

Report To: Council



Meeting Date: 28 April 2026
Subject: Waikato and Bay of Plenty Cross Regional Waste Strategy
Type: Information Only
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1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this business paper is to inform Council of progress on the Waikato and Bay of Plenty Cross Region Waste Strategy being developed by Waikato Regional Council in conjunction with regions' councils.

2 Suggested Resolutions

- 2.1 The following is a suggested resolution only and does not represent Council policy until such time as it is adopted by formal resolution.
- 1 The business paper on Waikato and Bay of Plenty Cross Regional Waste Strategy be received.

3 Background

- 3.1 Waikato Regional Council (WRC) has coordinated the development of a Waikato and Bay of Plenty (BOP) Cross Region Waste Strategy (the Strategy). A copy of the Strategy is attached. **(Attachment 1)**
- 3.2 Under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008, territorial authorities are required to have a Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP). The WMMP outlines a city or district's strategic objectives, policies and methods for managing and minimising waste in its local area.
- 3.3 The Strategy does not replace local WMMPs. Instead, this voluntary strategy enables collaboration and identifies common goals and actions that can advance.
- 3.4 Endorsement of the Strategy will be sought over coming months, so this is an opportunity for Council to have input into the Strategy.

4 Commentary

- 4.1 The Strategy formalises the partnerships and collaborative work already undertaken by local government in waste. It also sets up the next phase which involves developing a Cross Regional Waste Infrastructure Plan (the Plan). At present there is no expenditure associated with the Strategy. The Plan WRC is working on now will identify how proposed infrastructure could be funded, which may include waste levy funding, through LTP or through applications to funds, private/public partnership etc.
- 4.2 The Strategy focuses on collaboration and coordination in the region and sets out a collaborative framework to reduce waste, optimise waste systems, and embed circular practices across the waste system - focusing on solutions to challenges that are difficult to address individually.

Acronyms:

BOP	Bay of Plenty
The Strategy	Waikato and Bay of Plenty Regional Solid Waste Strategy (February 2026)
The Plan	Cross Regional Waste Infrastructure Plan
WMMP	Waste Management and Minimisation Plan

- 4.3 The Strategy outlines that there are several shared challenges to consider, including:
- Fragmented infrastructure and services and a lack of regional and cross-regional coordination.
 - Limited or inefficient recovery infrastructure.
 - Limited demand or sustainable end markets.
 - Lack of transparency on waste flows.
- 4.4 This Strategy aims to:
- Provide clear direction for Waikato and Bay of Plenty that connects regional and local action.
 - Coordinate long-term planning and behaviour change tools, including coordinated infrastructure development.
 - Identify opportunities for collaboration across sectors and at different scales: to improve viability, funding, affordable and efficient infrastructure, and local community-based solutions.
 - Future proof the regions for changing legislation to meet future demand for waste services and to improve network efficiency and environmental outcomes.
- 4.5 The focus areas are split into:
- Efficient and effective waste and recovery network.
 - Collaborating to grow circular activity and regional efficiency.
 - Improving environmental outcomes and climate resilience through improves waste practices.
- 4.6 There will be a focus on the waste hierarchy (reuse, repair, recycle and disposal networks); having a regional resource recovery park along with local resource recovery centres; creating stronger community and industry connections and supporting behaviour change programmes that will maximise effective use of networks.
- 4.7 The focus is on collaborating with Local Government, having cross sector partnership - private/public and community.
- 4.8 The Plan will be completed by 2027.

5 Attachments/Separate Enclosures

Attachment:

- 1 Waikato BOP Cross Regional Solid Waste Strategy Feb 2026 (Doc #968923)

Acronyms:

BOP	Bay of Plenty
The Strategy	Waikato and Bay of Plenty Regional Solid Waste Strategy (February 2026)
The Plan	Cross Regional Waste Infrastructure Plan
WMMP	Waste Management and Minimisation Plan



Waikato and Bay of Plenty

Cross Regional Waste Strategy



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Version 2.2

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1 What is this strategy about?

1.1 Introduction

Local government from across the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions have a history of collaboration and partnership. The Central North Island Waste Liaison Group (CNIWLG) is comprised of local government staff from across these regions and beyond. As a result of regular hui to discuss issues and opportunities, members of this group have worked together on waste issues. The issue of infrastructure and the opportunity to be more efficient through shared infrastructure and services has been an agenda item for the CNIWLG for a number of years. CNIWLG identified the identified opportunity to develop a shared waste strategy to unify waste prevention, minimisation and management activity, followed by an infrastructure plan. Together, these initiatives aim to coordinate infrastructure and systems across all stages of the waste hierarchy—repair, reuse, recycling, recovery and, where necessary, disposal.

1.2 Scope

Under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008, territorial authorities are required to have a waste management and minimisation plan (WMMP). This outlines a city or district's strategic objectives, policies and methods for managing and minimising waste in its local area. The Waikato and Bay of Plenty Cross Regional Waste Strategy does not replace local WMMPs. Instead, this voluntary strategy enables collaboration and identifies common goals and actions that can advance WMMP objectives while enabling broader efficiency and waste objectives to be met.

The Waikato and Bay of Plenty Cross Regional Waste Strategy (Waste Strategy) sets out a collaborative framework to reduce waste, optimise waste systems, and embed circular practices across the waste system—focusing on solutions to challenges that are difficult to address individually.

