MANAWATŪ DISTRICT COUNCIL

A digital version of this form is available online. To access it scan the QR code or visit: www.mdc.govt.nz/localgovernmentreform

Engagement Form

Should Local Decisions Stay Local?

The future of local government in New Zealand is being discussed now. Be part of the conversation. **Feedback closes 30 June 2026.**

The Government has announced a process of council amalgamations that would replace councils like ours with larger "unitary councils".

A unitary council combines both district/city council and regional council functions under one organisation.

Under the Government's "Head Start" pathway, councils are being required to work with neighbouring councils to develop amalgamation plans before 9 August.

Councils that do not participate are expected to enter a later compulsory "Backstop" process, which would still result in the Manawatū District being forced to amalgamate into a wider unitary council.

This is not simply a change of name or logo. Potential reform could affect:

- who represents our communities,
- how local decisions are made,
- how services are delivered,
- and how our district is governed into the future.

No decisions have been made, but Manawatū District Council believes the community should help shape what happens next.

Please refer to our Privacy Statement for information about how we collect, use, store, and disclose personal information www.mdc.govt.nz

1. Submitter Details - *Please fill in all fields with **

*First and Last Name: _____

*Phone (day): _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

*Postal Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

2. *Age Group:

We are asking the age of submitters as this is a decision that will impact our District for decades. Different age groups may have different opinions.

◯ Under 18 ◯ 18 - 29 ◯ 30 - 39 ◯ 40 - 59 ◯ 60 - 79 ◯ 80 plus

3. Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation? ◯ Yes ◯ No

If yes, this confirms you have the authority to submit on the organisations' behalf.

*Name of Organisation: _____

4. *How did you hear about this consultation?

◯ Newspaper ◯ MDC Website ◯ Radio

◯ Social Media ◯ Word of Mouth ◯ Other _____

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Please feel free to expand your answers on to another page and attach it to this form.

5. *What approach do you think Manawatū District Council should take in responding to the Government's unitary council reforms?

Approach 01: Oppose Amalgamation

◯ My choice is approach 01

Oppose compulsory amalgamation while exploring alternative reform options that aim to meet the Government's objectives around efficiency, coordination, regional planning and regional council functions, while retaining local representation, local decision-making, and local accountability.

This could include models such as a Manawatū Unitary Council, shared services with neighbouring councils, or other collaborative arrangements for regional council functions.

This approach would also aim to preserve local control while keeping future amalgamation options open if further reform discussions continue through the Government's "Back Stop" process.

Approach 02: Head Start Pathway

◯ My choice is approach 02

Actively pursue a unitary amalgamation proposal with one or more neighbouring district and/or city councils through the Government's Headstart pathway before the 9 August 2026 deadline.

Preferred Councils _____

Approach 03: Back Stop Pathway

◯ My choice is approach 03

Do not participate in the Headstart pathway before the 9 August 2026 deadline but continue working on possible amalgamation options with neighbouring councils through the compulsory amalgamation Backstop process.

Preferred Councils _____

Approach 04: Other

◯ My choice is approach 04

Please tell us another approach you would like Council to consider.

_____

_____

_____

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_____

6. If the Government proceeds with forcing compulsory amalgamation, which council(s) would you prefer MDC to amalgamate with?

_____

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