AUCKLAND COUNCIL **WASTE SOLUTIONS**

AK HAVE YOUR SAY

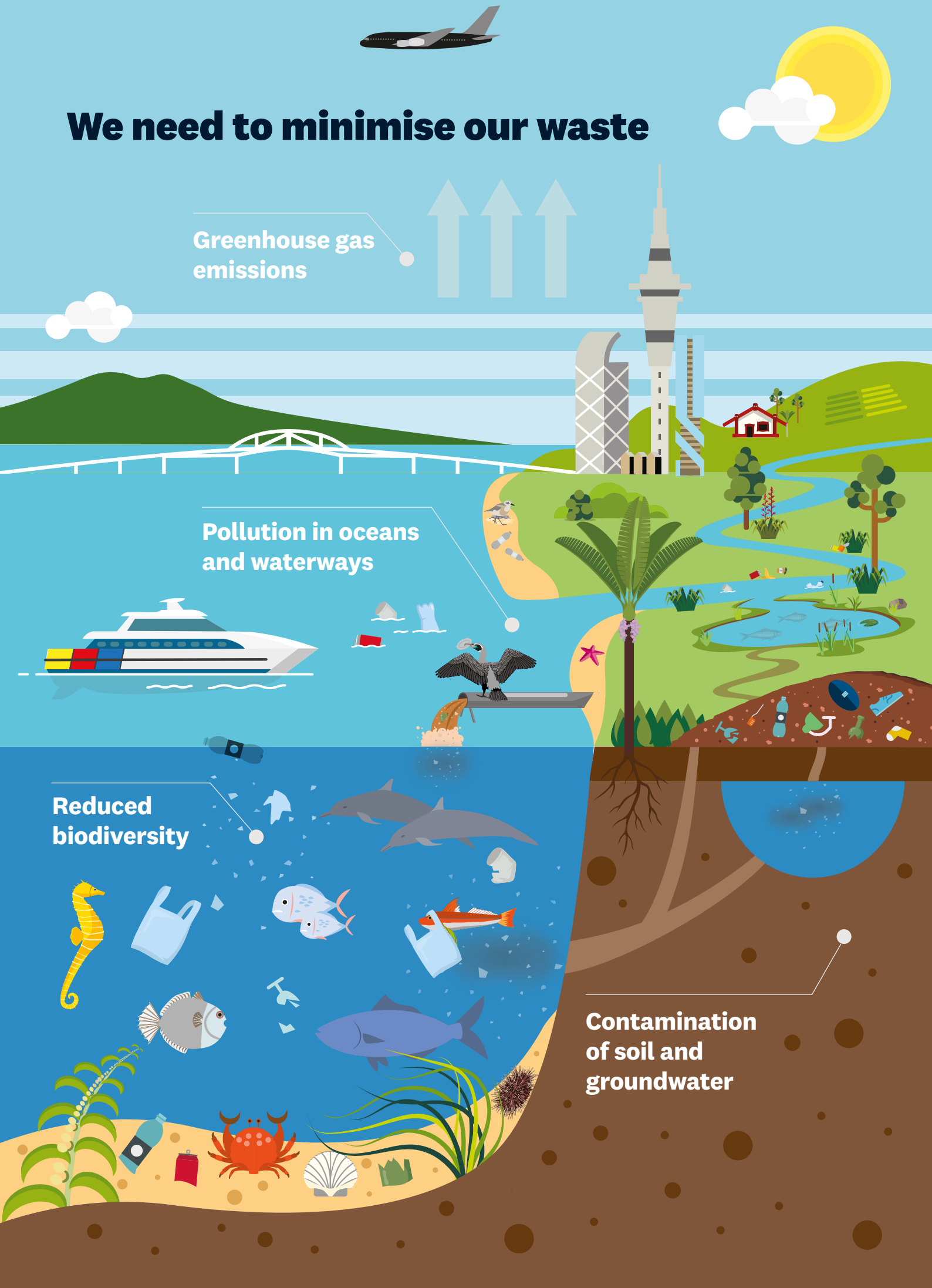
He Kapohanga Iti i te Mahere Hukihuki mō te Whakahaeretanga me te Whakaitinga o te Para 2024 ki Tāmaki Makaurau

