



Submission of Civic Trust Auckland

Proposed Low Carbon Strategic Action Plan

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1.1 Civic Trust Auckland (CTA) is a non-profit public interest group, incorporated in 1968, with activities and interests throughout the greater Auckland region. We regularly make submissions on Auckland Council plans.

1.2 CTA congratulates Auckland Council on producing the Proposed Low Carbon Strategic Action Plan and the consultation with a number of diverse groups on its content. We support such a plan as a positive and essential step to address what is a critical issue not just for Auckland but for all cities in all countries of the world.

1.3 We support the intention that the plan *“be flexible and responsive to the challenges and changes that emerge, and be regularly reviewed ... facilitating ongoing engagement and collaboration”*. (pg 4) We are pleased to see that the plan includes a timeline and stewardship to monitor progress of the actions proposed.

1.4 Although we support the vision in the plan and the actions which give effect to that vision, we are of the opinion that the plan should go much further.

1.5 CTA considers that more use could have been made of what other cities around the world have been doing to address the issue of climate change. We note that Auckland Conversations over the past few years have included a number of speakers on this topic and that the lessons learnt from these speakers could usefully be incorporated.

1.6 We support Auckland's involvement in the C40 Mayoral alliance for the purpose of sharing ideas with other cities regarding climate change. We note there is no mention of this alliance in the Proposed Low Carbon Strategic Action Plan and suggest that ideas from this alliance be included.

1.7 We note that Waitakere City established itself as an Eco City and that the supercity is well positioned to learn much from the success of this city as regards eco policies and actions.

1.8 We suggest that Council refers to its own Waste Management & Minimisation Plan and Regional Transport Plan to ensure that all relevant ideas from these recent plans have informed the Proposed Low Carbon Strategic Action Plan.

1.9 As *“transport and electricity account for around two-thirds of Auckland's emissions”* (pg 4) these are the two areas which should have the most focus in the plan.

1.10 Community Groups and businesses which use low carbon initiatives should be encouraged, supported and promoted by Auckland Council, e.g. Cycle Action Auckland, Walk

Auckland, bike hire companies, Cityhop and businesses that recycle products. Council could assist in raising awareness about community and business low carbon initiatives by way of a database and publicity.

1.11 The example of Henderson Valley School as a low carbon environment is inspiring.

1.12 Companies which provide services to Council should be instructed in Council's low carbon policies (refer photo with explanatory caption in the Appendix).

1.13 CTA welcomes regulation by Council rather than encouragement. Climate change is such an important issue that change is needed sooner rather than later and everyone should play their part in order to make life easier - even possible - for future generations.

1.14 The proposed group of cross-sector leaders, who to "*advocate, inspire and influence change in consumer and commercial behaviour*" and the second group to "*co-ordinate cross-sector action on the plan*" should include school children, e.g. from Henderson Valley School. The groups should also include immigrant groups and representatives of groups for whom English is not their first language.

The way we travel

2.1 CTA submits that all new vehicles over which Council has purchase control should be electric or low emission. We further submit that Council increases the proportion of bicycles in its fleet, and include a number of electric bicycles.

2.2 Auckland Council should continue to focus on public transport, and, rather than increasing the roading network, to grow the rail network.

2.3 Auckland Council should include public transport options on all invitations to Council events.

2.4 CTA commends those Councillors and other Council representatives and staff who commute by walking, by bicycle or by public transport. We encourage more of them to use these low carbon transport options.

2.5 We support increasing opportunities for safe and pleasant walking.

2.6 We support Council's commitment to improving cycle facilities. We note that there are increasing sections of cycle paths and cycle lanes throughout the city but many of them are isolated and short, often running out just where they are needed from a safety perspective, such as at intersections. More separate paths will encourage people to cycle who currently feel that on-road cycling is not safe enough.

2.7 There is evidence that considerable numbers of commuters would be encouraged to use bicycles if it were permitted to cycle without wearing a helmet. Council should investigate the feasibility of making cycling a safe commuting option to an extent that not wearing a helmet could be acceptable.

2.8 Council should encourage the already long-existing presence of a bicycle shop at the intersection of Khyber Pass, Symonds St, Newton Road and New North Road, the area due to be enhanced when the proposed CRL station is developed. This is an important location by virtue of its position as the highest topographical point in this part of the city and from where one can glide for one kilometre downhill towards Auckland's waterfront, virtually without turning the pedals.

