz>
Cc: Official Information <officialinformation@hcc.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Rates number 3468

H Sec

I have answered your questions about your property's rating valuation below and have CC'd this to our Official Information team, who will find out the answers to your other questions where possible.

Rating valuations are a snapshot in time. The whole city is revalued every three years and our current values are dated 1 September 2021.

These values then get used for setting rates for the following three years.

1 September 2021 was near the last peak of the property market and most residential property values have decreased since this time.

Section 7 (2) (a)

Our next revaluation will be based as at 1 September 2024 and you will be advised of your new rating valuation some time around March to May 2025.

When you receive your rating valuation notice you should check that you agree with the value and if you don't there will be information about how to object to your valuation and have it reviewed.

This objection process is only available following the revaluation.

Regards,

Section 7 (2) (a)
Rates Manager | Finance

Section 7 (2) (a) | Email: rates@hcc.govt.nz



Hamilton City Council | 260 Anglesea St | Hamilton 3240 | www.hamilton.govt.nz

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From: Section 7 (2) (a) @yahoo.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, November 1, 2024 3:29 PM
To: Rates Enquiry <Rates@hcc.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Rates number 3468

Good afternoon team

Apologies for the delay in replying to your email dated 5th September 2024.

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Thank you very much and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards, Secti

On Thursday, 5 September 2024 at 03:24:41 pm NZST, Rates Enquiry <rates@hcc.govt.nz> wrote:

Section

Thank you for your email. Rates have unfortunately had to increase under the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan to meet the financial challenges the city is facing. Council and Hamilton are not alone in this situation – rates are increasing by similar levels in cities and towns around the country.

To achieve this, the Plan includes an average general rates increase of 16.5% in 2024/25 (\$9 a week for a median-value residential property). The rates increase will reduce by about one percentage point annually over the following four years (15.5%, 14.6%, 13.5%, 12.5%).

We recognise this is a significant increase in rates over the next few years, and that many in our community will find this challenging. However, options to further reduce rates at this time are constrained because of the increased costs we face and the growing requirements on councils from central government.

Our city is facing cost increases outside Council's control, such as interest rates, inflation, and compliance demands from central government. And being a growing city means there's more for Council to deliver. We need to balance our financial situation with investing to grow our city well and deliver existing services.

Every effort was made to keep the increases as low as possible given the financial environment, and no decision was made lightly.

Council consulted about the Plan in March and April this year. During the consultation period, Council received almost 3000 submissions from individuals, organisations and businesses. Significant changes were made in the final Plan as a result of this feedback. Read about what we consulted on at hamilton.govt.nz/futurehamilton.

The Long-Term Plan is aimed at finding the right balance between continuing to maintain our city by delivering the essential work that our community values and relies on, while meeting everyday costs with everyday revenue within three years, and keeping rates increases as low as possible in the circumstances.

Residents will continue receiving what Council currently provides – such as keeping library and pool opening hours, gardens maintained, the city tidy, and the current kerbside residential rubbish and recycling collection schedule.

An easier and more flexible way to pay your rates is also coming soon – you'll be able to set and forget, with flexible options and text reminders. You can find out more about the different ways to pay rates here hamilton.govt.nz/payrates.

If you're a low-income property owner, we may be able to offer you a rates rebate. Check out hamilton.govt.nz/rebates to find out more.

Ngā mihi | Kind Regards

Rates Team

Finance Unit

Section 7 (2) (a) Email: rates@hcc.govt.nz



Hamilton City Council | Private Bag 3010 | Hamilton 3240 | www.hamilton.co.nz

From: Section 7 (2) (a) @yahoo.co.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2024 8:42 AM
To: Rates Enquiry <Rates@hcc.govt.nz>
Subject: Rates number Secti

Section 7 (2) (a)

We received your Council invoice few weeks back and it's shocking to know that the rates have gone so high and so soon as I was under the impression, that they would be raised only next year. I have been keeping an eye on the news on the rate hike but it would have been a good gesture to let property owners know via email or a call, to say how much their rates would go up by.

You please give an idea of how are we going to balance our cost of living when power companies, insurance companies, councils and everyone else are raising their rates - left, right and centre. You need to at least give us middle class people some kind of relief. I know the council won't reduce or go back to the old rates, but at least you can give us some grace time to pay off the invoice amount. 5th September will be too tight for us to pay as we have got our mortgage, insurance (house, health, content, car) all going out at the same time. After all of this, we just have minimum money to pay for our groceries and other costs of living.

Just a thought and I am not too sure whether you will agree with me. Since the council has the power to hike the rates, it also has the power to give relief to taxpayers by offering them some grace time to pay their bills or make part payments. At least, we are not burdened to pay such hefty rates along with our monthly utility bills and other cost of living expenses.

Thanks

Section 7 (2) (a)