Snapshot of Auckland's Draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan 2024

January 2024

aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

We need to minimise our waste



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1. Waste is everyone's responsibility

Waste is everyone's business. We all have an impact on the amount of waste we generate, and on where that waste ends up. In Auckland, around 1.5 million tonnes of waste goes to mixed waste landfills each year. That's enough to fill Eden Park every week. The amount of waste going to landfill remains a growing challenge to Auckland's vision of Zero Waste by 2040. If we continue like this, we will be sending an estimated 1.7 million tonnes of waste to landfill each year by 2040.

The true costs of waste

The financial cost of collection, transport and disposal of waste is only a small fraction of the true costs of waste. Many costs are hidden below the surface, affecting the economy, the environment and our communities.

2. Auckland: we're making a difference

We started on our pathway to Zero Waste in 2012. In recent years we have:

- Reduced household kerbside rubbish by nearly 12 per cent since 2010 to 141 kg/person in 2022
- Agreed on a fair and equitable charging system for collecting and disposing of household refuse which we are implementing across the region
- Rolled out kerbside food scraps collections to urban areas after successful trials
- Expanded our resource recovery network from five community recycling centres in 2018 to 13 centres in 2023.
- Worked alongside Māori, community and industry groups (including the construction sector) to trial and fund new and innovative approaches to manage and reduce waste.

This has worked well, but there are still significant challenges and opportunities:

- Households contribute around 20 per cent of the waste sent to mixed waste landfills, but we have fewer tools to reduce the remaining 80 per cent that is business and commercial waste.
- We get data on waste going to mixed waste landfills, but have limited information about waste, such as soils, going to other types of landfills (e.g. cleanfills). This means the full scale of the waste issue is unclear.
- Materials that emit more greenhouse gases in landfill, such as garden waste, food scraps, timber and paper, add to greenhouse gas emissions and means valuable nutrients and resources are lost from our environment and economy.
- Climate change impacts linked to dealing with waste from flooding and adapting to sea level rise are a growing challenge.
- While kerbside services are an effective way for households to recycle, a lot of material is still going to landfill; e.g. only around 13 per cent of plastics (including industrial, commercial and household products) are recovered for recycling in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland.
- Microplastics including from litter and illegal dumping are increasing in our land and water, raising concerns about harmful toxins and impacts on ecology and people.

The NZ Waste Strategy 2023 provides a nationwide pathway to change the way we manage waste including options for product stewardship, supporting right to repair systems, and better litter, illegal dumping and hazardous waste enforcement and tracking systems.

3. Our new draft plan

Zero Waste – a clear and ambitious vision

We expressed our commitment to Zero Waste in Auckland's first Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP) in 2012 and restated this ambitious vision in 2018.

Te matawhānui/Vision

Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland aspires to be Zero Waste by 2040 by:

- Working towards a circular economy
- Using resources for their best and highest value for as long as possible
- Taking care of people and the environment.

Zero Waste is about valuing and restoring the health and wellbeing of te taiao; land, air and water.

This means:

- Reducing the resources we take from the environment
- Re-designing things to preserve the value of resources and reduce environmental impacts
- Caring for, re-using, repairing, restoring and valuing our resources.
- Ensuring the final disposal does not diminish the wellbeing of people, the land, air or water.

Preventing waste is the most powerful form of reduction

Preventing waste in the first place is the best option to reduce its impacts on people and the environment. The waste hierarchy (page 8) outlines the most preferred options. These target waste reduction (such as rethinking how products are designed and extending their life span) and options to re-use, repair or repurpose items. Working on actions at the top of the waste hierarchy is a focus of this draft WMMP.