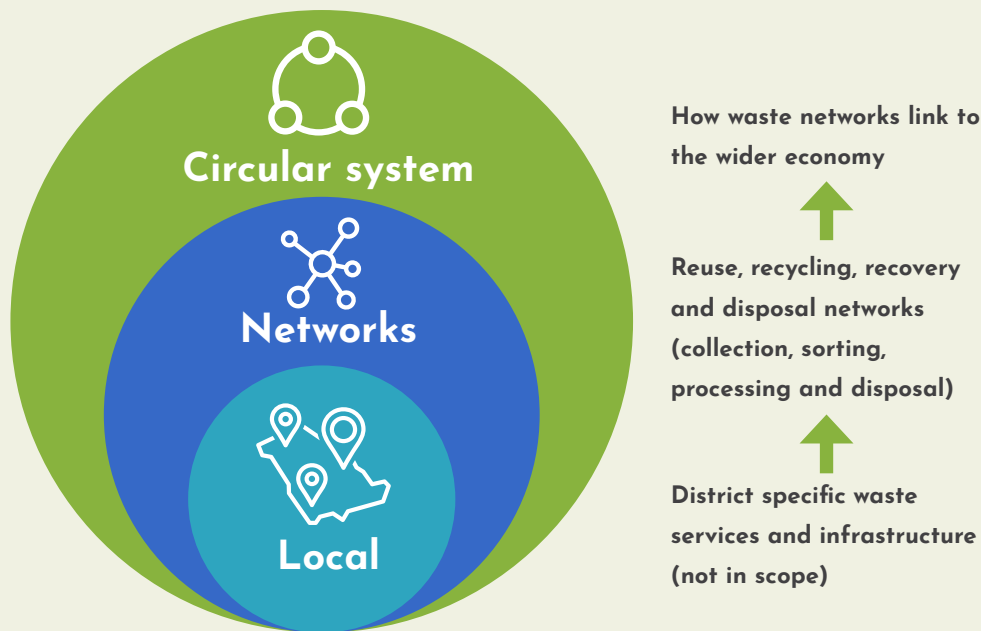


Figure 1.1: Core focus of the Cross Regional Waste Strategy (network and system views)

The Waste Strategy adopts a holistic view (Figure 1.1), focused on enabling:

- 1 Waste networks aligned with the waste hierarchy for managing materials across the regions, ensuring that resources are circulated, reused and repurposed rather than becoming waste.
- 2 A circular waste system that connects the regional economy to the waste network across the supply chain.

The strategy sets out a 30-year roadmap with short (three-year), medium (10-year), and long (30-year) termout comes to drive tangible progress through coordinated action, inclusive partnerships and adaptive review. It provides a platform to engage tangata whenua, councils, businesses and communities to co-create solutions and foster a resilient regional approach to waste minimisation and resource stewardship.

1.3 What is a circular economy?

A circular economy is a framework that keeps resources in use for as long as possible, extracts the maximum value from them, then recovers and regenerates products and materials at the end of each service life. In a New Zealand context, the principles of a circular economy are a significant part of te ao Māori¹. For the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions, the circular economy has been aligned with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals^{1,2} with four core principles (Figure 1.2):



Figure 1.2: Principles of a circular economy¹

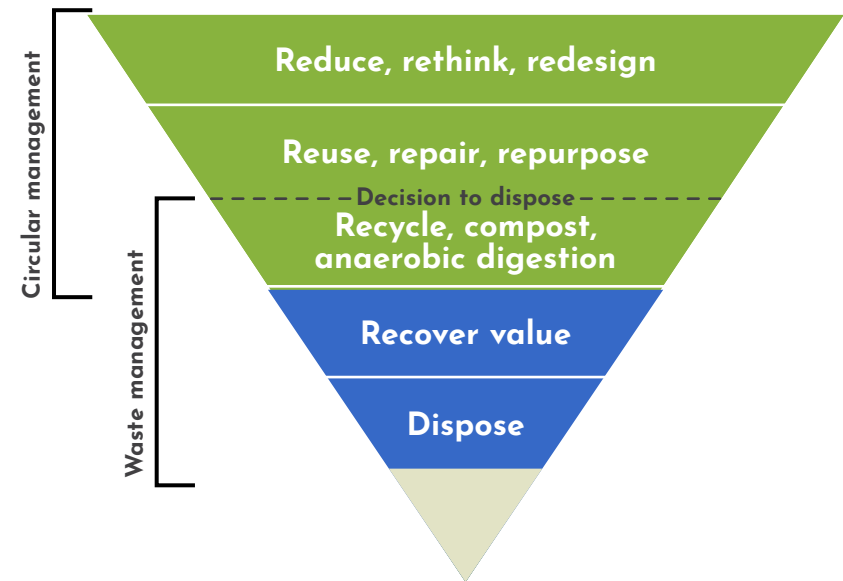
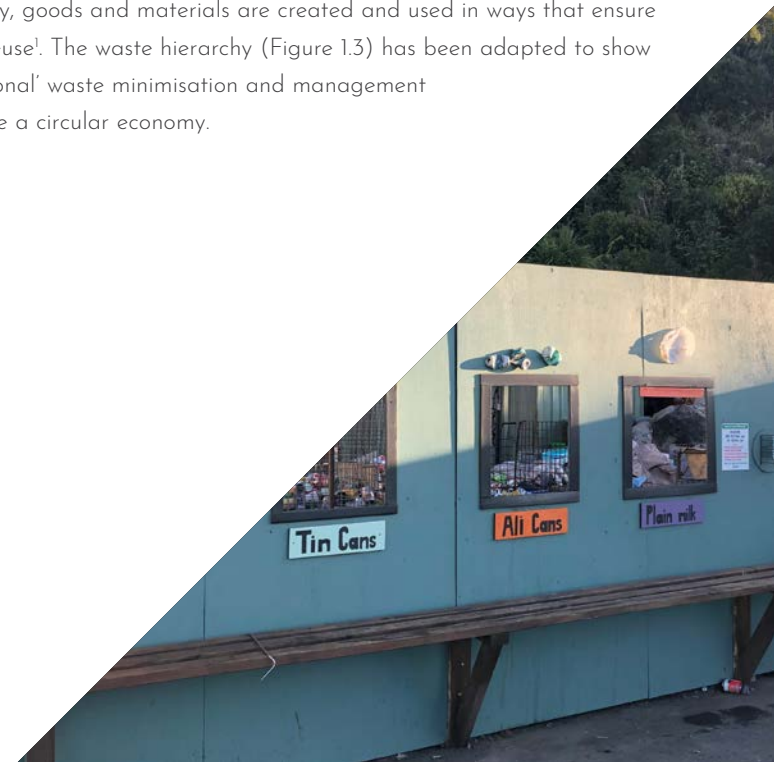


