



www.orataiao.org.nz

15 May 2018

WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL LONG TERM PLAN (WCC LTP) 2018-2028

OraTaiao: The New Zealand Climate and Health Council is submitting in response to Wellington City Council (WCC)'s Long Term Plan 2018-2028 public consultation¹.

Our 5 main messages are:

1. Adopt the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**² as **WCC's framework** for long-term planning (including **closing the growing wealth gap** in this city)
2. Apply WREMO's #1 resilience priority: **RISK REDUCTION**. This LTP must rapidly reduce climate risk by getting **our city's climate-damaging emissions on track to net zero well before 2050**
3. Integrate **strong climate action across all 5 WCC priority areas** – and take **strong climate control of Let's Get Welly Moving (LGWM)** transport planning
4. Stop **high-emissions** infrastructure investment – especially airport runway extension
5. Urgently update WCC's Low Carbon Plan 2016-2018 this year:
 - set strong targets towards **net zero capital city well before 2050 to limit warming to 2°C, and pursue efforts towards 1.5°C net zero in 2030s**
 - **report on our city's latest emissions progress (last report data 2014/15)**
 - monitor international aviation and shipping emissions risk
 - include realistic emissions costs in all WCC analysis

Climate context for Wellington city:

- New Zealand has signed up to meeting the 17 interlinked UN Sustainable Development Goals (Fig. 1). The vision is sustainable development for better wellbeing and equity. Each goal has a set of targets; needing central and local government, institutional, community and business action.
- It is time for WCC to identify actions our capital city can take (including in partnership with others) and make sustainable development the focus of this long term plan.

¹ <http://10yearplan.wellington.govt.nz/>
<http://10yearplan.wellington.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/40dc2ee660/FINAL-MASTER-consultation-document.pdf>

² <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

- As well as limiting global warming well below 2°C³, NZ has also committed to: *“pursue efforts to limit the (global average) temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change”*.
- NZ has a special responsibility to the Pacific as citizens, family and neighbours, where warming beyond 1.5°C will render homelands uninhabitable.
- Limiting warming to 1.5°C currently requires global zero net emissions *“well before 2040”*⁴ – and developed countries like NZ are expected to reduce emissions sooner.

What this means for WCC’s 5 priority areas:

Firstly, any long term plan that ignores climate change is **not** a long term plan.

Arguably, the greatest challenge this city faces is global climate change. As per WREMO’s new risk approach, **risk reduction** is top priority. That means mitigation (rapid reduction of climate-damaging emissions) is top priority for resilience. Rising climate adaptation costs (including infrastructure replacement and insurance) adds urgency to mitigation investment.

WCC already has agreed on the Low Carbon Plan 2016-2018, which requires 10% emissions reductions city-wide (on 2001 levels) by 2020, then other target reductions through to 80% by 2050. But city emissions have not been measured since early 2016 when these decreased by 1.9% from 2001 to 2014⁵. This means our city emissions need to drop by at least a further 8% from 2014 to reach WCC’s agreed 2020 target, then by a further 30% to 2030, to 80% below 2001 levels by 2050.

WCC’s Low Carbon Plan targets are insufficient to reach NZ’s overall 2°C net zero by 2050 target (let alone efforts towards 1.5°C which mean net zero in 2030s). Yet there is no planning in this draft LTP to reach even the modest WCC Low Carbon Plan targets.

WCC’s Low Carbon Plan targets are invisible in both the LTP consultation document, and in last year’s Let’s Get Welly Moving consultation - despite transport driving half of Wellington’s emissions.

Proposed so-called “economic catalyst projects” – the airport runway extension, movie museum, convention centre and indoor arena – omit any analysis of climate damage. Currently, the social cost of carbon is conservatively predicted to be NZ\$88 per tonne by 2020 rising to NZ\$176 by 2050⁶, so these costs must be included in all WCC analysis. This includes analysis for projects that rely on increased travel, especially high-impact international travel.

³ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Adoption of the Paris agreement (Conference of Parties 21), 2015. <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/109.pdf>

⁴ Walsh B, Ciais P, Janssens IA, Peñuelas J, et al. Pathways for balancing CO₂ emissions and sinks. Nat Commun. 2017;8:14856. <https://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms14856>. See also <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/13042017/paris-climate-agreement-greenhouse-gas-emissions-global-warming>

⁵ Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Wellington City and the Greater Wellington Region 2000-2015. <http://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Climate-change/CommunityGHGInventoryWlgnCityRegion2016.pdf>

⁶ Mid-range social costs of carbon in 2017 dollars. Source: Chapman R, Preval N, Howden-Chapman P. How economic analysis can contribute to understanding the links between housing and health. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2017;14(9).pii:E996. <http://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/14/9/996/htm> 2. Methods.