The waste hierarchy

Most preferred option

Circular Management

Reduce, rethink, redesign
Reduce resources being used, re-design to avoid producing waste.

Reuse, repair, repurpose
Keep things in use for as long as possible, without significant reprocessing.

Decision to dispose

Waste Management

Recycle, compost, anaerobic digestion
Process materials to make the same or different material of similar value when reuse is no longer possible.

Downcycle
Process materials to make the same or different material of less value. e.g., lower grade plastics.

Recover value
Recover any remaining value, sustainably and without increasing emissions e.g., chemical recycling, renewable energy.

Dispose
For any truly residual waste, treat to remove or reduce potential harm before final disposal.

Least preferred option

Goals and targets to direct our efforts

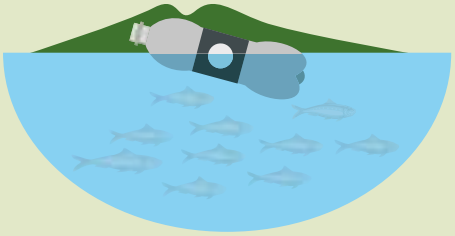
The goals of the draft WMMP set out what we want to achieve. For more detail on the principles and objectives that support these two goals, refer to sections 6 and 7 of the draft WMMP.

Goal 1:

Maximise circularity of resources and products in accordance with the waste hierarchy.

Goal 2:

Minimise harm by addressing the impacts of waste on the environment and communities including reducing harmful waste, litter and illegal dumping.



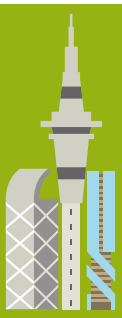
The targets for the next six years have been chosen to provide measurable milestones towards our ambitious horizon of Zero Waste. They are a continuation of the targets set in the 2018 WMMP, focusing on total waste to mixed waste landfill, kerbside waste collected by council-contracted services and waste generated by the council's operations.

We have set new targets to reduce waste by 2030:

New targets to reduce waste by 2030:

Total waste
30%

Kerbside waste
29%



Council waste
50%

Compared to 2022

Refer to section 9 of the draft WMMP for further information on the targets.

Priorities for action

The draft WMMP proposes to focus our actions on 12 priority areas. Refer to section 8 of the draft WMMP for further information.

Empower partnerships with iwi and community

- Strengthen ways of working with mana whenua and deliver Māori outcomes through waste initiatives
- Continue expanding and strengthening the Resource Recovery Network and its services

Target specific activities and materials

- Target construction and demolition (C&D) waste
- Focus on five priority waste streams: organics, plastics, packaging, textiles and biosolids
- Strengthen our focus on disaster preparedness and climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience

Advocacy for future action

- To move up the waste hierarchy, including source reduction, re-use and right to repair
- For implementation of a container return scheme and other mandatory product stewardship actions

Delivering direct action

- Support Aucklanders to use their kerbside recycling and foodscraps bins effectively and shift to regionwide rates-funded collection services
- Transition to a fortnightly rubbish collection service
- Accelerate efforts to minimise operational wastes from the Auckland Council Group
- Address litter and illegal dumping to protect public health and the environment

Partner with others to achieve a Zero Waste Auckland

4. What this means for you

Council services

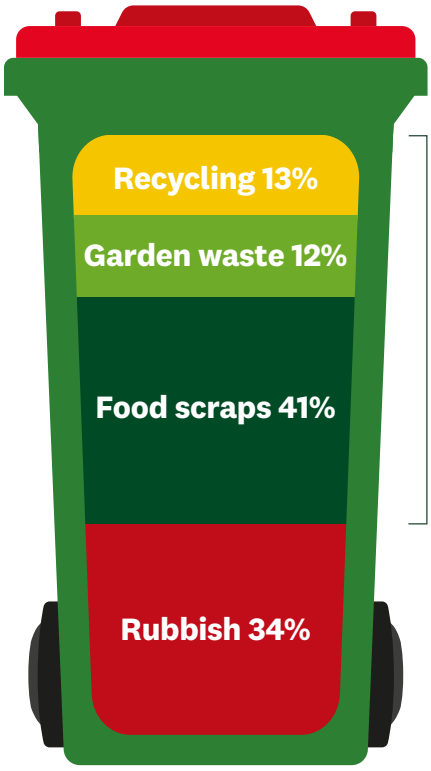
We will continue providing core services such as household kerbside collections, with some changes to help reduce waste to landfill even further. Our current and proposed services include*:

What	How often	When
Recycling collection	Fortnightly	Already in place
Food scraps collection for mainland urban areas	Weekly	Already in place
Inorganic collection	Annually	Already in place
Rates-funded refuse collection with a choice of 3 bin sizes	Weekly (until 2026)	Extended to all the region from 2024
Rates-funded refuse collection with a choice of 3 bins sizes	Transition to fortnightly	Move to fortnightly collections from 2026, once food scraps service is well established

*** With some variation to account for local conditions.**
Refer sections 11.5 and 12.6 of the draft WMMP for further information.

Why fortnightly refuse collections?

Moving from weekly to fortnightly rubbish collections is a key opportunity to keep recyclables and food scraps out of landfill and beneficially reused. Once the food scraps service is well established, we expect a standard fortnightly collection to meet the needs of most residential households because there won't be food scraps taking up space and rotting in rubbish bins. A fortnightly service also means less time is spent collecting rubbish, reducing collection costs. Service cost savings are passed on to ratepayers. Keeping recyclables and food scraps out of rubbish bins could also mean greenhouse gas emissions savings of as much as 50,000 tonnes of CO2-e per year (equivalent of 30,000 average-size cars).



65% of our rubbish is a resource

Based on rubbish bin surveys prior to the food scraps collection rollout.

For households needing extra support, we can offer alternatives to ensure they aren't left struggling with a bin capacity that doesn't meet their needs. We will also consider how to incentivise householders to be very low waste producers. For example, we already provide an option for lower rates charges for households using a smaller (80L) rubbish bin and are exploring how we could introduce a monthly rubbish service for ultra-low waste producers.

Many councils in New Zealand have already moved to fortnightly rubbish collections, for example Hamilton, Christchurch, Tauranga, Thames Coromandel, Central Otago, Hauraki, Timaru and Matamata-Piako. Dunedin is due to switch in 2024 and other councils are also consulting with their residents on this change. Collecting rubbish less frequently is already common overseas with a growing number of areas in England and Wales moving to three-weekly or monthly rubbish collections.

Resource Recovery Network

We have 13 Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) operating across Auckland (see map 15 below). Here, you can drop off unwanted goods, and find a pre-loved bargain. We're working to set up more centres, with plans for 21 CRCs plus two larger, commercially focused Resource Recovery Parks, by 2031. The centres are already achieving beyond expectations, diverting around 80 per cent of all material that they receive away from landfill, and generating local employment opportunities.

Refer sections 11.4 and 12.7 of the draft WMMP for further information.

Hauraki Gulf Islands

We provide waste services on Waiheke, Aotea / Great Barrier, Rakino and Kawau Islands. Isolation and the expense of shipping materials off-island for disposal or recycling make waste services much more expensive than on the mainland. This cost is subsidised from region-wide rates funding, with the intention to reduce the subsidy over time. Together with island communities, we have developed the Hauraki Gulf Islands Draft Waste Plan (HGI Waste Plan) as an appendix to the draft WMMP. This recognises the unique nature of waste management and minimisation challenges and needs in the Hauraki Gulf, and the importance of developing on-island solutions.