Figure 1.3: Waste hierarchy

A key element to implement a circular economy is shifting our relationships with goods and materials. In a circular economy, goods and materials are created and used in ways that ensure their longevity, fixability and reuse¹. The waste hierarchy (Figure 1.3) has been adapted to show the difference between 'traditional' waste minimisation and management and what is required to achieve a circular economy.

¹ The journey to a circular economy in the Waikato region

² THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development



1.4 The problem we are trying to address

Problem/opportunity

The Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions have demonstrated strong leadership in advancing waste minimisation and management, supported by a growing waste disposal and recovery infrastructure network and collaborative initiatives. However, the regions continue to experience population growth and urban expansion, resulting in increased waste quantities locally and from neighbouring areas.

The Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions faced increasing pressure from rising waste disposal to landfills. This challenge is compounded by significant volumes of waste being transported from outside the regions—particularly from Auckland, Ruapehu and Gisborne—into Waikato for disposal. These trends create disproportionate environmental, social and financial impacts on local communities and ecosystems, with potential long-term consequences for ratepayers and resource sustainability.

To address this, there are several shared challenges to consider, including:

- fragmented infrastructure and services and a lack of regional and cross-regional coordination
- limited or inefficient recovery infrastructure.
- limited demand or sustainable end markets
- lack of transparency on waste flows.

Changing government priorities, economic constraints, and an uncertain legislative environment also add complexity to local councils' ability to plan, invest in infrastructure, and drive behaviour change in the community. These issues are discussed in more detail across infrastructure in Te Waihangā³ and Waikato/Bay of Plenty waste/materials-focused research^{4,5}.

There is a strategic opportunity to build on what has been achieved so far and further strengthen regional approaches.

Through integrated long-term planning and strengthened cross-sector collaboration, these challenges can be addressed collectively—unlocking efficiencies, reducing environmental impacts, and delivering resilient, community-centred circular waste solutions.

What are the benefits of working together?

A circular economy relies not only on individual infrastructure components but on integrating systems so materials, services and information flow efficiently across boundaries and back into the economy by manufacturing new products. Detailed consideration of the current landscape for waste and resource recovery⁶ reveals both challenges and opportunities for greater network integration in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty, including shared infrastructure, coordinated service delivery, and aligned strategic planning across districts.

The waste network can be optimised by understanding the broader system and identifying key opportunities for collaboration. This means designing it to improve efficiency, resilience and maintain affordability and balancing local, regional and cross-regional solutions that contribute to local and national circular economy goals and ensure that services meet community needs and provide value for money.

This strategy aims to:

1. **Provide clear direction** for Waikato and Bay of Plenty that connects regional and local action.
2. **Coordinate long-term planning and behaviour change tools**, including coordinated infrastructure development.
3. **Identify opportunities for collaboration across sectors and at different scales:** to improve viability, funding, affordable and efficient infrastructure, and local community-based solutions.
4. **Future proof the regions** for changing legislation to meet future demand for waste services and to improve network efficiency and environmental outcomes.

3 Sector state of play: Resource recovery and waste | Te Waihangā

4 T+T, 2025: Review of current waste services summary report for the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions, October 2025.

5 Waikato Regional Council, 2024: Circularising Organics ISBN 978-1-99-117171-9; Waikato Regional Council, 2021: The journey to a circular economy in the Waikato region. Technical report 2021/34.

6 T+T, 2025: Review of current waste services summary report for the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions, October 2025.

Issues and opportunities

Local councils, the private sector and community organisations provide a comprehensive and developing network of waste reuse, recycling, recovery and disposal infrastructure in the regions. A detailed review of the current state of waste and resource recovery services and infrastructure across the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions⁷ highlights several key issues and opportunities.

Issues

1. Significant volumes of recoverable materials, particularly organics, plastics, and timber, go into landfill as unnecessary waste.
2. While recovery networks are in place, limited data availability limits visibility of the quantities of waste being recovered from private sector and commercial waste streams. This constrains regional understanding and planning.
3. Infrastructure challenges compound these issues. Gaps in local recycling, processing, and organics infrastructure—especially in rural areas—limit diversion potential, while economic barriers restrict individual councils from investing in recovery solutions. Rural communities face limited access to disposal facilities, higher transport costs, and inconsistent service provision. Community connection at the local level is important to minimise waste and support behaviour change and reuse. Community connection needs to be coupled with larger scale facilities that can manage larger quantities of waste.
4. Alongside this, regional landfills will be nearing capacity in the next 10 years, and many districts rely on privately owned facilities, raising concerns around long-term access and affordability.

