

GO DISTRICT READY TO GROW

10 Year Plan 2021 - 2031
Consultation Document

See inside

- The issues we want your feedback on
- What is planned for the future
- How your rates may change in the future
- How you can have your say

GO
DISTRICT COUNCIL
RE **RURAL**
CITY
LIVING



Welcome to our 2021 – 2031 10-Year-Plan Consultation Document. I sincerely hope you will take the time to look through the following pages and provide us with feedback as we continue to strive to make the Gore District one of the best places to live and work.

Last year we faced some of the most significant challenges I can recall during my time in local government – two civil defence emergencies within two months. Our community rallied both times, and it was heartening to see the compassion and selflessness of so many.

The February floods were a reminder that climate change is an issue we have to face. Climate change experts have told us there are likely to be more extreme rain events, which means more frequent flooding. We have to give serious thought to building resilience and ensuring the community is protected.

In the following pages, you will learn more about the major infrastructure projects we have underway and those in the planning. For many years our urban infrastructure network – the pipes under the ground we don't give much thought to until they fail – has had comparatively little in the way of investment.

We have made good progress with our asset management plans. However, over the lifetime of this 10YP, we will face the challenge of complying with Government legislation and maintaining service levels without putting too much burden on ratepayers.

Another important talking point is housing. Who would have thought three years ago we would have such a bullish housing market and scarcity of rentals. We are committed to growing our population, but how do we bring more people to Gore to live and work when there is no-where for them to live?

I know we all want a better place for our children and grandchildren – let's work together to achieve it.

Tracy Hicks JP - Gore District Mayor



10YP OVERVIEW

GROWING FORWARD: Maintain Sustain Afford

The steady growth in the District over the last three years is the realisation of our Ready for Growth goal. The 2018 census saw our population hit 12,400 residents, an increase of 363 on the previous census. The latest data for 30 June 2020 has seen the figure increase to an estimated 12,920. *(Source: dotslovedata)*

While our residents continue to be mainly in the 50 years plus age bracket, one of the most significant growth area was those aged 25 to 29 years. *(Source: dotslovedata)*

As we look to the future, we have the opportunity to maintain growth at sustainable levels and bring in new residents to enjoy all that rural city living has to offer.

Over the next 10 years we aim to:

- Maintain steady growth of our District's population
- Sustain the wide range of economic, recreational and social opportunities that contribute to *Rural City Living*
- Ensure rates affordability and user-pays Council services
- Build stronger relationships with Iwi

We are working towards gaining a better understanding of the condition of our pipes, plant and structures. This has flowed through into planning for our once in a generation infrastructure renewals.

As this work rolls out, there will be more significant pressure on balancing the books while ensuring we meet the Government-mandated requirements for drinking water, wastewater and stormwater brought about from the 3Waters reform programme.

Over the years, decades even, 3 Waters infrastructure has, in many communities around New Zealand, suffered from a lack of investment. The accumulative effect of this means in the Gore District, we are now facing significant invest in extensive renewal of water and wastewater pipelines which have, in a number of places reached end of life.

There is a funding shortfall between the renewal work we should be completing over the next 10 years and what our community can afford to complete. We need to take into account our debt ceiling and the self-imposed cap on the annual rates increase. Ultimately, these factors may have an impact on the level of service.

There are three issues we are seeking your feedback on to help us in our decision making.

These are:

1. The separation of combined urban wastewater and stormwater connections.
2. Future plans for the vacant Gore Library building
3. Future use of the Special Rural Fund

10YP EXPLANATION

In our 10-Year-Plan and this consultation document we talk about things happening in year 1 or year 2 etc. But what does that mean?

It refers to a specific financial year. Our financial year is from 1 July to 30 June.

Year 1 = 2021/22 Year 5 = 2025/26
Year 2 = 2022/23 Year 10 = 2030/31
Year 3 = 2023/24

The Council also produces an Infrastructure Strategy and a Financial Strategy. These provide more detailed information than the consultation document. You are welcome to access these on our website lets.talk.goredc.govt.nz.

10YP TIMELINE

- **Tuesday 20 April** – the Council adopts the Finance Strategy, 30-year Infrastructure Strategy and draft 10-Year-Plan consultation document
- **Wednesday 21 April** – Consultation opens
- **Wednesday 19 May** – Consultation closes
- **Tuesday 1 June** – the Council hears feedback on the draft 10YP
- **Tuesday 15 June** – the Council deliberate on feedback and makes any changes
- **Late June** – Adoption of 10YP



OUR PLACE

The Gore District is home to an attractive, vibrant community offering a wide variety of activities and services typically found in a larger district. We have world-class artwork displayed in our renowned Eastern Southland Gallery, one of the few remaining Kerridge Odeon movie theatres, variety performances and musical events cementing our place as NZ's capital of country music, and some of the best public gardens and main street plantings in the country.

Combine these with our vital agricultural sector and abundance of outdoor leisure activities and you have Rural City Living.

The past three years have seen a revival in our District's fortunes, with the population initially stabilising and steadily growing. Rural production continues to thrive, with primary processing and agricultural industries supplying both the domestic and international market.

We forecast over one-third of our population will be aged over 65 years within the next 10 years, which brings both challenges and opportunity. In recognition of this transition, we instigated the *Ready for Living* programme. It provides a range of resources and services for older people. Also, the Council continues to consider age-friendly initiatives and activities that complement its core services.

Our core services are dominated by the provision of 3 Waters, roading, waste management and regulatory activities. However, we remain true to our *rural city living* character by investing in parks, open spaces, and arts and heritage. These all contribute to a strong sense of community wellbeing.



\$369,000
Median house price
(\$193,245 in 2018)



12,920
Estimated
population



\$60,100
Median household
annual income





WHERE DO WE START?

Through our annual Residents' Survey we know the delivery of our core services is important to you. In 2020 your top four priorities were roading, water issues, wastewater/stormwater and footpaths.

Delivery of our core services and gaining a better understanding of our infrastructure sets the starting point for our forward planning. It's just like when you set a budget at home and start by listing your regular costs, such as power, food, and electricity. Our regular costs are delivering a library service, operating the Gore Aquatic Centre, keeping our parks and gardens looking spectacular and much more.

And just like your costs at home increase over time, our costs to deliver our services increase too.

There are many big decisions facing us, as a community, over the next 10 years. And they all come with a reasonably high price tag.

Apart from sticking to the basics though, we also know from our Residents' Survey that you want to make our District a place people will choose to live.

We want the same. However, as we look to the future, we need to balance our core activities, meeting government regulations and our aspirations for a more vibrant community with what we can afford.

YOUR SAY

Make sure you let us know what you think of our 10-Year-Plan. We must receive your submission by **5.00pm, Wednesday 19 May.**



We maintain
239 ha
of reserves



We have
2055
street trees



We maintain:
896km of roads,
550km of these are unsealed
100km of footpaths
118 bridges

INTRODUCING THE ISSUES

This 10-Year-Plan features issues relevant to specific areas, urban or rural, and across the entire District.

