

## 2.0 HAMILTON – A GROWING CITY

KIRIKIROA – HE TAONE WHAKATUPU

A photograph of two young girls riding on a paved path. The girl in the foreground is riding a scooter and wearing a light purple t-shirt with a Mickey Mouse graphic and the text 'I ♥ DINGLE'. The girl in the background is riding a bicycle and wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt. The path is surrounded by green grass and trees.

moving  
forward

## ■ 2.0 HAMILTON – A GROWING CITY

### CONTENT OF THIS SECTION

2.1	Introduction
2.2	Continued Population and Housing Growth
2.3	The Dynamics of Population Growth
2.4	Increase in Business Growth
2.5	Business and Employment Pressure from Surrounding Areas
2.6	Reasons for the City's Growth – Hamilton's X Factor
2.7	Other Things That You May Not Know About Hamilton
2.8	Preserving Hamilton's Unique Characteristics
2.9	Some Important Impacts of Growth on Hamilton <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.9.1 Transportation</li> <li>2.9.2 The Security of Hamilton's Water Supply from the Waikato River</li> <li>2.9.3 The Ongoing Viability of CityHeart – Hamilton's Central Area</li> <li>2.9.4 City Safety</li> <li>2.9.5 The Financial Capacity of the City to Fund Growth</li> </ul>

## ■ 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Hamilton is continuing to grow in both popularity and reputation, with the city now home to almost 142,000 residents (just on 50,000 houses). More than 8,000 Auckland residents moved to Hamilton and its immediate surroundings between 2001 and 2006<sup>1</sup> and results from Council's January – December 2008 Residents Survey showed that 92% of residents surveyed rated Hamilton as a good place to live.

## ■ 2.2 CONTINUED POPULATION AND HOUSING GROWTH

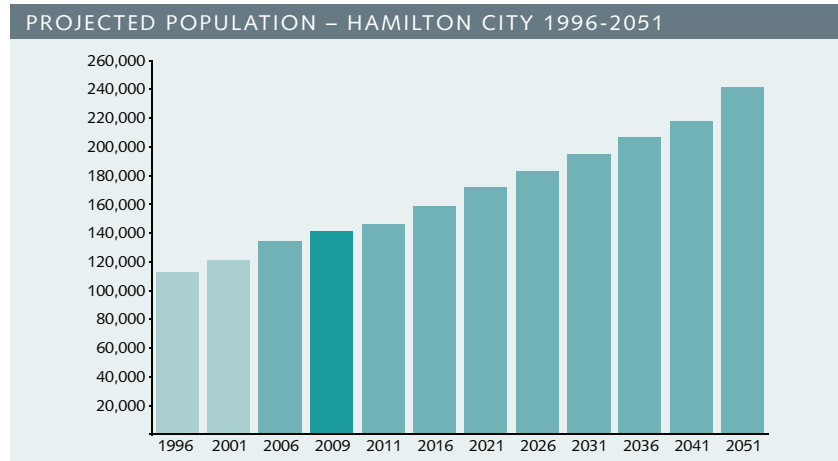
Hamilton continues to experience considerable population growth, as projected<sup>2</sup> by the 25.1% population increase and 26.7% housing increase between 1996 and 2009. On average this growth represents 42 extra people living in Hamilton each week, and 16 new houses being constructed each week.

Over the life of this LTCCP, long-term projections indicate that the city's population will increase to 166,500 (59,000 houses) by June 2019 – meaning that an additional 25,000 people (9,000 extra houses) will be living in Hamilton. This projected population increase is equivalent to two towns the size of Cambridge and would result in Hamilton's population being almost 90% of Wellington's current population of 193,000. Looking out to the year 2051 projections indicate that Hamilton's population could be almost 242,000 (just under 92,000 houses – refer following figures).