1. Resilience and Environment/ Te manahua me te taiao

OraTaiao strongly supports waste minimisation as an important means to reach nearly net zero climate-damaging emissions during the term of this LTP. We encourage WCC to set annual milestones and a much more ambitious target than reducing waste by a third over the next 9 years.

We also strongly support climate adaptation measures, and urge WCC to allocate more funding over time, as the costs of both climate clean-ups and insurance cover are likely to rise. How much more debt to take on should be tempered by rising climate clean-up costs – and what is needed to drive Wellington’s climate-damaging emissions to net zero well before 2050, fairly and fast.

We note with the proposed creation of the world’s first predator-free capital, that human changes to our climate present an even greater threat to biodiversity, as our continued climate damage changes environmental conditions faster than the natural ability to change and adapt. Until our city’s emissions are net zero, arguably humans are Wellington’s most dangerous predator.

2. Housing/ Ngā kāinga

OraTaiao strongly supports WCC rapidly increasing the supply of healthy housing that is affordable to buy, rent and live in, especially social housing. This contributes to at least three of the UN SDGs.

Healthy housing must also be affordable to live in as the costs of climate-damaging emissions rise – this includes housing that requires minimal or no energy to heat or cool, connects with safe walking, cycling and affordable reliable electric public transport, supported by EVs for affordable hourly hire within easy reach. However, resource consents should not be given for building or renovating in areas at significant risk from sea level rises, flooding and slips.

We strongly support the introduction of a Wellington Rental Warrant of Fitness, working in partnership with the University of Otago to ensure healthy housing is the right of all Wellingtonians. When housing is in short supply, people renting are forced to tolerate unacceptable unhealthy living conditions.

3. Transport/ Ngā waka haere

OraTaiao strongly supports:

- **Earlier delivery of the Cycling Master Plan, preferably by 2020** (not 2038 and certainly not 2053). Wellingtonians urgently need all age, all ability, safe cycling routes around our city, so that “the healthy choices are the easy choices” (public health mantra) for everyone. Anything less carries a huge health cost – both in the short and longer climate health term.
- **Introduction of weekend parking fees** to discourage private car use, plus lower cost public transport access for community services card holders
- **Transport-related initiatives** such as safer speed limits, bus priority improvements and better bus shelters. We note though resilience-related roading projects will be increasingly important to deal with increasing climate changes, **the top priority must be risk reduction – using this LTP to fast-drive Wellington’s transport emissions to net zero well before 2050.**

OraTaiao strongly supports better active and public transport initiatives from Let’s Get Welly Moving (refer our LGWM submission – including scaling up LGWM active and public transport). However, we have serious concerns about the LGWM process, the failure to include or even acknowledge WCC’s Low Carbon Plan emissions reductions targets, the failure to apply the Low Carbon Plan’s sustainable

transport hierarchy⁷, the failure to take public feedback seriously in analysing scenarios, and the illogical scaling up of active and public transport options with increased roading in the proposed scenarios. The double-spend on roading, which is destabilising our climate to the detriment of human health and our city's economy, has to end. The cheapest and most efficient way to decongest roading is investing in better active and public transport options, plus travel demand measures – without any new roading spending.

So here are the transport step-changes our city needs now:

- complete a **comprehensive network of safe, attractive pedestrian and cycling routes for all ages and abilities** across our region by 2020 (separate from motorised traffic where possible, lower vehicle speed limits and traffic calming measures where it is not).
- **start work this year on all-electric light rail from trains to planes** along the people-dense route connecting the railway station, hospital, zoo, Kilbirnie, Miramar and airport.
- convert **all buses to electric** as soon as possible before 2020.
- introduce **travel demand measures** (plus more equitable access) to reduce one-occupant car-driving, reduce congestion, unhealthy air pollution and climate-hostile GHG emissions.
- encourage measures to **reduce overall transport needs** by increasing urban densification and brown-field rather than green-field new housing developments.
- Increase fivefold **electric car-share vehicles for hire as public good transport** for affordable hourly hire in 2018 (hundreds of car-share vehicles replace thousands of private cars – so our city's scarce land houses more people, not cars), and grow EVs for all private use
- set a bold target of 80% of the region's residents by 2020 (spread across all ages, genders & abilities) can get their healthy physical activity from more active transport choices.
- prioritise safe, healthy active transport and public transport in areas with high Māori and Pacific populations, which are designed in partnership with these communities.
- use focus groups and structured individual interviews, to identify both barriers and incentives for greater active transport, public transport and car share uptake (covering diverse socioeconomic situations, culture, locations, household structure, age, stage, gender, responsibilities/activities, and physical abilities/disabilities).
- advocate for the completion of the **electrification of all the heavy rail links to Wellington** including the North Island Main trunk line, **electrification of the freight truck fleet** and **coastal shipping** to move freight.

