

Draft

# Climate Action Plan

FULL ACTION SUITE



Our climate is changing. Concerns are mounting over the speed and extent of change across all of our communities. Anticipated changes to our climate include sea level rise, higher rainfall intensity, prolonged dry spells and more frequent occurrences of extreme weather events. The time to act is now.

Acknowledging we are in a Climate Emergency, the Draft Climate Action Plan is a Whangārei-wide response to the current and future changes to our environment, communities, economy and key infrastructure caused by climate change. The Draft Climate Action Plan is covering both climate change mitigation and adaptation.

**Mitigation:** To reduce emissions, enhance removal, and to increase our cooling capacity.

**Adaptation:** To anticipate, prepare for and cope with the expected and unavoidable impacts of climate change.

The Draft Climate Action Plan is relevant to our rural, coastal and urban communities. It leverages off existing Council work programmes and relationships across the District to help identify the next steps to reduce our Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and the necessary steps to adapt to the environmental changes we expect to see as a result of climate change.

We ran workshops over a seven month period with groups across the District. The next step of the process is to invite wider feedback from the community on whether the community is supportive of the direction of the Draft Climate Action Plan and what can be done to improve the approach and the actions identified.

Our approach applies a range of ‘triggers’ to help determine where and when Council will need to act. A trigger is identified as an event or a decision that justifies starting an action or a new work programme. Trigger points that have been included in our approach include:

1. New Central Government funding
2. New data availability
3. Community direction and initiatives.
4. Recommendations from Central Government-including advice from the Climate Change Commission

The actions have been separated into 3 delivery ranges, acknowledging the timing of future delivery can change depending on other circumstances or triggers. The 3 delivery ranges are:

1. **Priority Actions:** These are the actions where Council's initial resourcing will be focused.
2. **Medium Term Actions**
3. **Long Term Actions**

Once the Climate Action Plan is adopted, the Plan will be reviewed and updated annually and will be formally updated every 3 years to inform the Long Term Plan. The Climate Action Plan will help promote and influence future climate action across all workstreams across the organisation.

The Climate Action Plan will help guide future decisions on refining the District's resilience to the impacts of climate change. The actions are promoting for a District wide transition to ensuring we are all acting appropriately.

## **Legislative Requirements & Global Commitments**

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Whangārei District Council is responsible for a range of functions that may be affected by climate change, under the Local Government Act 2002, the Resource Management Act 1991, the Civil Defence Act and for actions requiring a response under Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019. This includes land-use planning and decision-making, building control, emergency management and provision of infrastructure and community services. Council provides, owns and supports community assets that may be vulnerable to climate change effects. Our District Plan must also be consistent with the Northland Regional Council's Regional Policy Statement relating to hazards, biodiversity, water quality and quantity.

At a national level, New Zealand is a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement and has committed to reduce GHG emissions by 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030 and reduce net emissions of all greenhouse gases (except biogenic methane) to zero by 2050. This will apply from 2021.

## **Climate Change Risk & Response**

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A series of impacts caused from climate change has been projected for Northland by NIWA including sea level rise, warmer days, more droughts and a more regular occurrence of extreme weather events. Future changes to our environment have the potential to cause damage to transport and infrastructure networks and will increase pressures on communities through more regular drought and flooding events.

Council manage and own assets across the District that will be susceptible to climate change including roading, stormwater and wastewater infrastructure, libraries and a wide-range of other facilities. There are large, long term financial risks associated with climate change. Changes to the environment will contribute to increasing insurance costs and the potential inability to insure certain areas that are more susceptible to climate effects. Costs to protect, shift, and future proof infrastructure and assets will need to be factored into future considerations.

Climate change will have different levels of risk on people within the community depending on their circumstances. The elderly, the very young, those living in poverty and those living with chronic health issues are at increased risk with greater limitations ability to respond to potential climate scenarios.

Māori, acknowledge their whakapapa (genealogy) to the natural environment, connecting people to place and see the interconnectedness of wellbeing of the environment to wellbeing of the people. The National Climate Change Risk Assessment recognises that Maori will disproportionately experience the negative impacts of climate change for reasons such as:

- the Māori economy is more reliant on natural resources than other parts of the economy;
- the number of Māori coastal communities and sites of significance is considerably high;
- and

- disproportionate climate change impacts on low-income families in which Māori are disproportionately represented.

