

Community Feedback - Climate change concerns and priorities for action

20 July 2025

Total responses to 'Climate Ready' online survey: 140

In addition, the following feedback was received:

Two written responses received separately (Waikato Regional Council, Gord Stewart)

One response received prior (Transition Matamata)

Children's feedback from community event

Community feedback from Transition Matamata Sustainability Event

Results from 2025 Residents' Survey, 382 weighted responses

Many thanks to everyone who shared their feedback, which will be used to inform development of MPDC's Climate Resilience Strategy.

CLIMATE READY SURVEY

Thank you for taking part in our survey. Your input will help us understand the values, concerns and priorities of our community as we begin to develop a Climate Resilience Strategy.

1. In terms of climate impacts what are you concerned about? Tick as many as apply

- ☐ Weather events (e.g. flooding or drought on your property or in your community)
- ☐ Changing weather (e.g. more hot days, changes in growing seasons, higher wildfire risk)
- ☐ Costs (e.g. insurance, disaster recovery, infrastructure maintenance)
- ☐ Lifestyle impacts (e.g. jobs, sports, cultural practices, health)
- ☐ Natural world (e.g. water quality, native biodiversity)
- ☐ Services (e.g. roads, stormwater, drinking water services)
- ☐ Important places (e.g. marae, schools, parks)
- ☐ Impacts on people (e.g. your whānau, grandchildren, elderly, vulnerable members of community)
- ☐ No concerns (e.g. I'm not currently worried about any climate impacts)
- ☐ Uncertain (e.g. I'm not sure which climate impacts to be concerned about)

Do you have any comments you would like to add?

0/500

2. How important is it to you for Council to take a leadership role in responding to climate change?

1: not at all important 10: very important

Do you have any comments you would like to add?

0/500

3. What actions are most important for Council to take to respond to climate change?

Tick as many as apply

- ☐ Improve Council and community knowledge (e.g. increase understanding of climate risks, give property owners information about natural hazards, and use climate science in planning)
- ☐ Strengthen Council assets (e.g. ensure Council's services are robust so that we can continue to provide services to the community.)
- ☐ Plan for changing conditions (e.g. Introduce more water conservation measures, provide more shady/cool spaces, make room for rivers.)
- ☐ Climate adaptation planning (e.g. coordinate future-focused conversations with community to balance costs and benefits, understand risk tolerance, and explore adaptation options.)

- Land-use planning (*e.g. use rules in the District Plan to avoid developing in hazard-prone areas, require water sustainability measures, water permeable areas, and promote low carbon/climate-resilient building practices, etc.*)
- Reduce emissions (*e.g. take steps to reduce Council's own greenhouse gas emissions, encourage walking and cycling, support EV charging infrastructure*)
- Education and communication *in schools and for the wider community*
- Support community-led initiatives (*e.g. sustainability, emissions reduction, active transport, native planting, composting, waste minimisation*)
- Collaboration and partnership (*e.g. work with iwi, business, other councils in the Waikato*)
- I don't think Council should do anything

Do you have any comments you would like to add?

0/500

Is there any other feedback you would like to share on this topic?

0/1000

Thank you for your feedback! If we would like to ask you more about what you have told us, would you be happy for us to contact you? If so please leave your name and contact email below.

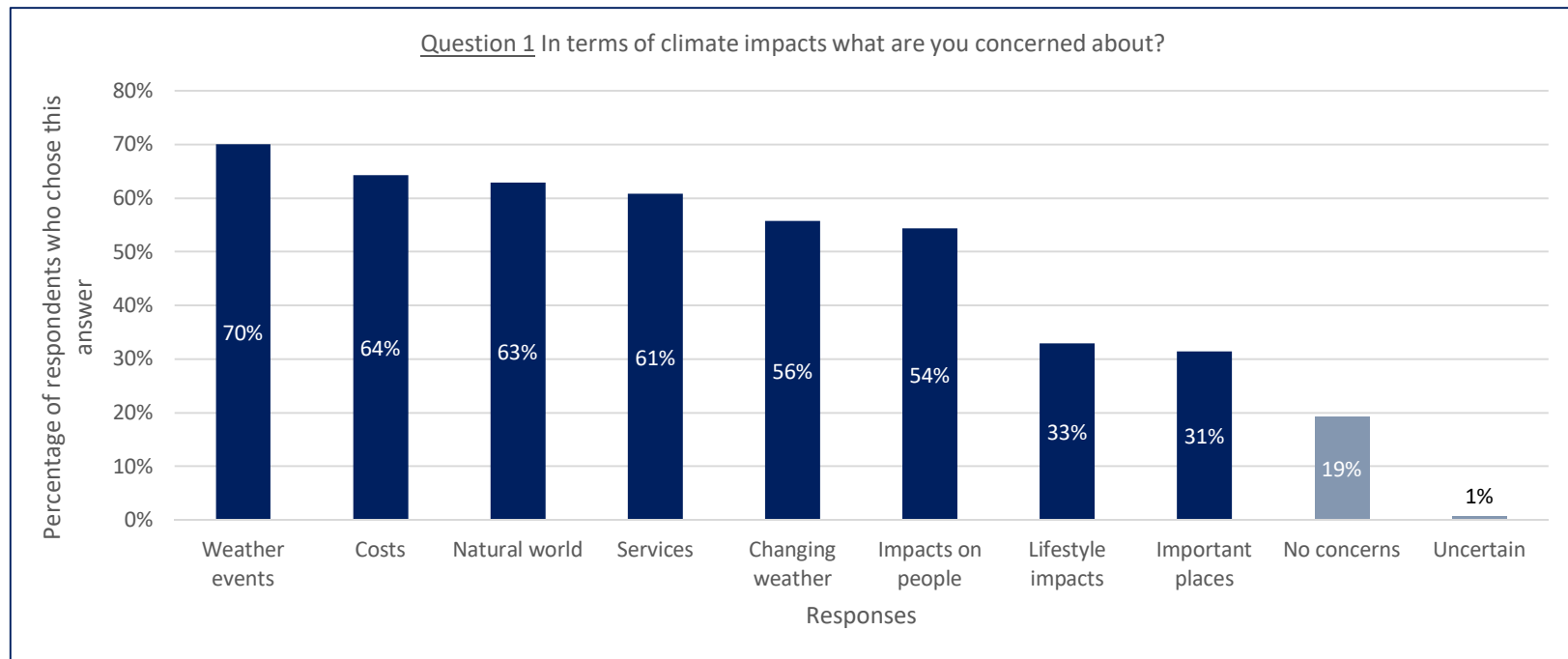
Name:

Email:

Would you like to sign up to receive updates
Yes please, sign me up for updates

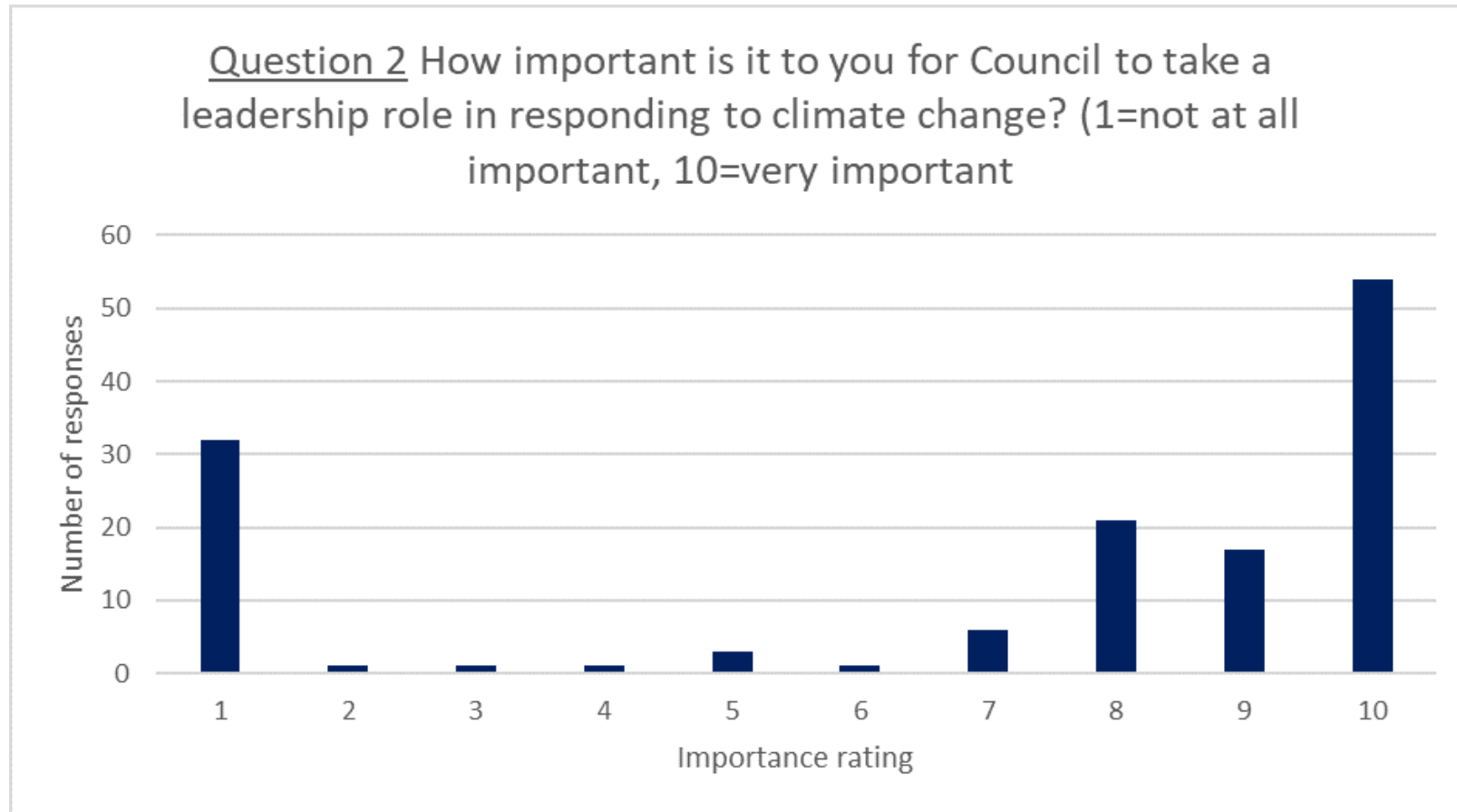
Question 1 In terms of climate impacts what are you most concerned about?

