
ICW SUBMISSION TO TE ATAKURA: FIRST TO ZERO. Wellington's blueprint for a Zero Carbon Capital – May 2019

INTRODUCTION

ICW (Inner City Wellington) supports WCC's aspiration to be the 'first to zero' as a Zero Carbon capital, congratulates the WCC on work done in relation to this to date, and welcome the opportunity to comment on the consultation document.

This submission is in two sections to address the "Six big moves" as well as the UNDP Goals (United Nations Development Programme Goals) which both national and local governments have signed up to.

The Mayor states in introduction '*.. being First to Zero means giving all Wellingtonians information and choices about how to reduce our individual and collective carbon footprint for future generations.*' '*.. it is your turn to tell us what we have got right and what else we should be doing.*'

However, the document appears to be primarily aimed at raising awareness rather than being a plan with tangible actions and timeframes for progress (although there are some almost hidden away in the many words and pictures).

The options presented are not quantified in any way, which makes it impossible to determine optimal strategies.

SECTION 1: 'SIX BIG MOVES' PRESENTED FOR A ZERO CARBON WELLINGTON

ICW responds to each of these in brief as follows.

1. *Shaping our plan for a growing city relates to coping with population growth and starkly sets only two options: growing up, unlike growing out, will lead to a zero carbon future.*
 - **ICW believe this is misleading** and designed to support a predetermined focus on maximising growth predominantly in the inner city. Depending on how it is planned it would be possible to grow out and also achieve a zero carbon future. Having said that, ICW is not averse to medium/high density housing. We simply do not accept built infrastructure can be looked at in isolation from other factors such as resilience, the environment in which the built infrastructure is set, community development etc.
2. *Getting us moving in all the right ways*
 - **ICW wholeheartedly supports** the aims here and would welcome speedy progress as we see this as a crucial underpinning to healthy living in the city as well as its contribution to the zero carbon initiative.
3. *Becoming a leader in high performing buildings.*
 - **ICW contends** that in addition to the factors currently noted, more focus is required on healthier environments with a broader definition of what this means to include impact for mental health as well as physical health of individuals and communities.
4. *Giving shared mobility options a lift*
 - **ICW submits that** these are all good initiatives but must not detract from the primary responsibility for provision of public transport that is accessible for all.

5. Building a Wellington climate lab

- **ICW recognises** this as a worthy initiative but without costs and outcome measures it is difficult to comment further

6. Going for a zero emissions transport fleet

- **ICW notes** that the importance of national Government leadership is highlighted here.
- **ICW supports** the further actions planned by WCC **and submits** that WCC should be more active in pushing the need for Government action prior to the next election.

'PLAN AT A GLANCE' HINDRANCES TO CONSULTATION

The breadth and complexity of the issues relating to the goal of Zero Carbon by 2050 is amply demonstrated in the "Plan at a glance" and throughout the document. However, this caused some frustration in finding where to make useful comment. Some examples of where we found the document frustrating from just one area are

- P44 *Governance – 're-evaluating how the Council takes account of climate change in each Council paper...'* ICW questions how this is going to help. If it IS relevant it should be part of the body of the paper.
- P 45 *New Commitments – what might be needed?... as a matter of priority the Council needs a piece of work to understand how far this plan will get us...* But 'this' is not a plan. Until there are specified actions, timelines, and expected outcomes along with costs, it is really only a 'wish-list' of worthy options, most of which are easy to support in principle but not a good basis for determining if or when the goal of zero carbon would be achieved.
- P 46 *Invest in energy savings across the business -... Council has built up a menu of energy saving projects to invest in but... has not progressed... devote more attention to investments that could result in significant financial savings...* ICW questions why this hasn't been done. Ratepayers expect such behaviours as 'business as usual' from a responsible Council.

The document shows there needs to be action as follows:

- There is no sense of what the priorities are.
- There is no clarity about where the responsibility for action lies with Central Government and where the WCC is stymied until that action occurs. The topic is complex and because of that such clarity is even more important.

Without such information it is difficult for ICW to determine how and on what to support WCC in the Advocacy role. It would have been helpful to have a clear overview of where action is required by National Government so that organisations like ours can develop an advocacy/lobbying strategy to focus on these issues prior to the next elections.