## Partnering for success

The Draft Climate Action Plan identifies potential groups who we think would be well suited to partner in developing and successfully implementing the actions. We are working with some already. The groups that have identified through our early engagement are:

- Hapū /Marae/Iwi
- Northland Regional Council (NRC)
- Kaipara District Council (KDC)
- Far North District Council (FNDC)
- Northland Transportation Alliance (NTA)
- New Zealand Transport Agency/Waka Kotahi (NZTA)
- NorthTec
- Hihiaua Cultural Centre
- Whangārei District Council Advisory Groups
- Whangārei Airport
- New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC)
- Northland Chamber of Commerce
- Aotearoa Wave and Tidal Energy Association
- Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ)
- Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISEA)
- Northpower
- Kiwirail
- Horticulture New Zealand
- Industry
- Creative Northland
- Northland District Health Board (NDHB)
- Northland based education and research institutions
- Northland Waste
- Waste Management
- Waste-Council Controlled Organisation
- Fraser Foote
- Community Groups
- Wananga
- Tai Tokerau Time Bank
- New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI)
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)
- Eco Solutions
- Bike Northland
- Agricultural sector
- Reconnecting Northland
- Northland Inc

## Climate Action Plan – the key outcomes



### Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Our commitment to our partnership with hapū and iwi under Te Tiriti o Waitangi is embedded in everything we do.

### Reducing emissions



Reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the Council and Whangārei District in line with the Government's national emission reduction targets or better.

Council supports hapū, iwi, the community and industry towards a Carbon Zero 2050.



### Drawing down carbon

Whangārei is rapidly sequestering carbon.

The cooling capacity of Whangārei is growing.



### Adapting to climate change

Council future-proofs its resources, assets and services from the risks of climate change.

Council works with hapū, iwi, industry and communities to prepare for and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
















### Community ownership
















The residents of Whangārei are informed, engaged and take ownership of this kaupapa.

## Our action categories

1. Te Tiriti o Waitangi Partnership
2. Decision-making.
3. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation.
4. Waste Management and Materials.
5. Smart City.
6. Transportation
7. Land use.
8. Buildings and Infrastructure.
9. Plant and Trees.
10. Innovative and Resilient Economy
11. Education & Training.
12. Vulnerable Populations.
13. Programme Delivery.

## Priority actions

Action area	Action	Outcomes it achieves.
Te Tiriti o Waitangi Partnership	Develop a framework based on Te Ao Māori for decision making, monitoring and evaluating. This framework could be adopted by Council to improve partnership with hapū and Council processes including care for the environment.	  
Decision-making	Embed low emission outcomes and climate change adaptation into the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) WDC strategies and policies</li> <li>b) Decision making reporting</li> <li>c) Processes such as business cases, procurement tender evaluations and project scoping</li> <li>d) Change management philosophy and processes that align with the organisational tikanga</li> </ul>	 
Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation	Build relationships with industry representatives with the intention of developing a District wide emissions profile.	  
Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation	Ensure that risks from climate change mitigation and adaptation are embedded into Whangārei District Council's risk management framework and Long Term Plan	  
Smart City	Investigate options for the use of new technology across Whangārei and moving to a 'Smart City'.	 

Action area	Action	Outcomes it achieves.
Transport	Partner with Northland Regional Council to identify options for net-zero emissions public transport. Opportunities to trial innovative ideas will be explored with a view to wider implementation.	  
Public Transport	Prioritise the delivery of our existing Walking & Cycling Strategy actions through additional funding, NZTA subsidies, and working in partnership with our communities	   
Buildings and Infrastructure	<p>Develop an implementation plan and partnership agreements for the Blue Green Network Strategy that includes a programme of work prioritising projects that align with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The Walking and Cycling Strategy</li> <li>b) The City Core Master Plan</li> <li>c) Planned Infrastructure upgrades</li> <li>d) Low impact stormwater design</li> <li>e) Planting plans</li> </ul>	  
Education and Training	Develop training packages to ensure staff are appropriately trained as to how climate action affects their roles and could be delivered in their roles and to ensure that suitable skillsets are within the organisation.	 
Te Tiriti o Waitangi Partnership	Support for Northland Mātauranga Māori and Geographic Information System (GIS) project/s. This will build/contribute to the existing work undertaken in GIS by hapū.	  



# Climate Action Plan – full suite

## Te Tiriti o Waitangi Partnership Actions

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Whangārei District Council is committed to developing more robust partnerships with Tangata Whenua to achieve the agreed vision 'He Whenua Rangatira - Whangārei, a district of prosperity, wellbeing and empowered communities'. Delivering this vision requires an understanding of the issues and opportunities through a Te Ao Māori lens, from the perspectives of Tangata Whenua.