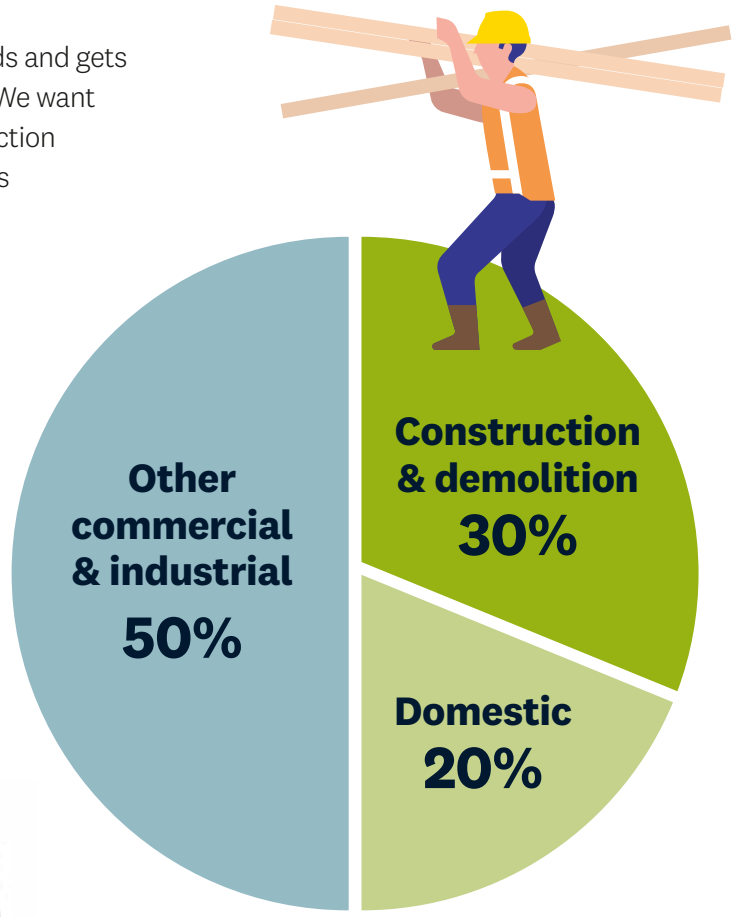
Commercial waste

Tackling and reducing the 80 per cent of waste that is commercially generated.

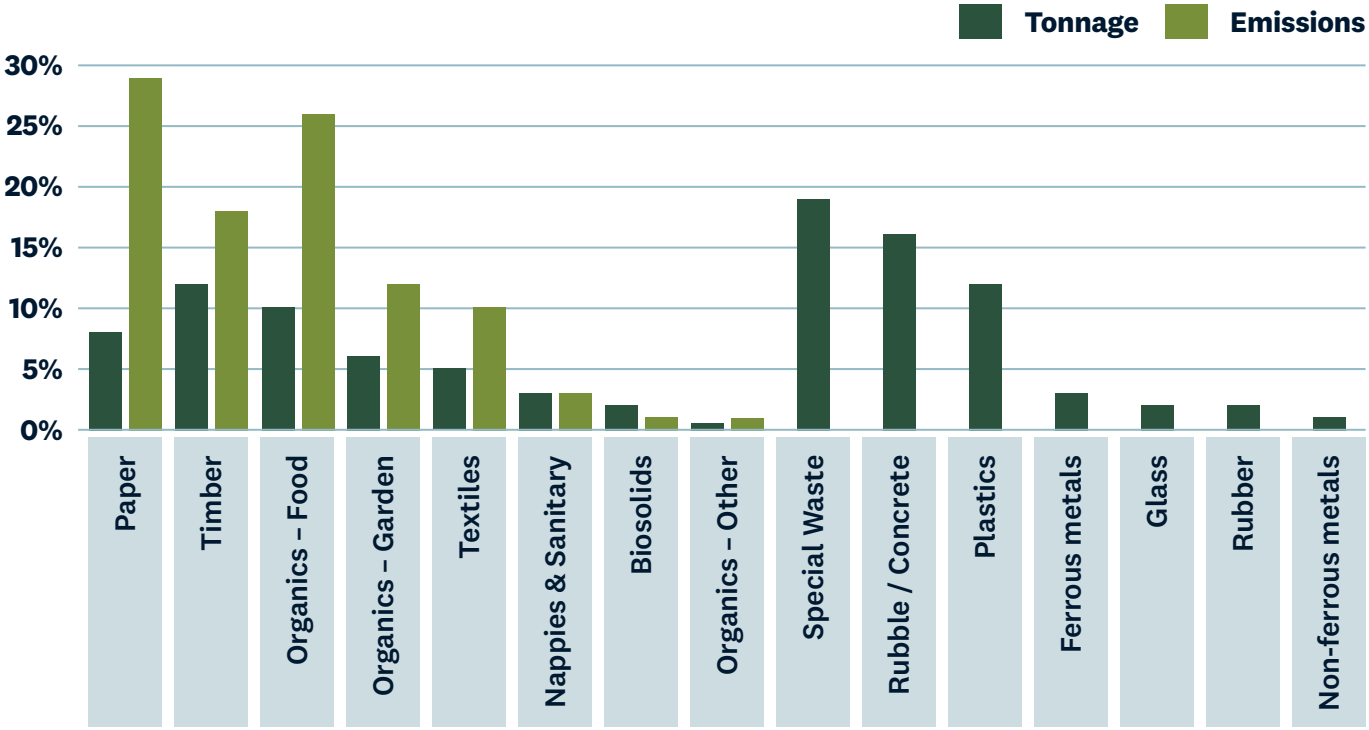
Most of Auckland's waste is not generated by households and gets collected and disposed of by private waste companies. We want to prioritise waste minimisation efforts with the construction and demolition (C&D) sector specifically, as well as focus on these five waste streams across the region:

- Organics
- Plastics
- Packaging
- Textiles
- Biosolids.

Our goal is to work collaboratively with businesses, community, and central government to reduce the generation of these wastes and divert more materials from landfill for useful purposes.



Information on the types of waste going to landfill helps us know where to target our efforts. The figure below shows the proportions of the types of waste going to landfill by weight and in terms of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions they generate in landfill. Emissions apply mainly to organic wastes, with some materials releasing more GHG during decomposition than others.



Estimated composition of waste disposed to landfill, as % by tonnage and emissions (CO2-e). Refer sections 12.3 and 12.4 of the draft WMMP for further information.

Construction and demolition waste

Construction and demolition (C&D) is the single largest activity generating waste to landfill. It is an estimated 30 per cent of total waste to mixed waste landfills and nearly 40 per cent of commercial waste. C&D waste includes significant amounts of soil and spoil transported to other types of landfills around the region and beyond.

Better planning and on-site management can help the industry to divert materials such as metal, plasterboard, plastic pipe and wrap, and timber from landfill. This will also save money. We partner with the C&D industry, tertiary institutions and social enterprises to research and promote ways to reduce C&D waste, and we have seen a willingness to try new methods and materials as they emerge. We are continuing to develop and showcase best practice in zero waste deconstruction and building within our own projects, and reduce reliance on materials such as expanded polystyrene and fibre-cement that are problematic at the end-of-life or during construction. Our proposed actions include support for specifications and markets for recovered materials, advocacy for changes to the way potentially contaminated soils are managed, and support for waste brokering services for C&D waste.

Organic waste

Organic waste (including food scraps, green waste, timber and cardboard/paper) are the source of most GHGs from landfills. We will work with both households and large food waste producers and processors to find alternatives to landfilling organic wastes. Further research is also needed to better understand opportunities and help focus our efforts to reduce other organic wastes in Auckland including paper and garden waste.

Textiles

Textile waste has a high environmental footprint, including embodied emissions during manufacture and transport. The trend for fast fashion, where items are quickly discarded and replaced, represents a significant waste of resources. Beyond clothing, textiles include fabrics such as bedding and towels, carpets and upholstery. There are limited opportunities to divert textiles in Aotearoa / New Zealand. Many recycling initiatives to date involve downcycling of textiles. Better opportunities exist further up the waste hierarchy, such as changing attitudes about fast fashion and supporting opportunities and regulation for better design, durability and recyclability of textiles.

