

# URBAN PLANNING AND POLICY

## To build a great urban environment, you have to start with a plan.

Wellington has so much going for it – its rugged natural environment, its compactness, the character and colour of its buildings, and the fact that it has a vibrant heart in the city centre/waterfront area. To preserve these things as the city grows takes planning. Growth needs to occur in ways that make efficient use of land and transport, and don't compromise the qualities that make Wellington special. In our urban planning work, we're aiming for a city that's compact, liveable, sustainable, prosperous, and retains a strong 'sense of place'.

## Our plan is to focus growth in ways that preserve what makes Wellington special.

We develop policies and plans to encourage high-quality urban development. This includes plans for the '**growth spine**' from the north through the city to Newtown and Kilbirnie.

We're aiming to cluster development around the key town/suburban centres along this 'spine', in order to ensure the city's land is used wisely and its transport systems are as efficient as possible. This vision will help make the city **more sustainable**, as well as helping us to preserve the **character** of other parts of the city.

Our urban planning work also includes:

- developing plans for specific areas of the city, such as Lincolnshire Farm in the north, where most growth is expected to occur in future
- the rolling review of the **District Plan**, which sets out rules on land use, subdivision and building in the city
- improving the way **infill development** is managed and using focus groups to gauge resident perceptions of infill housing
- developing new plans to enhance **public spaces** in the city centre and other areas of the city.

From 2008/09, we'll develop a good practice guide and display module that shows how best to retro-fit existing central city commercial buildings for residential use. The project is expected to cost \$105,000 and aims to ensure that future conversions address noise control and other issues making them more sustainable.

### MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

We use a range of measures, including resident satisfaction surveys, to gauge our contribution to the city. In 2007/08, our targets are:

- 87% of residents surveyed agree the city is developing in a way that takes in to account its unique urban character and natural environment
- 95% of the District Plan team's scheduled work programme is completed on time (measured as a percentage of all projects)
- no items listed in the District Plan are demolished or removed
- develop a concept plan and implementation framework for the second of the three centres along the growth spine (this measure provides greater detail to the LTCCP measure which was unclear in describing the scheduled work programme).

### WHAT IT WILL COST

ACTIVITY	OPERATIONAL SPENDING			CAPITAL SPENDING	
	USER CHARGES AND OTHER REVENUE \$000	NET EXPENDITURE / RATES FUNDING REQUIREMENT \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000	
Urban planning and policy development (1.1.1)	(12)	1,898	<b>1,910</b>		-
Smart growth (1.2.1)	-	306	<b>306</b>		-
<b>Total for 2007/08</b>	(12)	2,204	<b>2,216</b>		-

## BUILDING CONTROL AND FACILITATION

### MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

We use a range of measures, including resident satisfaction surveys, to gauge our contribution to the city. In 2007/08, our targets are:

- 100% of building consents are issued within statutory timeframes (20 working days)
- 100% of code compliance certificates are issued within statutory timeframes (20 working days after we are advised by the owner that work is complete).

### Building work should be safe and sustainable, and enhance the city's character.

All cities control building work according to the provisions of the Building Act and District Plan. These controls are required by law, and they're necessary to protect public health and safety, and to protect future users of land and buildings. They're also needed to protect urban character, for example by providing height restrictions for building in suburban areas, and to preserve the city's heritage.

Overall, we want the city to become more sustainable, safe, and prosperous, and to retain its compactness and unique 'sense of place'.

### We have controls in place to ensure these objectives are met.

We assess building consent applications to ensure work will comply with the Building Code, **issue building consents**, and monitor compliance. During 2007/08, we are continuing to work towards accreditation as a building consent authority as required under the Building Act 2004.

### In 2007/08, we're increasing our funding to manage legal costs from leaky homes claims.

Along with other councils throughout New Zealand, we have obligations under recently amended weathertight homes legislation. Accordingly we have increased our budget to manage any claims and legal costs we incur as a result of this legislative change.

### WHAT IT WILL COST

ACTIVITY	OPERATIONAL SPENDING		CAPITAL SPENDING	
	USER CHARGES AND OTHER REVENUE \$000	NET EXPENDITURE / RATES FUNDING REQUIREMENT \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000
Building control and facilitation (1.4.2)	(6,701)	3,950	10,651	-
<b>Total for 2007/08</b>	<b>(6,701)</b>	<b>3,950</b>	<b>10,651</b>	<b>-</b>

# DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AND FACILITATION

Land development and subdivisions should be sustainable and in keeping with the city's character.