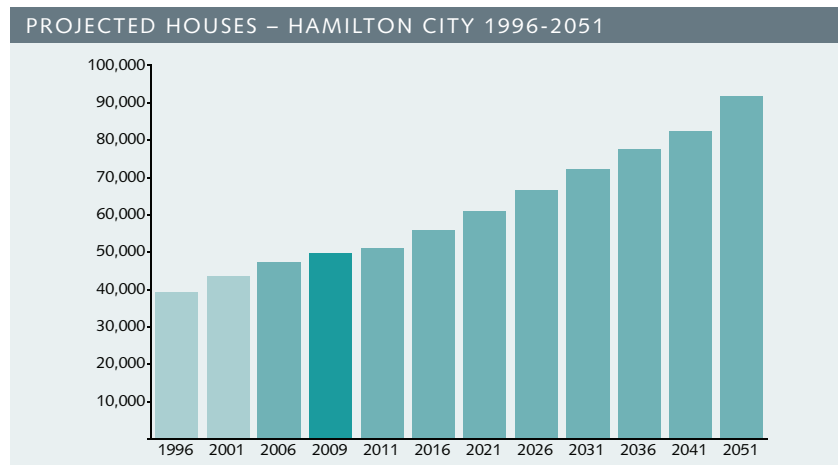
Like most other centres, the current economic downturn has impacted negatively on construction of new houses in Hamilton since 2008. This is regarded as being a short term trend (1 to 2 years), with Council anticipating a return to higher growth rates for development and building over the medium to longer term. In order to be well placed to respond to any changes in the wider economic environment, Council will continue to analyse and monitor a range of key leading indicators.

<sup>1</sup> Statistics New Zealand: 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings.

<sup>2</sup> The University of Waikato Population Studies Centre.



Source: The University of Waikato Population Studies Centre.



Source: The University of Waikato Population Studies Centre.

### 2.3 THE DYNAMICS OF POPULATION GROWTH

The dynamics of Hamilton's population growth, like any other city, are driven by two fundamental components:

- The net difference between the number of births over deaths of Hamilton residents. This is known as the 'natural increase'.
- The net difference between the number of people coming from other places to live in Hamilton (inwards migration) over the number leaving the city (outwards migration). This is known as 'net migration'.

In Hamilton's case, there has been a reasonably even split between a natural increase in population and an increase in net migration between 2001 and 2006. Looking forward, the natural increase in the city's projected population between the years 2006 and 2041 accounts for a slightly higher proportion than the increase from migration – averaging 52% over this period.

Beyond 2041 the trend reverses and net migration then accounts for a higher proportion of the city's projected population increase i.e. 54.6% in the period 2041- 2046 and 59.3% in the period 2046-2051 (refer table below).

PERIOD	TOTAL POPULATION INCREASE	NET MIGRATION		NATURAL INCREASE (BIRTHS MINUS DEATHS)	
		NUMBER	% SHARE OF THE TOTAL INCREASE	NUMBER	% SHARE OF THE TOTAL INCREASE
2006-2011	12,179	5,545	45.5	6,634	55.5
2011-2016	13,006	6,086	46.8	6,920	53.2
2016-2021	13,761	7,221	52.5	6,540	47.5
2021-2026	12,561	6,241	49.7	6,320	50.3
2026-2031	12,330	5,779	46.9	6,552	53.1
2031-2036	12,815	5,975	46.6	6,840	53.4
2036-2041	13,049	6,400	49.0	6,649	51.0
2041-2046	13,432	7,333	54.6	6,099	45.4
2046-2051	13,533	8,024	59.3	5,510	40.7

Source: The University of Waikato Population Studies Centre.

### 2.4 INCREASE IN BUSINESS GROWTH

In line with population and housing growth, business growth in the city has also been increasing at a rapid rate. Between the years 2000 and 2008 Hamilton had a 31.5% increase in the number of businesses (10,048 to 13,211) and a 37.6% increase in the number of people employed (56,340 to 77,510). As shown in the table below, it is estimated that Hamilton will be home to 15,000 businesses employing 90,000 people by 2019.

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT GROWTH IN HAMILTON		
YEAR (FEBRUARY)	NUMBER OF BUSINESSES	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
2000	10,048	56,340
2001	9,987	59,500
2002	10,053	61,820
2003	10,522	64,920
2004	11,471	68,660
2005	12,093	71,570
2006	12,610	74,300
2007	12,977	77,500
2008	13,211	77,510
2009 (estimate)*	13,000	77,000
2014 (estimate)*	14,000	83,000
2019 (estimate)*	15,000	90,000

Source: Statistics New Zealand Annual Business Frame Update Survey.  
 \*Estimates for 2009, 2014 and 2019 are from Hamilton City Council.