Weather events	70%
Costs	64%
Natural world	63%
Services	61%
Changing weather	56%
Impacts on people	54%
Lifestyle impacts	33%
Important places	31%
No concerns	19%
Uncertain	1%



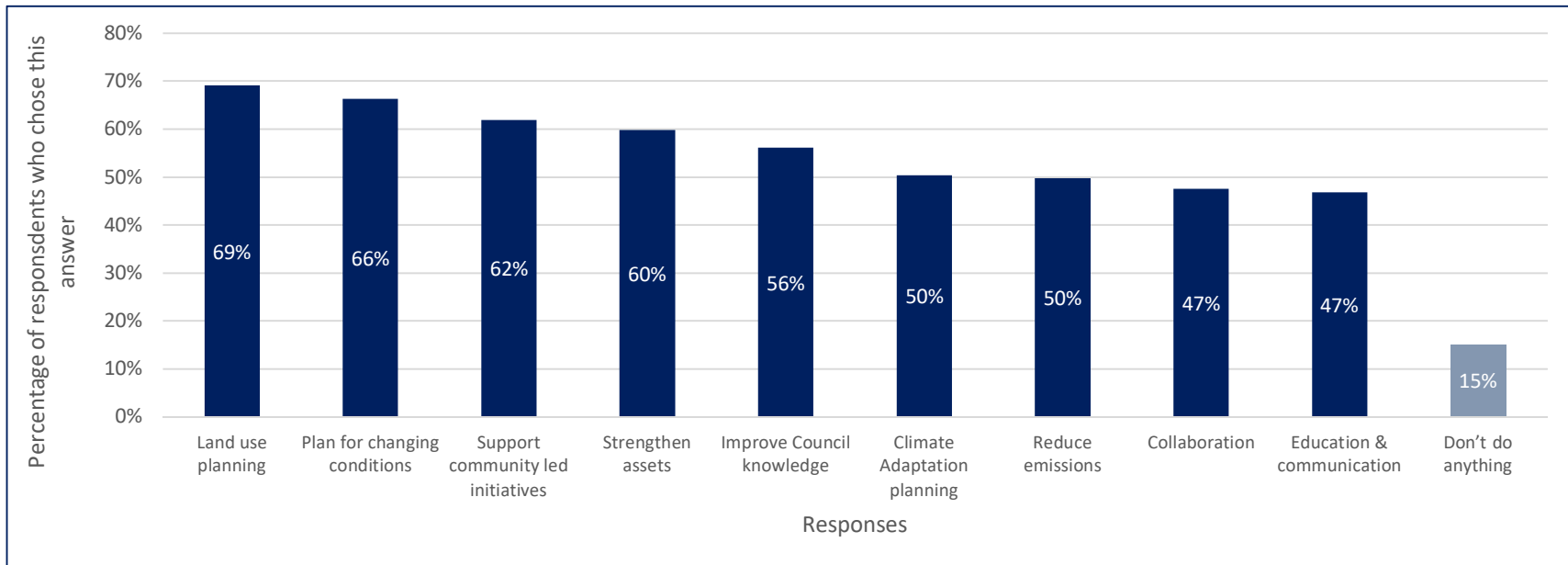
Question 2 How important is it to you for Council to take a leadership role in responding to climate change?

Average score: 7



Question 3 What actions are most important for Council to take to respond to climate change?

Land use planning	69%
Plan for changing conditions	66%
Support community led initiatives	62%
Strengthen assets	60%
Improve Council knowledge	56%
Climate Adaptation planning	50%
Reduce emissions	50%
Collaboration	47%
Education & communication	47%
Don't do anything	15%



Question 1 [Comments] : In terms of climate impacts what are you concerned about?

Comments have been grouped into similar themes

Significant impacts
Climate change is likely to affect us in many ways we can't even foresee at the moment. It's safe to assume though that it will have significant effects on our people, our places and our ability to live peacefully and well.
The likelihood of 5-year average global warming exceeding 1.5 Â°C in 2025-2029 is 70 per cent; ANY increase brings heatwaves, extreme rainfall, droughts, ice melts, ocean heating, rising seas. Our district faces significant risks of flooding and droughts, the prospect of insufficient water in summer for dairying and winter rains making livestock farming untenable long term. Nearby coastal communities could well need to relocate here. Council must consider land use and food production priorities.
All of the topics listed above are of concern to most people. As how to cope is an evolving future which realistically without a lot of money, the reality is we manage as best we can.
It is one of Council's most critical activities as it affects virtually everything and everyone. It is not new, this Council's first involvement, from memory, being 1993, when the first Local Authorities workshops were held. While there was a lot of talk, very little action took place. Waikato Engineering Lifelines, some years ago, started addressing the issue and vulnerabilities were identified. The RMA included it, and all infrastructure design has had to allow for it for over 20 years.
Lack of preparedness and action
I am concerned we as a community are very unprepared
I do worry that we might be a bit complacent since we haven't experienced serious disasters here yet. We often see councils in other areas that have allowed building in areas that have potential for floods etc. and we need to ensure that can't happen here.
Time to open our eyes. Climate change is happening now and it's progression will just get faster and faster. Thought needs to be given to what needs to be abandoned early rather than wasting scarce resources to protect it when the battle is already lost.
Worst case scenario the Waikato may well revert to being one big swamp.
While severe weather events have ocured.... this has always been the case. general emergency planning needs a lot of work in our region and recent events only highlight a growing concern as many of the regional services centralize and leave the districts at more risk than
We urgently need stronger, coordinated action to build climate-resilient communities, protect natural ecosystems, and restore biodiversity. This means investing in sustainable land and water management, supporting native habitat restoration, and ensuring local infrastructure can withstand extreme weather. It means centring mā tauranga Māori and community voices in decision-making.
Range of climate impacts
Climate change impacts different communities in different ways. In our area, this could mean increased frequency of flooding, more severe storm events, increased likelihood of drought, impacts to availability of critical services, and access to property.
Also need to consider cascading events and interrelated consequences
Giving people more advice how to keep cool in a cost effective way. Increase native tree a low tech way. Increase native tree / plant cover where possible. Rain Water conservation where possible. Inform property owners about exotic plants that are pests and how to control them.
Safety
For the safety of people with flooding & other things .
Mental health
And the psychological impact on today's children who are starting to realise all this will be their responsibility soon
Flooding
The constant flooding of my section on Junction Rd Paeroa very annoying. Draining not big enough
I'm concerned about the flooding in Te Aroha stopping our town from growing. When you look at the land available to develop, it's either in the flood zone if it's around town or stormwater issues prevent developments from going ahead. It looks like on GIS stormwater ends up in farmers properties. This needs to be rectified so we can grow our town for it to be able to thrive.
Very concerned about flooding as council do not clear the drains frequently. We have had 3 occasions in the past 3 years when our garage got flooded as the drains weren't cleared. My partner went up our street Totara Ave, Matamata in the downpour to clear the drains. This should not happen.
Now that Autumn is upon us many streets are layered with leaves, a potential flooding hazard, but Council does not appear to have a regular serice to clear and keep stormwater systems clear.
Wildfire
Greenbelts at strategic places to minimize impact in case of wildfire
Landslips
Is there a inclusion in the plan for farm stock and pets? If a tsunami like flood from hillside collapse into a body of water affecting housing and farms what would happen to animals ? Food clean water evacuation plans . A tsunami like flood appears imminent in Winstone quarry harbottle road as a large pond of water below collapsing hillside which is widely visible many large slips even from piako road
Water
Is our source of water big enough, and can the council store water to see the community through droughts.
I do NOT want water meters as they are a ripoff!!!!!!
Infrastructure
Our infrastructure can't cope
Council knowledge
David Orr, in 'The Dangerous Years', wrote: "Government officials appointed and elected must be ecologically literate enough to understand how the Earth works as a biophysical system and how that knowledge affects what they do ..." and "The longer we delay effective climate action, the worse it will get, for ourselves and for succeeding generations."Are our elected officials "ecologically literate enough"? Is Council's focus on resilience just a further delay of "effective climate action"?
Education
I'd like to see more education around recycling, reducing waste and the impact of over-consumption. Starting good habits from a young age will help instill positive change in the longer term. Education programme's in local schools would be a great way to do this. If we could restrict or regulate waste consumption from local businesses and therefore reduce the impact on landfills this would also be beneficial
Needs to be a focus in schools on climate change.