Opportunities

Figure 1.4 shows opportunities to enhance circular activity and increase resource recovery including:

1. Two major cities (Tauranga and Hamilton) provide the population base and volume of material to support establishing in-region infrastructure.
2. The regions' central location and established transport networks also provide opportunities for collaboration across districts and with neighbouring regions to address infrastructure gaps and develop locally and regionally based reuse and recovery hubs.
3. Strengthening in-region end markets for recovered materials can improve the network's economic viability, while strategic use of out-of-region markets can expand recovery options.
4. Improved data on materials flows can also support more targeted investment and planning, enabling infrastructure and services that are better aligned with regional needs and long-term goals.
5. Collaboration and partnerships can align planning, coordinate infrastructure needs, and de-risk infrastructure investment through increasing material feedstock, economic viability and funding opportunities.

⁷ T+T, 2025: Review of current waste services summary report for the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions, October 2025.



Figure 1.4: Cross regional opportunities within the circular economy that could be addressed through the Waste Strategy

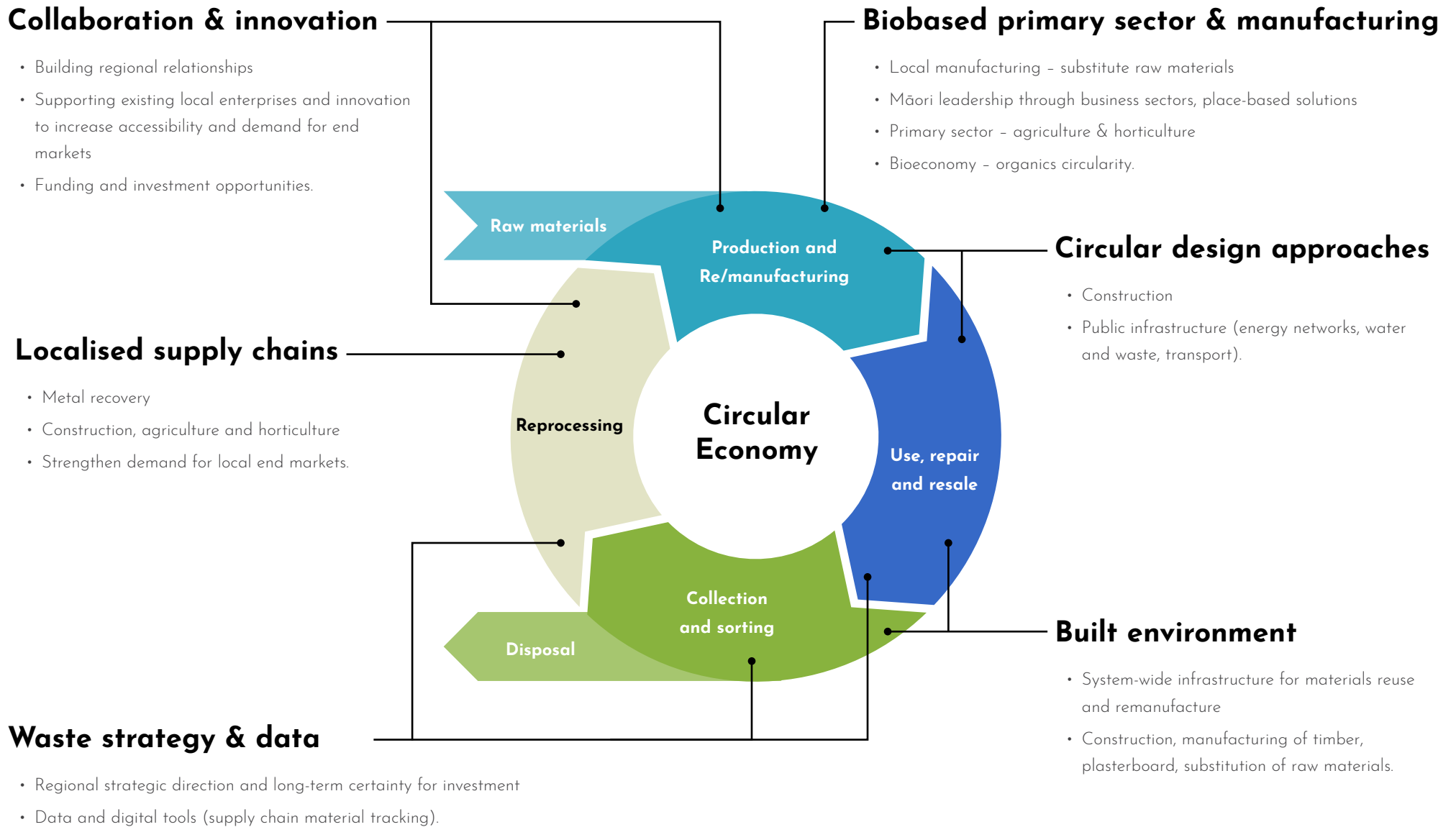


Figure 1.4: Circular economy

1.5 What role does the strategy have?

The Cross Regional Waste Strategy provides a link between the national Waste and Resource Efficiency Strategy, and local council waste management and minimisation plans.

It aims to:

- enable collaboration and unification on shared goals
- connect, strengthen and improve efficiency of networks across districts and regions
- expand funding options and the cost effectiveness of networks
- address gaps in the cross-regional waste system across the supply chain (waste producers, waste collectors, processors, disposal and end markets)
- integrate waste activity with climate change mitigation and adaptation planning, infrastructure planning, and the regional economy.