ISSUE 1:

How should we fund the separation of wastewater and stormwater pipelines on private properties?

In recent years we've been taking a good hard look at Gore and Mataura's infrastructure and how well it's working for our community.

We need to look after our water, our environment, and the wellbeing of our community.

Gore and Mataura's wastewater and stormwater system is old and doesn't meet today's environmental standards. Around two-thirds of properties – those built before the 1970s – have combined wastewater and stormwater pipes.

This combined system is not efficient or effective.

Stormwater is the rainfall that runs off hard surfaces and typically doesn't require treatment. However, the combined pipelines mean stormwater ends up at our wastewater treatment plant, considerably increasing the total volume of wastewater we have to treat, which is costly.

There are further issues during heavy rain. The combined system struggles to cope with the volume of water flowing through it, causing wastewater to overflow into the street, people's properties and the Mataura River. High flows also cause problems at our wastewater treatment plant.

To look after our community's wellbeing and get the best out of our infrastructure, we need to separate wastewater and stormwater pipelines, both public and private ones.

In 2018, we adopted the Gore Stormwater Master Plan (SMP) stage one. The SMP rollout starts with installing a new stormwater main in Elizabeth Street and St Andrew's Street.

The Elizabeth Street project is the first of many stormwater separation projects we need to undertake over the next 30 to 50 years.

The costs of stormwater separation are substantial. To resolve capacity issues in Gore's public stormwater network alone the cost is \$175 million.

Conversely, the impact of doing nothing is carried by the whole community over the short and long term. These impacts are:

- Financial – higher wastewater system operational costs
- Social – public health risks and the environmental impact of ongoing wastewater and stormwater overflows to private property and the environment.

Installing new stormwater mains in the road reserve is only part of the solution. To get the maximum benefit, we need private properties to separate their stormwater/wastewater mains.

This work may require digging up driveways, gardens, and other landscaped areas in some instances. We estimated the work could cost between \$3,000 and \$7,000 per property.

By 2031 the figures, taking into account inflation, will be between \$4,040 and \$9,425.

We appreciate things will be disruptive and inconvenient for residents. However, as a community, we have a responsibility to care for the environment. The public health risks and environmental impacts of these overflows are no longer acceptable.

We would like your feedback on how private property separation work should be funded.

We have come up with three funding options. It's important to note these are only concepts. Once we have your feedback, we will analyse the implications before finalising anything.

The options we would like your feedback on are:

OPTION 1 **The property owner funds the work** - this is our preferred option

This option sees the property owner funding the cost of completing the separation work on their property.

The Council would identify high priority areas and provide a timeframe for the property owner to complete the separation work. If the work was not completed by the deadline, we would arrange for it to be done and recover costs from the property owner.

Some key factors to be considered with this option are:

- The property owner will have greater flexibility in terms of the contractor they use, the potential to undertake additional work simultaneously, and/or the desired level of reinstatement.
- There would be no financial impact on those property owners who have already completed separation works.

OPTION 2 **The Council funds the work**

We would engage a contractor to undertake the work on the property owner's behalf. We would recover costs from all urban ratepayers connected to the wastewater and stormwater networks to pay for the work.

The Council will loan fund \$200,000 per year, (2031: \$269,000 inflation adjusted). This would allow work on about 40 properties, it would result in a \$35 - \$45 rates increase per year, which includes interest on the loan. (2031: \$47 - \$60 inflation adjusted).

Some key factors to consider for this option are:

- Everyone will pay a little bit over a long period of time. The costs will be spread across all ratepayers with drainage connections, ensuring it's as affordable as possible for low-income property owners.
- There will be additional costs as the Council will have to act as the 'middle man' and oversee the works. We need to ensure a property owner doesn't take advantage of the situation by doing more than what's required. We also need to manage health and safety, and quality assurance etc
- All properties will pay the same amount, irrespective of how much the work on an individual property may cost.
- A property owner who already has separate wastewater and stormwater pipelines (ie a house built after approximately 1970) will still be required to fund the separation work on other properties.
- This option does not impact on level of service.

OPTION 3 **Each property owner pays a set fee**

The property owner would pay a set fee. The fee could be the same for everyone eg \$2,000 or linked to a property's capital value ie 1% of the CV. For example a property with a \$350,000 CV will pay a fee of \$3,500. The Council would pay any amount over and above this, and would recover the amount via the water connection rate.

Some key factors to be considered with this option are:

- It would ensure the property owner's financial burden is limited to a set amount.
- Based on the Council investing \$100,000 per year (2031: \$135,000 inflation adjusted), this option is likely to result in a \$17 - \$20 rates increase per year, including interest on the loan, for all ratepayers with drainage connections (2031: \$23 - \$27 inflation adjusted).
- Costs would be shared between the affected property owner and urban ratepayers – commercial and residential.
- We would still be required to act as the 'middle man' and oversee the work.
- This option does not impact on level of service.



ISSUE 2:

What is the future of the old Gore Library?

In the last two years, there have been some significant changes to our Gore Library services.

In May 2019, black mould and asbestos forced our library team to vacate its home in Norfolk Street and relocate to the James Cumming Wing hall. Just over a year later a generous \$3 million grant from the Government's Shovel Ready Fund provided the impetus for the new Gore Library and Community Spaces redevelopment in the James Cumming Wing.

The question now is 'what's to become of the old library building?'

The Norfolk St building is located on Council reserve land in the heart of the heritage precinct. Leaky roof issues have plagued the building since it was opened. Replacing the roof was estimated three years ago to cost about \$1.1m.

Located in the heritage precinct, the building is in a prime position, which means we need to think carefully about its future use.

Our commitment to the heritage precinct spans many years. In our 2015-2025 10YP we outlined our \$1million investment in the area as we saw heritage tourism as a key driver of economic development in the District.

This is still the case. The Gore District is renowned for its arts and heritage. While COVID-19 has had a big impact on international visitors, we are still a top destination for domestic aficionados of the arts.

The Maruawai Precinct project and Hokonui Moonshine Museum redevelopment will become flagship attractions for the District, and indeed Southland, when they are finished.

The Maruawai project captured the attention of the Government in 2019, resulting in a grant of \$1.6million from the Provincial Growth Fund. This funding was for the redevelopment of the Hokonui Moonshine Museum and establishing a boutique distillery producing Hokonui (stage one), and development of the Maruawai Centre in the building currently occupied by the Gore Visitor Centre.

Perhaps the last piece of the precinct puzzle is the old library building. There have been some emerging proposals as to where it sits long term.

YOUR SAY

Make sure you let us know what you think of our 10-Year-Plan. We must receive your submission by 5.00pm, Wednesday 19 May.