Question 1 [Comments] : In terms of climate impacts what are you concerned about?

Some views on climate change
There's some talk about adopting processes to mitigate the outcome of global anthropogenic climate catastrophe which is so concerning that everyone should know about and be very worried. However, in my experience most people seem to care not or indeed tend to be hostile towards education on the matter, along with world leaders and our NZ government who remain scientifically naive. The answer is not to adjust but stop the ongoing damage by fossil fuel industries.
I am concerned about Climate Change denial, usually driven by those who put profit first.
Car use
As a regular user of a bicycle on the Hauraki rail trail and passing through the MPDC car park wonder why there are so many cars there? Surely the staff that live inTA can either walk, bike or share a ride to work. Perhaps the MPDC can start charging a parking fee to counter act climate change
Primary sector economy
Climate change impacts on everyone and is up to each person to examine how they can reduce their own impact on this fragile earth. Matamata- Piako district is a rural community with a large farming and horticultural aspect. The wealth of the county is dependent on the changes this sector is willing to embrace and practice for future resilience.
Other
Thank you for asking so clearly.
As the weather climate changes in cycles but we dont seem to be preparing for these
Weather will change, emissions by nz will change nothing. Focus on council core roles.
Not concerned about climate risks
Mankind cannot predict weather.
I don't believe there is a climate crisis, it's all just another way to gather tax, the scientific world won't say anything because they have never had as much funding as they are getting now. Have a look at the rainfall yearly average for the last 50 years it never varies much, if you have a period of dry weather, then somewhere down the track there will be a period of wet weather
No more extreme events than there has been previously in history.
It is just weather events, there is no need for climate change alarmism.
I'm not convinced that climate Impacts will have effects on any of these. Our natural world is dynamic and adaptable to climate changes, it has adapted to all of the world's climate changes throughout history. I'm more concerned about what authorities and people in positions of power will inflict upon others to meet their 'climate change' ideals.
The climate has been changing since before the last ice age and will continue to change long after the human race has gone. We as users of this planets resources have little impact on this.
I think the whole climate narrative has been imposed on the people to remove them from coastal areas and for money making purposes and control. Many other people I know think the same.
New Zealand's local governments should reconsider their climate change expenditure, as it increasingly appears to be a futile exercise in virtue signalling rather than effective policy. Despite decades of warnings about catastrophic consequences, rising sea levels, mass climate migration, and collapsing ecosystems” many of these predictions have failed to materialise. Sea level rise, for instance, has remained modest and gradual. Money should not be spent when there will be minimal global impact
This climate hoax is something that needs investigating, there has been a global accord signed by several thousand scientists that has disproven the supposed evidence put forward in the support of this climate hoax. There have been so many supposed events that were to happen, like the sea rising and the ozone layer and so many more that have proven to be lies. The incredible increase in Antarctic ice banks also proves that the planet is NOT heating up. Geoengineering, DARPA. Lets talk about them
The concept of man-made climate change is challenged. Probably the most important challenge comes from the recent paper from NASA. It concluded: From a quarter to half of Earth's vegetated lands has shown significant greening over the last 35 years largely due to rising levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide, according to a new study published in the journal Nature Climate Change on April 25. https://www.nasa.gov/centers-and-facilities/goddard/carbon-dioxide-fertilization-greening-earth-study-f
In my opinion it is important that weather events are assessed in the true context of historic weather variability. There are actions that can be taken to provide general environmental benefits that are positive, but proposals around perceived human induced climate change need to be balanced against other issues facing our community and society.
This summer extended dry is not symptomatic of long term climate change. It was normal for the area. What was different is that we have had 10 odd more years of wetter summers which was great for growing grass.
Healthy water ie NO FLOURIDE

Question 2 [Comments] : How important is it to you for Council to take a leadership role in responding to climate change?

Comments have been grouped into similar themes

Range of suggested initiatives
Maintain parks, help clean up dead and dry trees, remove slips,stabilise steep roadsides,riverbanks
By embracing the use of electric vehicles in its fleet, working with Waikato Regional Council to increase and subsidise public transport and have more electric charging points throughout the district. Also encourage local businesses to use less packaging (especially the plastic film on cardboard) and accept the return of the packaging they have used on products.
Street sweeping of leaves more regularly, upgrading storm water systems and improving roadside guttering/drainage
I don't think our council should take a position on climate change, but I am supportive of our council being more sustainable. By sustainable I mean reducing waste, being financially prudent, being mindful of resources it uses and addressing the millions of invasive weeds in its parks and reserves. The best thing mpdc could do if it beleives in climate change is address the weeds covering Mt Te Aroha, that would address is climate goals and is something everyone supports.
Council leadership
Having wise, concerned leadership at the local level can be very empowering and helpful for communities.
For the majority it is critical that the Council tries to lead the way as they have resources and access to knowledge.
The council is highly influential; its leadership can make or break the district as the climate warms and risks increase. It can model best-practice, sustainability-driven changes, eg, electrification of its fossil-fuelled fleet and facilities, publicise what it is doing and why, and collaborate with iwi, community organisations, neighbourhoods toward common goals - to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to baked-in temperature rises. Disclosure: I am a member of Transition Matamata.
We can't rely on central government, who historically under resource the provinces. Local council needs to set an example for the community, and signal that climate change is serious and urgent, but resilience is achievable. Other, near-by Councils are struggling to keep up with climate resilience and adaptation (think Hauraki and Thames Coromandel areas), and our council should mobilise resources now to shape our long-term resilience.
It is crucial for Council to take a leadership role in the community to address the impacts of climate change. Of course, there is a somewhat limited remit that any Council has (i.e. limited to certain activities), so there are some limitations to the extent to which the Council itself can meaningfully address all aspects of climate change by itself.
If the council takes the leadership role, the community can work together better and implement the most effective actions.
Community needs leadership in dissemination of information around disasters. Don't leave it all to civil defense.
Council need to take a hard stand to get what needs to be done for the whole town. If a small neighbourhood doesn't want change but it means our town grows, those people can move. Planners need to find more hazard free residential zones for developers to be able to do a development that's viable. Perhaps moving towards Waihou would be a better place to develop as it's away from the river and mountain which reduces chances of flood, wind and bush fire.
Strong Council leadership is essential to driving practical solutions and ensuring that at-risk communities have the support, resources, and direction they need to adapt and thrive in the face of climate challenges.
Education
Education is perhaps the biggest gap within the climate crisis so I'd like to see this prioritized.
Need to empower the community through education
Roles and responsibilities
8 but this MUST be done alongside central government or else just a waste of time and money. Has to be a joint initiative
Who else would do it. If there is someone better to do the job. Whoever can do the job effectively
Everyone including councils.
But it is essential that central government takes THE leading role in responding to, and anticipating, the practical changes resulting from climate change.
Climate change is out of the Council's control, but steps must be taken to mitigate its effects.
The global political landscape further undermines the value of local climate initiatives. Notably, the United States one of the world's largest emitters”withdrew from the Paris Agreement in 2020 under the Trump administration. Although it later rejoined, the withdrawal exposed the fragility of international climate consensus and demonstrated that global commitments are ultimately political and reversible. This raises serious questions about the effectiveness of local governments in New Zealand
Avoiding putting people and property at risk
Councils have nothing to do with climate control or science, apart from stopping people building on flood plains etc
Maintenance
Very as drains, rivers need to be cleared on a regular basis like in the past
Community safety
To make sure we are all safe. Where we are.
Lead by action for people's safety - be proactive on maintaining your assets such as parks, trees, drains. It is 2025 - I'm not sure why we need to have so many drains/road floods each time it rains
Council knowledge and views