Council also recognises its responsibilities to Tangata Whenua stemming from the Te Tiriti o Waitangi and those that are embedded in legislation such as the Local Government Act, the Resource Management Act and the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act.

Climate change affects natural environmental systems and resources, influences social-ecological knowledge and practice, shapes community vulnerability and resilience, and is directly linked to economic investment and local government policy, planning and resourcing decisions. Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) recognises these interdependencies and is able to respond in a manner that is relevant to the wellbeing of all the community.

Māori will be disproportionately affected by climate change. Hapū in Whangārei have been and continue to exercise kaitiakitanga, acting to mitigate environmental degradation and already responding to climate change.

Mātauranga Māori will be critical in developing a greater understanding of risks from climate change, identifying opportunities, and centring the interconnected relationship with the natural world in future climate change planning, policy and adaptation. Working with hapū enriches the information we have to consider, the scope of the available opportunities and the responses we have - increasing our resilience.

1. Develop a framework based on Te Ao Māori for decision making, monitoring and evaluating. This framework could be adopted by Council to improve partnership with hapū and Council processes including care for the environment.
2. Agree on a partnership model with ngā hapū o Whangārei for delivery of the Climate Action Plan.
3. Support for Northland Mātauranga Māori and Geographic Information System (GIS) project/s. This will build/contribute to the existing work undertaken in GIS by hapū.

## Decision Making Actions

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How we as an organisation take into consideration of the impacts of climate change in all facets of work is of a priority for the future delivery to our climate response. As an organisation, it is essential we are leading from the front as to how the climate response should be managed. We must ensure policy and procurement are factoring climate change into all decisions.

4. Embed low emission outcomes and climate change adaptation into the following:
  - a. WDC strategies and policies
  - b. Decision making reporting
  - c. Processes such as business cases, procurement tender evaluations and project scoping
  - d. A change management philosophy and processes that align with the organisational tikanga.
5. Ownership of the Climate Action Plan is driven by Elected Members and senior leadership.

## **Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation Actions**

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To ensure Whangārei District Council are tackling the right areas and our decision making is robust, we will need to undertake an ongoing programme of building up our data base, undertaking regular monitoring and evaluating processes. This will align our key outcomes, our actions and future investment together. Working alongside hapū and businesses across Whangārei, we have an opportunity to correctly measure our beginning points and what actions are required to achieve those long-term emission targets.

1. Build relationships with industry representatives with the intention of developing a district wide emissions profile.
2. Ensure that risks arising from climate change mitigation and adaptation are embedded into WDC's risk management framework and Long Term Plan.
3. Working in partnership with hapū to develop mātauranga based assessment and monitoring frameworks for local level implementation.
4. Conduct an internal climate change data & intelligence gap analysis to ensure evidence will be available for effective decision-making and policy advice.
5. Partner with hapū to provide monitoring services for key environmental changes that incorporate Te Ao Māori.
6. Undertake regular surveying of residents to gauge where further support or incentives are needed.
7. Include emissions reduction performance targets in the identification / prioritisation, design and construction of infrastructure.

## **Waste Management and Materials Actions**

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How Whangārei is able to transition our waste infrastructure and our ability to influence the communities behaviours to reduce waste to landfill is important for our long-term environmental, economic and social journey. Whangārei District Council has legislative

responsibilities to ensure that our solid waste is managed in an effective and efficient manner. Reducing our waste to landfill and reducing our waste emissions is not only an important step to achieving our national emissions targets but will also positively influence the environmental well-being and the overall attractiveness of Whangārei.

1. Investigate establishing a commercial scale composting facility within Whangārei and the option for it to be incorporated within the existing Council Controlled Organisation for solid waste.
2. Investigate kerbside food scraps collection services across urban, suburban and high growth areas in Whangārei.
3. Investigate installing compost bins throughout the high use areas of the City Centre and town centres.
4. Investigate incentivising on site composting solutions by subsidising home compost tools for rate payers and residents.
5. Investigate using a domestic waste collection rate that acts as an incentive for participating in selective waste collection.
6. Advocate for central government to establish a circular waste management framework to improve efficiency and reduce waste.
7. Undertake waste audits for bins in public areas.
8. Undertake regular data collection to better understand waste patterns of the district and require our contractors to have the capability to provide this information.
9. Investigate tools available to require all local events that Council funds, or owns the land/building, or approves via regulatory process to implement zero waste to landfill best practice as part of event planning.
10. Investigate the capture and use of methane from the Purewa landfill.
11. When printing Council documents, print the smallest run of documents possible, with the option to print more runs if needed.