2.9 Council should give consideration to applying a surface to cycle lanes which have characteristics best utilised by skateboards. In the same way, off-road cycle paths might usefully be given the best surface suited to roller blades and other means of active transport.

2.10 Council should set aside a portion of its budget towards investigating new or emerging technology which could enhance the mutually safe co-existence of motor vehicles with other road users.

2.11 We submit that cyclists should be permitted to cycle through an intersection on a pedestrian green light if they do not exceed normal walking speed. This would increase the speed and safety of their journey and perhaps discourage cyclists from cycling through on a pedestrian green light at a speed which is perceived to be unsafe by some pedestrians.

2.12 All bus stops should have shelters, as having to wait for a bus in the rain is a disincentive to using a bus.

2.13 Public transport services need to be introduced to new urban areas before car habits become established.

2.14 The benefits (both personal and global) of leaving the car at home should be promoted in the public realm by Council, including via OurAuckland.

2.15 Council could promote car sharing amongst neighbours, particularly those who live in apartment buildings, as well as car pooling, by including information about car pooling on its website and Auckland Transport's website, such as a link to <http://www.jayride.co.nz> and by advertising car pooling in OurAuckland and other Council outlets.

2.16 Priority or free parking could be made available for people who use a private vehicle to carpool to places such as The Edge for arts events.

2.17 We strongly support an extended ferry network, being a sustainable means of transport, and consider it important to align pricing of ferries with other public transport modes in order to achieve integration.

2.18 We support the new frequent bus network and electric trains supported by integrated ticketing and fares and the conversion of the public transport fleet to alternative fuels.

2.19 We support the quality, compact urban form but reliance on intensification as a means of reducing the number and length of trips is some years away and other measures need to be put in place in the meantime.

2.20 We support removing minimum parking requirements.

2.21 We commend the initiative of the Personalised Journey Planning projects, as described on pg 31.

2.22 CTA submits that the travel demand management tool of workplace travel planning should include, where feasible, the use of glide time. As referenced to on pg 30, i.e. *"The team then scratched their heads to come up with the best option that meant no-one would get detention at school or be in trouble for arriving late at work,"* the possibility of being late is a major reason for using a car to commute.

2.23 Consideration should be given to allowing car pooling vehicles (identified by e.g. a registration sticker on the windscreen) to stop in bus stops for the purpose of picking up designated passengers.

2.24 More consideration should be given to the proposal of free and frequent public transport, including assessing additional benefits to the reduction of the city's carbon footprint, such as reducing congestion on the roads and enabling more movement of people throughout the city to shops, entertainment and local tourism whilst having more money to spend because they haven't had to pay transport costs.

The way we use and generate energy

3.1 Council could support renewable energy generation by making solar energy generation a requirement for all new buildings.

3.2 Action 1 on pg 35 to *“Establish a plan to install modern energy efficient technology for street lighting to improve energy efficiency outcomes”* should ensure that such lighting is directed at the ground and not the sky.

3.3 Leaf blowers should be replaced by brooms in order to avoid emissions from these unsustainable tools, as in the 20 cities in California, which have banned them.

3.4 Council should both encourage and legislate for the use of lights in corridors - commercial as well as residential - which are activated by sensors.

3.5 We suggest that Council affirm the accomplishments of the Henderson Valley School's Power Rangers by applying low carbon principles to the new extension of the Auckland Art Gallery with regard to its use of internal lighting once the gallery is closed to the public in the evenings.

Our built environment and green infrastructure

4.1 CTA supports establishing a Warrant of Fitness programme for rental properties (a point on which we submitted in our Unitary Plan feedback on 31 May 2013).

4.2 The parts of the Auckland Design Manual, which provide *“information, case studies and guidance to the public and the development industry on sustainable urban design and building best practice”* should be mandatory.

4.3 We support the retrofitting of buildings to improve their Green Star rating, and congratulate the Council on its intention to retrofit 135 Albert Street to Green Star and NABERSNZ rating 5. Concomitant with the move into Albert Street is the necessity of a low carbon solution for the old Civic building.