Figure 1.5: How the Cross Regional Waste Strategy fits in with the local and national waste plans and strategies

The Waste Strategy does not replace council waste management and minimisation plans but provides overarching direction for both regions to enable aligned local government planning and provides a framework that supports collaboration on cross-regional projects.

1.6 Who will deliver the strategy?

Local government has led the development of this strategy and set the overall direction. However, its success depends on **sector-wide collaboration and collective action for waste prevention, minimisation and safe disposal.**

1.6.1 Local government collaboration

The Cross Regional Waste Strategy provides a voluntary framework that supports implementing mandated actions in council WMMPs. Table 1.1 identifies key action areas across the council WMMPs. Collaboration, education, efficient services (kerbside and RTS), national policy (product stewardship) and monitoring/data align strongly with the Cross Regional Waste Strategy.



Table 1.1: Alignment of WMMP actions across district and city councils

Summary of actions from TA WMMPs, ranked from high to low (by count)	Waikato region										Bay of Plenty region					
	Matamata-Piako	Hauraki	Thames-Coromandel	Hamilton	Ōtorohanga	South Waikato	Taupō	Waikato	Waipā	Waitomo	Kawerau	Ōpōtiki	Rotorua	Tauranga	Western BOP	Whakatāne
Collaboration (regional, community, industry, iwi) (16)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Communication, education, promotion (16)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Recycling kerbside, optimise, review (16)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Monitor and report - data (16)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Drop-off and RTS actions (16)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Resource recovery centre / transfer station (16)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Food waste actions (15)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Organic waste (14)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Litter / illegal dumping (13)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Grants/funding (13)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Business waste (incl. medical) (13)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bylaw review/actions (12)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Reuse (12)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Liquid and hazardous wastes (12)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Product stewardship (11)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Farm waste (11)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Waste policies by central govt (11)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Circular economy (new category) (10)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Waste operator licensing (10)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
C&D waste (10)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Disaster waste (new) (9)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
E-waste (9)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Event waste (8)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
National Waste Data Framework (8)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Biosolids (6)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Review WMMP (new) (6)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Procurement (5)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Closed landfills (new) (4)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Reporting against targets (4)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
New builds / MUDs (4)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Peak season (tourism) (3)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Health & safety (2)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Legend: Percentage features in WMMP's action plans: ■ = More than 75% ■ = Between 50% and 75% ■ = Between 25% and 50% ■ = Less than 25%

1.6.2 Cross sector collaboration

Local government will work with tangata whenua, waste service providers, community organisations and key sectors to deliver actions either independently or through partnerships, and drive innovation in the sector, supporting the strategy's objectives.

National policy support is also critical for systems change. While national frameworks set the regulatory environment, regional collaboration offers opportunities to accelerate change through advocacy, early intervention, and test cases that inform and influence national policy.

This collaborative approach ensures that all stakeholders—public, private, and community—can work together to create a resilient, circular economy and reduce reliance on landfills.



2 Where do we want to be?

2.1 Our strategic framework

The strategic framework sets the direction, roadmap and key outcomes for the next 30 years. The framework is aligned with (and ahead of) local government planning cycles (long term plan reviews every three years, with 10 and 30 year planning and budget horizons) to allow any key decisions and funding affecting local government to be incorporated into future long term plans. The first phase of the plan will start in 2027, preceded by a planning phase to set up initial projects.



Key outcomes for each focus area provide a staged approach to the implementation (3, 10 and 30 years) of the Waste Strategy



Figure 1.7: Key outcomes

2.2 Focus areas

The Waste Strategy has three focus areas. Detail on each area is provided below alongside the key tools that ensure successful and effective implementation (policy, behaviour change, infrastructure, economy).



Efficient and effective waste and recovery networks





Tools for implementation		Description for focus area
	Waste hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on reuse, repair, recycling and disposal networks • Infrastructure and asset-based focus
	Infrastructure and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving reuse and recovery of waste through fit-for-purpose and future proofed infrastructure and services, coordinated networks and consistent levels of service • Designing cross regional networks utilising regional resource recovery parks where quantities are required to maximise efficiencies and cost effectiveness, alongside local resource recovery centres to ensure community connection and local accessibility (hub and spoke model) • Where viable, support the development of distributed networks that are designed to manage council and commercial quantities effectively and utilise efficient logistics/transport routes • Resilient disposal networks (class 1-5 landfills) that will meet future demand
	Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying opportunities for increasing feedstock (i.e. organics), within region reprocessing aligned with end market demand for recovered material. • Collaborating to increase viability of networks and infrastructure (i.e. accessing funding, feedstocks, end markets) • Improving affordability of recovery infrastructure and services (including generating revenue) and moderating the increasing costs of waste disposal
	Behaviour change, education and policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating stronger community and industry connections and supporting behaviour change programmes that will maximise effective use of networks • Planning to integrate product stewardship and extended producer responsibility into network design as national policy develops to enable early and efficient implementation of national legislation