Question 2 [Comments] : How important is it to you for Council to take a leadership role in responding to climate change?

i have concerns that the current council is made up of Groundswell supporters which is not great from a climate perspective. i am also concerned that with the current right wing government there will be little to no central funding which would drive up the cost to rate payers. how will you ensure that climate change denialists will not derail efforts to mitigate the inevitable effects?
Main hazard here is the council is an elected body with no skills in assessing the impact of climate change with most, not all on the council elected on the basis of keeping costs down. Action is likely to be too little to late.
Sustainability
It would be preferable if Council was able to support its community in making sustainable choices
Big issue
It is the largest and most contentious subject that Councils in New Zealand have ever faced.
Community actions
Also important that households take responsibility for themselves ie bottled water on hand etc. Trees maintained on properties and not near power lines. Stormwater grates clear. Fire risks monitored - long dry grass etc
Instead of yet another survey (which opens the door to responses from uninformed people with an agenda), how about a citizen's assembly on the subject? Here's some info on the process (our council gets a mention at the bottom): https://gordstewart.substack.com/p/democracy-regained . Surveys can just 'tick a box' for council on route to following a predetermined agenda of its own. (See Comment sent separately by email.)
We all need to do our bit we are merely the caretakers of Te Ao and we have and haven't been doing our part, I hear the comments we are cleaning up your generations mess it's not just 1 generation it's everybody!!!! Put rubbish in bin, do not waste food, buy only what you need, wash tht milk bottle and put it in the recycling or tht empty tin of spaghetti wash it and put in recycling don't be a humbug and throw in the rubbish we want our future generations growing up in the Te Ao that we did
Work with others
Also to make sure all areas learn and co-operate with each other on plans for action. This is a huge challenge and cannot be tackled by small groups. Must work with whichever government is currently in office.a
Council should be aligned to national and international expertise on this topic and not try to go it alone.
Not supportive of Council taking a leadership role
I am very concerned how expensive our rates bills are!!!!!!
Council should not be spending money on anything related to climate change
Forgt climate change, focus on refuse and recycling and running the council to better budget and reduce the over inflated council project budgets and compliance costs. More focus on delivering core district needs keeping down rates while delivering true value to the community.
Council should not be wasting money on such concerns. Climate change is a religion, not a science. Go back to the 70's - The belief then was an ice age was imminent.
Just stick to core infrastructure. Do your job. Don't do nice to haves .
Council needs to focus on keeping rates low, and sticking to roads water and waste.
Nothing to be leaders on except being truthful to the people about geoengineering and DARPA.
Yes, much has been proven that the climate change is no different to a 100 years ago, or further back was hotter. I think this is hurting locals, costing locals money that is not needed. People are struggling.
Local Bodies should not waste Ratepayers funds on this matter. The lead of the USA should be followed as that country has withdrawn from the Paris Accord. The world's largest polluters, China and India, have no obligation to carbon reduction. New Zealand's CO2 emissions are 0.084% oof the global total. We cannot justify the economic consequences of climate control actions as our country cannot make a significant contribution even if we reduced our emissions to Zero.
Just make sure your infrastructure is up to scratch. Stick to what you are paid for. Don't spread misinformation about increasing weather events .
If council wants to get involved, I think they need to help fight the powers that be to stop the ludicrous spending as well as the weather manipulation and geoengineering that causes a lot of the problems
Not a leadership role. Just maintaining drains gutters etc for the long term
It is not Councils role, responsibility or area of mandate to "respond" to any perceived climate change.
Territorial Authorities should be involved in general activities that protect and enhance the environment. That should not expand into ideology associated with climate change alarmism. Council will lose community goodwill and engagement if they presume that their role is to "educate" the community on ideological climate change issues. Actions associated for general future planning should relate to real world effects and be subject to cost benefit analysis.
Stop cloud seeding. Stop HAARP and any Other CLIMATE MANIPULATION

Question 3 [Comments] : What actions are most important for Council to take to respond to climate change?

Comments have been grouped into similar themes

Range of suggested initiatives
Encourage / subsidise households to install rainwater collection tanks. Collaborate with plant nurseries to provide subsidised seeds/seedlings for private gardens (for food resilience and also to boost native species.) Consider mitigation of future climate-related risks, eg bushfires or landslides in Te Aroha. Consider collaborating with Civil Defence to help households get emergency ready - eg, bring along your ~get ready" kit for assessment.
Suggestions: Educate on reducing emissions, reduce in-house emissions (wastewater plant upgrades). Replace Morrinsville pool heating with electric. Solar panels “ feasible for pools? Replace each diesel or petrol vehicle with electric vehicle over time. Give incentives (lower consent fees) for solar panels and low carbon homes. Strong water-saving and waste-reduction campaigns. Educate farmers on sustainable practices. Support more native tree planting. Continue cycling/walking improvements.
I ticked a few, but they're all important, of course. First one: The climate crisis has been here for a long time. Shouldn't Council already have the knowledge needed to show real leadership? Fourth point - Climate adaptation planning: A progressive council would have had all this in place years ago. Fifth point re Low carbon, climate resilient building practices: Would have been awesome if council was on to this years ago so the recent building boom could have been shaped by it.
I would personally suggest a two-prong approach. Firstly, the Council must seek to understand its own emissions profile, set targets for reduction, and identify an action plan to meet the targets it sets for itself. Secondly, by 'practicing what we preach' the Council is then in a strong position to be a leader across the rohe to assist property owners, businesses, and community groups with information and resources to a) understand the impacts of climate change on their activities/communities.
I think new houses should have water tanks and use grey water for gardens so they are more self-sufficient. I commend the council for using Antenno for warning us of upcoming severe weather etc. I think it's a great service but I'm worried that not everyone is using this app especially if they don't have smart phones. Maybe we need to start encouraging neighbourhood support groups (as used to be the case with neighbourhood watch, which almost seems to have vanished.)
It's not your role to be a school. Stop building in flood prone areas. Clean up rivers you take water from, lead by example. Leadership means taking accountability - don't go oh, that's not our job, that is XYZ agency. Get in there and make things happen.
Composting workshops and grow your own. Keep green waste out of landfill.
Tackle things like wasting water through leaks, ensuring the rivers are not polluted by run offs from fields, maybe encourage smaller water collection points in gardens & advise on how to keep usable. Encourage use of buses ensuring they get people where they need to go at useful times. Honest reporting on what actually is the most important things to tackle (I don't know really). Support for cycling & walking.
1.Provide support for residents and businesses to install water (rain) collection and storage equipment. 2. Provide a usable, reliable, affordable and frequent bus service among the three towns and Hamilton. This would reduce the vehicle traffic, reduce emissions, reduce road accidents, reduce fuel usage, and improve quality of life especially for commuters and older people.
For council buildings to have solar panels, supply small water tanks which can be inserted into down pipes at cost price (as Porirua council) to the public. It was great to see council employees discussing this at Domain Day in Te Aroha and at Matamata. No doubt there would have been more events as well . Does this include sports events, farming events, businesses and market events?
Land use planning is a major one - Climate Change is blamed for floods in the East Coast but same areas flooded in 1930s but land use has massively intensified there.- EVs are not the answer unless power source is clean (not Huntly coal!); a safe, environmentally-responsible way of disposing of batteries; and alternative transport options, like public transport, walkways, cycleways exist. - Council could get some E-bikes for staff to use on local site visits. Solar panels & sensor lights.
Working with others
Collaboration- Work together only if that makes sense financially.
Regional collaboration is critical. No single district can tackle these challenges alone. Working together allows us to share knowledge, pool resources, and implement solutions at a scale that truly makes an impact. Councils are key in leading this work, supporting aligned strategies across boundaries, and empowering local voices.
Reduce emissions
Reducing emissions is number one priority
Reduce emissions - sustainable farming, EV-trackers,Ute's and farm vehicle's as per the farmer on Country Calender show who went totally electric on his whole farm,whereby he generates electricity and sends it back to the grid. Collaboration and partnership (e.g. work with iwi, business, other councils in the Waikato and farmers.
Public transport
Public transport (even mini vans or mini buses) that operates well and frequently is an easy win and will encourage people to leave cars at home.
Reduce risk of flooding
As roads get built and houses, factories etc with parking areas there automatically are more hard surfaces where water is collected and drained into the stormwater systems, this used to soak into the ground. That's why we have more flooding etc
Leadership role
Have not seen MPDC 'walk the walk' re climate change. Despite some mentions, I dont see MPDC leading broader systemic change across our district. They need to take a much stronger, united leadership role to really support greater community resilience.
We all need to play a role, not just Council
Stormwater
There's already so many planning rules, adding more would make it less viable for investors to invest in our town. The development behind ruakaka shops would help our town so much and I think council should work with the developer to mitigate the stormwater issues instead of shutting it down. Same with the development on Grattan Road. Sort the stormwater before the development.
Education
Education, people need to understand insurance retreat & DAPP simplified
Education and communication in schools is a national issue - development of resources and age specific learning tools and programmes is outside of the scope of Local Government. Similarly general education and communication across the community generally is not a Local Govt function. Supporting through improving council internal knowledge and systems is where change needs to occur firstly
Water conservation
Yes. Water conservation. How about encouraging town dwellers to place a rain water system on their property. If everybody would have a rain water system, there would be less pressure on the current water system. Rain water is a resource and should be conserved as much as possible.
Would love to see new build regulations include requirements to include non potable water systems for flushing toilets, showering etc and renewable energy sources.
All new builds should have storage tanks to catch their own rainwater

Question 3 [Comments] : What actions are most important for Council to take to respond to climate change?

