

SENSE OF PLACE

Our goal for Wellington is quality of life, growth and prosperity. But we recognise that, in striving for our goal, the city's population and economic growth must enhance – not damage or destroy – whatever it is that makes Wellington special.

So we embarked on a research project to find out what Wellingtonians treasure about their city: what gives this place its unique character, essence or soul – its sense of place. Understanding our sense of place helps us to define those things that must be protected and enhanced as the city grows.

In researching Wellington's sense of place we reviewed the community views from all our major consultation exercises since 1996 and surveyed a sample of Wellington organisations. This work gave us clear themes, from which we created some concepts about Wellington. We tested these concepts with focus groups and with various business and community leaders.

The results were clear and not unexpected, although the passion people showed was overwhelming. Wellingtonians love the city's compact size, its buzz, easy access to a wide range of activities, stunning setting and friendly, interesting people.

We know that no one statement can say 'Wellington'; instead we have devised a set of concepts that weave together to create a sense of this place. These concepts must be issued with a disclaimer, because every individual has a different perspective. But the concepts do represent a common view.

Over the next few pages, we give some more detail about what people love about Wellington, and we propose some guidelines to help us preserve those special qualities. While we encourage growth, we want to make sure it respects and enhances Wellington's unique sense of place.



The Sense of Place

PLACE + DIFFERENCES = SENSE OF PLACE

The Council's goal for Wellington is quality of life, growth and prosperity. In striving for this goal, we must ensure that we preserve what makes Wellington special. We have researched what Wellingtonians treasure about their city and what gives it its unique character or essence – its sense of place. Understanding this sense of place helps us define what must be protected and enhanced as the city grows.

Wellington's essence is its **integration** . . .

- Hills-harbour-buildings-greenery in balance
- Work-play-living in proximity
- Nationhood-mānā-creativity in synergy
- Symbols-character-energy-places in concert
- All types of people in there together

. . . and the key to protecting this is to keep it all **accessible**.





REAL PEOPLE

LOYALTY

EXPRESSION OF THE ARTS



CITY HEART WITH A PULSE

EASY AND CONVENIENT

HUMAN SCALE



DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

CENTRE OF NEW ZEALAND

PLACE OF CREATIVITY



UNRIVALED BEAUTY

VIEWS

URBAN-GREEN-COASTAL



EXTREMES

DYNAMIC BUT VULNERABLE

GLORIOUS SUNNY DAYS



The Place

PLACE + DIFFERENCES = SENSE OF PLACE

'Place' refers to the natural and built environment and how people, through their culture and economy, mould it.

DRAMATIC SETTING

Wellington has a natural setting that is comparable to Auckland, San Francisco and Sydney in its dramatic beauty.

MID-SIZED

Greater Wellington has a population size comparable to Newcastle, Canberra and Christchurch.

KEY ROLE

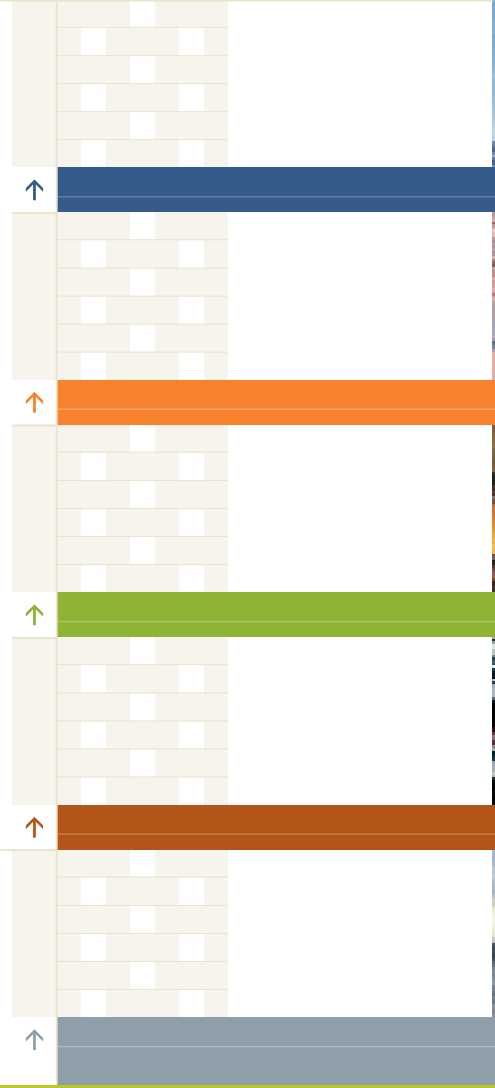
Wellington is the nation's capital and so has the same national leadership role as global cities such as Tokyo and special-purpose cities such as Canberra.

HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE

With its creative economy and strong social networks, Wellington offers a quality of life that equals or exceeds that of any city in the Asia-Pacific region.

DIFFERENT

But Wellington is much more than a dramatically located, medium-sized capital city where residents enjoy a high quality of life – it is uniquely different...





