



Submission: Auckland's Draft Waste Management And Minimisation Plan 2024

25th March 2024

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Submission to Auckland's Draft Waste Management And Minimisation Plan 2024

Auckland Council is seeking feedback on Auckland's Draft Waste Management And Minimisation Plan 2024. (WMMP)

Introduction

Business North Harbour (BNH) representing the North Harbour Business Improvement District welcomes the opportunity to make this submission on Auckland's Draft Waste Management And Minimisation Plan 2024.

BNH is a significant commercial and industrial Business Improvement District (BID), representing over 4,500 commercial property owners and businesses within the North Harbour area. Collectively they employ over 37,000 Auckland residents and ratepayers. The organisation is located within the Upper Harbour Local Board area, which remains one of the fastest growing areas in the country, in both absolute and percentage population terms, which brings both challenges and opportunities to the North Harbour business district.

BNH represents and works with a wide range of businesses comprising of a mix of sole traders, Small Medium Enterprises (SME), through to multi-national organisations, representing sectors such as ICT, business services, specialist manufacturing, light – medium warehousing, logistics, retail and hospitality. In addition, we have key educational institutions within or on our boundary, including Massey University Albany and AUT Millennium, along with a variety of primary and secondary schools including Rangitoto College, the largest secondary school in New Zealand.

Background

Auckland Council has commented:

This draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP) 2024 sets out Auckland's direction in managing and preventing waste. It is informed by many suggestions gathered over the past year from iwi/Māori and key stakeholders through pre-draft engagement. It is guided by the same Zero Waste by 2040 vision for Tāmaki Makaurau of previous plans but with updated principles and objectives to guide decision-making, and actions and targets for the next six years. A waste plan for Aotea / Great Barrier Island, and Waiheke, Kawau and Rakino Islands of the Hauraki Gulf is included as an appendix. This acknowledges the unique challenges and opportunities of dealing with waste in island communities.

Now we want your feedback to help finalise this draft WMMP in 2024.

BNH Feedback:

(1) Direction

The draft WMMP focuses on ways to reduce waste being created and sent to landfill, with actions aimed at the top of the 'waste hierarchy', e.g. redesigning, reusing or repairing items. It also supports actions further down, e.g. recycling materials. The WMMP's goals centre on keeping resources in circulation and minimising harm to the environment and communities from waste.

What do you think of this direction?

BNH supports the focus of the draft WMMP, on ways to reduce waste being created and sent to landfill, with actions aimed at the top of the 'waste hierarchy', e.g. redesigning, reusing or repairing items as well as recycling materials. We agree with the draft WMMP's goals that centre on keeping resources in circulation and minimising harm to the environment and communities from waste. Encouraging Aucklanders to engage in recycling or circular economies, moving away from the traditional linear economy, will support Council to achieve its waste reduction and emission reduction targets. BNH suggests that Council should undertake an educational initiative explaining the benefits of recycling and circular economies compared to the traditional linear economy, to help get Aucklanders more engaged in their waste minimisation efforts.

(2) Priorities For Action:

The draft plan includes 12 priorities for action. The following questions relate to specific priorities.

2A. Fortnightly rubbish collections.

Food scraps make up 41% of the rubbish in your rubbish bin. We have introduced a weekly food scraps collection service in mainland urban areas so you will have more space in your rubbish bin. Cities such as Christchurch, Tauranga and Hamilton, and in other parts of the world, show that by using a weekly food scraps bin households can comfortably make do with a fortnightly rubbish collection. We propose introducing a fortnightly rubbish collection for most Auckland households from 2026, with options for a larger bin for households that need it. Cost savings will be passed on to ratepayers. We will also investigate options to divert other items from household rubbish e.g. nappies and medical waste.

What do you think of this priority area?

BNH agrees with the focus of removing food scraps (which have made up 41% of the rubbish in our bins) from general rubbish through the weekly food scraps collection service in mainland urban areas. Now food scraps have been removed, you are proposing to introduce a fortnightly rubbish collection for most Auckland households from 2026, with options for a larger bin for households that need it. Cost savings will be passed on to ratepayers. We agree with this approach for households but ask that you ensure it is also fit for business ratepayers (see *Other Comments* below). We also support investigating options to divert other items from household rubbish, such as nappies and medical waste.

2B. Construction and demolition waste.