Plastics and packaging

Plastic and packaging waste presents challenges to the recycling sector as well as negative effects on the environment and human health. It is estimated that only 13 per cent of the 190,000 tonnes of plastic entering Auckland each year is recovered for recycling. Most of this material is manufactured for consumer and commercial packaging but cannot easily be recovered for recycling. Just over half of the plastics by weight in household rubbish bins are soft plastic bags and film and can't be included in council recycling collections anywhere in New Zealand. We support government regulation to implement a national product stewardship scheme for plastic packaging, and to encourage manufacturers to switch to packaging that can be collected at kerbside, as well as consider refillable/reusable packaging systems to reduce single-use packaging.

Biosolids

Biosolids are the organic materials resulting from treatment of wastewater. In Auckland, most biosolids are being used to rehabilitate Puketutu Island quarry in Māngere. This project will be complete in the early 2030s and we will need new uses for over 200,000 tonnes of biosolids per year. Watercare will start working with mana whenua, communities and stakeholders to investigate options to reduce and reuse biosolids and agree a plan for their future.

5. Advocacy

If we are going to turn the tide on waste, fundamental changes will be needed so that we all take responsibility for waste generation. We need delivery of the New Zealand Waste Strategy to drive change. As part of the draft WMMP, we will continue to ask central government to unlock more of the tools that are available through legislation, and to work collaboratively to advocate for Zero Waste action.

Container Return Scheme and product stewardship

We would like to see implementation of the proposed nationwide container return scheme for beverage containers. Building a refundable deposit into the purchase price of drinks could greatly increase their recycling rate, reduce litter, and lessen costs for ratepayers.

We also support the urgent implementation of mandatory, nationwide product stewardship schemes for the six 'priority products' declared by the government in 2020. These include plastic packaging, tyres, agrichemicals and their containers, e-waste, farm plastics and refrigerants. We will also advocate for a wider range of products to be declared as priority products, such as textiles and mattresses. Under these schemes, producers and consumers share responsibility for the end of life of their products and packaging, ensuring greater reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials.

Refer to sections 10.4 and 12.5 of the draft WMMP for further information.

6. Litter and illegal dumping

Ongoing litter and illegal dumping is not only unsightly, but it also harms freshwater, marine life and soils. This is especially true of hazardous substances or plastic items in our environment that degrade into microplastics. We are prioritising loose litter services and working with organisations to develop campaigns and interventions to address litter to address this issue. We also propose to continue our advocacy for better regulatory tools to act as an effective deterrent, together with a beverage container return scheme to reduce litter.

Refer to sections 11.6 and 12.9 of the draft WMMP for further information.