QUIRKY AND WHIMSICAL

CONFIDENT

SENSE OF COMMUNITY



ACCESSIBLE ACTIVITIES

A CITY - VILLAGE

COMPACT



GLOBAL LINKS

MANA

SENSE OF PURPOSE



HOUSES ON HILLS

CITY - SEA RELATIONSHIP

THE HARBOUR








THRILLING

CHALLENGING SITES - INNOVATIVE ARCHITECTURE

WILD RUGGED COASTLINE

The Differences

PLACE + DIFFERENCES = SENSE OF PLACE

	<p>A CITY-VILLAGE ATTITUDE; CULTURED, SMART AND CARING</p>	→	<p>Wellington has a confident, unpretentious and quirky personality that reflects the nature of the people who live here.</p>
			
	<p>A COMPACT, PEOPLE PLACE</p>	→	<p>A compact, well-integrated city layout and good public transport mean residents and businesses can enjoy the benefits of a large urban area but can move around with ease.</p>
			
	<p>CENTRE OF THE NATION</p>	→	<p>As the capital, Wellington has the excitement, benefits and mana of being at the centre of a nation linked to the world, and is also home to many other sectors that make it a dynamic centre of creativity.</p>
			
	<p>HILL-CROWDED HARBOUR CITY</p>	→	<p>The steep green hills, the buildings and the sea fit together in a beautiful balance that is unrivaled. Wellington has a wealth of successful urban and rural spaces – from the magical waterfront, historic inner suburbs, well-defined neighbourhoods to the rugged coastline and Outer Green Belt.</p>
			
	<p>A CITY ON THE EDGE</p>	→	<p>The mild – sometimes wild – weather has created a culture that is equally enticing inside or out, from thrilling mountain bike trails to buzzing inner city entertainment. Wellington's dynamic environment invites innovation – it is never dull.</p>
			

It has real people – sophisticated but not pretentious • A strong sense of community – people are friendly and it feels safe • A diverse population with a sizeable group of immigrants, and tolerant attitudes • A wide range and good depth of cultural experiences • Student life adds vibrancy and academic stimulation • Expression, appreciation and excitement of the arts and literature • The element of quirkiness and whimsy in the city's urban design • A profusion of symbols, icons and unique places • An almost unconditional loyalty

A city heart with pulse • A compact and well-designed urban form • A human scale place, with amenities that encourage enjoyment – a 'city-village' • Pro-urban policies have created an attractive and stimulating public realm • Easy and convenient to live in, in terms of time and distance • A city of pedestrians and public transport users – highest number in New Zealand • A city for working and playing, with a high degree of central city living • Huge range of activities in easy reach – accessible lifestyle • One of Australasia's most successful central cities in terms of range of functions and role, return of investment, vacancy rates • Events and excitement – a happening place

Capital city of a thriving Pacific nation • More than a capital – a 'whole city' • A place for discussion and debate, drawing together iwi and the Crown in negotiations and management • Unique combination of capital status with creative/IT sectors • Global linkages, but not globalised • The region's businesses and workforce are closely linked to the government functions and creative industries • Physical centre of New Zealand • Access north and south for recreation and entertainment • A balanced and rewarding urban-rural lifestyle and visitor experience incorporating the larger region • Central location means a wide catchment for events

A well-favoured relationship between city and sea • The fantastic amphitheatre effect of harbour and hills • Sheer beauty of the harbour • The defining image of houses built onto hills • The scale of buildings complements the landscape • Linear valleys and hillside suburbs with identity and character • Farsighted and successful protection of Town and Green Belts and hillscape around harbour and coast • Extensive views beyond harbour to Rimutaka ranges, Hutt Valley, Cook Strait and the South Island • Landscape and urban form combine to create places of special interest

Extreme weather is invigorating and exciting • Weather cleanses the city, leaving the place feeling fresh and pristine • 'Can't beat Wellington on a good day' – Wellington shines in the sun • Consciousness of and respect for Wellington's geological history • Weather and landscape provide a fabulous environment for stimulating or extreme activities

Preserving Wellington's sense of place

WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL WELCOMES AND ENCOURAGES POPULATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH THAT RESPECTS AND ENHANCES THE CITY'S SENSE OF PLACE.

The Council will work to ensure that all new growth preserves and enhances these ten key characteristics:

1. Good accessibility, including public transport use and easy walking within and between parts of the city
2. The compact and integrated urban layout
3. The pivotal role – and diverse and vibrant character – of the central city
4. The natural character of the significant ridgelines and hilltops and the coastline, and the significance of the Town and Green Belts
5. The role as centre of the nation – a successful host of the government and Treaty of Waitangi negotiation and management
6. The growing range and size of the creative and cultural sectors
7. The range of events and recreation activities, both outdoors and indoors
8. The high quality and diversity of public spaces, including the prominent streets, parks and squares
9. The distinct character of communities, neighbourhoods, urban quarters and suburban centres – people and buildings – and the city's confident, unpretentious personality
10. The symbols, images, places and buildings that identify the people of Te Whanganui-a-Tara and Wellington city and tell their history.

Photographs: Neil Price, Wellington City Council; Positively Wellington Tourism