We note that:

- Around half of NZ adults do not get the weekly physical exercise needed for good health⁸
- More public transport and car share use can also increase physical activity and health
- Active and public transport investment (including car share) actively decongests our roads
- E-bikes are revolutionary in our city, flattening hills and conquering the wind
- Transport design can minimise distances, encouraging urban development in resilient areas
- Equity of transport access for all ages, abilities and socioeconomic situations, is essential.

4. Sustainable Growth/ Te kaunake tauwhiro

OraTaiao strongly supports planning for population growth by adopting and reaching the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We have scarce land resources and even scarcer atmospheric resources, and the growing gaps between Wellingtonians' wellbeing must be reversed.

⁷ Wellington City Council. Low carbon capital: a climate change action plan for Wellington 2016–2018. 2016. <https://wellington.govt.nz/~media/services/environment-and-waste/environment/files/low-carbon-capital-plan-2016-2018.pdf> p.20

⁸ New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine. NZCPHM Policy Statement on Physical Activity. Wellington: NZCPHM, 2014. https://www.nzcpmh.org.nz/media/81766/2014_11_28_physical_activity_and_health_policy_statement.pdf

We strongly support urgently reviewing the District Plan and Urban Growth Plan, for a fast fair transition to net zero Wellington. Heathy housing must be affordable to buy and rent, and affordable to live in as the costs of climate-damaging emissions rise – this includes housing that requires minimal or no energy to heat or cool, connects with safe walking, cycling and affordable reliable electric public transport, supported by EVs for affordable hourly hire within easy reach. These plans must also start the retreat of buildings from areas at risk from sea level rises, flooding and slips. Resource consents should not be given for building or renovating in at risk areas.

5. Arts and Culture/ Ngā toi me te ahurea

OraTaiao has no comments to make on this LTP priority area, except to repeat that likely climate changes and the social cost of carbon must be included in all WCC analysis, including projects that rely on increased travel, especially high-impact international travel. Currently, the social cost of carbon is conservatively predicted to be NZ\$88 per tonne by 2020 rising to NZ\$176 by 2050⁹, so until international travel relies on renewable energy, global pressure can be expected to reduce this travel. A recent analysis in *Nature* has estimated tourism as now responsible for 8% of global emissions, and rising¹⁰.

Thank you for the opportunity for OraTaiao to make this written submission on WCC's 2018-2028 Long Term Plan. We wish to present our ideas and speak with the Council to support our submission.

Yours sincerely

Dr Alex Macmillan, MB ChB, MPH (Hons), PhD, FNZCPHM, Public Health Physician/Senior Lecturer, University of Otago;
Co-convenor, OraTaiao: The New Zealand Climate and Health Council

Liz Springford, BA, MPP (merit), Policy Analyst, Wellington;
Executive Board Member, OraTaiao: The New Zealand Climate and Health Council

Dr R Scott Metcalfe, MB ChB, DComH, FAFPHM (RACP), FNZCPHM, Public Health Physician /Chief Advisor, Wellington;
Executive Board Member, OraTaiao: The New Zealand Climate and Health Council

Mr Russell Tregonning, MB ChB, FRACS, FNZOA, Orthopaedic Surgeon, Wellington;
Executive Board Member, OraTaiao: The New Zealand Climate and Health Council

for OraTaiao: The New Zealand Climate and Health Climate Council
www.orataiao.org.nz

Primary contact point:

Liz Springford phone 021 0617 638, email: liz.springford@gmail.com
c/- 16 Chatham Street, Berhampore, Wellington 6023

⁹ Mid-range social costs of carbon in 2017 dollars. Source: Chapman R, Preval N, Howden-Chapman P. How economic analysis can contribute to understanding the links between housing and health. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2017;14(9).pii:E996.
<http://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/14/9/996/htm> 2. Methods.

¹⁰ <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-018-0141-x>

About OraTaiao:

- [OraTaiao: The New Zealand Climate and Health Council](#) calls for urgent and fair climate action – for real health gains right now, and to safeguard a fair healthy future for NZers.
- OraTaiao is a not-for-profit, non-partisan, incorporated health professional society, with a growing 600-strong membership and support base of doctors, nurses, midwives, students and academics (including all NZ's leading international climate health experts).
- We are well supported by the wider NZ health sector (see NZ health professionals' [Call for Action on Climate Change and Health](#)), and by the global climate health movement (including founding organisational member of the [Global Climate and Health Alliance](#)).



Figure 1 UN Sustainable Development Goals