The options we would like your feedback on are:

OPTION 1 Transfer ownership to an arts trust - this is our preferred option

Redevelop the building to enable the expansion of our visitor experience, in keeping with the strong arts and cultural themes of the precinct.

This option would see the ownership of the old library transferred to a local arts trust. This would enable external sources of funding for the upgrade of the building to be sought.

We envisage ensuring minimal ratepayer investment in any costs to replace the roof, potentially capping it to around one-third of the total. This scenario is included in the 10YP modelling. We are forecasting spending \$350,000 over Years 2 and 3.

The old building will be added to the successful stable of assets managed by our arts and heritage department, such as the John Money Wing, Ralph Hotere Collection and Eastern Southland Gallery.

OPTION 2 Redevelop and retain

Retain the building for redevelopment as a visitor, tourism and business information centre. This may include expanding the services currently provided at the visitor centre, including a café, and bookable co-working spaces.

This option would require the Council to be the primary investor, including replacing the roof. The estimate provided three years ago for the new roof was \$1.1m. Taking into account inflation and the cost of internal refurbishment, the estimated cost now would be in the vicinity of \$1.5m. This would be loan funded. The level of service is not impacted.

OPTION 3 Demolish and expand as an open air site

Demolish the building and expand the site as an open space visitor experience complementary to the trout and country music structures, with landscaped walkways through to the gallery, museum and visitor centre.

There could be various activities, and it could be available for food trucks and/or coffee carts to locate. Given the high-profile location, it might also provide a home for a regular farmers' market.

While the building is only 38 years old, the roof has been compromised since the day it opened.

The estimated cost of demolition, provided by a quantity surveyor, is \$225,000.

We have calculated the cost for each option, based on spreading cost across the 6,032 rating units in the District.

OPTION 1:
\$350,000
Overall cost per rating unit **\$58**
\$350,000 (loan funded)

OPTION 2:
\$1,500,000
Overall cost per rating unit **\$249**
\$1,500,000 (loan funded)

OPTION 3:
\$225,000
Overall cost per rating unit **\$37**
\$225,000 (loan funded)





ISSUE 3:

What should we do with the Special Rural Fund?

The Special Rural Fund was set up in 1989 with money from the former Southland County Council given to Gore District following local government amalgamation.

Over the years the fund has been used to subsidise rural rates and provide grants and loans to the rural community. No money has been given out in over 10 years. The fund currently sits at \$512,000.

We believe it's time to look at the fund's future and whether it should be closed.

The primary aim of the fund is to support rural ratepayers. Therefore, it's appropriate to disperse it in a way that benefits rural residents.

One option we see as having merit is to use the fund to reduce the debt associated with the new Pyramid Bridge. The new bridge opened last year and cost \$4.66 million.

It was a joint venture between Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, Southland District Council and Gore District Council. Our contribution was \$650,000. Repayment of the loan associated with the new bridge is funded by rural ratepayers, as the bridge is primarily used by the rural sector ie farmers, contractors and local residents.

None of the options we are considering impact on our levels of service.

YOUR SAY

Make sure you let us know what you think of our 10-Year-Plan. We must receive your submission by 5.00pm, Wednesday 19 May.





The options we would like your feedback on are:

OPTION 1 Use fund to reduce bridge debt - this is our preferred option

Close the Special Rural Fund and apply all remaining money (less administrative costs) to reduce the debt on the new Pyramid Bridge. This will give rural ratepayers a minimum saving of \$310 on loan repayments. The estimated life of the loan is 15 years.

OPTION 2 Use fund in consultation with rural community

Close the Special Rural Fund and apply all remaining funds to projects identified in consultation with the rural community. This option has no impact on our rates forecasts for the life of the 10YP.

OPTION 3 Give funds to Southland Rural Support Trust

Close the Special Rural Fund and give the remaining funds to the Southland Rural Support Trust, to help Gore District rural residents during adverse events. This option has no impact on our rates forecasts for the life of the 10YP.

OPTION 4 Retain fund for later use

Retain the Special Rural Fund and look to reopen it for applications at a later date. This option has no impact on our rates forecasts for the life of the 10YP.



INFRASTRUCTURE

We aim to

- Ensure urban families and businesses have safe, quality drinking water.
- Provide a wastewater disposal system that protects public health and has minimal impact on the environment.
- Protect private and public property from flooding and minimise nuisance flooding through the provision of a stormwater network.
- Provide a safe and efficient transport network.

All these are essential services and our core business.

Our 30-year Infrastructure Strategy outlines the major challenges we are facing and how we will deal with them. You can read a full copy of this on our website or at one of our offices.

Understanding the condition of our infrastructure will enable us to plan for the upgrades needed to replace our ageing infrastructure and to meet the new standards and

requirements the Government has introduced through its 3 Waters reforms. This includes key projects to improve drinking water supply, better manage stormwater, and upgrade our wastewater treatment to ensure it meets the requirements for regional consents.

We are working towards gaining an understanding of asset conditions, including collecting and collating underlying data. This will continue to be a focus as we roll out the infrastructure projects.

Work on our waste management approach will continue. Changes to our kerbside collection service has seen an increasing the amount of waste being collected at our landfills. With Government levies on waste set to rise in the coming years, the need to have a long term, sustainable recycling solution is recognised across the country. We also need to ensure we are taking steps to encourage waste reduction across all waste streams – encouraging reduced food waste, repurposing of goods and increase diversion from landfills.

SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS



Heritage Precinct Upgrade - Maruawai Centre Development

This project started in 2008 with the acquisition of the building adjacent to the Hokonui Moonshine Museum.

Recognising the importance of our heritage precinct both as a tourist attraction and to tell the stories of our District's past, we invested \$1million to buy the former Salvation Army building and kick start the project.

In 2019 the project received a significant boost when the Government announced a \$1.6million grant from the Provincial Growth Fund for stages 1 and 2.

Work has started on the Hokonui Moonshine Museum's redevelopment, which includes an onsite distillery and commercial kitchen. There's also plans for a boutique brewery next door. The moonshine museum

redevelopment is expected to be completed later this year.

The Hokonui Moonshine Museum Trust will operate the museum and distillery as a commercial enterprise, providing a high-quality experience for visitors and locals while also reducing the operating costs for ratepayers.

We have committed further funding for the project in this current 10YP. There's \$450,000 for stage 1, of which \$300,000 is savings from the Eastern Southland Gallery's earthquake strengthening and \$150,000 was brought forward from stage 2.

We have also set aside \$340,000 for stage 2, which is scheduled to be carried out in Year 3 of the 10YP. If we take into account inflation this amount increases to \$362,000.





New Gore Library and James Cumming Community Centre

A \$3 million grant from the Government’s Shovel Ready fund provided the impetus for this project to get underway in the 2020/21 financial year. After talking with the community about their aspirations and what they wanted in a modern library and community centre, a final plan was developed.