4.4 We support regulations that will lead to the following (pg 46): *“New buildings, precincts and large-scale development will be required to meet standards set to improve sustainable design and baseline performance. This will focus on low-cost, passive design elements, such as orientation, natural ventilation and green infrastructure, over expensive technologies. The new requirements will minimise use of resources by including low impact design, renewable energy, stormwater and wastewater capture and recycling, as well as community-focused designs which encourage sustainable transport and quality compact living.”*

4.5 We support Action 10 (pg 47): *“Develop a package of financial incentives, including development contributions and rates, to accelerate the uptake of sustainable design practices”*.

4.6 We note that adaptive use of existing buildings is sustainable use of a resource and that the replacement of one building with another needs to take into account the loss of materials from the demolished building and the energy and resources used in its demolition.

4.7 As part of “enhancing local food production” (pg 61) people could be encouraged, where practicable, to establish food plants on their berms. More trees and other vegetation planted by Council could include food-bearing plants, e.g. the grape vines planted by Auckland Council on the north western cyclepath (Kingsland).

Zero Waste

5.1 An example of waste management that Council could assist with is in the provision of a collection point, e.g. adjacent to the Pikes Point Refuse Station, where industrial waste as

well as household reusables could be stored and made available for others to collect for their use. This would both reduce the amount that goes into landfill and make better use of finite resources.

5.2 An initiative in Marrickville, Sydney, called Reverse Garbage, is one that could be adopted by Auckland. Reverse Garbage makes available industrial and commercial discards, off-cuts and over-runs by providing high quality, low priced, useful and unusual materials for use in arts, craft, education, small business, home renovation and other activities. (www.reversegarbage.org.au)

5.3 CTA strongly support Council's intention to develop a resource recovery network and suggests that this include smaller centres that can collect materials which are then delivered to larger centres, so that places are accessible for a good part of the community. We propose that Shed 10 become part of this network and that a car boot sale such as the one held in Grey Lynn be held on Queen's Wharf once a month.

5.4 Construction and demolition materials form a huge part of the city's collective waste, therefore we support the inclusion of drop-off of such waste as part of the proposed resource recovery network.

5.5 There should be facility for some "specialist" resource recovery centres, such as the Early Childhood Resource Centre that used to operate in Mt Wellington, providing materials for arts and crafts for preschools.

5.6 We submit that Council address the issue of food waste from restaurants, cafes and supermarkets. Some of this food should be made available for human and/or animal consumption.

5.7 Many convenience store operators automatically reach for a plastic bag to give the customer even if they are selling one item only. Council should raise awareness regarding this aspect of waste.

5.8 We support minimisation leading to prohibition of plastic bags, to be replaced with biodegradable bags. Consumers should be charged for the purchase of plastic bags, in order to encourage them to reuse bags and/or bring their own non-plastic bags with them to a store.

5.9 The Auckland Museum is mentioned in the plan as a place where batteries use in-house are collected for recycling. We would like to see (as per our submission on the Waste Management & Minimisation Plan) batteries taken to libraries for recycling. We note that people living in London can take their household batteries to any of the London libraries and put them in a battery recycling collection box. This would seem to be a good interim way of dealing with used batteries in Auckland until resource recovery centres are in place.

Forestry, agriculture and natural carbon assets

6.1 One of the key elements listed on pg 20 is, "*Growing the extent of urban and regional forests*". To assist with this, Council's new tree rules should be rescinded.

6.2 We quote from Auckland City Council's Draft Urban Forest Plan March 2007 (1.2), "International concern about global warming and its linkage to the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions and its relationship to energy production through fossil fuels, points to the importance of trees in balancing greenhouse gas production. The urban forest provides significant environmental benefits including green house gas mitigation (CO₂ production), stormwater amelioration, particulate removal from the air, heat island reduction and habitat for birds and other fauna. The role that trees play in greenhouse gas mitigation is viewed internationally as a service to communities. The Kyoto Agreement sets targets to achieve for signatory countries like New Zealand. Auckland City contributes through the Cities for Climate Protection programme and there is a need to improve our understanding of the contribution of the urban forest within this wider context."

6.3 We submit that input from the Cities for Climate Protection programme be included in the Proposed Low Carbon Strategic Action Plan.

Stakeholder Mailing List

7 Civic Trust Auckland would like to be a part of our stakeholder mailing list to receive more information about future implementation initiatives.

END OF SUBMISSION

(Appendix on next page)

Date: 7 April 2014

Signature



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Audrey van der Pijl".

Secretary, Civic Trust Auckland

Appendix

Photo: Excessive packaging for postage of Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan CD from Wickliffe Solutions