### 2.5 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PRESSURE FROM SURROUNDING AREAS

Hamilton not only has to cater for the needs of its current and future residents. Further pressure is also placed on the city's infrastructure from people who live outside of Hamilton but work in the city. In March 2006, almost 14,000 people who lived outside of Hamilton travelled into the city to work. Similarly, just on 16,000 people who lived in Hamilton travelled to various work locations outside of the city<sup>3</sup> (refer figure below).

HAMILTON'S WORKFORCE: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WHERE PEOPLE LIVE AND WORK



3 Statistics New Zealand: 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings.

These daily work-based traffic movements place a considerable burden on both the city and region's transportation networks.

Tourists, as well as people visiting the city for business purposes and to see friends and family, add further pressure on Hamilton's physical infrastructure and its natural environment.

## ■ 2.6 REASONS FOR THE CITY'S GROWTH – HAMILTON'S X FACTOR

Established in 1864, Hamilton is a relatively young city. At 98 km<sup>2</sup> it is also very compact and is the country's smallest city in terms of land area (the next smallest being Napier at 105.6 km<sup>2</sup>, with Dunedin being the largest at 3,342 km<sup>2</sup>).

The city's relatively compact size, picturesque landscape, abundance of green space and parks with the Waikato River running through its centre, coupled with the constant buzz of activity through the city hosting hallmark events (such as the 'Hamilton 400', 'Balloons Over Waikato', 'The Great Race', 'Fuel Festivals' and the 'World Rally Championship') are some of the main reasons people like living in Hamilton over and above other New Zealand cities.

Residents also like Hamilton's central location and accessibility relative to Auckland, the Bay of Plenty and Coromandel, West Coast beaches (in particular Raglan – only 35 minutes away and offering one of the best left hand surf breaks in the world), and the outdoor pursuits offered around Taupo, Rotorua and the central plateau. Almost half of New Zealand's population (just under two million people) live within 160 km of the city. Hamilton is now very much a destination city in its own right.

Hamilton offers a range of quality tertiary educational facilities (including the University of Waikato and Wintec – with a combined total of just over 28,000 students<sup>4</sup> at 2008) as well as 38 primary and intermediate schools and 13 secondary schools. Around 1,200 retail shops<sup>5</sup> and an extensive and diverse range of entertainment facilities are also available to residents and visitors.

Located at the centre of New Zealand's golden growth triangle (comprising the Waikato, Auckland and the Bay of Plenty regions) Hamilton has considerable strengths in research and technology. A large proportion of New Zealand's research and development is undertaken at Innovation Park (New Zealand's growth hub for Ag-Biotech and Agritech business that houses over 50 businesses and 350 staff), which is adjacent to the internationally renowned Ruakura

4 Ministry of Education – [www.educationcounts.govt.nz](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz) (2008).

5 Statistics New Zealand Annual Business Frame Update Survey (February 2008).

Research Centre complex – the leading agriculture and life sciences research centre in New Zealand. This centre comprises AgResearch (including MIRNZ – the Meat Industry Research Institute of New Zealand), HortResearch, Landcare Research, and DairyNZ. Also close by is Waikatolink (the commercialisation and technology transfer company of the University of Waikato), which maximises the economic potential of the University's intellectual property and bridges the gap between academic research and the realisation of technology potential.

Hamilton is at the centre of New Zealand's premier agricultural and pastoral region, with the agricultural sector contributing close to \$4.5 billion<sup>6</sup> into the local economy each year. The Waikato Region accounts for almost 30% of the country's total dairy production<sup>7</sup>.

The city is also home to a hi-tech innovative manufacturing sector, with a number of international companies having their head office or main operation located in Hamilton. Two of the largest companies are:

- Fonterra, New Zealand's largest export company and the world's largest producer of dairy products, which is owned by just over 11,000 New Zealand farmer shareholders and generates over a third of all international dairy trade.
- The Gallagher Group (with a focus on animal management systems and security industries), which employs over 600 people in New Zealand and as many overseas, with annual sales exceeding \$100 million and customers in over 130 countries.