Construction of the new centre, which is adjacent to our new remodelling offices opened in March this year, is expect to begin in Year 1. The rebuild is expected to take about 15 months.

The new Gore Library and James Cumming Community Centre will provide a modern, harmonious mix of space for library users, community groups, clubs and visitors to town.

At the time of writing, the estimated cost of this flagship community facility was \$6.98 million. The cost to the Council is \$2.86 million as the project has external funding of:

- Government grant - \$3 million (specific to the James Cumming Wing site)
- MVM financial contribution - \$958,000

In our last 10YP we included:

- \$1.1 million for a library roof upgrade, and
- \$400,000 to upgrade the James Cumming Wing interior.

This mean new loan funding totals \$1.52m.

Roading

We maintain 896km of roads. The majority of our roads (550km) are unsealed. There are also 118 bridges and 100km of footpaths in the District.

We fund road maintenance and renewal work from rates, as well as receiving a subsidy for specific projects from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. We know from our annual Residents' Survey that good roads are important to our residents.

During the life of this 10YP our capital expenditure will be reasonably stable, rising incrementally each year to keep up with the rising costs of supply.

One of our major capital investments is a new bridge across the Mataura River. The cable-stay bridge will provide a cycling and walking link, and carry a new water pipeline from the East Gore water treatment plant to the Jacobstown Wells.

Construction of the bridge will depend on the outcome of a resource consent hearing, held in late 2020. The hearing commissioners are expected to deliver a decision this month (April)



Water

We manage two urban water supply schemes in Gore and Mataura. The Gore network consists of approximately 116km of pipeline with 5000 commercial and residential connections. The average daily water usage in Gore is 3.9 million litres.

In Mataura, the network consists of 31 km of pipeline with 777 commercial and residential connections. The average daily water usage in Mataura is 1.1 million litres. There is one private scheme, the Otama Rural Water Scheme, which supplies chlorinated water to 253 connections on 210 farms.

Mataura water upgrade a priority

The Mataura Water Treatment Plant does not currently meet the requirements of the Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand 2018.

Taumata Arowai, a new Government agency responsible for the regulation of water services is currently being established and is expected to be operational by mid-2021. One of Taumata Arowai's core roles will be to oversee and administer an expanded and strengthened drinking-water regulatory system, to ensure all New Zealand communities have access to safe drinking water. That includes holding suppliers to account, if need be.

We want to ensure the residents of Mataura have access to safe drinking water. This, coupled with the significant changes in regulation, mean upgrading the Mataura Water Treatment Plant is a high priority for us.

In recent years we have investigated a number of options to identify a long term cost effective solution to supply Mataura with safe drinking water. These include:

- upgrading the existing water treatment plant,
- construction of an entirely new treatment plant,
- undertaking a joint venture with the Alliance Group's Mataura meat processing plant, or
- supplying Mataura from the Gore water supply.

As a result of these investigations our preferred strategy is to upgrade the existing Mataura Water Treatment Plant. This work is estimated to cost \$2.2 million and will be completed by mid-2023. This has been forecasted and included in the rates increase in this 10YP.





Wastewater

Community expectations and national regulations have significantly changed in recent years, which means we need to take a new approach to how we treat wastewater in Gore and Mataura over the next 35 years.

Wastewater is the water that drains into a pipe each time you flush the toilet, pull the plug from a sink, have a shower or use water on your property. Wastewater is also known as sewage.

We have lodged applications with Environment Southland to renew our resource consents for the Gore and Mataura wastewater treatment plants. We are also already planning to upgrade the wastewater treatment plants for both towns.

We are proposing a staged development of a new Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) Treatment Plant for Gore, to treat wastewater to a high quality before discharging it to the Mataura River.

The estimated cost of this option is between \$46 million and \$61 million. This project poses funding challenges. For the Council to fund it alone would put significant pressure on our ratepayers.

Fundings options available include borrowing more money, which would increase our net debt and impact rates.

Another option would be to have a rates increase above our 5% self-imposed rating cap. Our key concern will be affordability for ratepayers.

At this point, we are proposing implementation in three stages over 30 years, starting in 2032.

The Mataura wastewater treatment plant is also in line for an upgrade, at an estimated cost of between \$1.6 million and \$2.1 million. We plan to expand the existing wetlands system and other improvements to optimise the existing treatment plant. This has been forecasted and included in the rates increase in this 10YP. The project should be completed by 2027.

Stormwater

Fixing the problems associated with having combined stormwater and wastewater mains is something councils throughout the country are grappling with.

In 2018 we adopted the Gore Stormwater Master Plan – an ambitious plan to separate public stormwater and wastewater mains over the next five decades.

We have already talked extensively about the first steps in this project and the need for private pipeline separation, not just public pipeline separation.

Please refer to pages five and six for details.

In the lifetime of this 10YP, we are proposing to invest between \$8.9 - \$9.4 million on achieving the separation of stormwater and wastewater mains. This has been included in the forecasted rates.

A fire at the former Gore Borough Council offices in the 1950's destroyed a lot of the underlying infrastructure records .

As a result there's a lack of reliable information about the age and condition of pre-1960's water and wastewater networks. While we know these assets are nearing the end of the useful lives, there's had to be some estimates about how well or badly the infrastructure has aged.

We acknowledge this increases the risk of these assets failing, causing a decrease in the level of service.

We have mitigated these risks by:

- Having spare parts on hand for critical assets to reduce the risk of impact on level of service;*
- Having plans in place to enable reactive maintenance as required to ensure minimal impact to level of service.*

We have begun performing assessments of critical pipes by using CCTV to learn more about the condition of these pipes.

This in turn will assist in developing a robust renewals strategy about when and where future water and waste water upgrades should occur. At the time of writing, this work was in the early stages and a significant portion was still to be completed. Therefore, Council has limited information in which to inform the renewal strategy.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES



Government-led Water Infrastructure Review

Effective water infrastructure is a necessity for a healthy community – it provides clean water to your taps, removes wastewater from homes and businesses, and protects our assets from floods by managing stormwater.

It is the often-unseen infrastructure that plays a vital role in the overall health of our community and wellbeing of our environment.

In July 2020, the Government announced stimulus funding package of \$761 million to provide post-COVID-19 stimulus, as part of the three-year programme of reform of local government water service delivery arrangements, and to support the establishment and operation of Taumata Arowai (the new water services regulator).

The Government funding package is part of a series of actions in response to many councils across NZ struggling to meet the water regulatory framework put in place as a result of the 2016 campylobacter outbreak in Havelock North, caused by contamination of the town's drinking water supply.

The Gore District Council, along with all councils nationwide, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government in August 2020, committing it to the first stage of the water reform programme to access \$2,707,702 of stimulus funding.

This funding has been allocated to:

- \$600,000 on the development of a robust wastewater renewals strategy
- \$1,885,000 on the renewal of the Wigan Street wastewater main
- \$130,635 on the recruitment of additional 3 Waters internal resources
- \$92,067 on collaboration with Otago and Southland local authorities

Councils throughout New Zealand face significant costs to meet the Government's new regulations, community expectations and address the lack of investment over many years in critical infrastructure.