Waste from construction and demolition (C&D) activity makes up almost 40% of commercial waste in landfills. Reducing this waste and making better use of materials from C&D is a priority in the draft WMMP over the next six years. This will help us reduce Auckland's total waste to landfill by 30% by 2030.

What do you think of this priority area?

Your *Consultation Document* notes that waste from construction and demolition (C&D) activity makes up almost 40% of commercial waste in landfills. BNH agrees that reducing this waste and making better use of materials from C&D should be a priority in the draft WMMP over the next six years to help reduce Auckland's total waste to landfill by 30% by 2030. Given the likelihood that C&D waste is liable to increase as housing intensification increases, BNH believes that any initiatives to support successful outcomes in this area should be implemented as a matter of urgency.

2C. Priority waste materials.

We propose to focus on five priority waste materials:

- *organics (including food scraps, green waste, timber and cardboard/paper)*
- *plastics*

- *packaging*
 - *textiles*
 - *biosolids (the organic material resulting from sewage and wastewater treatment).*
- These are the materials that make up significant volumes in landfills, release greenhouse gases, or are problematic when they break down – such as microplastics in the environment.*

What do you think of these priority areas?

BNH agrees with your proposal to focus on five priority waste materials: • organics (including food scraps, green waste, timber and cardboard/paper); • plastics; • packaging; • textiles; • biosolids (the organic material resulting from sewage and wastewater treatment). We note that these are the materials that make up significant volumes in landfills, release greenhouse gases and are problematic when they break down – such as microplastics in the environment. Concentrating on the reduction and effective disposal of these materials should offer significant support to Council in achieving waste reduction and emission reduction targets, whilst also reducing negative impacts on the environment.

2D: Product stewardship.

Advocating to central government for a beverage container return scheme (CRS) and other mandatory product stewardship schemes is a key priority action within the draft WMMP. The CRS will ensure containers are returned for re-use and recycling instead of littering roadsides and waterways. This and other product stewardship schemes will shift the cost of waste disposal from ratepayers to producers, manufacturers and consumers, and drive higher rates of reuse and resource recovery.

What do you think of these priority areas?

BNH agrees with Council advocating to central government for a beverage container return scheme (CRS) and other mandatory product stewardship schemes as a key priority action within the draft WMMP. You say the CRS will ensure containers are returned for re-use and recycling instead of littering roadsides, waterways and town centres. You also believe this and other product stewardship schemes will shift the cost of waste disposal from ratepayers to producers, manufacturers and consumers, and drive higher rates of reuse and resource recovery. BNH would like to work with Council to ensure the implications for business (especially small and medium sized business) are fully understood.

2E. Litter and illegal dumping.

Addressing litter and illegal dumping to protect public health and the environment includes advocating to central government for better legal tools (e.g. instant fines) to deal with litter and collaborating with communities on local solutions for hot spot areas.

What do you think of these priority areas?

BNH agrees with your focus on addressing litter and illegal dumping to protect public health and the environment, including advocating to central government for better legal tools (e.g. instant fines) to deal with litter. We support Council collaborating with communities and businesses on local solutions for hot spot areas. BNH believes that the amenity of the CBD, our town centres and business districts should be maintained at a high level as it is an important factor in supporting the local economy by attracting visitors, customers and new businesses.

(3) Other Comments:

BNH acknowledges the fact that the priority area for fortnightly rubbish collections is aimed at households. There doesn't appear to be any reference in your documentation regarding a change to business collections, so our assumption is that weekly collections will remain in place for the business community. Should this not be the case, we would ask Council to ensure that

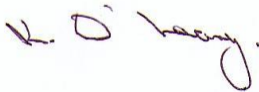
the needs of the business community are identified before any such proposal is introduced for business premises.

Conclusion:

As noted above, BNH supports the focus of the draft WMMP and the priorities and actions identified to reduce waste being created and sent to landfill, with actions aimed at the top of the 'waste hierarchy'. We would also reiterate that an educational initiative from Council including the content of the 'waste hierarchy' and the benefits of engaging in recycling and circular economies compared to the traditional linear economy, would help to get Aucklanders more engaged in their waste minimisation efforts, which would in turn support Council to achieve its waste reduction and emission reduction targets, whilst also reducing negative impacts on the environment.

Should there be any questions or other matters arising from this submission, we would be pleased to respond to these.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'K. O'Leary', written in a cursive style.

Kevin O'Leary
General Manager