The appeal of Wellington relates to its urban form.

We aim for a compact, vibrant and attractive city.

The challenges we face
• Meet changing demands such as smaller households and more inner city living.
• Support more sustainable land use and transport options to accommodate the growing population, pressure on land, and environmental concerns.
• Improve quality of urban design.
• Manage consent processes to ensure safety and sustainability without hindering economic development.

Our strategic approach
• Maintain the city’s ‘compactness’ and unique character.
• Focus development where benefits are greatest – in key centres with strong infrastructure and transport links along a ‘growth spine’ extending from Johnsonville through the city centre to Newtown and Kilbirnie.
• Allow intensive development in some areas while protecting others.
• Improved integration of land use and transport.
• Improving the quality of urban design, and public open spaces.

In this section
6.1 Urban planning and policy
6.2 Building control and facilitation
6.3 Development control and facilitation
6.4 Earthquake risk mitigation
6.5 Public spaces development
Outcomes

Our 2009–19 long-term plan identified the following outcomes (ie what we’re working towards) for the city’s urban development:

**More Liveable/More Sustainable:**
Wellington will be a great place to live, offering a variety of places to live, work and play in a high quality urban environment. The city’s buildings and urban design will use land and other resources efficiently and sustainably.

**Better Connected:**
Wellington will be accessible, pedestrian-friendly and offer quality transport choices on a highly interconnected public transport and street system.

**More Prosperous:**
Urban design will contribute to economic development through good transport linkages and a flexible approach to land use planning. The Council contributes through its support for centres and appropriately managing the location of activities.

**More Compact:**
We develop policies and plans that encourage a city with a contained urban form and more intensive development focused on the city centre, key suburban centres and major transport corridors.

**Safer:**
Wellington will be a safe city.

**Have a Stronger ‘Sense of Place’:**
Wellington will be a memorable, beautiful city, celebrating its capital city status, distinctive landmarks and landmarks, its heritage, and its high quality buildings and spaces.

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1. A full set of outcomes indicators is presented in the separate Monitoring Information on page 195.

---

**Snapshot of the City**

- **2009–10**
  - 1,250 buildings inspected to date
  - 126 found to be earthquake prone
  - 126 buildings strengthened
  - Average time to get a Land Information Memorandum (LIM) report is now 3.8 days

- **2010–11**
  - 2,957 buildings inspected to date
  - 201 found to be earthquake prone
  - 11 buildings strengthened
  - Average time to get a Land Information Memorandum (LIM) report is now 3.8 days

---

**Commercial Growth**

- **2009/10**
  - $200
- **2010/11**
  - $250

**Residential Building Consents**

- **2009/10**
  - 9,500
- **2010/11**
  - 9,700

---

**Population Density**

- **1916**
  - 2.5 people/hectare
- **2010**
  - 6.8 people/hectare

---

**Heritage Areas**

- **Six New Heritage Areas**
  - Aro Valley Shopping Centre
  - Berhampore Shopping Centre
  - Hataitai Shopping Centre
  - Tinakori Shops (Thorndon)
  - Adelaide Road - Riddiford Street Corner (Newtown)
  - Newtown Shopping Centre

---

**We Created**

- Six New Heritage Areas
ACTIVITY 6.1
urban planning and policy

Our overall aim is to develop policies and plans to encourage high-quality urban development, ensuring we focus growth in a way that makes the city more sustainable, while also preserving its character.

Through this activity we manage the District Plan and other policies that guide urban development.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT
Wellington city’s population is expected to grow by around 55,000 people over the next 30 years. This places demands on infrastructure and on land use. More people, means more dwellings are required.

This poses questions about how and where the city should grow. Our urban planning and policy development work guides our answer. It's important that we guide growth so that we ensure on the things residents like the city – such as its compact nature, the fact that it has a true ‘heart’ around the city centre and harbour, the character of its hillside residential areas. It's also important that we manage development in a way that minimises harm to neighbours and to the wider environment.

Our approach is to focus development around key ‘centres’ which will bring together more intensive residential development, places of work, shops and other facilities, and public transport, in ways that support sustainable development and high quality of life.