Our water treatment plants deliver good, clean drinking water, although do not currently meet the New Zealand Drinking Water Standards for protozoa treatment.

Our 3 Waters capital works programme has seen the 10YP's total estimated 10-year budget increase from \$6.6 million to \$54.8 million between 2009 and 2031. This increase is a combination of the following:

- An increase in capital expenditure to renew existing assets - \$27.6m in this 10YP
- An increase in expenditure to improve our level of service - \$27.2m in this 10YP

While there is still a lot of decisions to be made, we have had to consider the future landscape of 3 Waters management in our 30-Year Asset Management Plans.

For this 10YP and our future planning purposes, we have made the assumption we will be delivering 3 Waters services for the next three financial years. What may happen in the medium term is likely to be up for discussion in our next 10YP review in 2024.

Among the structural reforms being signalled by Government is a voluntary scheme for councils to opt into. The scheme proposes to combine two of the 3 Waters services into a larger entity – moving away from local government delivery. The larger entity would look to deliver drinking water and wastewater services, with stormwater management not yet resolved. The current proposals are influenced, in part, on what has been learned through the Scottish water reforms.

If these structural changes proceed, this would create a significant shift in the delivery of services by local

government, and the funding and financing for these services. This change could also have a considerable impact on debt held and serviced by the Council.

Before any decisions are made, we will be seeking to understand how any new entity would be funded, what compensation for Council's Three Waters assets would look like, the impact this would have financially on ratepayers, and how the wider community's voice and the voice of iwi have been taken into account.

For this 10YP and our future planning purposes, we have made the assumption we will be continuing to deliver 3 Waters services for the foreseeable future.

YOUR SAY

Make sure you let us know what you think of our 10-Year-Plan. We must receive your submission by 5.00pm, Wednesday 19 May.

Climate Change and Sustainability

Climate change is causing the earth to warm, sea levels to rise and weather patterns to become disturbed.

In the Gore District we don't have to worry about coastal inundation, but the effects of climate change will mean over time we experience more extreme weather more frequently.

The NIWA report, which we are using as a baseline for our planning, shows the Mataura catchment can expect temperatures to increase, more heatwaves and more wet days per year by the end of the century.

These changes will put core infrastructure at risk,

change how we plan for development, require a rethink about where and how we build, what goods we consume and overall, how we act and contribute to the issue.

We will continue to work with Environment Southland on flood modelling impacts, particularly for the Mataura River catchment and its likely effects on urban environments adjacent to the river. Climate change rainfall modelling has been a key driver behind implementation of the stormwater master plan.

The plan will improve our network's resilience for those one in five year rainfall events.

Rubbish and Recycling

New Zealand is facing some massive challenges with how we manage our rubbish and recycling.

Last year we made the tough decision to stop our kerbside recycling service, due to our contract with Southland disAbility Enterprises ending. We know this has been hard for residents, but our District is not alone in grappling with the complex issue of rubbish and recycling.

As a community we want to do the right thing. Earlier this year you told us the development of a recovery centre at the Gore transfer station was a priority for you. Making our District free of single use coffee cups was also high on your list.

Factors we have to consider as we look to the future include:

- Offshore markets are no longer accepting recyclables. This is driving up the costs of recycling for councils around the country, a cost that has to be picked up by the customer.

- The Government is working towards a more sustainable future. It is funding these positive changes by increasing the Waste Disposal Levy (the tax on sending stuff to landfill), and the Emissions Trading Scheme (carbon tax) – these increases are driving up the cost of kerbside collections.
- There is a drive from the waste industry and local government to standardise kerbside collections across the country to simplify collections and processing. This would be an improvement on our existing kerbside collection service – but that improvement comes at a cost.

As you can see, it's complicated. There are a lot of factors driving up costs, many of which we have no control over.

Our rubbish and recycling service will cost a total of \$31m over the next 10 years. The delivery of this service is a conversation we will be having with the community in the near future.



Should we investigate the introduction of a less complex rating system?

To a large degree, the Council’s basic rating structure was inherited from our predecessors. Our urban rating areas resemble the Gore and Mataura borough councils, and the rural rating ward closely aligns with the former Southland County Council.

Not only were these rating areas maintained, but some specific policies were preserved, such as a differential on commercial and industrial properties in Gore and Mataura.

Rates are our primary source of revenue. Our rating system is capital value-based, which means your property’s value contributes to calculating the percentage you pay for certain activities. However, it is not used to calculate your total rates.

There are two types of rates - a general rate and a targeted rate. Your rates account is made up of the following:

- **Uniform Annual General Charge and other uniform target rates** 25%
- **Fixed targeted ward rates** 51%
- **Valuation-based targeted rates** 13%
- **Valuation-based general rates** 11%

Over the last few years, there have been numerous changes to our rating system in response to public

submissions and changes in the political philosophy of the role rates should play, together with new services or new industries.

Changes included:

- **A move to capital value rating**
- **Use of targeted rates based on the number of rating units within a rating area**
- **Use of a heavy industry ‘rating island’ in the Mataura rating area**
- **The establishment of large industry in the rural rating area**
- **An enhanced refuse collection system, including kerbside collection**

In this 10YP, we want to let you know we are considering introducing one rating area for the entire District, effective from 2025. We believe such a move will deliver:

- **Transparency**
- **Simplicity**
- **Fairness, and**
- **Consistency**

We propose to continue using targeted rates where the beneficiaries of a service can be accurately identified.

Why Change?

The numerous changes made over the years have tended to fix the problem at hand and create relativity issues elsewhere. It's a bit like removing air from an airbed – no sooner has one area been smoothed and flattened, a bulge appears elsewhere.

Some of the questions we have asked ourselves are:

- Given the compact nature of the Gore District is it sensible to retain three rating areas based on entities that went out of existence over 30 years ago?
- Is it justifiable to have a differential on commercial and industrial ratepayers domiciled in our two main urban areas – Gore and Mataura?
- Should the heavy industry rating island in Mataura be retained?
- Is it fair businesses outside our urban boundaries are rated lower than those in the boundary?
- Should we return to applying the maximum Uniform Annual General Charge (30% of all rates levied) to ensure all ratepayers contribute a base level of funding to the District's needs?

To help us provide credible, positive answers to these questions, we looked at two North Island councils similar to Gore District, but with a single rating area encompassing urban and rural areas.

Matamata-Piako District Council and Hauraki District Council both have an urban/rural mix similar to ours. They have also had stable government and management for a long time – again, similar to Gore District.

Matamata-Piako also has three urban centres – Matamata, Morrinsville and Te Aroha, along with productive dairy and strong thoroughbred bloodstock sectors.

