

None of the proposed changes are preferable to most rate payers considering that two year ago, we were told that the city's finances were in good shape. This was following several years increases of 3.5% in order to recover from disastrous council decisions concerning the V8's fiasco. We were also told that the council's debt had stabilised and was manageable for the foreseeable future. So, senior managers have not dealt with these recent financial trends well and councillors have allowed this to happen and failed to learn the lessons from the V8's races. R M Haslemore

1. Learn to live within income
2. Ratepayers wallets are not a bottomless well and the proposed rates increase are simply not acceptable during a period of very low inflation.
3. Trim capital spending to essential services and infrastructure.
4. Cancel the 'nice to do' and legacy projects. The proposed spending on Garden Place is simply spending more money on a failed concept.

Growth must be within the council's (that is the ratepayers) ability to fund new infrastructure (reading, services, water, waste water, amenities etc) If the demand for growth is so strong, let and encourage private enterprise to help fund it. Growth is good to a point but is not the be all and end all of everything. Rachel Tordoff

Listen to the people that are genuine hard working rate payers that are so scared of what the rates increase will mean to them. Really do we need to reinvest in garden place, every \$1 means lots of us are closer to having to move....insurance is going up, rates are going up, living expenses are going up but our wages are not. It is hideous.

I would think you should be looking to cut costs rather than increase revenue to meet costs. Are there too many costly consultants involved when experienced HCC employees can make decisions? We moved into our current home in 2000 and have had 300% rates increase for no additional services that I'm aware of, so I am not too sure why you need even more money from Hamiltonian's. We should be charging developers the full cost of HCC provided infrastructure in new sub divisions. I believe infrastructure and the safety of constituents is the most important role of the council. The other areas of spending are nice to haves. Parks in the CBD are a great example of wastes of money when we cant even pay for everyday costs. Xue Mei Li

Hamilton is a university city and has the need for low cost housing for both students and workers. If the council implements it new plan to charge \$500 per living unit and increase the basic rates, it will make a huge negative impact on both these groups. Having encouraged development of student accommodation and investment within Hamilton to make sure that there is good healthy homes for low waged workers and beneficiary's, you now propose to load a tariff on to those properties. My husband and I am a small private investors in Hamilton and as landlords with some student studio rooms, with shared common room and

kitchen, and a small block of 2 bedroom low rent units. We ask you to reconsider these changes or at least exclude single student rooms and accommodation below a certain rent level. These are reasonably priced, safe, clean and well maintained. Supporting and encouraging students and workers to come to Waikato from over seas to study and work. If we have to put the rent up to cover the huge rates increases for each bedroom /unit per year, it will make a huge difference to where these people can afford to stay. Students and their families, often have to make sacrifices to attend university here and these proposed increases will have to be passed on to the tenants and their familys. It will make the difference to where they come to study, whether they can study at another campus for less or even if they can come at all. As for my units some of the tenants are barely able to pay the rents at the moment and they will not be able to afford the huge increases, that the council has imposes on them. We are retired and on a fixed income and so we could not cover the increases in the rates so they will go onto the rents. I know that there are many investors that are in the same situations and young and old families, trying to make ends meet, that will not be able to continue in Hamilton if these huge increases take place. There are few family units that these kind if increases won't hurt. You have a plan that people were working and budgeting towards, to radically speed up and load extra charges on the least able to pay homes is not right or ethical. A family in a nice single home, with maybe two good incomes, get the same charges as an overseas student, with no income, living in a student studio room....how fair is that. A beneficiary that has been living in the same small unit for 15 years has to move out because they have to pay an extra \$500 a year, to fund new development that they will never even visit let alone be able to live in, is or should be, hard to rationalise with the councils new hasty draconian plans. I beg you to think WHO will truly suffer if you do this.

