

TŌ TĀTOU ROHE, ŌHANGA, TAUPORI HOKI

OUR DISTRICT, ECONOMY AND
POPULATION



OUR DISTRICT, ECONOMY AND POPULATION

OUR DISTRICT TODAY

The Matamata-Piako District is a rural area of 175,477 hectares in the Waikato Region. Previously, two thirds of the District's population lived in one of three main towns (Matamata, Morrinsville and Te Aroha), with the remainder living in rural areas. This has changed to just over 60% of the population. The District is well known for its dairy farming and thoroughbred racing industry but has a number of other key features.

Major attractions include Mount Te Aroha (952m high) and the stunning Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park, which offer visitors a range of day walks or overnight tramps. At the foot of the mountain is the Mokena Geyser (the only natural hot soda water geyser in the world), and the historic Te Aroha Domain, featuring Swim Zone Te Aroha and the Te Aroha Mineral Spas.

Matamata is well known as the location of the Hobbiton Movie Set, which was used for the world famous Lord of the Rings movies, and The Hobbit trilogy. The Hobbiton Movie set has been one of New Zealand's major tourist destinations in the past, attracting over 500,000 each year. Matamata is also home to the historic Firth Tower Estate and Museum. Matamata has a strong equine and racing community, and it has produced many fine thoroughbred horses that can now be found racing internationally.

The easy rolling terrain surrounding Morrinsville makes for some of the best farmland in New Zealand, earning it the title 'Cream of the Country'. Morrinsville is also home to the Herd of Cows public art and Wallace Gallery, which showcases artwork from around the District and wider region and the Morrinsville Museum.



General information about the District

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of electors (enrolled)*	23,767	23,768	23,393
Number of rating units**	15,015	15,163	15,070
Value of improvements**	\$4,543,681,400	\$4,619,325,900	\$4,654,320,900
Net land value**	\$8,240,602,000	\$8,272,574,800	\$8,275,337,800
Total capital value**	\$12,784,283,400	\$12,891,900,700	\$12,929,658,700
Total rates	\$31,324,000	\$32,178,000	\$33,881,000
Average total rates per property	\$2,086	\$2,122	\$2,248

* Electoral enrolment centre

** At the end of the preceding financial year

*** Excludes metered water rates, targeted rates from industries, lump-sum contributions and penalties.

Our demographic future and our economy

We are planning for the future, which means we need to consider what the demographic future might look like in our District.

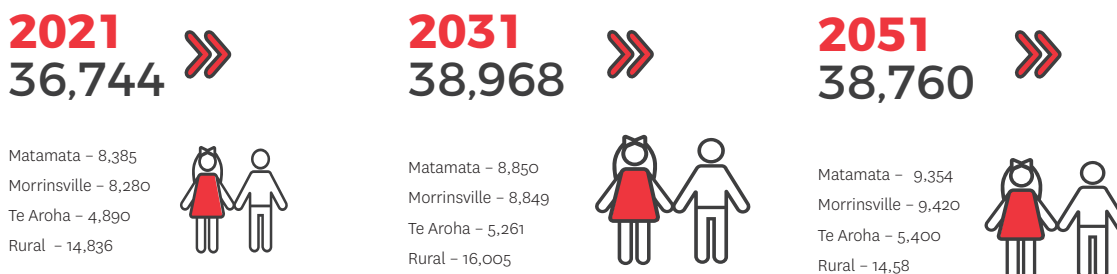
- What will our population be?
- What ages will they be?
- How many households will there be?
- How many people will live in each household?

The answers to these questions (and other demographics) all effect how we manage growth and plan for our infrastructure and services. All population figures in this LTP are projected as at 30 June of each year, which aligns with our financial year (1 July – 30 June).