After conferring with these councils, we are convinced a move to a single rating area will deliver the outcomes our ratepayers deserve – a fairer, more transparent and easier to understand rating system.

We will be investigating the move to one rating area in Year One and will be looking for your feedback during annual plan consultation.



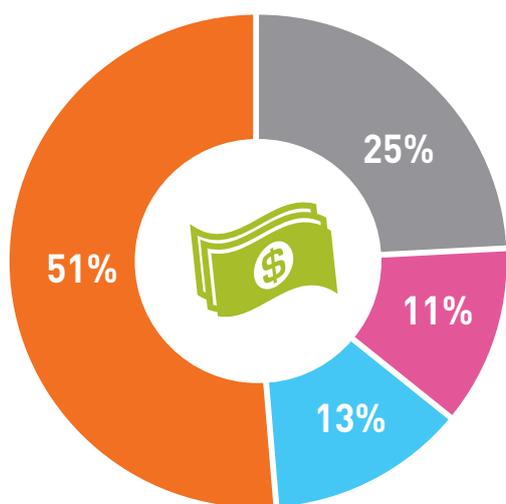
MONEY MATTERS

Rates are a property-based tax to pay for public services. We have 6,032 rating units in our District.

How much you pay varies depending on where you live, what services you access and the value of your property.

There are two main types of rates. A general rate based on the capital value of your property, and targeted rates for services and facilities that benefit particular groups of residents (such as rural water supply).

Your rates comprise the following:



General Rates

- Fixed general rate (UAGC) & other uniform targeted rates
- Valuation based general rate

Targeted Rates

- Fixed targeted ward rates
- Valuation based targeted rates

Our commitment to ensuring our annual rates increase is below 5% is something we have been working hard to achieve. However, sometimes other factors like a pandemic come into play.

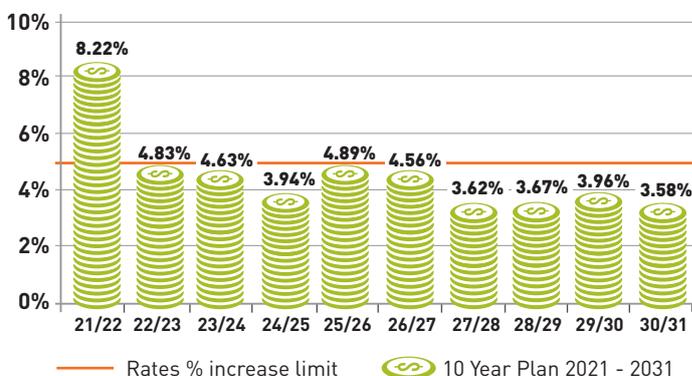
Last year, in response to COVID-19, we reduced a proposed rate increase of 6.6% to 2.84%. This represented a \$1.147m decrease in our budget, achieved by the tightening of numerous belts across the organisation.

This situation is not sustainable in the medium to long term. Capital works funding requirements is the main driver behind a rate increase for Year 1 of 8.22%.

It is worth noting the combined rate increase for 2020/21 (2.84%) and the proposed rate increase for 2021/22 (8.22%) is 11.06%. If you average the 11.06% over the two rating years it is pretty close to our 5% per annum cap, if COVID-19 hadn't thrown everyone a curve ball.

We will get our rates increases back on track in the ensuing years. The average annual increase over 10 years at 4.59%.

Proposed Rates Increases 2021-2031



What does this look like for you?

If we take an average valued property in each of our rating areas, the 8.22% increase for 2021/22 looks like this:

Gore residential	\$ 5 increase per week	9.12%
Mataura residential	\$ 4 increase per week	8.57%
Rural	\$ 3 increase per week	6.31%
Commercial	\$ 8 increase per week	7.22%

(note this will differ property to property please refer to page 23 for more examples)

To help us keep rates low, we have used the rates collected for depreciation to fund capital work, loan repayments and interest. However, an intensified capital works programme drives increased borrowing, which means there is not enough from rates collected for depreciation to cover all three areas.

Our strategy, flagged in the last two 10YPs, is to fund interest costs by rates. This is in addition to the rates we already collect for depreciation.

DEBT

What Do Your Rates Pay For?

Your rates pay for things we all need every day, such as safe water, roads to get to work and sports fields for our children to play on. Then there are the facilities that make our District a special place to live, such as the Gore Multisports Complex.

Our Services

- Safe water supply
- Stormwater drainage
- Street cleaning
- Recycling/waste transfer station
- Wastewater disposal
- Roads
- Footpaths
- Street lights
- Street plantings/flower gardens
- Entertainment venues
- Sports fields
- Public halls
- Public toilets
- Cemeteries
- Animal Management
- Parking
- District Planning
- Noise control
- Food safety
- Parks
- Reserves
- Building Control services
- Community housing
- Economic development
- Visitor services
- Tourism
- Museums
- Heritage projects
- Events
- Road safety projects
- Libraries
- Community arts activities
- Swimming pool
- Swim schools
- Civil defence
- Alcohol permits
- Monitoring food businesses
- Walking tracks
- Cycle ways
- Motorhome promotion
- District marketing
- Grants and scholarships
- Sister city relationship

Replacing aging infrastructure and continuing to deliver essential services (ie the water that comes out of your tap and the waste that goes down your drain) drive capital expenditure over the next 10 years. The focus on our infrastructure is also being driven by legislation, meaning that in some instances we have no choice to delay or not do a project.

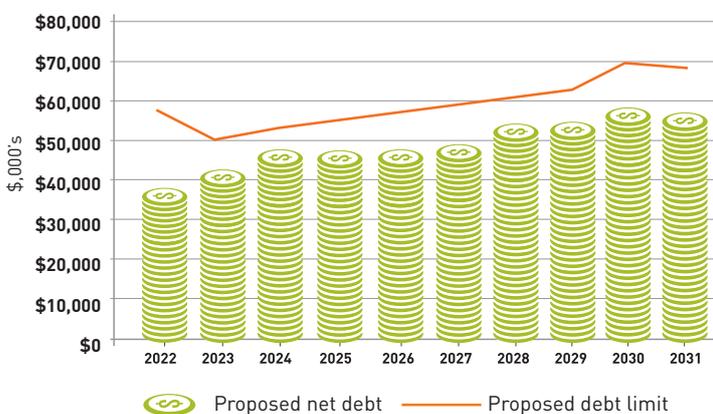
To fund these projects we need to borrow money. Borrowing is an effective tool to ensure the cost of projects delivering benefit across generations, is spread across all beneficiaries.

The way we ensure our borrowing is affordable (prudent), is to make sure that debt is balanced against our income. For us this means limiting our borrowing to 175% of our total income. This may sound like a lot, but it is like having an annual income of \$50,000 and a mortgage of \$87,500.

Note: the Council borrows money from the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA). It has set 175% as "a prudent debt limit".

As you can see by the graph below, we get close to our debt limit in Year 3 of the 10YP due to several large capital projects.