Table 2.1: Focus area: Efficient and effective waste and recovery networks



Collaborating to grow circular activity and regional efficiency






Tools for implementation		Description for focus area
	Waste hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on reduction, reuse, repair and recycling • Non-asset-based focus: behaviour change, planning, collaboration
	Collaboration and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to prioritise local government collaboration • Building cross-sector partnerships to support effective and efficient waste networks (private/public, community) • Establishing relationships with local sectors and waste generators to identify opportunities for in-region processing or new end markets
	Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the supply chain through connecting to local sectors to understand their needs and increase demand for end markets • Identify funding and investment opportunities
	Behaviour change, education and policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working towards regionally aligned planning (by waste management and minimisation plans), and regulation (bylaws), and integrating regional spatial planning network to support efficient establishment of infrastructure • Coordinated data collection and reporting to support planning and identify future demand • Continued collaboration to support education and behaviour change focused at the top of the waste hierarchy • Coordinated and cross-sector advocacy to central government to drive national progress that will support regional goals • Investigate procurement approaches that support a coordinated waste network • Working with the construction sector to prioritise the appropriate use of circular materials and identify opportunities to enable appropriate use of materials (working to reduce the risk of liability)
	Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting and investing in research and development to better understand issues and identify solutions • Improving capability within the waste sector and identifying technology and / or pilot trials

Table 2.2: Focus area: Collaborating to grow circular activity and regional efficiency



Improving environmental outcomes + climate resilience through improved waste practices




Tools for implementation		Description for focus area
	Waste hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on reuse, recycling and disposal• Managing the impacts of waste infrastructure and services, including emissions reduction and climate adaptation, and environmental impacts of waste activities
	Infrastructure and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resource recovery and disposal (class 1-5 landfills) networks and closed landfills (at risk/vulnerable) are appropriately funded and managed to reduce environmental harm• Managing impacts from reprocessing activities e.g. odour and water impacts of organic materials processing, dust and noise impacts of C&D processing• The impacts of reusing and recovering materials are understood (i.e. aggregate, organic materials, plastics, metals)• Assets and networks are designed to minimise emissions across the waste supply chain• Work to increase asset and network resilience and maximise use of existing infrastructure• Working with partners to incorporate solutions for difficult and / or hazardous wastes into waste networks
	Behaviour change, education and policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporating the benefits to climate change alongside waste into behaviour change and education programmes• Planning to support a resilient waste system and emergency and disaster waste• A plan for reducing illegal dumping is developed and implemented

Table 2.3: Focus area: Improving environmental outcomes + climate resilience through improved waste practices

2.3 Priority waste streams and sectors

As not everything can be done at once, the waste strategy identifies priority waste streams and sectors as implementation progresses.

3 years

Initially, the plan focuses on strengthening the organics network, construction waste infrastructure and reuse and repair through refuse transfer station networks, supported by coordinated behaviour change and education. Working with the construction sector to address the liability for new products using recycled material⁸ and appropriate use of recycled material. These networks are already developing and can make the biggest impact on strategy goals. Further action can quickly build on this work to improve efficiency. Identifying practical and convenient solutions for farm waste and rural communities, and planning for future waste disposal sites (class 1 landfills) also help ensure there are appropriate disposal options in the medium term. Key sectors that can support actions in the first three years of the plan include the construction, manufacturing, and bio-based primary sectors and Māori business.

10 years

In the medium term, we will help develop and grow less-established networks, support challenging and lesser-understood waste streams (like textiles, biosolids and soil management), and evaluate the role of class 2 to 5 landfills. Current national soil management research can inform planning in the medium term. Traditionally, biosolids have not been included within waste planning; however, with a focus on reducing waste to landfill, collaboration with the wastewater sector to support biosolids processing and end markets will contribute to strategy outcomes. In addition, we will develop options for difficult or hazardous waste, and opportunities for additional secondary processing connected with local sectors where viable.

30 years

Planning for emerging waste streams is needed over the longer term to proactively avoid and minimise waste from new technology and ensure networks are in place to capture value if or when these materials do become waste. While these waste streams are currently unknown, maintaining a forward focused view of industry and consumer trends to identify emerging issues early will enable a coordinated response. Emerging waste streams could include waste from renewable energy and technology. The impact of changing consumer behaviour on waste networks in the longer term also needs to be considered alongside new waste recovery, processing and disposal technology i.e. reducing feedstocks for recovery infrastructure and waste quantities for landfills as the waste system becomes more circular.

⁸ The risk of using comparatively untested products that are made from recycled material content may impact on product use by builders and regulators, and the application of building guarantees and warranties.

3 How are we going to get there?

3.1 Action plan




Actions for the first three years of the Waste Strategy have been developed within each focus area. These actions focus on **enabling** through planning, network design, and establishing and building relationships, utilising existing resources and budget, collaborative forums and planned work. This will support a more streamlined transition to on the ground implementation (access to funding and construction of any new infrastructure or services) in years 4 to 10.

Draft actions for the medium term (10 years) provide a suggested pathway based on the current context. These can be updated as part of the Waste Strategy review (section 4.3) based on progress in the first three years, any changes to the strategic environment nationally or regionally and improved understanding of the waste system.

These actions have been summarised in the tables on the following pages.