Continue the fazed changes that have been planed and allow people time to budget for the changes. Make sure that the money spent is on the truly necessary things. Water, waste water and roads. Cut back or stop looking at 'nice to have' things such as expanding recreational and arts projects. Having an arts theatre is hardly relevant to most people, if you have nowhere affordable to live. I do not think my tenants have ever been to the theatre and neither have I. Expanding parks is only relevant if you have to sleep in them, as rents are too high. Please slow down the changes and find a way to exclude the low income dwellings.

Yvonne Rutland

I want to have my say. why do you make it difficult to make a submission about the proposed rates hikes? If you are open to submissions, make it easy to do so instead of providing so many other irrelevant, diversionary tactics. I strongly object to the 10 year plan to raise rates 10% in each of the next 2 years. We have an ageing population increasingly dependent on NZ government pension so sustaining the rates hike would make it not more difficult for retirees to maintain their current standard of living. Secondly, many companies who do offer annual wage increases to their workers have, and have had for a number of years, a2% max wage/salary increase. With no sign of that changing how are we expected to cope with a 10% increase in rates year on year. I have no faith that this submission will even be read by the Councillors, let alone be taken into account, which it should be in a democratic society.

J Baxter

Only spend what we pay in rates and stop with your over inflated egos wanting to have things that we cant afford and dont want (velodrome!!! we said no!!!) concrete the bleeding middle of main roads so we dont have to pay for , and put up with traffic management to weed these stupid gardens. nobody cares what the middle of a road or roundabout looks like. Jeff O'Neill

i am sure Mr Andrew King is well aware .we are all struggling. i have few commercial tenants ,some of the increases suggested increases rates By 100 % over 3 years. How can you justify .LIVE WITH IN YOUR MEANS. as landlord I find it hard to justify above CPI. CPI past few years has been no more then 2 % last few years. M Keshvara

The New Zealand Inflation Rate is about 1.5% whereas the rates increase is close to 10%. My annual salary increase only considers the inflation rate and is less than 1%. So a rates increase about 10% will place financial burden on me and make me less affordable to sustain my livelihood especially when i am the sole income earner in my family supporting two children doing tertiary education and also my wife who is unemployed. I suggest the rates increase be not more than 1.5% per year. Murugesh Arunachalam

I am writing to express my concern at the outrageous rates rises that are planned. Over \$600 in 3 years?? And that is not including any further increase with re valuations .As a pensioner , if you include the Regional rates as well, it has become unaffordable for many who will have to think of selling up. Take 3 to 4 thousand out of a pension and what do you have left??? **Redacted text** Please reconsider this amount of increase, I understand the need to spend some money for the benefit of Hamilton, but a lot of us won't be alive to enjoy the benefits that the Council want to go ahead with. I urge you to reconsider this huge increase  
Theresa Connolly

Stick to the commitment in the current 10 year plan of 3.8% increase per year until 2025. - Do NOT invest in any 'new projects' (eg New theatre, redeveloping Garden Place, Central City Park) until the City has got the maintenance and key improvements of EXISTING assets under control/up to spec. It is vital that we look after what we already have, before diving into new projects. HCC has proven that it not capable of looking after assets, so why on earth would the ratepayers want you to go and build more expensive things that you will just let slide into disrepair? - Furthermore, make cuts to existing 'nice to have' functions to ensure the 'must haves' can be funded without additional rates increases.

Growth needs to fund growth. Existing ratepayers should not be expected to pay for growth. Stop fleecing the older suburbs of Hamilton to pay for new development. ESPECIALLY when so many of the of the facilities in existing suburbs (libraries, theatres, pools, playgrounds etc) have been essentially left to rot with no investment in maintenance or improvements for years. Furthermore, I absolutely disagree with Council using most (if not all) of it's debt carrying capacity to fund new growth. If the Council is prepared to take on more debt, then fix up all of the assets in the existing suburbs first! This Council has a very bad record of being drawn to and pandering to all things 'new and shiny', with significant negative impacts on the ratepayers who are forced to pay for it! Therese Balvert