## Smart City Actions

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A Smart City increases our technology usage within our urban areas to improve Council's ability to collect data on activities including transport and other human interactions within our urban areas. Implementing Smart City initiatives help to positively influence our behaviour for the benefit of our environment and for the efficiency of our urban areas. Examples of Smart City initiatives include:

- Smart Street Lighting: Smart lights are automatically adjusted based on periods of activity

- Smart Transport: Embedded technology in our urban areas connecting to the Public Transport system and electric vehicle taxi providers.
  1. Investigate options for the use of new technology across Whangārei and moving to a 'Smart City' concept.
  2. Investigate using sensor traffic lights.

## Transportation Actions

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The ease of movement of people and goods is critical for Whangārei. Our transport system will need to include low emission, low cost alternatives that must be accessible for all of our urban and rural communities. The way we move supports economic transactions, growth and development, social cohesion, health and the day-to-day running of our communities. Future transport infrastructure will need to be planned, designed and built for resilience to the climatic changes we are anticipating.

1. Provide bus priority lanes to reduce delays on buses and increase the frequency of buses to make public transport more attractive. Initially this will be achieved through clearways or removal of parking on bus routes to provide city-bound bus priority or transit lanes (ie T2 lanes).
2. Prioritise the delivery of our existing Walking & Cycling Strategy actions through additional funding, NZTA subsidies, and working in partnership with our communities. In particular, the Bernard Street to Maunu section and the Tikipunga route.
3. Investigate providing e-bikes & e-scooters for hire across the City Centre.
4. Support Bike Northland's Bike Riding education in schools programme.
5. Provide rural bus services for commuters to key rural towns such as Hikurangi, Tutukaka, Maungatapere, Parua Bay, Ruakaka, Waipu.
6. Identify streets and roads within the district that could benefit from tactical urbanism to improve safety and liveability of our transport system and our strategic outcomes.
7. Partner with Northland Regional Council to identify options for net-zero emissions public transport. Opportunities to trial innovative ideas will be explored with a view to wider implementation.
8. Build Travel Planning into our services aiming to increase modal shift from private vehicles, reducing the number of vehicle trips and increasing carpooling.
9. Progress the introduction of an electric car sharing scheme into Whangārei.
10. Promote the use of safe ride sharing.

11. Investigate the feasibility of implementing a passenger train route across our high growth areas.
12. Increase electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the district and explore opportunities to develop a regional network.
13. Offset air travel carbon emissions through staff travel through industry schemes or WDC sequestration commitments.

## Land Use Actions

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Exploring future development and planting opportunities to achieve our long-term outcomes of sequestering carbon, increasing our cooling capacity and reducing our total emissions is necessary for Council's future climate response.

1. Investigate afforestation, restoration and planting opportunities on appropriate Council owned land and buildings that aim to achieve multiple benefits (carbon sequestration, growing the soil sponge, cooling, food, medicine, biodiversity). Then develop planting plans for these locations.
2. Integrate climate change into WDC District Plan and Environmental Engineering Standards guiding development practices to work towards more resilient communities and infrastructure.
3. Develop a programme of work to plan for climate change adaptation in the district following Ministry for the Environment best practice guidance.
4. Review approach to eliminate pests on WDC owned land to support the revegetation of the bush.
5. Discourage future development in areas that are among the high risk areas based on coastal hazard mapping.
6. Work alongside the Whangārei Airport to improve the accessibility to implement industry leading sustainability practices aligned with the District's reduction masterplan.

## Buildings and Infrastructure Actions

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We have the challenging task of reducing our emissions while contending with the needs of our growing population. Identifying new approaches and technologies to improve our environmental responses requires embedded commitments within the organisation to achieve better climate outcomes with our future infrastructure delivery. The actions explore where we are able to embed climate change considerations within the organisation while setting out new policy initiatives that would incentivise the private sector to follow suit.