Growth projections give us low growth, medium growth and high growth scenarios - we have done our forward planning based on the medium growth profile. These population projections and economic data have been provided by Infometrics. You can read the full population report at mpdc.govt.nz and the economic profile is available at infometrics.co.nz

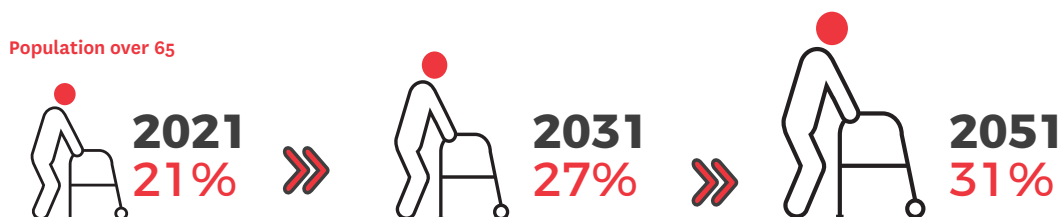
Population Projections

**Due to rounding, figures used in this section may not add to the stated totals. Population growth projections to 2051 report completed by Infometrics Limited in April 2020, pre-Covid-19.*

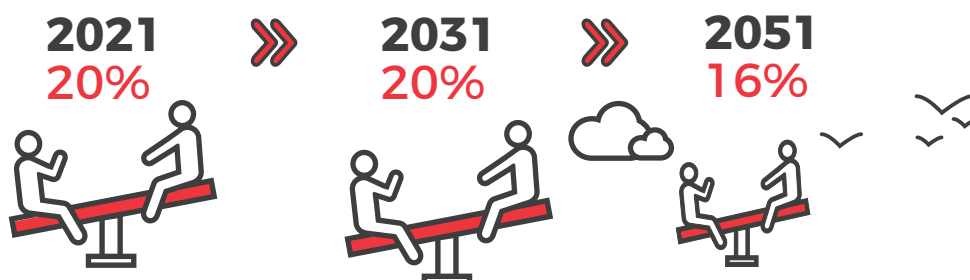


An Ageing Population

Our population is projected to age and the number of young people (under 15 years) decrease. This changing age profile could have a flow-on effect to the make-up of the work force in the District and the services we provide like recreational facilities and pedestrian access. It also has impacts on the affordability of rates as many pensioners are on fixed incomes.