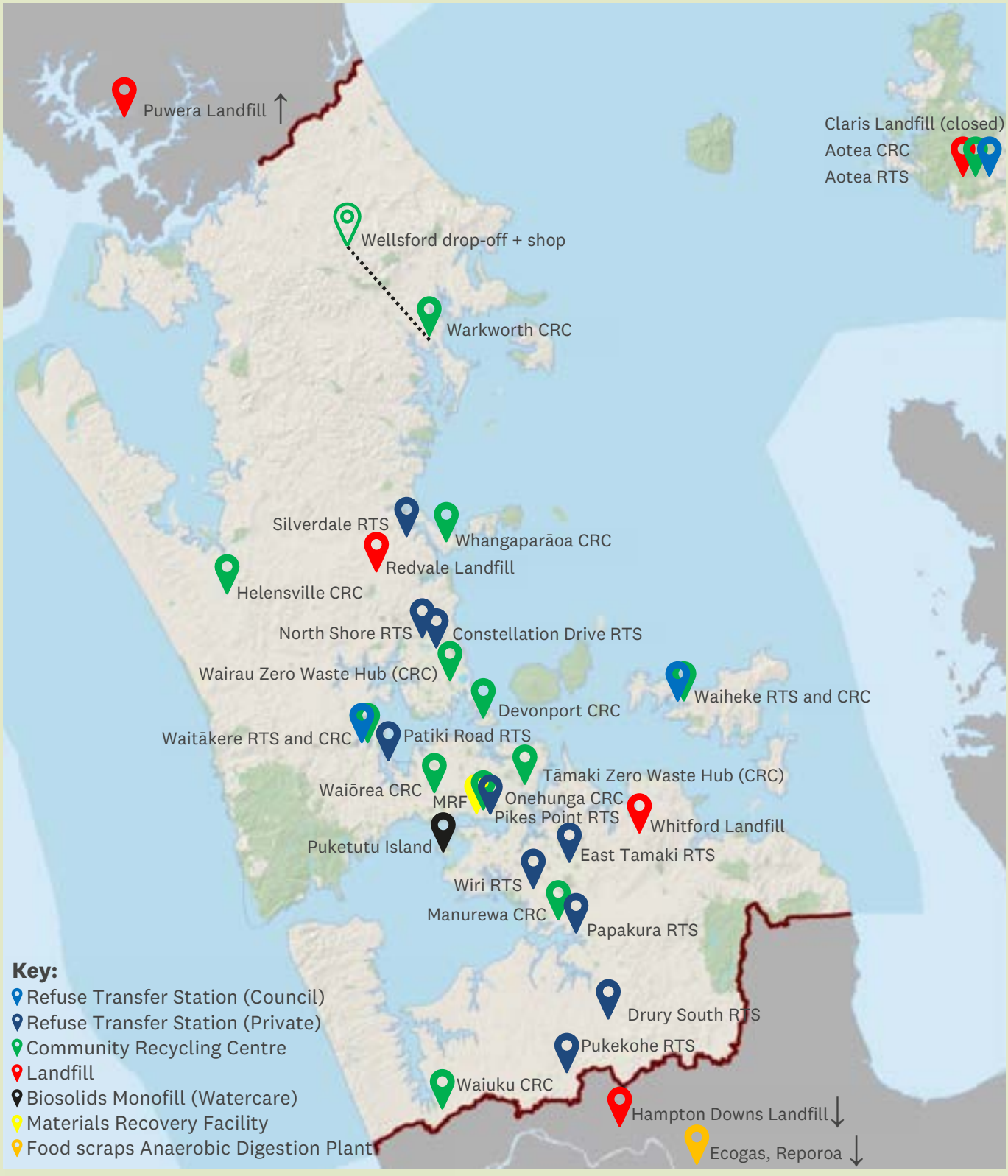
7. Working together

We have built good relationships across Auckland, using partnerships and innovative approaches to design low-waste solutions with our communities. Our community-led waste minimisation efforts are delivering world-leading results. We need to do the same with the 80 per cent of waste that is commercially generated and managed. This means strengthening our relationships with waste-producing businesses, the waste and recycling industries, mana whenua, mataawaka, schools, community and other organisations. This will help us put our proposed action plan into practice.

Refer to sections 11.1, 12.1 and 12.2 for further information.

Our Waste Minimisation and Innovation Fund seed-funds ideas to minimise waste. Funding is available for businesses, community groups, schools and Māori/iwi organisations.

Map of key facilities for diverting and processing waste and materials



8. He pārongo atu anō me ngā ara e tuku kōrero ai koe

8. Further information and ways to have your say

We want your feedback to help us make decisions on our draft WMMP.

There are a variety of ways you can Have Your Say including written and online feedback forms, emailing Waste Plan 2024 **wasteplan2024@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz**, or attending face-to-face events. Consultation opens 28 February and closes 28 March 2024.

Please visit your local Auckland Council library and service centre for a copy of the draft WMMP, a snapshot summary of the plan, and feedback forms. Alternatively visit **AKLHaveYourSay.nz** where you can find an online feedback form and further information including:

- Online copies of the draft WMMP and related documents
- Events where you can have your say
- Project steps and timeline.

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