Table 3.1: Actions for years 1 to 3 for the Waikato and Bay of Plenty Cross Regional Waste Strategy

Focus area	Outcome	Action	Measure
 <p>Efficient and effective waste and recovery networks</p>	<p>We are designing recovery and disposal networks to strengthen and connect communities and supply chains.</p>	<p>Design cross regional reuse and recovery networks (including consistent service levels) across the waste hierarchy and develop an infrastructure plan for key infrastructure gaps.</p>	<p>Infrastructure plan is completed by March 2027.</p>
		<p>Identify local sector demand and processing needs aligned with [within region] end markets and sectors (biobased industry, construction) - focusing on priority waste streams/sectors (organics, construction and rural waste).</p>	<p>Infrastructure plan is completed by March 2027. Opportunities within local sectors are identified by June 2030.</p>
		<p>Identify future disposal network infrastructure gaps (class 1-5) and develop an infrastructure plan to address gaps and potential locations for new disposal sites.</p>	<p>Infrastructure plan is completed by March 2027.</p>
 <p>Collaborating to grow circular activity and regional efficiency</p>	<p>We are working together to enable aligned planning, innovation and funding of circular activity.</p>	<p>Align waste planning, data, advocacy, and education cross-regionally.</p>	<p>Areas of collaborative work that are aligned with the Waste Strategy are identified annually.</p>
		<p>Establish partnerships and funding models that support the infrastructure network and strengthen the supply chain (sector demand and end markets) and cross sector funding of regional infrastructure, focusing on initial priority waste streams and sectors.</p>	<p>Infrastructure plan is completed by March 2027 (including funding strategies for priority projects). Areas of collaborative work aligned with the Waste Strategy are identified annually.</p>
		<p>Support cross sector innovation through setting clear priorities, collaborative research and development of pilots and use of technology.</p>	<p>Partnerships are explored through existing council forums (i.e. mayoral forum, CO-LAB and BOPLASS).</p>
		<p>Promote and increase sector involvement in circular waste activity through cross sector forums, partnerships and collaboration, focusing on priority waste streams.</p>	<p>Areas of collaborative work aligned with the Waste Strategy are identified annually.</p>
 <p>Improving environmental outcomes + climate resilience through improved waste practices</p>	<p>The impacts of our waste networks and disposal pathways are understood.</p>	<p>Establish and maintain list of current and proposed cross sector regional infrastructure to inform future renewal and network planning (existing network assets life, capacity, condition, closed landfills).</p>	<p>Key asset information is collected and updated through cross regional stocktakes, 3 yearly (scan) / 6 yearly (full stocktake), and maintained in a database and GIS maps. Infrastructure Pipeline⁹ is used and updated for planned waste infrastructure.</p>
		<p>Develop a cross regional climate resilience and disaster waste plan for core regional infrastructure networks.</p>	<p>Plan is developed and adopted across both regions with cross sector input by 2030.</p>
		<p>Develop and implement an action plan to reduce waste network emissions and environmental impacts from waste activity (including illegal dumping and difficult or hazardous wastes, closed landfill remediation).</p>	<p>Illegal dumping plan developed by 2030. Infrastructure plan is completed by March 2027 (including emissions reduction within network design).</p>

⁹ The Pipeline | Te Waihangā is a facilitation tool that brings together a breadth of infrastructure sector participants, and through their contributions, interactions, and use of the Pipeline project data, drives informed conversations and decisions, efficient allocation of resources, and better outcomes for New Zealand.

Table 3.2: Draft actions for years 4 to 10 for the Waikato and Bay of Plenty Cross Regional Waste Strategy

Focus area	Outcome	Action
 <p>Efficient and effective waste and recovery networks</p>	<p>Core recovery and disposal infrastructure and service networks are in place.</p>	<p>Implement the infrastructure plan to grow efficient and effective waste and recovery networks.</p>
		<p>Collaborate to fund and establish within-region processing and end market solutions for priority sectors or materials.</p>
		<p>Develop disposal infrastructure in line with infrastructure plan.</p>
 <p>Collaborating to grow circular activity and regional efficiency</p>	<p>Cross-sector circular solutions and activity are accessible and becoming cost effective.</p>	<p>Build on Y1-3 research and pilot trials to shift innovation from pilot to larger scale implementation; continue to identify and/or support relevant research and trials for additional waste streams.</p>
		<p>Investigate and develop cross regional policy and behaviour change tools that support effective use and delivery of the waste network and community engagement at the top of the waste hierarchy.</p>
		<p>Expand governance, funding and/or partnership models to support additional priority waste streams or sectors.</p>
		<p>Continue to promote and increase sector involvement in circular waste activity through cross sector forums, partnerships and collaboration, expanding to consider additional priority waste streams.</p>
 <p>Improving environmental outcomes + climate resilience through improved waste practices</p>	<p>Our waste networks are becoming resilient and related environmental impacts are reducing.</p>	<p>Embed circular approaches and low emission material in regional asset renewal and growth planning and implementation.</p>
		<p>Collaborate to connect disaster and emergency waste planning across regional and community-based networks.</p>
		<p>Plan and integrate management of emerging waste streams into network, including through avoidance and reduction at source.</p>

4 Monitoring success

4.1 Measuring circularity

Effectively measuring circularity is essential for tracking progress, informing investment, and ensuring accountability in the transition to a circular economy. In 2024, the International Organisation for Standards (ISO) published the ISO 59020:2024 standard¹⁰ which provides a structured methodology for assessing circularity performance across systems, organisations, and products. The standard outlines how to define system boundaries, select relevant indicators, and interpret data to evaluate how well resources are being retained, reused and regenerated. This standard supports alignment with global sustainability goals and enhances transparency in environmental reporting.

The Waste and Resource Efficiency Strategy does not mandate or propose any targets or performance measures. Alongside this gaps in the data make it challenging to measure circularity in line with the ISO standards. Key indicators that are regularly used in New Zealand waste generation and disposal per capita, percentage of material recovered, and material capture efficiency will form the initial system performance indicators for the Waste Strategy (Table 4.1). As data accuracy improves, performance measures could include selected ISO circularity measures (Table 4.2).

