



# Making cents of the dollars

Your 2025/26 Annual Plan budget snapshot

*Te whakarāpopototanga o te mahere pūtea  
ā-tau 2025/26*

**What's the annual plan?**

***He aha te mahere ā-tau?***

Every three years we set a big-picture direction for the next decade in what's called a Long Term Plan. In the years between, we check in with an Annual Plan. It's a chance to review costs, adjust funding, and respond to what's happening in the world right now – like inflation, interest rates, or changes from central government. The Annual Plan keeps things flexible and on track and allows us to make changes to the 2025/26 budget set in the Long Term Plan, without reviewing the full 10-year programme.

**Annual Plan 2025/26**  
***Te Mahere ā-tau 2025/26***

 **WHAKATĀNE**  
District Council  
*Kia Whakatāne au i ahau*

## What's changed since the 2024–34 Long Term Plan?

### He aha ngā panonitanga i te Mahere Pae Tawhiti 2024–34?

We've found some savings, and that's good news. Here's how we're putting those savings to work:

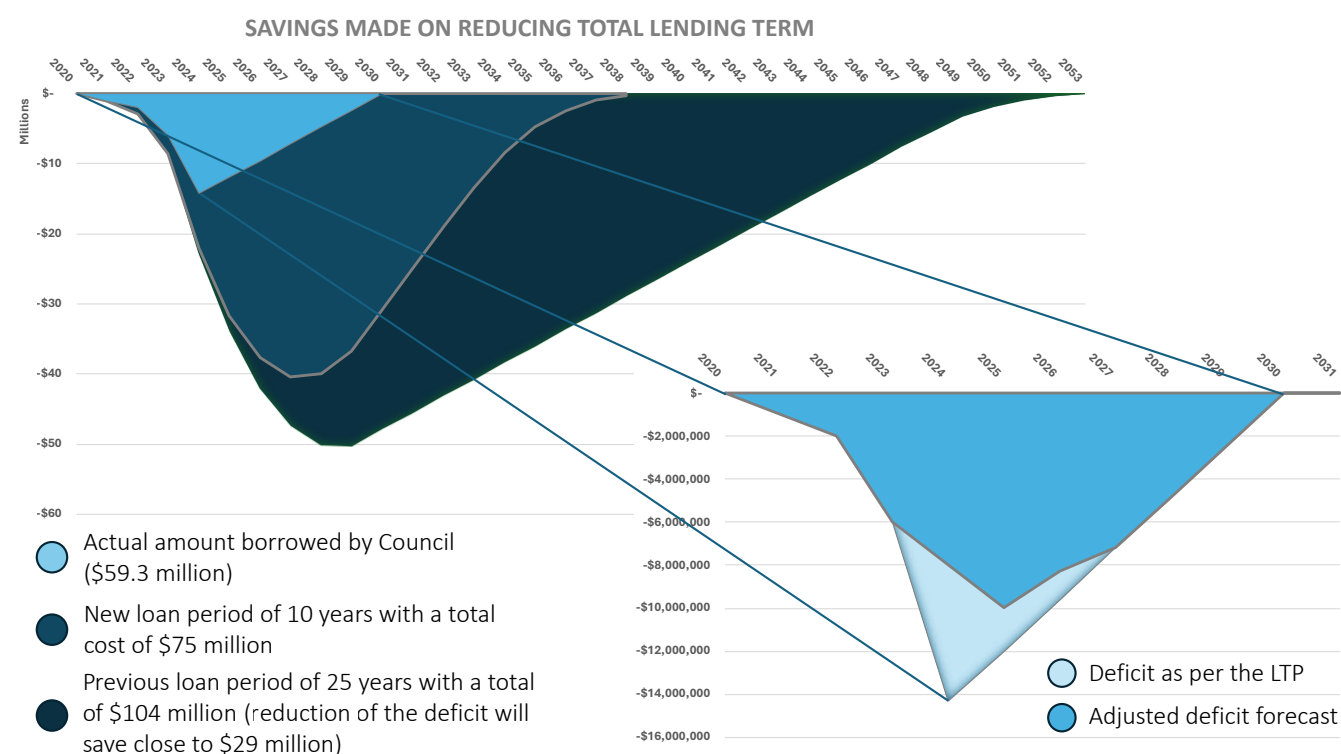
#### Rates projections

- In the Long Term Plan, we expected rates to rise by 12.7% in 2025/26.
- The new average rates increase will be 11.7% – easing a bit of pressure for ratepayers.

#### Closing the operating deficit

- We originally planned to pay off the deficit over 25 years.
- Now we can do it in 10 years, saving around \$24 million in interest.
- We've also reduced the amount we need to borrow – the "Fund the Gap" loans are now almost \$10 million lower than expected.

The Fund the gap loan totals \$59.3 million, which includes the \$50 million set out in the Long Term Plan. Repayment costs over 25 years at an interest rate of 5% would be \$104 million. Shortening this term to 10 years reduces the total cost of the loan to \$75 million, saving around \$29 million in interest payments.



The section of "actual amount borrowed by Council" shows how savings have been used to reduce the operating deficit, with the reduction of nearly \$10 million dollars.





## Where did the savings come from?

### *Nō hea ngā penapena pūtea?*

- Inflation and interest rates dropped
- We've paused hiring some new roles
- Some transport projects are on hold (more on that below)

## What do these savings mean?

### *He aha ngā hua o ēnei penapena pūtea?*

- Services stay the same
- Rates rise is less than expected
- We'll pay off debt faster – helping future ratepayers too

## Why is the transport work programme on hold?

### *He aha te hōtaka mahi waka e whakatārewa nei?*

A big chunk of our transport budget was going to be funded by subsidies from NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi. In October 2024, Central Government withdrew this funding. Without that support, some projects in our 2024–27 plan aren't currently affordable.

## Support is available

### *Ngā kōwhiringa taunaki*

#### **Rates rebates**

You might be eligible for a discount on your rates through the rates rebate scheme. We manage this on behalf of the Department of Internal Affairs. The maximum rebate you can get is \$790. To find out if you qualify, use the online rates rebate calculator, or get in touch with us and we'll help you through.

#### **Payment options**

We recognise that some people are struggling with the cost of living. It's important for our communities that you continue your rates payments, so we can keep providing the services and facilities people expect. If you think you might need some help, please contact us by phone or email so we can work with your individual needs.

scan here



[whakatane.govt.nz/annual-plan](https://whakatane.govt.nz/annual-plan)