Understand the risks
Re. Natural hazards. Council should install a wind anemometer through Met Service or Weather Watch, so a better understanding of the wind problem we experience often. Closest is Paeroa, we have very different conditions. None in Morrinsville or Matamata ie the MPDC area.
Adaptation
The subject of climate change has been talked to death as to what is causing it, whether it is naturally occurring or human induced, has become almost irrelevant, as this counties impact is less than 0.2% of the World's emissions and the world is too busy fighting to make any meaningful changes. All of the above-mentioned actions are important but will simply bog any forward actions down. The critical component is physical adaptation and is where over 90% of the effort should be placed.
Natural environment restoration
Nzs emissions are puny, they don't contribute anything to the global emissions total, we don't need to waste precious resources addressing this.this is being addressed by qualified people already. If you want to be helpful then go outside, attend a planting day or better yet, lead one. Get everyone at mpdc to plant one tree, that will do a great deal more than any of the other suggestions on here.
Council core services
Must be done on a central government level. Council should concentrate on it core responsibilities ie, sewage water rubbish flood plan for it area
Do the commonsense stuff, Yes, make sure water infrastructure is in good shape for dry (normal) summers for example.
Just build decent infrastructure. It is not the councils job to educate or partner with iwi. Stop wasting our money .
Council will lose community goodwill and engagement if they presume that their role is to "educate" the community on ideological climate change issues. Territorial Authority rates have in general (to be fair MPDC have done relatively well) continued to run well above inflation. Territorial Authorities have had "mission creep", and responsibilities in part forced upon them, that have affected costs significantly. Council should stay with core service delivery.
Ensure water and power infrastructure is maintained
Clean air measures
If we adopted a clean air bill and restricted the use of indoor fires this may help reduce emissions and reduce pollution, especially in a often misty environment like Matamata
Other
The council is elected by the community to lead and protect them. Important to see officers relating to community
Not supportive of Council responding to climate change
Save your (my/our) money. Don't waste money when it's ultimately not going to change a thing
There has got to be better things to spend our money on. How about you come up with ways to balance the budget without rates going up so much every year.
Council should gather real scientific evidence that shows the normal fluctuating weather over time. They had to change the narrative from a coming ice age, to global warming, to climate change over my lifetime, because the climate wasn't behaving as they expected! Weather manipulation is the problem that is used to keep the people in fear and the narrative going. Sea levels are not rising at rapid rates. Plenty of photos to show that around.
Council shouldn't get too involved in "Climate Change"
It is not your job to educate people
No reponse required, focus on core responsibilities.
I feel the council has too many overhead costs not needed, and this needs to be addressed to cut costs of rate payers etc.. This is a priority from Matanata Piako not so called climate change.
Climate change is Natural, Except when MAN MADE CLIMATE MANIPULATION IS ENGAGED. USE COMMON SENSE PLEASE
Climate change is a hoax created by the UN WEF and its associated bodies. How can a supposed climate crisis be fixed with carbon tax ??? its a scam. Electric cars are part of this scam because electric cars can be turned off / controlled. "fossil fuels" a term created by the Rothschilds to give an image of no longevity but there is oil for generations in the ground but there is no endless supply of parts for batteries. All this speed bumps and bus lanes, cycle lanes is all part of the hoax.
Focus on Roads, Rates, Rubbish and Reserves. Forget the other nonsense.
In our community that depends on the farming of livestock The Council should take the lead in opposing directives that inhibit farming on the grounds of what is increasingly described as "The Climate Hoax."
The Council are here because of Rate paying people. Just look after and maintain the infrastructure we have and future proof for an increasing population.

Question 4: Is there any other feedback you would like to share on this topic?

Comments have been grouped into similar themes

Increase community knowledge
Education is the key to seeing change happen. If people are unaware of the damage they are causing to the environment they will not change their ways.
Education on the subject is paramount, as in my experience so many people are flat earth believers in their lack of understanding and concern for the systematic destruction of our planet.
... and b) provide guidance/support to the community on ways to address their own emissions and to become more resilient to the effects of climate change. Going one step further, by developing a strategy to understand the most significant contributors, and developing an action plan to both mitigate and adapt- incentives can be prescribed in key areas to encourage behaviors/activities which contribute to the strategy. Communication is key. It is often the case that the average ratepayer doesn't always understand the services Councils provide or why. By helping the community to better understand the work we do, and the risks to our own activities driven by climate change, we can help the community to better understand that we're all in this together- and that it's in all our interests to work together to provide robust solutions.
We need to start putting Planet before Profit. We cannot continue as we are and this means constant education at all levels. Schools are very important in breaking the cycle of denial and sheer ignorance.
Increase Council knowledge
Could I suggest that Council purchases copies of The Climate Book (created by Greta Thunberg) for distribution to all councillors, senior administrators and others involved in your climate efforts? It's a great book, one that should be in every school library and public library in the country and read by all elected officials and business owners and managers. Here's some information on it: https://gordstewart.substack.com/p/blah-blah-blah
Community participation
Do you have a Matamata-Piako climate change think tank? Having a dedicated group to consult with could be a smart move long-term.
Yes, if planting of trees etc. is required, volunteers could help to plant.
Remind people to ensure neighbourhood drains are cleared of leaves & debris if this is not done by Council contractors. Conservation reminders before it becomes an issue ie water
Supportive of Council responding to climate change
I'd rather pay higher rates to resolve these problems, they are really important to me.
Action what the community asks for. Not in 25 years!!!
Critical topic
Range of different suggested initiatives
I would like council to listen to, work with and educate residents on lower-carbon living and involve communities in climate decision-making. Offer workshops on: how to reduce waste, reduce household and business energy consumption, grow a productive veggie garden, build to Green Star ratings. Run competitions “ eg, Design a sustainable town centre , Most productive garden or How we farm with lower inputs and emissions". Council could workshop with farmers on reducing fertiliser use, diversifying pastures, increasing riparian and native tree planting. It could support more community tree-planting. Once it has completed climate risk assessments, it should inform property owners. As above, risk reduction measures can include: not allowing flood-prone land to be built on, encouraging and/or mandating water permeable areas and allowing room for rivers . Climate-change messaging in councils dvertising/editorial/website promotions/events should convey urgency. [References available]
If Council is serious about doing something they should have stricter planning controls next to rivers/floodplains, stronger rules and resolve to acquire esplanade reserves, and fund buffer planting along riparian areas with appropriate native species. Also do more to promote tree planting and increasing canopy cover (opposite to current approach where we loose trees and they don't get replanted). - Solar panels on Council buildings and use of sensor lights.- Please stop using the photo Te Aroha wetlands and floodplain reserves 'in flood' to sell climate change. These areas have flooded for >100 years and do so with regularity, often multiple times a year. It is a floodplain afterall. The fact that it floods has nothing to do with climate change, though frequency and severity would be affected by changing climate. The image that you and WRC have used actually shows a functioning 'flood buffer zone' as the town did not flood, only the floodplain reserves and some roads.
The strategy should not involve endless streams of dialogue with all parties, but to concentrate on the information it has, such as the Lifelines Vulnerability Report for infrastructure, and determine potential means of mitigating the risks, whether it be by planning or physical engineering structures. It will involve relocation of existing urban areas, rather than relying on engineering solutions which are generally short-term options only. The one party that should be involved right throughout the process is the insurance industry, as they have a major stake in the outcomes. The only way forward is to provide the public with potential remedial options, costs and consequences of doing nothing. It is the most critical and important subject that Councils have ever faced and there are no alternatives, but to make extremely tough decisions. To achieve that, the public must be treated equally and to have viable options that they can comment on.
Addressing our region's climate and environmental challenges requires a wide-reaching, coordinated response. Solutions must go beyond quick fixes and be integrated, long-term, and community-led. From waste minimisation strategies that reduce landfill pressure to nature-based solutions like wetland restoration and native planting, every action contributes to building resilience and restoring balance. Education and support are vital. Communities and businesses need clear guidance to adapt, reduce emissions, and minimise waste. Funding and resourcing grassroots initiatives build trust and drive lasting change. Solutions are more effective and inclusive when people are empowered to lead and innovate locally. Strong leadership and collaboration can create a climate-resilient future for people, nature, and future generations.
Water conservation measures
Tim Shadbolt had the right idea 30 years ago, every new building built from now on should have water storage tanks to collect the water off the roof, thus can be plumbed in for the flushing of toilets and washing of cars, or watering plants etc. That way the council won't have to spend millions on a new water treatment plant
I believe residents & businesses should pay for water use to make us all aware of how much we use. But it needs to be affordable.
Restoring natural environment
I think MPDC is going down a path that it's I'll informed on. Why does our rural, country town council beleive that it has an affect on the climate at all. Steer well away from the social engineering and the ivory tower ideating and please actually do something real if you believe the climate is changing. If you do beleive that, then look to mt Te Aroha and see the sea of weeds that is choking the carbon sequestering forest. There is one thing you can do if you actually beleive there is climate change. Or the river banks in our district, many of them are totally bald. Why not create a program with local landowners to reduce eutrophication by making a trees for rivers grant? You can absorb carbon and nitrogen in one go! I bet you'd spend less on that than have spent just talking about the topic, that's great value for money. Perhaps mpdc could lead by example first? Would all the staff at mpdc participate in a cycling promotion? Maybe bike month?
Stop mowing public parks down to the roots in the summer. Some of our big trees have exposed roots and the lawn has turned to dust. More native plantings to prevent soil erosion. Stop using leaf blowers which cause noise and air pollution. Rake and collect leaves instead. Harness natural geothermal water to heat swimming pools
Infrastructure resilience
Rather than focusing on symbolic gestures like carbon-neutral councils, electric rubbish trucks, or funding marginal emission reductions, local governments should prioritise practical infrastructure resilience, economic adaptation, and prudent fiscal management. The billions required for meaningful climate impact are far beyond their remit and resources. Climate change, if and when it poses a true existential threat, must be addressed at national and global levels. Until then, local spending should reflect evidence, proportion, and accountability”not ideology.
Don't fear monger and scare people. Just build decent infrastructure. We have always had drought and floods. It is not increasing. Be ready for those events.