Project Borrowings 2021-2031



So, how does your annual rates bill compare with other annual household expenses? In 2018/19 the average rates for a Gore urban property was \$2,525 a year, or \$48.65 a week.

In that same year, people spent:

	Weekly average	Yearly average
Food	\$233.60	\$12,147.00
Vehicle running costs	\$74.60	\$3,879.20
Phone mobile and landline	\$39.00	\$2,028.00
Electricity and gas	\$44.60	\$2,319.20
Insurance - car, house & content	\$65.30	\$3,395.60

From StatsNZ based on 30 June 2019 averages

RATING COMPARISONS

Examples of 2021/22
Proposed Rates (GST inclusive)

Category	Capital Value	Total Proposed Rate 2021/22	Total 2020/21	% increase	Rates change \$ annually	Rates change \$ weekly
Gore Residential	150,000	\$ 2,784	\$ 2,554	8.98%	\$ 229	\$ 4
	250,000	\$ 3,013	\$ 2,761	9.12%	\$ 252	\$ 5
	375,000	\$ 3,299	\$ 3,019	9.27%	\$ 280	\$ 5
	500,000	\$ 3,585	\$ 3,277	9.39%	\$ 308	\$ 6
	650,000	\$ 3,929	\$ 3,587	9.52%	\$ 341	\$ 7
Mataura Residential	75,000	\$ 2,448	\$ 2,249	8.82%	\$ 198	\$ 4
	150,000	\$ 2,527	\$ 2,325	8.71%	\$ 202	\$ 4
	250,000	\$ 2,633	\$ 2,425	8.57%	\$ 208	\$ 4
	340,000	\$ 2,728	\$ 2,516	8.45%	\$ 213	\$ 4
Gore Commercial	150,000	\$ 3,547	\$ 3,279	8.18%	\$ 268	\$ 5
	250,000	\$ 4,508	\$ 4,187	7.67%	\$ 321	\$ 6
	400,000	\$ 5,950	\$ 5,549	7.22%	\$ 401	\$ 8
	700,000	\$ 8,834	\$ 8,274	6.76%	\$ 560	\$ 11
	1,400,000	\$ 13,530	\$ 12,778	5.88%	\$ 752	\$ 14
Mataura Commercial	45,000	\$ 2,720	\$ 2,548	6.77%	\$ 172	\$ 3
	95,000	\$ 2,893	\$ 2,750	5.20%	\$ 143	\$ 3
	165,000	\$ 4,550	\$ 4,384	3.79%	\$ 166	\$ 3
	380,000	\$ 6,699	\$ 6,604	1.44%	\$ 95	\$ 2
	600,000	\$ 10,741	\$ 10,645	0.90%	\$ 96	\$ 2
Rural	400,000	\$ 1,652	\$ 1,543	7.08%	\$ 109	\$ 2
	1,650,000	\$ 2,976	\$ 2,799	6.31%	\$ 177	\$ 3
	2,500,000	\$ 3,876	\$ 3,654	6.09%	\$ 223	\$ 4
	3,500,000	\$ 4,935	\$ 4,659	5.94%	\$ 277	\$ 5
	5,500,000	\$ 7,053	\$ 6,669	5.77%	\$ 385	\$ 7
	7,500,000	\$ 9,171	\$ 8,679	5.68%	\$ 493	\$ 9
	9,000,000	\$ 10,760	\$ 10,186	5.63%	\$ 574	\$ 11
Heavy Industry 1	400,000	\$ 29,963	\$ 27,686	8.22%	\$ 2,277	\$ 44
Heavy Industry 2	1,092,000	\$ 17,863	\$ 16,506	8.22%	\$ 1,357	\$ 26
Heavy Industry 3	19,210,000	\$ 311,793	\$ 288,103	8.22%	\$ 23,690	\$ 456

In 2019/20 we



Maintained
896 KILOMETRES
of road



We built
TWO NEW DOG PARKS
and registered
3374 DOGS



Issued
97,596 BOOKS
from the Gore and
Mataura libraries

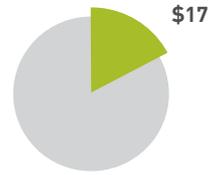
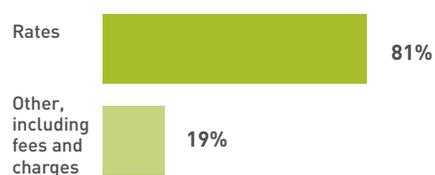
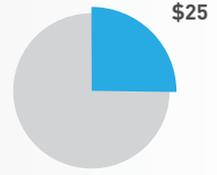
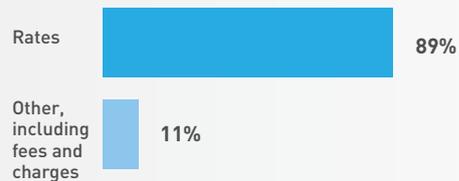
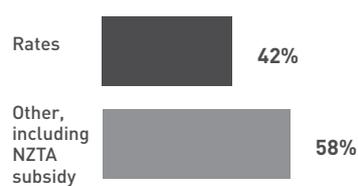
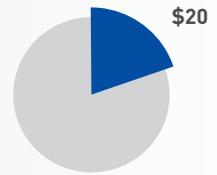
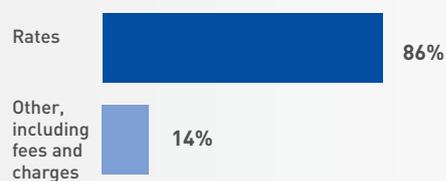
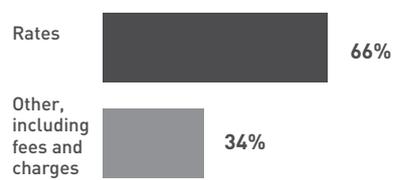
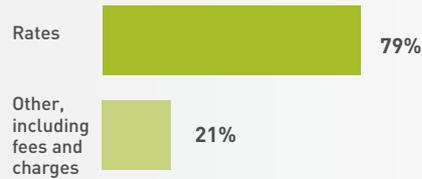
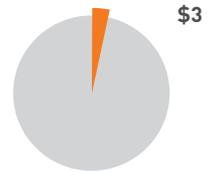
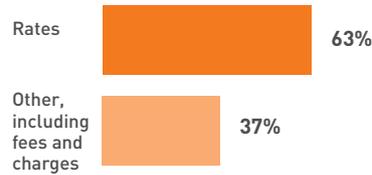
We grow about
72,000 ANNUALS

to go in our flower
beds to ensure our
towns look great
all year round



DRAFT 10 YEAR BUDGET AT A GLANCE

Area of Spend	Capital spend 2021-2031 (\$M)	Operating Spend 2021-2031 (\$M)	How operating costs are funded	Rates Value per \$100
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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT



Independent auditor's report on Gore District Council's consultation document for its proposed 2021-31 long-term plan.