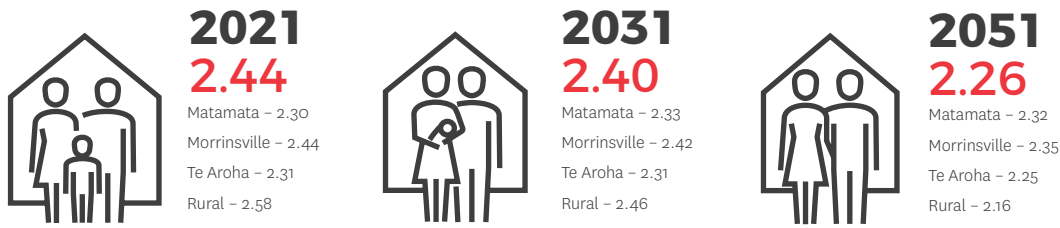


Population under 15



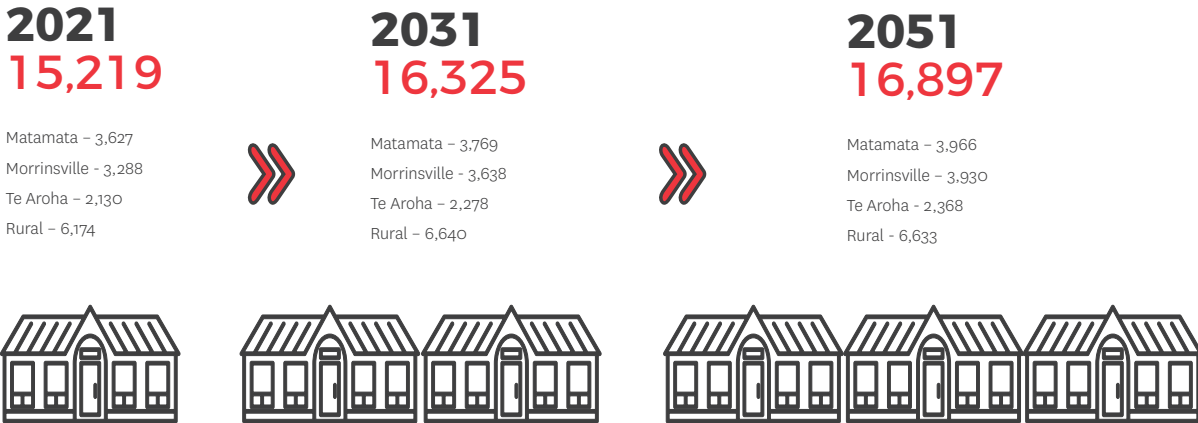
Household Size

The average household size is projected to decrease likely due to the impact of the ageing population and changing family structures.



Total Dwellings

The number of dwellings is projected to increase in line with the projected increase in population and rating units.



Rating Unit Projections

Rating Units are pieces of land that hold a certificate of title of equivalent (e.g. gazette notice). In preparing our budgets, we have applied a more conservative average annual growth in rating units. For more details refer to the Significant Forecasting Assumptions section of this plan.



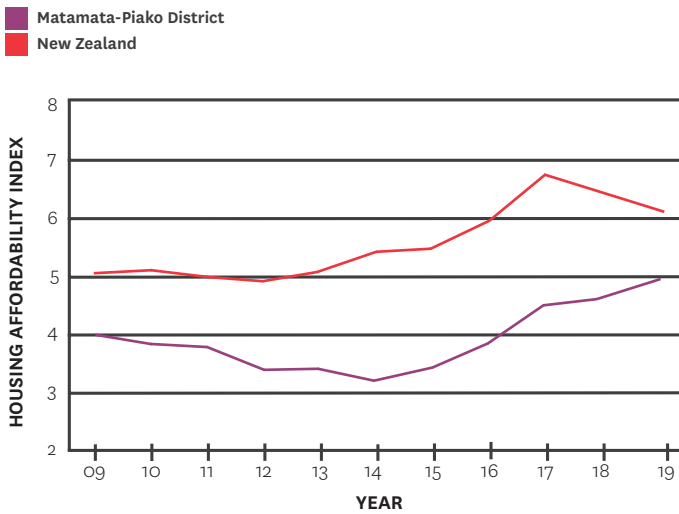
District	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
	14,965	15,064	15,163	15,262	15,460	15,562	15,665	15,768	15,870	15,973

Split of Urban/Rural Population



Housing affordability

Matamata-Piako District & New Zealand



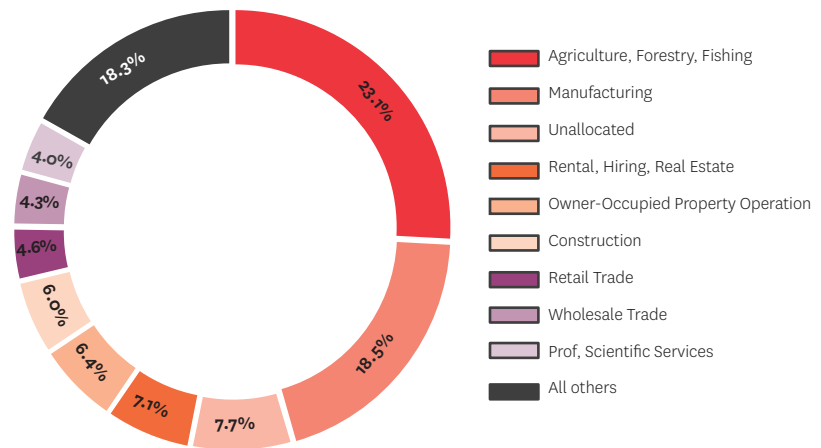
Housing affordability is a measurement of a communities overall economic wellbeing. The affordability ratio is measured by comparing the average current house value to average annual earnings. A higher ratio indicates a bigger gap between median house prices and typical incomes, which indicates lower housing affordability.