## ■ 2.7 OTHER THINGS THAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT HAMILTON

- The capital valuation of Hamilton (at 30 March 2009) was \$22.959 billion, with the central area (the city's main retail and commercial hub) accounting for 11.2% of this amount.
- Over \$1.7 billion of construction work has taken place in Hamilton since the year 2000.
- At February 2008 the city had over 13,200 businesses employing over 77,500<sup>8</sup> people.

6 Hughs, Warren – The University of Waikato Regional Economic Bulletin (July 2007).

7 Dairy NZ – Dairy production in the Waikato accounted for 28.2% of New Zealand's total milk solids production in the 2007-08 season.

8 Statistics New Zealand Annual Business Frame Update Survey (February 2008).

- Waikato Hospital (being part of the Waikato District Health Board – WDHB) is a 600 bed regional base hospital located in Hamilton and is one of the largest in New Zealand. The WDHB employs over 5,200 people and provides tertiary and trauma services to a catchment of over 800,000 people in the central North Island.
- Hamilton is the centre of the country's leading export region, accounting for around 20% of the country's total exports.
- The city hosts New Zealand's largest annual event – the Hamilton 400 V8 Supercars StreeTrace (attended by over 121,000 spectators during the three days it ran for in April 2009 – the event is estimated to be worth close to \$30 million for the local economy).
- Transpower's National Coordination Centre (reputed to be the country's second most strategic operation) is based in Hamilton and Wellington. One of the primary reasons for this Centre being located in the city is the Waikato's relative geological stability i.e. it has a very low risk from natural disasters such as earthquakes, flooding and volcanic activity.
- Hamilton is home to several of New Zealand's major sports teams such as the Magic Netball team, Waikato and Chiefs Rugby teams and has produced a number of national representatives in sports such as rowing and cycling.

Further information that profiles the uniqueness of Hamilton, the surrounding area and what it has to offer can be found on Council's website [www.hamilton.co.nz/monitoring](http://www.hamilton.co.nz/monitoring).

## ■ 2.8 PRESERVING HAMILTON'S UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS

There is an expectation from residents that a city the size of Hamilton should have certain key facilities that are available in other centres. These include the likes of museums, theatres, sports stadiums and venues capable of holding a range of local, national and international events. Due to the size and semi-commercial nature of such venues, in most cases it is unlikely that they would be provided by the private sector. Council recognises that these community expectations will continue to increase in line with a growing city and has taken this issue into account in developing this 2009-19 LTCCP.

In addition to community expectations for the construction of new large facilities, there is also a desire from the community to improve existing facilities and services. This too has potential to increase costs.

There is also evidence that in uncertain economic times additional pressure is placed on rate-subsidised Council facilities that are provided to the community at either no or little direct cost to users e.g. parks, swimming facilities and libraries. There is a financial impact to Council when this occurs due to the increases in additional operating and maintenance costs for these facilities.

Such growth pressure requires Council, in partnership with other organisations, to plan for how, where and when the city will develop and to implement responsive, forward-thinking projects and programmes that balance the city's social, economic, environmental and cultural needs with a prudent and sustainable approach to the city's finances.

The challenge then is for this to be undertaken in a way that retains and enhances the special features and characteristics that the community value about Hamilton.

## ■ 2.9 SOME IMPORTANT IMPACTS OF GROWTH ON HAMILTON

Prolonged growth in the city generates new economic activity and opportunities but also has the potential for some negative effects. A number of key impacts of significant city growth have emerged over recent years that have potential to be of concern to Council.

These impacts have been identified through a variety of mechanisms, including Council's Quarterly Residents Survey; Customer Satisfaction Survey Programme; submissions received to proposed strategies, plans and policies; coordination and participation in various benchmarking and indicator programmes (e.g. Hamilton's Community Outcomes Progress Indicators and participation in the Quality of Life Project – refer Section 3.4); general customer feedback; feedback through various organisations and task groups (e.g. the task groups that developed the eight City Strategies).

This section outlines five important areas of concern for Council and the community that have either contributed to or resulted from recent growth pressures in the city:

- Transportation.
- The security of Hamilton's water supply from the Waikato River.
- The ongoing viability of CityHeart – Hamilton's central area.
- City safety.
- The financial capacity of the city to fund growth.