I am the Auditor-General's appointed auditor for Gore District Council (the Council). The Local Government Act 2002 (the Act) requires the Council to prepare a consultation document when developing its long-term plan. Section 93C of the Act sets out the content requirements of the consultation document and requires an audit report on the consultation document. I have done the work for this report using the staff and resources of Deloitte Limited. We completed our report on 20 April 2021.

Qualified opinion

In our opinion, except for the possible effect of the matter described in the basis for qualified opinion section of our report:

- the consultation document provides an effective basis for public participation in the Council's decisions about the proposed content of its 2021-31 long-term plan, because it:
 - fairly represents the matters proposed for inclusion in the long-term plan; and
 - identifies and explains the main issues and choices facing the Council and district, and the consequences of those choices; and
- the information and assumptions underlying the information in the consultation document are reasonable.

Basis for qualified opinion

– *Lack of condition and age information for water supply and wastewater assets*

As outlined on page 16, the Council does not have sufficient reliable information about the condition of the assets in those networks, many of which are nearing the end of their useful lives. Further, the exact age of assets more than 60 years old is unknown due to a fire that destroyed the underlying infrastructure records in the 1950's. The Council has used historical failure rates of its assets to determine the investment required to upgrade these networks.

We consider it unreasonable for the Council to use historical failure rates alone to develop its forecasts for upgrading its networks. Planning on this basis increases the risk of asset failures which could result in reduced levels of service.

We carried out our work in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements (New Zealand) 3000 (Revised): *Assurance Engagements Other Than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information*. In meeting the requirements of this standard, we took into account particular elements of the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards and the International Standard on Assurance Engagements 3400: *The Examination of Prospective Financial Information* that were consistent with those requirements.

We assessed the evidence the Council has to support the information and disclosures in the consultation document. To select appropriate procedures, we assessed the risk of material misstatement and the Council's systems and processes applying to the preparation of the consultation document.

We did not evaluate the security and controls over the publication of the consultation document.

Emphasis of Matter – Uncertainty over three waters reforms

Without further modifying our opinion, we draw attention to the disclosure on page 17, which outlines the Government’s intention to make three waters reform decisions during 2021. The effect that the reforms may have on three waters services provided is currently uncertain because no decisions have been made. The consultation document was prepared as if these services will continue to be provided by the Council, but future decisions may result in significant changes, which would affect the information on which the consultation document has been based.

Responsibilities of the Council and auditor

The Council is responsible for:

- meeting all legal requirements relating to its procedures, decisions, consultation, disclosures, and other actions associated with preparing and publishing the consultation document and long-term plan, whether in printed or electronic form;
- having systems and processes in place to provide the supporting information and analysis the Council needs to be able to prepare a consultation document and long-term plan that meet the purposes set out in the Act; and
- ensuring that any forecast financial information being presented has been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand.

We are responsible for reporting on the consultation document, as required by section 93C of the Act. We do not express an opinion on the merits of any policy content of the consultation document.

Independence and quality control

We have complied with the Auditor-General’s:

- independence and other ethical requirements, which incorporate the independence and ethical requirements of Professional and Ethical Standard 1 issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board; and
- quality control requirements, which incorporate the quality control requirements of Professional and Ethical Standard 3 (Amended) issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board.

In addition to carrying out all legally required external audits, we carry out engagements in the areas of assurance services relating to trust deed reporting and registry audit that are consistent with our role as auditor. Other than these engagements we have no relationship with or interests in the Council.



Mike Hoshek

Deloitte Limited

On behalf of the Auditor-General, Christchurch, New Zealand



HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY



Make sure you let us know what you think of our 10-Year-Plan.
We must receive your submission by 5.00pm, Wednesday 19 May.



Online:

Go to our website www.lets.talk.goredc.govt.nz. Here you will find our online submission form. Once you have submitted your online submission, you will get a confirmation email. If you do not get an email from us, then please call **2090330**.



Written Submission:

Fill in a hard copy of our submission form. Once you have filled it in you can.



Post to:

Gore District Council
10-Year-Plan Consultation
P O Box 8, Gore 9740



Scan and email to:

info@goredc.govt.nz



Hand deliver to:

Civic Administration Building
29 Bowler Avenue, Gore

QUESTION 2:

Future plans for the Old Gore Library

(refer to pages seven and eight)

Option 1 - Transfer ownership to an arts trust

(This is our preferred option)

Redevelop the building to enable the expansion of our visitor experience, in keeping with the strong arts and cultural themes of the precinct.

Yes No Don't know

Option 2 - Redevelop as information centre

Retain the building for redevelopment as a visitor, tourism and business information centre. This may include expanding the services currently provided at the visitor centre, including a café, and bookable co-working spaces.

Yes No Don't know

Option 3 - Demolish and expand as an open air site

Demolish the building and expand the site as an open space visitor experience complementary to the trout and country music structures, with landscaped walkways through to the gallery, museum and visitor centre.

Yes No Don't know

Comments

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QUESTION 3:

Future Use of the Special Rural Fund

(refer to pages nine and ten)

Option 1 - Use fund to reduce bridge debt

(This is our preferred option)

Close the Special Rural Fund and apply all remaining money (less administrative costs) to reduce the debt on the new Pyramid Bridge.

Yes No Don't know

Option 2 - Use fund in consultation

Close the Special Rural Fund and apply all remaining funds to projects identified in consultation with the rural community.

Yes No Don't know

Option 3 - Give funds to Trust

Close the Special Rural Fund and give the remaining funds to the Southland Rural Support Trust, to help Gore District rural residents during adverse events.

Yes No Don't know

Option 4 - Retain funds for future use

Retain the Special Rural Fund and look to reopen it for applications at a later date.

Yes No Don't know

Comments

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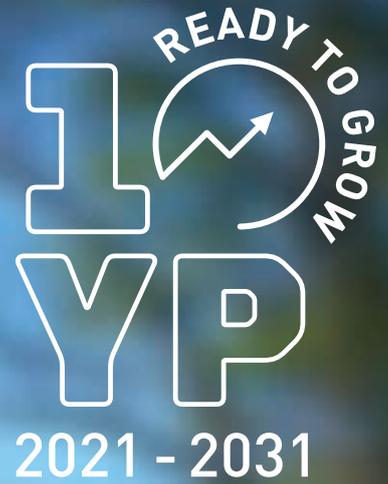
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NEED MORE ROOM? You can attach extra pages to your feedback but please make sure they are A4. Also check to include your name and contact details on the extra pages.

GO DISTRICT READY TO GROW

Make sure you let us know what you think of our 10-Year-Plan. We must receive your submission by 5.00pm, Wednesday 19 May 2021.



29 Bowler Avenue, Gore 9710
Phone: 03 209 0330
Email: info@goredc.govt.nz
www.goredc.govt.nz