Cause for optimism in changing times

Throughout much of the world, the 2010/11 year has been a volatile and difficult one. Events such as Canterbury’s earthquakes and Japan’s tsunami have reminded us just how vulnerable even the best prepared city can be to the greater forces of nature. And global financial difficulties have continued to slow New Zealand’s economy, raising public sector debt, creating jobs, and affecting the livelihoods of many. In Wellington, we have been fortunate. While other cities have faced overwhelming challenges, our residents have continued to enjoy a relatively stable economy and outstanding quality of life. Even in turbulent times, the foundations of Wellington’s success as the ‘coolest little capital in the world’ remain unchanged. Our people are as friendly and creative as ever, our communities as strong, our arts and entertainment scene as vibrant, and our environment as beautiful and dramatic. We remain a cosmopolitan and compact city with a wild edge.

As a Council, we have sought to learn what we can from recent events around the world, while also looking ahead with optimism and fresh vision. We have been reminded of the importance of sound stewardship of the city’s environment, infrastructure, and finances, so that we are robust enough to weather future challenges. We have been reminded of the importance of protecting and celebrating all that makes Wellington special. And we have also been reminded that in some areas we will benefit from change that builds on our existing strengths.

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