2. Develop an implementation plan and partnership agreements for the Blue Green Network Strategy that includes a programme of work prioritising projects that align with:
  - a. the Walking & Cycling Strategy
  - b. the City Core Master Plan

- c. planned infrastructure upgrades
  - d. low impact stormwater designs
  - e. planting plans developed through related Actions.
3. Develop performance standards to ensure new infrastructure is climate resilient.
  4. Support knowledge building within Whangārei's building and development sector to inform the design, construction/ development and assessment of carbon neutral buildings, properties and communities.
  5. Investigate undertaking best practice efficiency assessments for all planned and existing Council owned buildings including pensioner housing.
  6. Enable HomeFit checks undertaken by an independent assessor to be included on LIM reports.
  7. Investigate methods to enable and encourage the installation of infrastructure and tools that lower emissions of the community.
  8. Investigate reducing Development Contributions if new infrastructure meets certain low impact design criteria.
  9. Investigate opportunities to increase green spaces with appropriate planting to deliver multiple outcomes: cooling capacity, biodiversity, reducing pressure on the stormwater system, amenity.
  10. Investigate opportunities to incentivise local businesses to transition into low emissions solutions.
  11. Address leak detection and water loss in the potable water infrastructure network.
  12. Investigate providing video conferencing technology in rooms that can be hired by the community.
  13. Investigate low impact design using green infrastructure solutions to align with storm water management. Update the Engineering Environmental Standards.
  14. Investigate other areas of the district where we could be using LED lighting.
  15. Investigate opportunities to increase energy generated through solar and wind based technology on individual buildings, properties and as a network across Whangārei.
  16. Investigate the feasibility of using solar water pump systems in our pump stations.
  17. Investigate including a Building Automation System within the design of the new Civic building.
  18. Investigate low carbon emission material for use in the infrastructure pipe network.
  19. Investigate trenchless technologies.
  20. Review agreements between WDC/NRC regarding flooding responsibilities.

## Plants and Trees Actions

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Whangārei District Council provides parks and reserves for sport and recreation, landscapes and green places. The forests, trees and vegetated areas provide opportunities to help sequester carbon, build soil health, provide shade and amenity and support biodiversity outcomes. We look forward to working alongside hapū and our communities to protect and deliver future planting plans that are reflective of our environmental obligations and our cultural heritage.

1. Establish a tree inventory for WDC owned tree assets to more accurately plan, manage and budget for climate change adaptation, maintenance and investment in tree resources, including assets on the road reserve and any planting through planting plans.
2. Identify and protect the Significant Natural Areas and significant trees in Whangārei District.

## Innovative and Resilient Economy Actions

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There are opportunities within our economy to reduce the District's emissions while supporting the emergence of new sectors. While Council may not necessarily be leading specific actions within this sector, we can support other entities across the District to help with their transition to low emission outcomes. Through our engagement, we would like to receive feedback on how Council can best support the business sector's response to Climate change.

1. Partner with industry and research institutions to identify opportunities for Tai Tokerau to specialise and excel in. This may include innovation in areas such as land use and technology.
2. Through procurement process, support and enable circular economy initiatives.
3. Investigate opportunities to encourage food security and food production prospects within the district and region including the different scales:
  - a. household
  - b. community, kainga
  - c. marae
  - d. industry
  - e. region.
4. Support Research and Development into different farming and food production styles.
5. Investigate the opportunity to use time banking to support civic operations and services.

## Education and Training Actions

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Our climate journey requires complete buy in from both Council staff and from the wider community. As an organisation, we need to ensure we have the right skillsets across every team allowing for the successful delivery of climate action across the entire organisation. Similarly, for our District wide response, Council can facilitate new community education opportunities.

1. Develop training packages to ensure staff are appropriately trained as to how climate action effects their roles and could be delivered in their roles and to ensure suitable skillsets are within the organisation.
2. Develop a change management philosophy and processes that align with the organisational tikanga to support and embed climate change thinking into the organisation culture and thinking.
3. Enabling teachers and learners to educate and prepare for the future by participating in the Enviroschools programme.
4. Develop an engagement and communication strategy to support information sharing and civic ownership of this kaupapa that is responsive to the platforms and approaches our community uses.

## Vulnerable Populations Actions

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There are communities in Whangārei who are going to be more susceptible to the impacts of climate change. Council has an important role in facilitating discussions between communities as to how we are able to plan and be responsive to the impacts caused by climate change. An equitable transition to climate change means that the benefits and implications are shared across society.

1. Develop food security, water security and fuel security network plans as part of the emergency response planning for hazard or pandemic response.

## Programme Delivery

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Within our organisation, we have identified the need for new roles to help champion our climate response within the organisation and to help bring other communities together to deliver Climate Action.

1. Prepare a business case for two new roles:
  - a. Climate change programme coordinator
  - b. Sustainability community advisor.