All cities control development work according to the provisions of the Resource Management Act and District Plan. These controls are required by law, and they're necessary to ensure resources are used sustainably, to protect public health and safety, and to protect future users of land and buildings. They're also needed to protect urban character and to preserve the city's heritage, for example by protecting trees and other heritage assets.

Overall, we want the city to become more sustainable, safe, and prosperous, and to retain its compactness and unique 'sense of place'.

We have controls in place to ensure these objectives are met.

We assess resource consent applications against the District Plan, **issue resource consents**, and monitor compliance, to ensure land and other resources are managed sustainably – each year, we consider more than 1,200 resource consent applications.

## MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

We use a range of measures, including resident satisfaction surveys, to gauge our contribution to the city. In 2007/08, our targets are:

- 100% of resource consents (non-notified) are issued within statutory timeframes (20 working days)
- 100% of applications for certification of subdivision plans are processed within statutory timeframes (10 working days).

## WHAT IT WILL COST

ACTIVITY	OPERATIONAL SPENDING			CAPITAL SPENDING
	USER CHARGES AND OTHER REVENUE \$000	NET EXPENDITURE / RATES FUNDING REQUIREMENT \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000
Development control and facilitation (1.3.1)	(1,966)	2,063	4,029	-
<b>Total for 2007/08</b>	(1,966)	2,063	4,029	-

*Overall, we want the city to become more sustainable, safe, and prosperous, and to retain its compactness and unique 'sense of place'.*

# EARTHQUAKE RISK MITIGATION

## MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

We use a range of measures, including resident satisfaction surveys, to gauge our contribution to the city. In 2007/08, our target is to:

- assess 1,300 earthquake-prone buildings.

We will also monitor the number of resource consents for addition to/alteration of heritage buildings (listed in the District Plan).

## Wellington's heritage is worth preserving.

Heritage buildings add to the city's character. Preserving these makes a difference to the city's appearance, and to our sense of identity as Wellingtonians. Looking after them is also important for public safety – older buildings, if not properly looked after, can be earthquake risks. We work with property owners to protect the city's assets and reduce this potential risk.

We also work with researchers to gain a better understanding of the vulnerability of the region to large earthquakes. Wellington has four major active faults and a number of second-order faults. By using the latest geological techniques and computer modelling we'll be able to plan future developments with even greater certainty.

## So we work with owners of older buildings to assist with restoration and strengthening.

We:

- work with property owners to ensure earthquake-prone buildings are **strengthened** – in line with our Earthquake-prone Buildings Policy, this work includes identifying and assessing earthquake-prone buildings, and can include offering financial and property management assistance, and/or requiring the owner to carry out strengthening work
- are supporting a five year **research study** on the likely timing and impact of a major earthquake on the city. We will use its findings to guide our decisions about urban design.

We also work with property owners and others to aid restoration of heritage buildings and assets (see public spaces development).

## WHAT IT WILL COST

ACTIVITY	OPERATIONAL SPENDING			CAPITAL SPENDING
	USER CHARGES AND OTHER REVENUE \$000	NET EXPENDITURE / RATES FUNDING REQUIREMENT \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000
Earthquake risk mitigation (1.4.1)	-	445	445	-
<b>Total for 2007/08</b>	-	445	445	-

# PUBLIC SPACES DEVELOPMENT

## We want to enhance the city through sensitive, high-quality development of the waterfront and other public areas.

The waterfront is Wellington's heart. It's a festival venue, a place where people gather to relax, an area of colour and charm. Sensitive development of this key area enhances people's enjoyment of the city and contributes to our sense of what makes Wellington unique. Attractive, well-designed parks and public spaces in the city and suburbs are also crucial to people's enjoyment of the city. They encourage people to get together, support shops and cafes, and make the city more attractive for Wellingtonians and visitors alike. They also provide important connections between businesses, making the city a more stimulating place to work.

Heritage buildings along with other heritage assets such as monuments, historic trees and archaeological sites also add to the city's character. Our overall goals are to retain this character that makes the city more liveable and provide an even stronger 'sense of place' through continual improvement of these public areas.