SECTION 2: UNDP GOALS

Rather than trying to address each of the multiple issues documented, ICW presents its comments in relation to the UNDP goals which both National and Local Governments in New Zealand have ratified. We see Goals 7, 11 and 12 are particularly relevant.

AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY: ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL (UNDP GOAL 7)

Fossil fuels and greenhouse gas emissions are making major changes in the climate and causing significant problems across the globe.

- **ICW welcomes** any action that brings more urgency to energy efficiency by increasing the rate and scope at which WCC is investing in the clean energy sources necessary to protect the environment.
- **ICW submits** that WCC should foster public authority support for more prioritised sustainable energy options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **ICW strongly supports** the use of solar power and urge WCC to work with progressive companies to accelerate this.
- **ICW strongly supports** specific investments which would increase the rate and scope of clean energy sources and notes plans for uptake of EVs, car sharing, making charging stations available etc.
- **ICW notes** the Green Infrastructure Plan (p47) *'Green infrastructure...uses investments like green roofs to manage stormwater'*

While green roofs can result in reduced stormwater runoff, and can reduce the amount of energy a building uses for cooling in the summer and heating in the winter, according to a report from the United States General Services Administration "The Benefits and Challenges of Green Roofs on Public and Commercial Building", buildings with fewer floors will show relatively greater energy savings for installing a green roof than a building with more floors. And as savings are mostly realized in the uppermost floors, the cost-benefit analysis proposed a particular height: 8-stories.

- **ICW agrees** that green roofs should be built to manage stormwater run-off and conserve energy use, while acknowledging this will increase costs of building to maintain waterproofing of the building.
- **ICW submits** that development in the inner city to accommodate a share of the projected growth should be at maximum 8 levels.
- **ICW does not support** roof-top gardens as a "substitute" for public green spaces
- **ICW submits** that WCC should be providing more permeable surfaces in built-up areas to assist with stormwater – i.e. green spaces instead of concrete inner city parks.

SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES: (UNDP Goal 11)

Maximising Compactness (p37) 'Compact, liveable urban forms result in lower carbon emissions. When shops, jobs and entertainment are nearby there is far less need to travel long distances using transport modes that are unsustainable – and living in denser housing forms uses less energy.'

- **ICW wholeheartedly supports** the above statement
- **ICW does not accept** that there is only one option to achieve this goal as it seems to be presented – that is growth upwards in the inner city.
- **ICW has significant concerns** about putting the bulk of an 80,000 increase in population into an area of known high seismic risk liquefaction, and sea level rise. This is not good planning for resilience.

An opportunity to enhance the building code (p49)

- **ICW supports** the documented suggested additions to the building code and submits that the LIFEMARK standard should also be part of any required certification to ensure buildings are usable and safe for people of all ages and stages.

In relation to improved public transport and pedestrian infrastructure

- **ICW submits that WCC should**
 - prioritise implementing LGWM (Let's Get Wellington Moving)
 - prioritise working with GWRC to sort out the bus debacle and increase public transport uptake and look for ways to reduce fare costs
- **ICW does not agree** with WCC using the 'plan' to justify its decision to support/contribute to the extension of the Wellington Airport runway.
An increase in aviation engines (should it occur) would result in increased heat, noise, particulates and gases which contribute to climate change and global warming.

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (UNDP GOAL 12):

Promote effective reduction, recycling and disposal of waste

- **ICW submits that WCC, along with other Councils, should**
 - Invest in being a regional processor and charge other Councils to process their rubbish. (Since there needs to be economy of scale, not every Council could or should establish processing facilities)
 - WCC and other councils must pressure LGNZ to compel the government to make the container deposit scheme, which is already allowed for under legislation, occur.
 - Start actively lobbying/making it a national Government issue to bring in product stewardship legislation and implement it, for Government to help fund national onshore processing of waste (rather than shipping it off).
 - Until proper recycling processes are in place, and until product stewardship initiatives take effect, WCC should be increasing the ability to create power from the rubbish that is currently being dumped. Over time the amount of rubbish may not be sufficient to generate power but that could be lined to decisions to upgrade the plant or decommission it.

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