### 2.9.1 TRANSPORTATION

Since June 2004, Council's Quarterly Residents Survey has identified transportation as the main issue that residents want Council to address. In the January – December 2008 Residents Survey, just under half (48.3%) of all survey respondents mentioned a transportation related issue as one of their three most important issues, i.e. Roads (22.5%), Traffic (17.0%), and Public Transport (12.5%).

The following provides some examples of transport-related comments received through Council's Quarterly Residents Survey.

*'Get real on transport (more roading, plan for 20 years not 3).'*

*'Maintenance contracts with roads; they need to be controlled and more value for money.'*

*'Traffic movement; the Victoria Bridge needs to be widened, something needs to be done there, because it's a bottleneck. Fairfield Bridge is another one that's a bottleneck. Both are only single lane each way; Cyclists – if there were improvements there, people would cycle more. When new roads are built, it'll be much easier to put cycle paths in. Footpaths and cycle paths could be combined and there'd be more space then, they'd have room to put them in better'.*

In keeping with the city's population growth, the number of motor vehicles in Hamilton increased by 10.5% between 2001 (40,965 vehicles) and 2006 (45,572 vehicles)<sup>9</sup>, placing additional pressure on the city's transportation network.

Through the Access Hamilton Strategy (refer Section 3.6) Council is aiming to provide Hamilton with a more sustainable and integrated multi-modal transportation system, and has made budget provision of \$116 million to maintain and enhance the city's transportation network over the 10 year period of this 2009-19 LTCCP. Recent data trends indicate that the work Council is undertaking is having a positive effect on traffic flows on the city's roads at peak times around key congestion points where motorists have experienced the most delays in the past. For example, the 2009 monitoring report on Hamilton's Community Outcomes (refer Section 3.4) shows that while off-peak and peak morning travel times have been increasing (on average) over the 2004-2008 period, peak afternoon traffic appears to have decreased (on average) between 2006-2008.

<sup>9</sup> Statistics New Zealand, 2001 and 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings.

A key aspect of moving Hamilton towards a more sustainable and integrated multi-modal transportation system to cater for the city's growing population is through the provision of an efficient and effective public transport service. Council will continue to work in partnership with Environment Waikato to consolidate and enhance Hamilton's bus service.

#### Transportation in a Regional Context

The city's transportation network also needs to be looked at in both a regional and national context. Although the Waikato accounts for 9.4% of New Zealand's population<sup>10</sup>, almost 20% of the nation's freight passes through the region. Much of this movement is from goods being delivered to and from the country's two busiest ports – Auckland and Tauranga.

Up to 28,000 vehicles travel on State Highway 1 through the Waikato on any given day. Of these vehicles, up to 4,000 are heavy commercial vehicles, which often results in a number of negative effects for the city and region's transportation network. This issue will compound with traffic volumes on the Waikato's roads predicted to grow at an average rate of 3% per annum (over the 10 year period of the 2009-19 LTCCP), with road freight projected to almost double between 2006 and 2020<sup>11</sup>.

It is important then that planning and development of Hamilton's transportation network is coordinated with that of the region. To this end, Council is a key partner in the development of FutureProof (the growth strategy for the sub-region – refer Section 6.3) to provide a consistent land use planning strategy for the subregion that can be used for integrated transport planning purposes. In addition, the Waikato Regional Land Transport Programme for 2009-19 establishes the regional priority for many of Council's transport activities outlined in this 2009-19 LTCCP (including all state highway activities and some local road improvements – refer Section 8.8).

Council's participation in the Waikato Regional Transportation Model (anticipated to be completed in late 2009) will also enable it to determine and implement changes that will provide Hamilton with the most effective and efficient transportation networks. The model will enable testing of land use policy (e.g. structure plans, major resource consents) and assessment of roading schemes (e.g. Wairere Drive – Crosby to Cobham) and new bus services.

<sup>10</sup> Statistics New Zealand Subnational Population Estimates (30 June 2008).

<sup>11</sup> The Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Economic Development and Land Transport New Zealand (now part of the New Zealand Transport Agency) – 'National Freight Demands Study' (September 2008).

