



Email: info@sustainablewaikato.org.nz

Web: www.sustainablewaikato.org.nz

HCC candidate name: James Casson

1. Have you personally been involved in any group, organisation or activities that relate to sustainability? Please give details and outcomes.

A. Yes I have, though the sustainability was in regards to social and justice sustainability. I have been on several overseas deployments with the New Zealand Police to Tonga (2005), Solomon Islands (2006), Bougainville Papua New Guinea (2004-2005) and East Timor (2007-2008). In the Solomon's in was as part of the "Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands" (RAMSI) In Timor is was as a member of the United Nations as "united Nations Mission in East Timor" (UNMIT). All deployments that I was involved in were to forge sustainable social outcomes to each country that had been embroiled in local conflicts. Each mission was to assist in building local policing and justice abilities to enable the eventual withdrawal of outside assistance. Once each mission country was satisfied that the goal had been achieved to allow self-determination which was sustainable, there would be a slow withdrawal of international assistance. My speciality was Community Policing and the training of village and national Police members of countries that I was deployed in.

2. Please rank, in order of (1) to (7), what you consider to be the most pressing needs for sustainability today, (1) being the most pressing and (7) the least. Please also add one of your own ideas.

Adapting to the impacts of climate change Rank: 6

Reducing our contribution to climate change Rank: 3

Sustainable economic growth Rank: 4

Sustainable transport options Rank: 5

Sustainable urban design Rank: 7

Water quality in our rivers and lakes Rank: 1

Social sustainability Rank: 2

You may comment on your ranking if you wish: Our water qualities in our rivers and lakes is in my mind an utmost priority. Case in point the drinking water debacle in the Hawke's Bay and the serious consequences that has had.

3. In your view, what is the most effective thing Council could do to improve wellbeing for those of lower socioeconomic status in our city?

A. Use engagement and include in decision making that affects them directly. Find a better way for council to engage and deliver on social housing. Investment, for the council to support and encourage businesses to invest in our city that will enable more jobs to be created which will in turn lead to better/more employment opportunities.

4. What do you see as future priorities for transport in Hamilton City and what benefits do you believe these changes will bring?

A. Cheaper bus fares. In Brisbane Australia where I use to live, public transport is very well used as they have made it relatively cheap. Queensland Transport relies on quantity to be viable. Promote carpooling as a preferred option in getting to and from work each day to reduce vehicles on our roads. This will help with congestion not to mention less air pollution. Promote cycling in the city which has both traffic congestion and health benefits. With that said, I would like to see the eastern side of the river developed to include a walk/cycle way along the river which will promote cycling and walking. The Western side of the river is well serviced with walkway/cycle paths along the entire city part of the river but not so on the eastern side.

5. What sustainable water management strategies do you think Council should implement?

A. A better working relationship with our local authorities, community groups and other utility services across the Waikato district. Our planning should involve a more regional approach to sustainability issues with better recognition of interaction between types of infrastructure (water, Sewer, storm water, Power, Transportation etc). Rainwater tanks could be another option that could be investigated for promotion.

6. Do you see the Council as having responsibility towards managing native biodiversity within the city? If yes, what policies would you like to see in place to support this? If no, please explain.

A. Most certainly yes. (for a councillor to state there are more important things other than bugs and slugs was un-called for). I would like to see more collaboration and co-operation with Sustainable Waikato and our Waikato Regional Council on biodiversity matters.

7. What strategies do you think Council should employ to minimise the City's waste?

A. Increase range of recyclables collected to include plastic pots, tubs and trays. Waxed cartons and pizza boxes should also be collected instead on placing them in landfills. Introduce food waste/organic waste collections for all households. An achievable target of no more than 5% of household waste should be landfilled by 2026.

8. How can Hamilton celebrate cultural diversity while helping to strengthen cross cultural ties?

A. Continue to support and promote such activities like Ethnic Soccer festival. Support and actively participate in programmes and cultural activities at the Migrant Resource Centre and to continue to run the HCC Citizenship Ceremonies. Promote our own Waitangi Day celebration with new migrants which again can be supported by collaboration and co-operation with the Migrant Centre and our other diverse cultures we have including the Waikato Chinese Association.

9. Do you think Council has a role in supporting businesses, schools, families and individuals to make more sustainable choices? If no, why not and if yes what ideas do you have to support this?

A. Yes. HCC should be showing leadership around this subject and provide education and information sharing that would lead to encouraging more sustainable choices. As a council, we should be more pro-active in sustainability and the first step is by being a leader and demonstrate by doing, not by just talking.

10. Do you think Council has a responsibility to have policies to mitigate climate change and manage its impacts? Could you please give some examples?

A. Yes. As what is already happening by providing transportation alternatives such as bus services. The buses to all run on ethanol to reduce carbon emissions. Increasing the range of recyclables to reduce landfills. To encourage and educate in terms of healthier alternatives for transport. Eg, cycling and walking to and from work. All of these lead to less emissions into the atmosphere.

11. Suppose that your Council is considering a proposal for economic development. The development would increase regional GDP and create a significant number of jobs. It would also add significant pollution to waterways and further degrade their ecosystems. Would you support the proposal or not? What is your reasoning?

A. If it was to lead to significant pollution no. In the end it would not be sustainable. With waterways being polluted it would lead to gastro outbreaks eventually. With people being sick the workforce would dwindle. In the end the economic development would run into severe problems and would be unsustainable in the long run. The council and regional council would have to spend a significant amount of money to clean up the waterways and ecosystem (if it was not too late) making the whole exercise unviable, un-sustainable and un-affordable, both health wise and economically

Regards

James Casson East Ward and Mayoral Candidate. Hamilton