Question 4: Is there any other feedback you would like to share on this topic?

Not supportive of Council responding to climate change
Climate Change is a big have. The Council are box ticking with this survey. It would be interesting to know how the Council would fund being ~climate ready". Rate payers maybe ??
Please RESERCH CLIMATE MANIPULATION
be accountable to the people that you are supposed to serve, the fact you are a corporation questions your ability to make by laws and charge rates etc but i am sure the truth will come out very soon and all will be exposed.
Please to not spend anymore rate payers money on climate change.
Remember, we need CO2 for life on the planet! Without it, we inhibit plant growth and our ability to feed ourselves and our animals. Plants flourish with CO2. And we hardly need to cool the planet. The summer felt so short, despite what they say. And the temperatures were definitely not as high for as long as previous summers. If you want to spend more of the money that ratepayers can't afford, use it to do real research into what is really happening, the climate change hoax.
Other
I prepared something to place here. Loading it in, I see it would only take about half of it (1000 characters). Probably good to have a word limit, but also would be nice if you will accept longer submissions - constructive thoughts that residents who have put some time into writing it. I will send my comments intended for this space in PDF form as an email attachment. I trust you will consider it and include it in the published submissions on council's website.

File No: 25 12 00
Document No: **32088794**
Enquiries to: Alejandro Cifuentes



3 June 2025

Matamata-Piako District Council
35 Kenrick Street, Te Aroha
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Private Bag 3038
Waikato Mail Centre
Hamilton 3240, NZ

waikatoregion.govt.nz
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Email: submissions@mpdc.govt.nz

Dear Sir/Madam

Waikato Regional Council feedback to climate ready communities public consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to make provide feedback on the climate ready communities public consultation. Please find attached the Waikato Regional Council's staff comments, signed under delegation.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Balsom".

Lisette Balsom
Manager, Strategic Policy Implementation

HE TAIAO MAUIRORA	HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT
HE ŌHANGA PAKARI	STRONG ECONOMY
HE HAPORI HIHIRI	VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Staff feedback from Waikato Regional Council on climate ready communities public consultation
30 May 2025

Introduction

1. Waikato Regional Council (WRC) staff appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback to the climate ready communities public consultation.
2. We agree extreme weather events disrupt day-to-day lives, and the changing climate means communities are likely to experience more frequent and severe weather events.
3. Building understanding of the risks the district faces and being able to adapt and prepare helps ensure safe and resilient communities both now and in the future.
4. We support the identified approaches for proactively addressing climate change, including the proactive actions to mitigate increased risks.
5. We welcome the opportunity for future discussions and encourage continued collaboration in the future.

Feedback

6. It is essential that development opportunities align with Policies 13.1, 13.1.1 and 13.2 of the Waikato Regional Policy Statement to ensure development opportunities are carefully managed in areas with identified hazards to ensure both climate change and community resilience are considered in the planning process.
7. We encourage hazard management is considered when planning for future development. For example, the Waikato Regional Climate Change Hazard and Risk Report (linked below) identifies that Te Aroha faces risk from extreme weather, higher temperatures, rainfall, flooding and land instability.
8. We recommend strengthening emergency management strategies, with particular focus on preparedness for more frequent and extreme weather events. Proactively addressing these challenges encourages mitigation of risk and community resilience.
9. We support Matamata-Piako District Council (MPDC) to continue work on and resourcing of long-term plan programmes that respond to climate risks and build the resilience of the services it provides to the community. We encourage working proactively to plan for the community's long term resilience, which will help to identify opportunities to respond to natural hazard risks in the short, medium and long term. We encourage territorial authorities to lead these activities, with support from Waikato Regional Council.
10. We also note that territorial authorities have a critical role in communicating natural hazards information to communities through the district plan and land information memoranda (LIM). Recent changes to the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) require territorial authorities to make natural hazards information known to communities in LIM reports. We encourage territorial authorities to ensure the appropriate implementation of this new regulatory requirement as it will increase communities' awareness about natural hazards and risk.
11. Waikato Regional Council staff are currently working alongside Matamata-Piako District Council staff on flood mapping. We are committed to continuing this project and look forward to further opportunities to strengthen our partnership.

12. We support actions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and community-led initiatives that focus on sustainability. This includes waste minimisation and steps to reduce emissions.
13. Several resources have been developed by Waikato Regional Council staff that may assist in planning for changing climates and community resilience. These resources are outlined in more detail below.

Additional resources

Resource	Overview	URL Link
Climate Action Roadmap	Waikato Regional Council has developed the Climate Action Roadmap to guide how it will work with others to support the transition to a climate-resilient, low emissions society that is less vulnerable to disruption, more affordable and better for health and wellbeing. The Climate Action Roadmap identifies nine pathways, each with a set of council commitments to reduce emissions and adapt to the changes we're already experiencing. The document highlights WRC commitment to working alongside territorial authorities to promote coordinated and collaborative approaches to climate adaptation.	Climate-Roadmap.pdf
Wharekawa Coast Adaptation Work	Three partner councils (Hauraki District Council, Waikato Regional Council and Waikato District Council) worked together alongside communities and iwi to look at a range of issues over the next 100 years. The plan was adopted at the end of 2023 and provides a pathway for how the communities and councils can work together to ensure a safe and resilient future for communities living on the Wharekawa Coast.	Wharekawa Coast 2120 – Looking Ahead
Hauraki Plains Adaptation Work	Hauraki District Council and Waikato Regional Council are working with communities to make a plan for the future. This is proposed to be achieved through a dynamic adaptive planning process.	HAURAKI PLAINS CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION PLANNING
Waikato Regional Climate Change Hazards and Risks Report	This report provides an overview of climate change hazards and risks identified through a high-level risk identification and screening process, incorporating insights from council subject matter experts. This report, which covers the geographic area of the eleven district councils in the Waikato region, provides insights into the hazards and potential risks associated with climate change that are likely to affect the Waikato region, across five domains (human, natural environment, economy, built environment, governance).	Agenda of Climate Action Committee Meeting - Thursday, 15 May 2025 - Core Share Agenda page 50 - 137 PowerPoint Presentation - Core Share
Waikato Regional Council Organisational Climate Change Risk Assessment	To better understand the specific climate change risks for the Waikato, WRC staff are developing a comprehensive climate change risk assessment for the region. This document identifies hazards, assesses the associated risks and examines the spatial variation of climate risks across the region. This information may be useful in planning for climate related events in each district.	Agenda of Climate Action Committee Meeting - Thursday, 15 May 2025 - Core Share Agenda page 138 - 159

