

## **Oral Submission on Zero Waste Strategy April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Kia Ora Councillors and Deputy Mayor, and thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of Owhiro Bay Residents Association.

Our submission on the Zero Waste Strategy covered all the Objectives in the plan and I won't go over them all.

OBRA's thoughts on Zero Waste align closely with the other speakers here.

Wellington is behind other cities in the developed world but also in New Zealand in the reduction of waste. Auckland and Christchurch are both ahead of us. For instance, only Wellington is going to continue burying sewage and food waste in the Southern Landfill **until 2026!**

Zero Waste is a concept that we need to embrace and until we do we can never say that **Wellington is a leader** in anything environmental or climate related.

**Specifically for OBRA's** submission, I'll remind you about one of the reasons we should be minimising our waste.

Landfills, covered by **Objective 4** of the Strategy. The 3 landfills in Owhiro Bay are the Southern Landfill, T&T and C&D. As our population grows we cannot just sweep waste into landfills – that is filling up and destroying the environment that people want to live in and enjoy and it's no longer an acceptable solution.

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As residents of Owhiro Bay we are concerned that the Southern Landfill and other 2 private Landfills should take the minimum possible waste and are effectively phased out. This means that we are heavily invested in seeing that Wellington's waste is rapidly reduced, tending towards zero.

Landfills leak **emissions** – a large proportion of Methane is captured, but not all.

Landfills leak **chemicals** and **toxins** – new ones are lined and old ones capped, but who knows whether after 100 years or an earthquake, that might break down.

Landfills **pollute the air** with smells. The direction of the wind determines which of us get that on which day. Hopefully that will stop in 2026 after the sewage stops being buried, but we don't know for sure.

Landfills pollute the surroundings with **flying soft plastics** that for decades have been getting into the streams and festooning the trees

Landfills attract **predators**. Rodents and mustelids are attracted and breed there. Birds radiating out from Zealandia and native invertebrates (and the introduced kiwis further down the line) are under threat.

Landfills attract **traffic**, both cars and huge numbers of trucks thundering through Te Aro and Brooklyn. There is little to force them to cover loads, or to check they do not come from out of town or to ensure they are not taking toxic waste to C&D.

Landfills are an **eyesore and an anachronism** and these three - which started out life outside the city - are now well and truly inside its boundaries. Houses, the marine reserve and Zealandia are all around them.

Residents in different parts of OB have to put up with all of this. It affects all Wellingtonians and tourists visiting the marine reserve and Red Rocks, but most of all it affects us.

Some of the things we expect to see:

1. On the day in mid 2026 that **Sewage Sludge** is no longer piped to the Landfill, wellington will no longer need the 4 parts of waste to mix with the sewage. We want to see on **Day 1** the planned measures to reduce waste implemented. There will no longer be any excuse.

For instance, another 3 years is surely enough time to have got a plan and schedule for kerbside **food scrap collection and other diversions**. Many years of trials, discussions etc have already taken place, and Auckland and Christchurch are well ahead of us. NO more FOOD should be accepted in the Southern Landfill on that day in mid 2026..

2. We want a **WCC Emergency plan** for the city, and also specifically for the city's landfills . If an earthquake occurs, for instance, there should be a detailed plan for where the debris is stored and/or buried. Currently there is none except a one-pager from Greater Wellington, and the danger is that the Southern Landfill will get rapidly filled up with rubble. This contingency must be part of the planning.

4. OBRA's last point in the submission addressed the section on **Targets** in the Strategy :

Much better information about volumes and types of waste is required than what we have now; if the council does not gather, monitor and analyse waste data in the most stringent way there can't be a meaningful plan.

There needs to be a **timeline** for the Zero Waste strategy, with tracking and progress indicators;

The Southern Landfill is a facility that **should be included in the timeline**. As waste is reduced to a minimum, there is good reason to keep the landfill open only for emergency resilience purposes, and possibly hazardous waste, and possibly recycling and repurposing, and send all other residual amounts to a regional facility.

A timeline would show the city working towards this goal and showing us how.

**And finally, we are asking you to bear in mind when talking about Zero Waste that ZERO WASTE MEANS ZERO LANDFILLS.**