



Toi Te Ora Public Health  
PO Box 2120  
TAURANGA 3140

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Waste Management and Minimisation Plan  
Tauranga City Council  
Private Bag 12022  
Tauranga 3143  
[sustainability.waste@tauranga.govt.nz](mailto:sustainability.waste@tauranga.govt.nz)

## **Submission to Waste Management and Minimisation Plan 2022-2028**

### **Introduction**

Toi Te Ora Public Health (Toi Te Ora) is the public health unit funded by the Ministry of Health, for the Bay of Plenty and Lakes Districts. Toi Te Ora's purpose is to improve and protect the health of the population in the Lakes and Bay of Plenty health districts, with a focus on reducing inequalities in health.

Public health is about promoting wellbeing and preventing ill health.

Many of the crucial underlying factors that contribute to improving, promoting, and protecting the health of people and communities are directly influenced by the decisions and activities of councils. For this reason, Toi Te Ora is committed to working collaboratively with Tauranga City Council (Council) and welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the draft waste management and minimisation plan (WMMP).

Waste management is important for the health of the public. If not disposed of properly, waste can present a health hazard through physical injury, chemical poisoning, exposure to infectious material and encouraging pests such as rodents, flies and mosquitoes.

It is pleasing to see Council has incorporated many points from Dr Jim Miller's response to the 2021 WMMP. However, it appears that not all of Toi Te Ora's requests are in the action plan. It would be appreciated if Council could clarify which actions, they are under, as we may have overlooked them.

### **Do you have any comments to support your position on key waste issues for Tauranga?**

It is Toi Te Ora's position that the draft waste minimisation and management plan is appropriately focused on the priority waste issues for Tauranga.

Ideally, Council needs to be constantly identifying new and emerging situations or problems before they become waste management issues. Of particular relevance to this challenge is the continuing population growth in the district.

It is good to see that Council recognises the importance of planning for unforeseen events which might produce high volumes of waste, as well as the requirement for the continuity of key services in these situations. During the peak COVID-19 outbreak the organic waste service stopped for a period. There is potential for organic waste to be a nuisance because this waste is naturally more offensive and odorous. Council should plan to manage such situations.

It is pleasing to see the vermicomposting trials have been successful. Toi Te Ora congratulates Council for requiring “back up” options to be available for the disposal of biosolids and is keen to hear what these options are.

As stated, the population living in multi-unit developments will continue to grow and it is pleasing to see that Council has adopted the option of requiring storage for bins in all multi-unit developments.

**Do you have any comments to support your position on the proposed vision of “reduced waste to landfill”?**

Toi Te Ora supports Council’s vision of “reduced waste to landfill.” It is encouraging to see that this vision is measurable as this supports monitoring and accountability. It is recommended that Council also measures waste generation, as this will help establish how much waste doesn’t make it landfill and confirm whether reduction measures are working.

Toi Te Ora recommends that Council focusses not just on reaching targets, but also on the means to achieve these targets. For example, the closure of the Maleme Street transfer station could achieve the target of reducing waste to landfill. Unfortunately, it could also result in individuals and businesses disposing their waste inappropriately eg through fly tipping. It is important that Council uses an equitable approach when making these decisions. Council should prepare a thorough assessment of the impact of closing the Maleme Street waste facility.

Toi Te Ora supports the transition to a circular economy, specifically the approach that reducing waste is about making the most of available resources. Toi Te Ora is keen to be involved in planning this transition and suggests that Council also include other community stakeholders. This will help ensure resources are used in a way that promotes and protects public health. For example, the application of sewage sludge and biosolids to land needs careful management. Without adequate planning, people may come into contact with an environment contaminated with human waste. Likewise, composting of organic waste needs to be done in such a way that prevents people from being exposed to disease-causing organisms, such as Legionella bacteria.

**Do you have any comments to support your position on the draft plan’s goals, objectives, and targets?**

Toi Te Ora supports Council’s overall strategic direction, vision, goals, and objectives. It will be key to introduce quarterly monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, to ensure that the targets are met within the time frames stated.

Toi Te Ora specifically supports the goal of collaboration with local iwi and recommends that working in partnership with local iwi and hapū is prioritised, supporting aspirations of mana whenua.

Toi Te Ora supports the Waste Management and Minimisation Bylaw. Ongoing population growth in the district means it will be important to limit a corresponding growth in waste while ensuring that all waste is disposed of correctly.

Toi Te Ora wants Council to ensure that all properties throughout the city (ie including rural areas) have access to waste services. This will help improve equity within the community while also protecting public health. Regardless of where a property is located, every resident should be provided with appropriate waste disposal services.

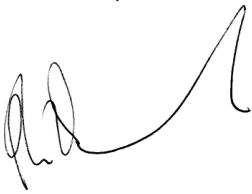
**Is there anything else you think Tauranga City Council needs to consider when looking at managing and minimising waste for the next six years?**

It is pleasing to see that Council is committed to working with local health services, childcare facilities, rest homes and industry to increase the diversion of nappies and sanitary products away from landfill. While this is a good initiative, it is important to note that the scope of this action should not be limited to these industries.

As mentioned in our feedback on the draft waste minimisation and management assessment, collaboration between territorial authorities is key to delivering successful and sustainable waste services. Toi Te Ora supports this aspect of the action plan, and emphasises it is crucial that such collaboration continues across all areas of waste management and minimisation. This is key to providing a service that is successful throughout the community – waste does not recognise boundaries.

Toi Te Ora supports Council's use of clear objectives, methods and performance measures, as well as the use of behaviour and volume targets. Toi Te Ora is keen to partner with Council to help achieve the described initiatives. Toi Te Ora also suggests that Council provides a progress report on the action plan every two years, in order to assure public health is protected.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Phil Shoemack', written in a cursive style.

Dr Phil Shoemack  
**Medical Officer of Health**