## To achieve this, we fund new parks and street upgrades, and support enhancement of the waterfront area.

We:

- oversee **development** of the **waterfront** in line with a guiding policy, the Wellington Waterfront Framework, and fund waterfront enhancement projects (management of the waterfront is carried out by a Council-controlled organisation, Wellington Waterfront Limited)
- fund work to develop the **street environments** and other public areas in the city and suburbs, with the aim of making these areas safe, lively and attractive
- provide grants to developers and others to ensure that the **restoration of heritage buildings** and assets contribute to the city's character.

In 2007/08, we plan to complete our upgrade of Cog Park at Evans Bay. We also plan to complete an upgrade to Lambton Quay by the beginning of 2008. The aims are to make it easier and more comfortable to walk along the quay, create new spaces for rest and relaxation, and give the street a more elegant look.

## We're partnering with the Ministry for Culture and Heritage to construct the New Zealand Memorial Park.

We're contributing \$2 million over two years towards this \$12.9 million project, with the remaining funding provided by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Construction of the New Zealand Memorial Park will vastly improve the surroundings of the National War Memorial, an area of deep significance for many New Zealanders. It will also provide a place for public gatherings on important commemorative occasions such as Anzac Day, and create a space for the development of new memorials from countries which New Zealand has close historical relationships with.

Construction of the park will start in October 2007 and is due for completion in 2008.

### MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

We use a range of measures, including resident satisfaction surveys, to gauge our contribution to the city. In 2007/08, our targets are:

- 92% of residents surveyed agree that the central city is lively and attractive
- 65% of residents surveyed agree that their local suburban centre is lively and attractive
- 100% of scheduled public space and centre development projects are completed on time.

Performance targets for Positively Wellington Waterfront are shown in the council-controlled organisations section of this annual plan – see the appendix.

## VARIANCES

For the 2007/08 financial year, we are planning the following variances from our 2006–16 long-term plan:

- central city parks and squares – reduce capital spending by \$250,000 by deferring an upgrade of the Eva Street/Hannah's Courtyard area (the land purchase is not complete)
- central city parks and squares – reduce capital spending by \$1 million by deferring construction of Cobblestone Park until 2008/09 (this is necessary to allow sufficient time for consultation and design)
- waterfront development – reduce operational spending by \$150,000 by decreasing the management fee paid to Wellington Waterfront Ltd (which achieved a surplus in the 2005/06 financial year while also meeting its required performance targets)
- waterfront development – we have provided additional capital expenditure funding of \$14.95 million over three years to the Wellington Waterfront project for public space development on the waterfront. The amount will be repaid from commercial proceeds by November 2009
- waterfront development – we have also agreed a 125-year ground lease to redevelop the Overseas passenger Terminal. The proposal is for a mixed use development, with public use such as restaurants on the ground floor and apartments for the upper levels. Public access will be maintained around the perimeter
- city heritage development – reduce operational spending by \$100,000 (this funding is provided to support owners on restoration and upgrade of heritage buildings. In past years it has been under-subscribed).

## We're setting up a 'flying squad' to protect the city's streetscapes from graffiti.

Graffiti detracts from the attractiveness of the city. Unless it is removed quickly, it can lead to further property damage and, ultimately, to other forms of street crime. This is a problem Wellington takes seriously.

From 2007/08, we're trialling a 'flying squad' to tackle the problem. This will involve:

- providing a rapid graffiti removal service for eligible small businesses, utilities, sports clubs, community organisations, and private homes – this would respond to complaints within 48 hours

- providing education on how to remove, discourage and report graffiti
- engaging with local artists and community groups to develop murals
- look for corporate sponsorship opportunities for graffiti removal.

Operational spending of \$225,000 is budgeted for 2007/08. Future funding will depend on the project's success.

*The budget for this work is provided for within our 'public health and safety' activities.*

## WHAT IT WILL COST

ACTIVITY	OPERATIONAL SPENDING			CAPITAL SPENDING
	USER CHARGES AND OTHER REVENUE \$000	NET EXPENDITURE / RATES FUNDING REQUIREMENT \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000	EXPENDITURE 2007/08 \$000
Waterfront development (1.5.1)	-	2,411	2,411	6,600
Public space and centre developments (1.5.2)	-	1,297	1,297	3,671
Heritage development (1.5.3)	-	674	674	-
<b>Total for 2007/08</b>	-	4,382	4,382	10,271

*Attractive, well-designed parks and public spaces in the city and suburbs are crucial to people's enjoyment of the city. They encourage people to get together, support shops and cafes, and make the city more attractive for Wellingtonians and visitors alike.*