Table 4.1: Waste system performance indicators for the Cross Regional Waste Strategy

Performance indicator	Description
Waste disposed to landfill tonnes/capita/year	Kerbside waste disposed to Class 1 landfills divided by total population (council and private sector if available) Total waste disposed to Class 1 landfills divided by total population (council and private sector if available)
Percentage of actual recycled material	Percentage of total waste (landfill + diverted) that is diverted

Table 4.2: Circularity measure from ISO 59020:2024 standard that could be used in future

Circularity measures		Data required
Percentage of actual reused products and components	Retaining resource value	Material entering waste stream that is reused
Percentage of actual recycled material	Recovering resource value	Material entering waste stream that is recycled
Percentage of actual recirculation of outflow in the biological cycle	Recovering resource value	Material originating from a biological source entering waste stream that is recirculated
Material productivity (ratio of material generated by total mass of all linear resource inflows)	Indicates resource reduction	Total revenue generated and total quantity of resource inflows

Note: Circularity measures may need to be estimated or considered at the national level to enable assessment of material inflow and outflow for Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions.

4.2 Performance evaluation

Regular review and reporting of Waste Strategy progress and evaluation of performance will ensure ongoing action and stakeholder engagement in the implementation of the strategy.

Performance review will include:

1. Three yearly data collection and analysis to monitor trends in waste quantities and material flows, prior to plan review.
2. Review of progress with actions and underlying programme of work.
3. Tracking of system performance and circularity measures over time.

¹⁰ ISO 59020:2024 - Circular economy – Measuring and assessing circularity performance

4.3 Plan review

The potential for a changing landscape over the 30-year period of the Waste Strategy means regular review is required to make sure it continues to be fit for purpose, continues to address the issues identified across the waste sector, and actions are updated to reflect progress and level of circular activity in the regions.

Aligned with the roadmap and local government planning cycles (waste management and minimisation plans, long term plans, activity/asset management plans), progress on the Waste Strategy will be reviewed every three years including:

1. Performance evaluation - are actions contributing to the outcomes of the strategic framework, what is working well, and what could be improved?
2. Update actions - what actions have been completed, and what future actions are needed to continue to progress towards the vision and outcomes?

Alongside this, the review will also assess whether the strategic framework remains relevant including:

1. Assessment of the strategic context - has anything changed, are there any new or emerging issues or opportunities?
2. Targets and circularity measurement - is there sufficient data to expand on key circularity indicators? Is it appropriate to apply targets to drive further progress towards strategy goals?

Should this review highlight significant changes to the strategy are required, a more comprehensive review of the strategic framework can be initiated.

4.4 Resourcing the plan

Oversight for implementation and review of the Waste Strategy will be undertaken by Waikato Regional Council, in collaboration with Bay of Plenty Regional Council and partner councils.

Where possible actions will build on existing work completed or planned. To progress specific collaborative actions or infrastructure investment, access to available funding sources (contestable funds, waste levy, private sector or philanthropic investment, local government investment and revenue from operation of services or infrastructure) will need to be secured.

For the first three years of the strategy, funding and resourcing of plan implementation will be aligned as much as possible with existing resourcing and budget including:

- Council WMMPs which identify collaboration and aligned action that will support waste strategy outcomes
- The infrastructure plan.

Where specific resource and funding is required, funding sources and budgets will be identified annually and/or through local government budget cycles. Resource and budget requirements will be outlined in a 3-yearly programme of work aligned with strategy reviews.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Waste terms	
Circular economy	An economic system that uses a systemic approach to maintain a circular flow of resources by recovering, retaining or adding to their value while contributing to sustainable development.
Diverted material	Materials that are reused, repaired, repurposed, recycled, composted or processed via anaerobic digestion.
Waste	<p>Waste is defined according to the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 (WMA) as being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anything disposed of or discarded. • Includes a type of waste that is defined by its composition or source (for example, organic waste, electronic waste, or construction and demolition waste (C+D). • To avoid doubt, includes any component or element of diverted material, if the component or element is disposed of or discarded. <p>In the context of this strategy, the focus is on solid waste and excludes liquid or gaseous waste unless this is produced as part of the waste system (i.e. landfill gas).</p>
Waste disposal	Any material that is disposed to landfill (excludes all diverted material).
Waste generation	Any material that enters the waste system, whether it is diverted to reuse or recycling, or disposed to landfill.
Waste network	A physical system of services and infrastructure for collecting, sorting, processing or disposing of waste. It also includes the waste supply chain from waste producers, through to end markets for recovered materials. Networks can be material specific (organic) or sector related (construction, community resource recovery networks).

Term	Definition
Key stakeholders	
Community organisations	Not for profit organisations that provide waste services or operate within waste networks.
Cross sector	Encompasses any or all waste related organisations (local government, waste service providers and community organisations) alongside tangata whenua and relevant local sectors.
Local government	Elected local authorities – regional, city and district councils – that make decisions for local communities including for the management and minimisation of waste and provision of waste services.
Local sectors	An area of economic activity within the Waikato or Bay of Plenty regions, in which businesses or other organisations share a similar market or produce a similar product or service, i.e. construction, manufacturing, agriculture or horticulture. Sectors may be a part of the waste supply chain as a waste producer or potential end market user of recovered material.
Tangata whenua	Indigenous people of the land.
Waste service providers	Private sector organisations that provide waste services and infrastructure for collection, transfer, processing or disposal of waste.
Areas / scale	
Local, regional and cross-regional	Scale of area; local refers to a district or city; <i>regional</i> is either Waikato or Bay of Plenty regions, and <i>cross-regional</i> encompasses both Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions.