### 2.9.2 THE SECURITY OF HAMILTON'S WATER SUPPLY FROM THE WAIKATO RIVER

Council is committed to ensuring the long-term security of an adequate supply of water for Hamilton sourced primarily from the Waikato River. Under its recently awarded consent, Council can extract up to 105 million litres of water from the river on a daily basis for municipal use. This increases to 146 million litres per day in 2014 and has further steps beyond this to meet future growth.

Increasing dry conditions had seen Hamilton approach the maximum volumes of water that Council was permitted to source from the Waikato River. Although the new consent allows an increased volume to be extracted, it has introduced mechanisms that reflect the fact that water is a limited resource, and that treatment and distribution comes at a significant cost. Therefore the city needs to manage its use in a careful and sustainable manner.

Environment Waikato's recent variation to the Waikato Regional Plan (Variation 6) influences the manner in which freshwater is allocated throughout the region and as such deals with the current levels of demand and competition for water. This variation involves the introduction of a structured approach to the protection, allocation and use of the region's water resources, including a call for municipal water suppliers to demonstrate the efficient use of water.

A 'Smart Water Use' initiative between Council, Environment Waikato and other territorial authorities throughout the greater Waikato was introduced in December 2008 and is part of a regional collaborative effort aimed at promoting proactive water conservation. A key component of this programme is the introduction of a new water alert level system (outlined in the figure below) that commenced in Hamilton in December 2008.

WATER ALERT LEVEL SYSTEM	
WATER ALERT LEVEL 1	WATER ALERT LEVEL 2
<p><b>Restrictions:</b>                      Sprinkler systems permitted between 6-8am and 6-8pm only.                      No restrictions on commercial/non residential properties.</p>	<p><b>Restrictions:</b>                      Sprinkler systems permitted between 6-8am and 6-8pm on alternative days only.                      No restrictions on commercial/non residential properties.</p>
WATER ALERT LEVEL 3	WATER ALERT LEVEL 4
<p><b>Restrictions:</b>                      Total ban on domestic sprinklers – only hand held hosing permitted.                      Restriction on outdoor water use for commercial/non residential properties.</p>	<p><b>Restrictions:</b>                      Total ban on all external non essential use of water.                      Restrictions on all external water use for commercial/non residential properties.</p>

The new water alert levels are a more comprehensive water conservation approach than the alternate day sprinkler restrictions used previously. Council will initiate a rise in water alert levels when a high volume of water has been consumed over a sustained period. Alternatively when consumption volumes are reduced over a sustained period, alert levels can be lowered. The water alert levels and their corresponding restrictions are designed to encourage residents to treat water as a 'limited and precious resource' and to ensure a consistent supply to the city's water users throughout the year. The alert levels are supported by educational and communication strategies that ensure that Hamilton's residents are aware of the need to conserve water and at what level of demand the city is currently experiencing.

Council acknowledges the iconic status of the Waikato River and the great significance that it holds both culturally and spiritually for Tainui. The River is also iconic for the people of Hamilton. In many ways the River defines and is the reason for the city's existence. The River is also a very important resource for the city and for these reasons Council has a very high level of interest in the sustainable management of the Waikato River and supports the co-management approach advocated through the Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Bill (refer Section 4.2).

This support is seen in the recently awarded water consent where Council has committed to the development of an HCC Waikato Tainui Liaison group. The purpose of the group is to ensure that matters relating to the abstraction and use of water from the river have a forum for discussion.

### 2.9.3 THE ONGOING VIABILITY OF CITYHEART – HAMILTON'S CENTRAL AREA

Hamilton's central area is the city's main commercial and retail area, accounting for almost 30% of the city's total workforce and around 30% of the city's retail outlets.

The value of the land and buildings (the capital value) in the central area at 30 March 2009 was \$2.575 billion, accounting for 11.2% of the city's total capital value of \$22.959 billion. Rates levied from the central area accounted for \$11.6 million (10.6%) of the total rates levied in Hamilton of \$109.6 million for the 2008/09 financial year.