This graph shows the affordability of housing in the Matamata-Piako District and for the country as a whole. This suggests that the Matamata-Piako District has reasonably affordable housing when compared to New Zealand as a whole.

Our Economy - Affordability

Our District is one of New Zealand's cornerstones of the dairy industry, with some of the best quality soils in New Zealand. We also have a strong presence of other large industries like horticulture and meat processing.

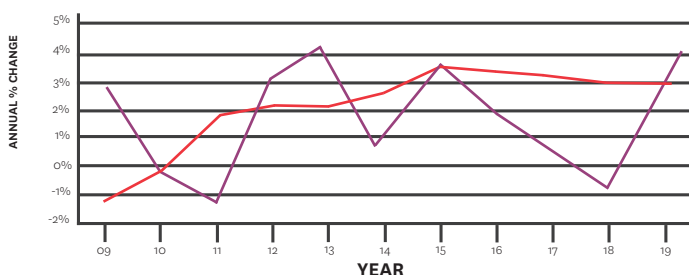
These all play a major role in building a strong local economy. Gross domestic product means, the total value of goods and services produced in an area. It is a common way of measuring the performance of an economy.



Growth in GDP



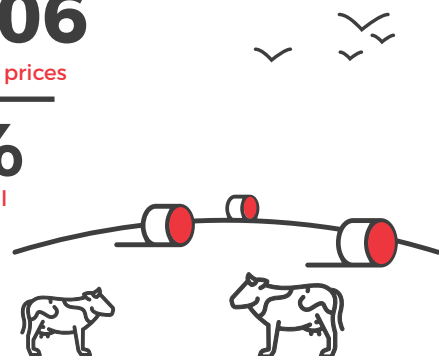
Partly due to our high proportion of primary industry, our District remains resilient to financial shocks and the economic impact of Covid-19. This is also reflected in a steady employment growth of around 1% year on year between 2009 and 2019, and lower than national unemployment rates (3.7% in our District compared to 5.4% in New Zealand).



GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

\$1,706
million in 2010 prices

0.8%
of national total



Climate Change

The impacts of climate change are being felt by local government and its communities now. Those changes include rising sea levels and changes in rainfall and temperature patterns. These changes can also lead to gradual impacts or stressors such as groundwater rise, or salt water intrusion, or more frequent extreme weather event hazards, such as coastal or inland flooding. Matamata-Piako District Council is fortunate enough to be a land locked district. We are protected from the direct impact of sea level rises and coastal inundation (refer the Waikato Regional Councils hazard modelling <https://waikatoregion.govt.nz/services/regional-services/regional-hazards-and-emergency-management/regional-hazards-portal/>). The impacts of climate change on our communities are mainly evidenced by the increased frequency and severity of severe weather events such as droughts and floods (refer NIWA Climate Change Forecast <https://niwa.co.nz/our-science/climate/information-and-resources/clivar/scenarios>). The Ministry of Environment has also indicated for the Waikato Region that there is likely to be more frequent droughts which is likely to lead to water shortages. It is our role to manage our infrastructure in a way that minimises or mitigates the risk associated with these extreme weather events and protects our communities.

The Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019 provides a framework by which New Zealand can develop and implement clear and stable climate change policies that:

- contribute to the global effort under the Paris Agreement to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels.
- allow New Zealand to prepare for, and adapt to, the effects of climate change.

The changes do four key things;

- set a new domestic greenhouse gas emissions reduction target for New Zealand to:
 - reduce net emissions of all greenhouse gases (except biogenic methane) to zero by 2050.
 - reduce emissions of biogenic methane to 24–47 per cent below 2017 levels by 2050, including to 10 per cent below 2017 levels by 2030.
- establish a system of emissions budgets to act as stepping stones towards the long term target.
- require the government to develop and implement policies for climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- establish a new, independent Climate Change Commission to provide expert advice and monitoring to help keep successive governments on track to meeting long-term goals.

It is expected that further legislative initiatives to combat the effects of climate change will be introduced during this current term of Parliament, and that some of the responsibility to make changes will be delegated to local councils around the country.