Stick to the original plan and keep rate increases at the original pace as stated before. If all the nice to haves, including a new theatre are put on hold for now the rate increases doesn't have to go up drastically. Upgrading Garden Place, AGAIN and other pet projects to leave a

legacy are NOT struggling to keep the 'lights on'. These items can be mothballed for now until it can be afforded. Not everyone are on awesome pay packets like some of the council members with massive property portfolios. The man on the bottom of the chain is on a fixed salary and annual increases in salary does not even keep up with the rise of cost of living. Start listening to the people and stop thinking about yourselves. Tia

Do you have any other ideas about how the Council should change the way the rates are calculated?

The new Rates Proposal is simply outrageous. In the past 8 years our rates have increased by approx. 9.63% per annum and with the new proposal the rates will increase by 44.34% per annum, yet in your proposal letter you state: "Average rates increases of 9.5% for the next two years.....". Currently we are paying \$2,341 and for 2018 (according to you calculations) \$3,379 per annum, meaning a 44.34% increase. Who is not getting the calculations right at the HCC? We can imagine that this new proposal is going to have a big impact on low-income families who are struggling already to make ends meet or feed their children. And what about retired people? Does their superannuation increase by 44.34% per annum? You are indicating that Hamilton is one of the fastest growing cities in the country. That tells us, with an increasing population, more money should flow into the Council's budget. We think the council is out of touch with the Hamilton community. HCC needs to step back a little and take a slower approach to make improvements around the city. Rome wasn't built in one day. Ursula Pruden

This is not your own money. They need to increase, but not in a way, people ca'nt afford. You may build a flash new theatre, but rate payers, will not have the money to go. Divide the 10 years into equitable amounts. I am a superanuant on my own, & get \$416 less than if my husband was still alive, with all the same out goings. Valda Merhrtens

Cut your wages. If the council is running at losses then technically you are not performing well enough in your roles. Which then leads to no bonuses. Getting a bonus just for turning up to the office is a bit of joke. Maybe listen to what your city and people have to say. If the majority don't agree with you then you are obliged to not press on with your own agendas. Remember you work for us and not yourself. Democracy not dictatorship.

Councillors need to be held accountable for their bad decisions. If a decision fails then they should be held responsible. If they continue to make poor decisions and continue to pursue their own agendas then they obviously are not fit for their role and need to be replaced with someone better suited to their role. Tony Sako

Step back from Capital rating of our properties altogether, organize some public meetings and listen for once to what the general public need. We are not made of money and do not want necessarily to invest it in your agenda's. learn to manage the funding you currently have in better ways. Stop taking large wage increases for yourselves. Be more considerate of how you spend other peoples money remembering that none of the money belongs specifically to yourselves it is a public fund for the public good. You should also seek permission from your constituents prior to making any large investments in infrastructure or increases in your own wages. This permission should be binding as we the constituents own the pool of funds not yourselves. Tracey Kerr

We received your letter dated 29/3/18 informing us of proposed changes to our rates at a property Hamilton. We want to record our strongest possible appeal against the unfair burden placed upon us by doubling and more our rates by 2020. Surely the council must be able to see that even if rates increases are needed by past events and rapid growth more ratepayers are coming on stream each year and a more equal system must be found. In our case we are providing for poor people not able to purchase their own house. We do not fit the title of rapacious landlords because our two bedroom flats are the equal and have all the amenities of a small house for \$220 per week and 1 bedroom flats most suitable for single people for \$180-200 per week. They are very well maintained. We are keeping people from living homeless in the streets and becoming a great burden to the city. In our case to try and recoup the rates increase by raising rents would place further burdens on vulnerable people. The Council definitely needs to live within their means and desist from placing unfair burdens on ratepayers. Another look at our situation would be in order. Surely the council must be able to see that placing this type of burden on one section of the community is unjust and requires a change of heart.

**AR and AH Torrens**