The journey to a circular economy in the Waikato region	In 2020, Waikato Regional Council established the Waikato Regional Waste Prevention Action Plan 2020-2025, which outlines focus and action areas to pursue a circular economy approach. This research included a desktop study of national and international case studies, connecting with other organisations and people working in this space, and discussing pilot ideas with territorial authority (TA) waste officers.	The journey to a circular economy in the Waikato region
Circularising Organics – research report	Waikato Regional Council and a team of researchers created these resources to help organisations make decisions around organic waste and to create circular organics systems in the Waikato region and beyond.	Circularising organics Circularising Organics – Decision making tool guidance Circularising Organics Project Waikato Regional Council
Stocktake of reusable packaging for fast-moving consumer goods in the Waikato region	In 2022, Waikato Regional Council commissioned Reuse Aotearoa to undertake a three-part research project into reusable packaging in the Waikato region. This report presents part one of the research project: a stocktake of existing reusable packaging systems across the Waikato region, focusing on the packaging of groceries and fastmoving consumer goods (FMCGs) across the supply chain	Stocktake of reusable packaging for fast-moving consumer goods in the Waikato region
Return to reuse: The potential role for Waikato's territorial authorities and resource recovery sector in supporting reverse logistics for reusable packaging	In 2022, Waikato Regional Council commissioned Reuse Aotearoa to undertake a three-part research project into reusable packaging in the Waikato region. This report presents part three of the research project: an exploration of the current and future role of territorial authorities and the resource recovery sector in supporting reusable packaging systems through service provision.	Return to reuse: The potential role for Waikato's territorial authorities and resource recovery sector in supporting reverse logistics for reusable packaging.

Submission on MPDC's climate resilience strategy, Gord Stewart, 12 June 2025

Council's current plan, outlined in its Climate Change Rivermap, is an insult to young residents of the district and to future generations.

Calling it a 'Climate *Resilience* Strategy' rather than a 'Climate *Action* Strategy' suggests council has set itself a low bar with a narrow focus. The survey was slanted toward this predetermined path. Council did ask how important we thought it was for them to take a leadership role in responding to climate change. Do they really need our opinion on this?

It's late in the game and the science is clear. Climate change is an existential threat. We need all hands on deck to tackle it. This includes local councils – ours, too! – taking bold, practical steps. Instead, the Rivermap proposes soft, easy actions, many that council would have done anyway. It's a plan that leaves the hard work to others.

Council has done some good things over the years – LED streetlights, sustainability features in the Matamata library/civic centre, and solid waste initiatives, for example. But it's always nibbling around the edges, with no meaty, comprehensive long-term plan.

Council committed to develop and implement ambitious action plans that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions when it signed the Local Government Leaders' Climate Declaration way back in 2015. We're still waiting.

The Climate Change Rivermap plan won't deliver on this. Eleven of the 20 initiatives proposed relate to water services. (Perhaps that's why it's called a rivermap?) Take water conservation, for example. When asked, council said it had no estimate of expected water savings from the effort and that GHG emission reduction "is not a primary goal of the initiative". Resilience 1, Action 0.

Council needs to go beyond its own operations. Progressive local governments overseas are encouraging creative housing developments that offer a real sense of community, built with sustainable materials, features and construction techniques. Why not here?

And what about dairy farming? Farming contributes nearly half the country's GHG emissions, with dairy farming producing the great majority of it. In our district, GHG emissions from farming dwarf all other factors combined. Council should go boldly and encourage and support needed changes in farming practices. It should also strive to diversify the district's economic base so we are less reliant on dairy.

Young residents and future generations deserve a real shot at a decent future. Council should play its part to help deliver it.



MATAMATA PIAKO DISTRICT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Tēnā koutou katoa

Transition Matamata welcomes the opportunity to comment on Matamata-Piako District Council's climate change work and is pleased to see a range of strategy developments is now in play.

District priorities

We support the four broad “planks” of action identified by the council:

- Infrastructure resilience
- Adaptive land use
- Emergency response and recovery planning, and
- Engaging, education and learning from communities.

We note the importance of consultation with local iwi and hapū on climate matters, as the council has acknowledged.

For Transition Matamata, there is also a need to add a fifth plank:

- Reducing the district's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

This would include a clear time frame for the council's actions to reduce its own emissions as a medium-sized enterprise.

Our district's climate impact

The council also has a role (as it has noted) in educating the public. Our district is a contributor to global emissions. Our livestock farming activity and location (with a lot of travel incurred) are behind this because, according to the [NZ Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990–2022](#), GHG increases since 1990 relate to:

- enteric fermentation from dairy cattle, largely due to an increase in the dairy cattle population (methane)
- road transportation, due to traffic growth (carbon dioxide), and
- agricultural soils, due to increased fertiliser use (nitrous oxide).

Fairness would suggest that, being part of the problem of man-made global temperature rise, our district should be part of the solution. We all need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. A large number of businesses recognise that the future is low or no carbon.

We would like to see the council, perhaps in partnership with various local groups, run workshops to help individuals and businesses to understand their carbon footprint and then support them to reduce it. Annual sustainability awards, with an awards night, would also encourage local businesses on a path to low emissions. We would hope Transition Matamata's knowledge and contacts will be useful here.

Climate projections

We note the Long Term Plan 2024–2034 includes “climate projections” within the research the council will do in the current year. We hope the council has already located the [highly detailed map](#) on this, recently published by the Ministry for the Environment.



A lively and green CBD!

Transition Matamata is pleased to see the council's Plan Change 61 proposes to encourage more people to live in the town's central business district. We can well envisage this as part of Matamata becoming the greenest, most beautiful small town in Aotearoa New Zealand, with all the reputational benefits this would bring.

Many buildings can be adapted to accommodate residential dwellers and new buildings can be designed to do so, and the town's layout can be retrofitted to focus on walkability and green space enjoyment. Rooftop gardens, vertical gardens, mini food forests, lane shrub plantings, new wildflower and grassed areas are just some ideas. Businesses would benefit from greater foot traffic as more people would spend time in the CBD.

Matamata is fortunate that its CBD has green "bones": Hetana Reserve; Centennial Drive; Founders Park; Matamata Domain; and the Broadway median strip with its magnificent trees. We are confident the Matamata community will help the council to build on this legacy. (We will set aside for the moment the often-discussed and complex matter of large trucks using Broadway, but we note that this cannot continue indefinitely.)

There is also plenty of enthusiasm for helping restore the health of forests on the Kaimai Ranges, an effort that supports biodiversity and carbon absorption. Pest control on the western side of the ranges has provided local jobs and helped mitigate climate change but is now in need of funding. Transition Matamata has long contributed to this work and would urge the council to consider supporting the team of experienced trappers.

Residential and industrial growth

"[Green building](#)" standards will in the long term be nationally required. But starting now, with local regulations, education and incentives, the council could encourage:

- building waste minimisation
- water storage tanks
- black versus grey water separation (so grey water can be used on gardens), and
- more environmentally sustainable building products such as eco-friendly concretes and saveBOARD.

Incentives such as discounts on planning fees could be provided for solar energy and "waterless" toilets. Green builds mean our district can house more people at less cost over time and with a much lower environmental burden.

We would like to see the council hold workshops for the local building sector on low-impact, lower-emissions materials, technologies and methods.

Transition Matamata also points out the environmental and economic unsustainability of natural gas. Public health scientists have shown gas-fired homes carry health risks. Gas is a GHG subject to high price variability. It is not an efficient fuel. The district generally needs to move away from gas, including any council-owned boilers, toward electricity. The global-warming effect of gas pipe leakage of methane (estimated at 1% to 10% of the gas produced) is many times stronger than that of carbon dioxide.



Similarly, the council's own emissions-reducing actions should include an immediate start on electrification of its fleet. Whenever a council vehicle needs replacing, an electric vehicle should be chosen in its place. The extra cost will be recouped by much cheaper running costs. The council could also set expectations for the contractor to move toward electric waste collection vehicles.

Urban sprawl

The spread of new subdivisions has gone far enough. There is now a need to protect our future capacity for sustainable horticulture and agriculture to service the local population. We must bear in mind that transport and food costs will rise with more weather events and new pandemics.