We, together with 63 other councils and regional councils, have signed the Local Leaders Climate Change Declaration. Amongst other things, the declaration acknowledges the importance and urgent need to address climate change for the benefit of current and future generations.

Whilst non-binding, the declaration includes a commitment to

- Develop and implement ambitious action plans that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support resilience within our own councils and for our local communities. These plans will:
 - promote walking, cycling, public transport and other low carbon transport options.
 - work to improve the resource efficiency and health of homes, businesses and infrastructure in our district.
 - support the use of renewable energy and uptake of electric vehicles.
- Work with our communities to understand, prepare for and respond to the physical impacts of climate change.
- Work with central government to deliver on national emission reduction targets and support resilience in our communities.

In our 2019/20 Resident Survey, 60% of those surveyed said it is very important or important that Council takes a leadership role in climate change response for the community, with 14% saying it is unimportant or very unimportant.

Our decisions about how we continue to invest (or not) in existing infrastructure in light of climate change impacts will affect things such as the continued availability of infrastructure to current and future communities, their preparedness for natural disasters, and their safety.

Our current approach

We maintain robust asset management plans for all our infrastructure activities and community facilities and property. These plans consider the effects of changing environmental and weather patterns as part of their ongoing asset management planning, both in terms of operational practices and capital investments (choosing materials, considering whole of life costs, and alignment/compliance with current and proposed legislative requirements). The asset management budgets feed into the LTP budgets for the asset activities, and as such form part of the underlying information for the LTP baseline budget.

Some of the capital investments we have planned as part of this LTP and Infrastructure Strategy, that is in part driven by climate change adaptation and resilience include:

- Encouraging active modes of transport to reduce number of cars on the road.
- New walkway Waharoa to Matamata.
- New cycleway Matamata to Piarere.
- Matamata pedestrian connectivity.
- New linkage parks and walkways in Matamata, Morrinsville and Te Aroha.
- Digital Strategy implementation.
- Develop Resource Recovery Centres in Matamata and Morrinsville to encourage less waste sent to landfill.
- Matipo Street stormwater pond upgrade.
- Tower Road wastewater pump station and rising main.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades across the District.
- Implement water loss strategy.
- New water treatment plant Wisely Bore.

The challenge ahead

We acknowledge that all our activities contribute in some way to the total carbon emissions for our District. We are committed to better understanding our carbon footprint and how we, as a Council, can take steps to reduce this. Our main focus for the first three years of this LTP is to gain a greater understanding of where we are currently at in terms of our footprint, planning for resilience and see where we can improve as an organisation in a cost effective as well as environmentally friendly way. This may include;

- Commission a further emissions stocktake for council's activity that requires and engages staff participation.
- Continuing to assess the implications of the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill for Matamata-Piako District Council and its communities.
- Develop an emissions goal (for example, set an ambitious goal to be carbon neutral by 2030, or something that aligns to the Zero Carbon Act (2050)).
- Develop a holistic approach (strategy) to emissions reductions activities across the Council.
- Seek advice and best practice on how to disseminate and communicate emissions- reduction-based information to communities.
- Recognise that the Council has a leadership role – by changing the way it does things, it can role model the changes that are needed in its communities, and demonstrate commitment to leading and coordinating communities to reduce emissions.
- Explore opportunities to tap into existing community resources to support some of these activities.

As an organisation, we are taking a whole of council approach to climate change adaptation. In 2021 we started a programme to transition our fleet into hybrid or fully electric. This will continue as part of the fleet renewal programme for all council vehicles and machinery where appropriate and cost-effective. Our energy efficiency working group monitor and recommend opportunities for improvement when it comes to energy use at council facilities, and our Digital Strategy set the road map for how we can reduce our requirement for printing, both internal and with our external customers and stakeholders. We are also enabling our staff to work more from home, and facilitating virtual meetings, to reduce the requirement for travel.

We are committed to working with our partners in local governments across the Waikato and the country, to do our bit to mitigate the potential impact of climate change. We are part of the Waikato Local Authorities Shared Services Climate Change Forum.