



Hamilton City Council – Staff Feedback

Emergency Works Investment Policies Consultation

**NZ Transport Agency Waka
Kotahi**

19 June 2024



**Hamilton
City Council**
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa



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 to 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 19 June 2024.

Feedback # 768

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.

Key Messages

1. Support for the Proposed Changes

- Overall, Hamilton City Council staff support the proposed changes outlined in the NZ Transport Agency's **Emergency Works Investment Policies Consultation**.

3. Emergency Works Funding

- We recognise and acknowledge that the NZ Transport Agency has for a long time provided financial support for works in the immediate response (to a defined, major, short-duration event) for public safety or to provide vital access and the reinstatement of customer levels of service for transport.
- This funding is in addition to the approved funding within each three-year National Land Transport Fund (NLTP).

6. Proposed Changes

- We note that the proposed Financial Assistance Rated (FAR) changes and associated thresholds would take effect on 1 July 2025 to allow Approved Organisations (AOs) time to adapt to these changes. Other changes to make the policies clearer and easier to interpret, and better aligned with legislative requirements, are proposed to take effect on 1 July 2024.

8. Relevance to Hamilton

- Unlike many rural dominant councils, Hamilton City Council has not traditionally included a budget item for Emergency response in its Long Term Plan budgets, while for some councils it is likely the highest value single budget line.
- The ability to claim for potential future seismic events is likely the most relevant one for Hamilton City.

11. Impact of Proposed Changes for Hamilton

- It is likely that the type of natural event in Hamilton that has the highest risk of unexpected expenditure for event response to reinstate access and return the network to full Levels of Service is a seismic event, where damage to non-transport assets and private assets could be expected to be broad and of high value (in particular in relation to the river crossing bridges). This is not affected by the proposed changes, with the exception of the reduction in the enhanced FAR from 71 % to 61%.
- It could possibly be considered that the 10% reduction in an enhanced FAR might at that point not be significant.

Introduction

14. Hamilton City Council staff welcome the opportunity to provide feedback to the NZ Transport Agency's **Emergency Works Investment Policies Consultation**.
15. This feedback is structured under the following key headings:
 - **Context – Emergency Works Funding**
 - **Proposed Changes**
 - **Relevance to Hamilton**
 - **Impact of Proposed Changes for Hamilton**
 - **Support for the Proposed Changes**
16. Overall, Hamilton City Council staff support the proposed changes outlined in the NZ Transport Agency's **Emergency Works Investment Policies Consultation**.

Context – Emergency Works Funding

17. We recognise and acknowledge that the NZ Transport Agency has for a long time provided financial support for works in the immediate response (to a defined, major, short-duration event) for public safety or to provide vital access and the reinstatement of customer levels of service for transport. This funding is in addition to the approved funding within each three-year National Land Transport Fund (NLTP).
18. To meet the requirements for additional funding, the events which may cause damage to the transport network are:
 - Of unusually large magnitude or severity for the particular area in which they occur (a 1 in 10-year scale).
 - Originate from natural, short duration triggering events, including very high intensity rainfall, severe wind, severe drought, or seismic events.
 - Have reduced levels of service significantly to those prior to the event.
 - Involve a total cost of \$100,000 or more per event.
19. We note that the funding availability is always subject to availability of Crown funding within the NLTP.
20. Funding Assistance Rates (FARs) for support funding for responding to events for Hamilton City are set at our standard FAR of 51% up to the value emergency works and up to 10% of the total annual subsidised maintenance programme (\$18,900,000 for 2023/24).
21. For emergency response works over that value, there is an enhanced FAR available of 71% for that entire event.

Proposed Changes

22. We note that key proposed changes to FARs and associated thresholds include:
 - Changing the qualifying trigger for an emergency event attracting an enhanced FAR to a minimum frequency 1 in 20-year event, from the current 1 in 10-year event.
 - Reducing the enhanced FAR from normal FAR +20% to normal FAR +10%.
 - Restricting provision of a bespoke FAR (i.e., greater than an enhanced FAR) to only those extreme events for which Crown funding is made available.

23. The proposed FAR changes and associated thresholds would take effect on 1 July 2025 to allow Approved Organisations (AOs) time to adapt to these changes. Other changes to make the policies clearer and easier to interpret, and better aligned with legislative requirements, are proposed to take effect on 1 July 2024.

Relevance to Hamilton

24. Hamilton City is a highly developed area with very little surface area that is not stable when compared to other Road Controlling Authorities such as the Thames-Coromandel areas where rainstorm events can cause stormwater flooding, and slope instability issues often cause damage and/or blockages on the transport system.
25. Traditionally, Hamilton City's transport network has not suffered from the effects from extreme weather events and can consider itself relatively fortunate in being reasonably resilient from rainstorm and high wind events.
26. Unlike many rural dominant councils, Hamilton City Council has not traditionally included a budget item for Emergency response in its Long Term Plan budgets, while for some councils it is likely the highest value single budget line. The ability to claim for potential future seismic events is likely the most relevant one for Hamilton City.

Impact of Proposed Changes for Hamilton

27. Last year's Cyclone Gabrielle event was well in excess of a 10-year return period and was close to a 20-year return event. It may be reasonable to conclude that rainfall/wind type events of less than a 20-year return period are not likely to cause significant loss of Levels of Service to the transport network, and that the change in return period for the emergency repairs funding will have limited, if any, effects on Hamilton City.
28. The known effects of climate change include the increasing occurrence of short duration intensive rainfall or strong wind events. It is probable that in future, events of the scale of Cyclone Gabrielle may become more common, but it is likely that these will qualify for emergency response funding.
29. The proposed changes to the NZ Transport Agency Work Class for Emergency Works are relatively minor in respect to Hamilton City Council. The shifting of the 'trigger event' from a 1 in 10 to a 1 in 20-year scale is not expected to impact on Hamilton's transport network as weather events of less than 20-year return period have not historically caused damage or Loss of Service on the network.
30. The change to reduce by 10% the application of additional enhanced Funding Assistance Rate (FAR) for events with a cumulative cost of more than \$18,900,00 from one event (for transport assets only) is potentially significant to Hamilton but would only come into effect *after* Hamilton City Council had committed to \$9,450,000 in local share in response to an event, which would perhaps be equivalent to the complete loss of a river crossing bridge.
31. It is likely that the type of natural event in Hamilton that has the highest risk of unexpected expenditure for event response to reinstate access and return the network to full Levels of Service is a seismic event, where damage to non-transport assets and private assets could be expected to be broad and of high value (in particular in relation to the river crossing bridges). This is not affected by the proposed changes, with the exception of the reduction in the enhanced FAR from 71% to 61%.
32. It could possibly be considered that the 10% reduction in an enhanced FAR might at that point not be significant.

Support for the Proposed Changes

33. As noted above, given the foregoing, overall Hamilton City Council staff support the proposed changes outlined in the NZ Transport Agency's **Emergency Works Investment Policies Consultation**.

Further Information and Opportunity to Discuss Our Feedback

34. Should the NZ Transport Agency require clarification of the feedback from Hamilton City Council staff, or additional information, please contact **Martin Gould** (Transport Activity Manager - Infrastructure and Assets) on 07 958 5818 or email martin.gould@hcc.govt.nz in the first instance.
35. We would also welcome the opportunity, if available, to have further discussions around the key areas of this feedback with the NZ Transport Agency.

Yours faithfully



Lance Vervoort
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Hamilton City Council
Garden Place, Private Bag 3010, Hamilton

 /HamiltonCityCouncil

 @hamiltoncitycouncil

 07 838 6699

hamilton.govt.nz