Transition Matamata believes the council has a role to play in encouraging residents to grow their own fruit and vegetables if they can. To this end, we gratefully acknowledge the council for its support of our composting workshops, which build on this theme. We wish to work with the council to build momentum arising from these.

Safe transport

Urban sprawl incentivises car travel at a high cost to the individual, while also increasing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. For this reason, Transition Matamata emphasises its longstanding request and detailed recent submission that the council continue working toward the goal of an extensive safe cycling/walking network. We note that nationally provided funding for this has been deleted but we say the council should have an ongoing annual "kete" of funding to keep adding to this infrastructure.

We would welcome moves such as requiring cycleways in new subdivisions. For example, Matamata Country Club could have been asked to extend its cycleway to Broadway, as part of its consent.

Providing car-share spaces for services like Mevo, with on-street charging facilities, is another way the council could help reduce personal car dependence.

Waste minimisation

We welcome the planned refresh of the waste minimisation strategy and the plan to develop a Resource Recovery Centre. We would hope the business case for the centre can be completed ahead of current plans, and we urge funding be allocated to open the centre in the very near future. The potential savings from waste diversion justify urgency.

Transition Matamata is distressed by the massive volumes of waste being generated from our district.

We congratulate the council on its organic waste collection service, which prevents methane from being released in landfill. On the other hand, the council and the environment carry the burden of the carbon dioxide from fuel used during collection.

Our interest in home composting is partly because it creates a positive for the district and the council. Wide adoption of composting will stop food waste collection volumes and service costs from spiralling ever higher.

We would hope Transition Matamata and other groups can be partners with the council in pilot projects that start expanding recycling to reduce waste to landfill. But we cannot emphasise enough,



the urgent need for the council to educate people, however it can, about the “[waste hierarchy](#)” that starts with reducing waste and sees disposal as a last resort. In house, the council must practise what it preaches in this regard.

Water distribution

Transition Matamata is concerned that water consumption is already high in the Matamata Piako catchment. We welcome the 2024/25 priority to reduce network losses. We would like to see this tackled with urgency, with a staged plan and targets set.

Water consumption

We urge the council to start immediately on communicating to the public about water conservation, with regular dissemination of “tips and tricks”. “How you can reduce your water usage” is still not widely understood. Schools and community groups may well agree to back the council up on this, and spread ideas further. No one wants to see the next drought lead to major inconvenience or commercial losses.

Water metering

Transition Matamata accepts that water meters will likely be needed as a disincentive to over-consumption. However, we ask the council to recognise that one size will not fit all where metering is concerned. A full, inflexible user-pays scheme penalises large families and low-income households. We would urge a payment system with a sliding scale according to a measure of relative deprivation. The [NZ Index of Deprivation](#) may help here. It shows Waharoa, for example, is in the most highly deprived decile.

Water separation

We support all effort towards separation of wastewater from stormwater. This should be mandatory for all new builds, residential and industrial, and we urge the council to advance this where it has not already done so.

Floods

We would hope the council will speed up its stormwater modelling and flood mapping work as it’s important to know the areas at greatest risk. More can be done to protect the district from flooding.

Other

Transition Matamata commends the council for supporting the work of the Piako Catchment Forum. We urge the council to consider funding more such ventures to capture and coordinate the enthusiasm felt by many groups for restoring natural landscapes and conserving soils and wetlands.

Thank you again for your efforts on this kaupapa.

Martin Louw
Coordinator Transition Matamata

Kiwanis One Day Fun Day October 2024

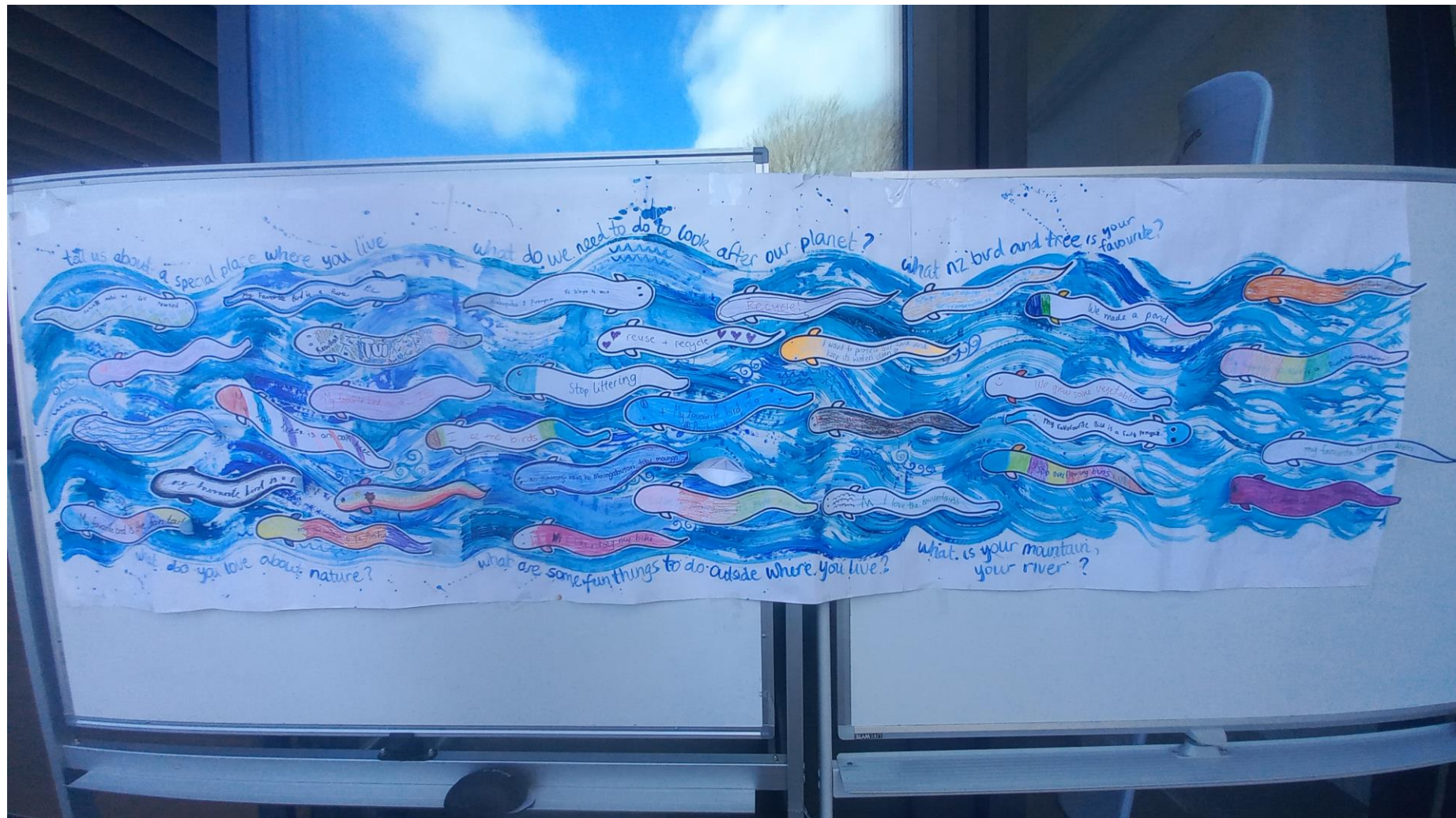


Image of children's responses to questions around edges of river

Feedback received at Transition Matamata Sustainability Event 13 April 2025

What climate impacts are you most concerned about?

- Deforestation
- Drought
- Threat to wildlife
- Removal of legal safeguards
- Drought, flood, over capacity water demand
- Flooding, drought and weeds, land use for housing – more green spaces and corridors, running out of water – wasting resources

What actions are most important for Council to take?

- Water quality
- Rules for new subdivisions: water, solar
- Incentivise the public to eliminate household rubbish with affordable dump fees
- Raingardens – re-evaluate plant choices – plant to size of garden
- Garden / sustainable practices
- Financial help for eco options on house solar/ water
- More regular maintenance of stormwater drains, education to encourage residents to help out
- Helping avoid spread of pest plants and animals
- Focus / support healthy homes
- Protect green spaces and tree cover
- Lead the way – do 1 project a year to reduce council emissions
- Replace gas heating of Morrinsville Pool with heat pumps
- Internal practices within Council
- Communication with people on the ground floor, idea sharing



Image from table set up at event

2025 Residents' Survey

Do you think it is important for Council to take a leadership role in Climate Change response for our community?

Climate change response

- 64% of residents state that it is *Important for Council to take a leadership role in Climate Change response for our community*. This opinion is significantly stronger among respondents who have lived in the district for 6-10 years (75%) compared to those who have lived in the district for over 10 years (58%).