The central area is facing increasing pressure from other retail complexes throughout the city. The ongoing viability and vibrancy of this area is of key concern to Council, which is why it has commenced the CityHeart revitalisation programme. This programme is aimed at developing a quality urban environment that will attract people back into the city centre and assist in the revitalisation process. The CityHeart vision is "that Hamilton has a vibrant distinctive heart with easy access to a redeveloped Claudelands Event Centre and supported by a pedestrian friendly Victoria Street".

Over the 2009-19 period Council has made funding provision \$8.2 million to undertake a range of key projects through the CityHeart programme (refer Section 7.6).

Council's support for new initiatives to assist the central area's viability is further demonstrated through its trial of parking meter free weekends that commenced on 15 November 2008. Although it is free to park all day on Sundays, Council extended this to Saturdays for the trial period. Time limits on meters (in most cases one hour) were still enforced on the Saturdays during the trial period to ensure regular turnover of carpark spaces for the benefit of shoppers and visitors to the central area.

The parking trial ended following completion of the CityHeart Victoria Street upgrade in mid 2009. The cost to Council was estimated to be around \$5,800 in lost revenue from parking fees each Saturday during the trial period (with the overall reduction in parking revenue anticipated to be around \$300,000). This was considered acceptable given that the initiative drew people back into the central area (as well as making it a more vibrant place during the traditional Christmas and New Year shopping period).

Council is currently undertaking a thorough review of parking management for the city and the results of the parking trial will be an input into that review.

### 2.9.4 CITY SAFETY

City safety featured prominently as an issue of high concern to Hamilton residents in the January – December 2008 Residents Survey, with 29.9% rating 'Law and Order' (which includes safety, crime, and graffiti) as the most important issue they would like Council to address.

As Hamilton grows and develops, the need to plan and deliver safe social and physical environments is becoming increasingly important. Safety and crime are complex issues that territorial authorities can not solve on their own. Council therefore works alongside other organisations with the aim of reducing crime and disorder, and improving people's safety and perception of safety in the city centre.

Programmes already underway to improve safety in the city include enhancing the partnership with the Police, liquor licensing, late night transport options, improved lighting, reduced tagging (including the introduction of a tagging hotline for the public to phone to report graffiti anywhere in the city) and 'crime prevention through environmental design' or CPTED. CPTED is an approach to development based on the design and use of the built environment, which aims to help people feel safe. Some of the key principles of CPTED are that ensuring good visibility in public spaces helps avoid situations where people can hide or be trapped, providing alternative safer routes for more vulnerable users (particularly after dark), and that maintenance also signals that a place is cared for and more likely to deter undesirable behaviour.

Council also manages the central city crime prevention camera network, the City Safe night patrol team (who are present in the central city area on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights), and the Liquor Control Bylaw that is in effect in areas of the city to ensure that drinking is managed appropriately.

### 2.9.5 THE FINANCIAL CAPACITY OF THE CITY TO FUND GROWTH

Growth occurring in the city requires Council to work with the development community to expand infrastructure into new areas (including roads, water, wastewater and stormwater and community infrastructure such as parks, libraries and pools). While many of the costs of this 'expansion' are able to be recovered by Council through Development Contribution funding, some of these costs have to be incurred by the existing ratepayer base as there is some city wide benefit from these new services. Therefore Council has to fund capital expenditure by using debt to fund projects required by growth in the city (irrespective of whether or not this debt is paid for by Development Contributions or rates from existing ratepayers).

While deferring or cancelling projects is one of the ways Council manages its debt levels, this approach is not always the most appropriate option, as major infrastructure projects that enable growth or replace worn out assets cannot be put off indefinitely. This means that at some point in the future (particularly for councils that are experiencing significant growth) debt levels may reach a level where critical projects cannot be undertaken as there will be a limited ability to borrow further funds. While this is not the case for Council in this 2009-19 LTCCP (as debt from growth and capital projects has been managed through reprioritisation) it is a crucial issue that will need to be addressed by the local government sector and central government in the near future.

Council takes a sustainable development approach when considering the funding of growth related projects, which includes a balanced consideration of economic, social, environmental and cultural factors and the effect that these factors may have on future generations. A key aspect of this approach includes the long-term ability for Council to borrow the necessary funds that will be required in the future to renew assets and provide quality services to the community.

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