

# your DISTRICT - COUNCIL -

Annual Plan 2016 - 2017



## SO HOW MUCH ARE RATES GOING UP?

For the 2016/17 year total income from rates will increase by 2.95 percent. Growth makes up 1.24 percent of this leaving an increase of 1.68 percent for existing ratepayers. When you exclude inflation of 1.6 percent, this increase amounts to only 0.11 percent.

The graph below shows what this looks like in your area. The variation in rates is mostly a result of moving to one uniform annual charge for water and wastewater. Rates movements reflect where each community is on this cycle.

Average rates in Katikati rise 4 percent - this includes the water and wastewater charges. Average rates in

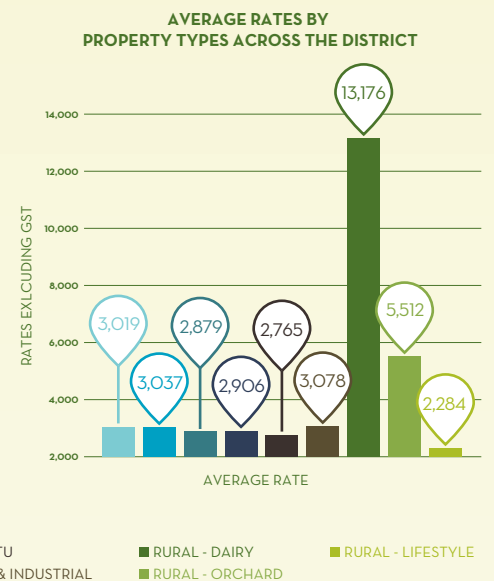
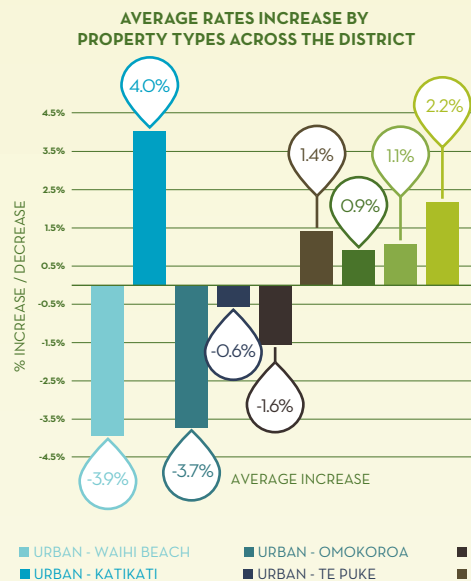
Waihi Beach and Omokoroa drop because they transitioned to a single wastewater charge. Te Puke and Maketu rates also drop, however these communities will have to pay for water separately - adding an extra \$150-\$180.

If Te Puke and Maketu had not transitioned to the metered water charge, which reduces cost from \$564 to \$371, their rates increase would be 3.8 percent and 3 percent respectively.

Katikati residents will see the benefits of the change by 2018 when the district-wide water metering project is complete.

**THIS YEAR WE'RE DELIVERING ONE OF THE LOWEST RATES INCREASES IN MANY YEARS.**

THE AVERAGE INCREASE FOR EXISTING RATEPAYERS IS  
**1.68 PERCENT**



*This low rate increase doesn't come at a cost to service delivery, and you can rest assured the region's valuable assets will continue to be well maintained.*

*We'll continue on our quest to retire debt, and have some great improvements to roading and the region's digital footprint on the way.*

### WHY IS THE RATES INCREASE SO LOW?

In preparing for this year's Annual Plan, we thoroughly reviewed the proposed budgets and removed costs wherever possible.

We were careful to make sure projects that maintain and futureproof the region's core assets continue to be adequately funded. We have also made sure that we maintain our current levels of service and meet legislative obligations.

So the good news is while this may be the lowest rates increase in more than 10 years, it still ensures the communities' needs for essential services are met.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:  
[www.westernbay.govt.nz/myrates](http://www.westernbay.govt.nz/myrates)

OR CALL OUR CUSTOMER SERVICES TEAM ON:  
07 571 8008 OR 0800 926 732

### A COMMITMENT TO REDUCING DEBT

To keep up with the needs of a rapidly growing population, Council has invested heavily in infrastructure over the past 15 years. As a result we have a proportionally high debt per person compared to many other areas.

The result of the thorough reviews of our costs has led forecast debt to reduce from \$150m in the Long Term Plan forecast to \$135m - a reduction of \$15m. In order to lower this debt over the next 10 years we've allocated \$13m in 2016/17 to go towards debt repayments. This has reduced the interest payments by \$220,000.

Continued changes to service delivery - such as collaborative roading and water contracts - will also reduce Council spending by about \$25m over a nine year period. Savings like this, combined with commitment to repaying debt, make good financial sense and are good for the region and the ratepayer.

### IMPROVING ROADS

The NZ Transport Agency recently announced a \$520m roading package to transform State Highway 2 between Tauranga and Waihi. Council's role in this and other Transport Agency roading projects is to represent our communities' interests and be advocates for changes - such as the Katikati Bypass - that we believe are good for the District. We currently have a \$1.91m surplus in our transportation budget for 2016/17. This allows us to allocate an extra \$1.5m towards the seal extension programme, bringing the total budget to \$3.5m. This figure allows us to seal about 12km of unsealed road over the year.

### UPGRADING ANIMAL SHELTERS

With existing animal shelters bursting at the seams and a growing dog population, we've allocated \$250,000 (funded primarily from dog registration fees) to upgrade and expand the Council-operated shelters at Katikati and Te Puke. This will ensure we have safe, healthy facilities that can accommodate dogs from across the District needing Council shelter. 80% of the 30 submissions agreed with this decision.

### IMPROVED INTERNET ACCESS

Western Bay Council and Tauranga City Council are each contributing towards the implementation of the sub-region's 'Digital Enablement Plan'. The objective of this plan is to ensure the region has a level of internet access and capability that allows its residents and business to fully utilise and benefit from advances in digital technology. 78% of the 32 submissions on this project agreed with this decision.

### ONGARE POINT WASTE WATER SYSTEM FUNDING

While the funding for this project was initially budgeted for the 2016/17 year, we opted to delay funding for one year to better align with Bay of Plenty Regional Council funding availability. This also allows adequate time to prepare for the new system, obtain resource consent and purchase the required land. Of the 24 responses received on this topic, 19 were in support.