The District Plan is required under the Resource Management Act 1991. It sets out rules for land use and development within the city – for example, types and sizes of buildings allowed in different areas of the city, and protections for heritage and open space areas. Anything not permitted by the District Plan requires a resource consent, which will be for either a land use consent or a subdivision consent.

KEY PROJECTS
During the year:

- We issued decisions on two major reviews of the District Plan in September 2010. These covered the review of residential areas (Plan Change 72) and the review of suburban centres (Plan Change 73). These reviews have covered most of the built-up area of the city except for the CBD. Mediation on appeals is now underway.
- Plan Change 75 was also completed and became operative in July 2011. This recognises and provides protection for six suburban heritage areas (Thorndon, Hataitai, Berhampore (Rintoul Street), Arorangi, John Street intersection, and Newtown).
- Four plan changes relating to zoning in Owhiro Bay, Rongotai, and Newtown and a plan change relating to earthworks were made during the course of the year.
- The Kilbirnie-Town Centre Revitalisation Plan was adopted in August 2010 and initial designs for public space improvements were developed. $1.5 million has been set aside for their implementation in 2011/12.

- We prepared a spatial framework for the development of central city over the next 30 years. The work forms part of the Wellington 2040 project. The work assesses the street structure, built form and city’s landscape and frames developments around nine interrelated ideas including: laneways, adding prominence to the capital city status; a revitalisation plan for two blocks of Victoria Street, and embedding the use of green infrastructure in to developments. The work is subject to consultation and well guide future investment decisions.

WHAT IT COST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTUAL 2010</th>
<th>BUDGET 2010</th>
<th>VARIANCE 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.8 million</td>
<td>6.5 million</td>
<td>-0.7 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Capital Expenditure 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.3 Urban Planning and Policy Development</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.086</td>
<td>1.160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Expenditure is to be carried forward

WHAT IT COST 2011

The expenditure variance is due to lower legal and consulting costs associated with District Plan changes, associated organisational overheads.

End Notes:

1. Under budget due to John Street upgrade section of the Adelaide Road project being rescheduled.

2. To be completed in 2011.
ACTIVITY 6.2
building control and facilitation

We have a statutory responsibility under the Building Act to control building developments. This includes ensuring buildings are safe and sanitary and do not threaten environmental quality or public health.

Our work under this activity includes issuing and monitoring building consents, and providing guidance to make sure buildings meet the standards required.

We offer grants for homes that use sustainable building features such as solar or heat pump water heating or wood pellet stoves with ‘wetbacks’.

WHY IT’S IMPORTANT

All cities control building work according to the provisions of the Building Act and codes. These controls are necessary to protect public health and safety, and to protect future users of land and buildings.

We work both the residential and commercial sector. Ensuring our staff are knowledgeable and consistent in their approach and efficient in their work is vital. Delays can add costs to projects and working to set standards means people can have confidence in the process. Towards this, we hold accreditation as a building consent authority.

Our work goes beyond regulation. We’ve also begun to encourage greater use of energy efficient design and renewable energy technologies in Wellington’s buildings. The incentives we offer in this regard are important because sustainable buildings solutions will help reduce the city’s carbon emissions.

Overall, we want the city to become more sustainable, safe, and prosperous, and to retain its compact nature and unique ‘sense of place’.

ACTIVITY 6.3
development control and facilitation

Through this activity, we control land development in line with the provisions of the Resource Management Act 1991 and our District Plan.

This includes assessing resource consent applications, granting consents, and monitoring compliance. A resource consent is required for any activity that is not permitted under the District Plan.

The consent process depends on the environmental impacts and who is affected. If the effects are not minor, the consent may be publicly notified, allowing other residents to have a say before a hearing is held to determine whether to grant the consent.

WHY IT’S IMPORTANT

All cities control development work according to the provisions of the Resource Management Act and District Plan. These controls are necessary to ensure resources are used sustainably, to protect public health and safety, and to protect future users of land and buildings.

We also need to protect urban character and to preserve the city’s heritage, for example the workers’ cottages and grand villas. The Resource Management Act requires us to regulate land use in the city to minimise environmental harm from such things as noise, earthworks, new subdivisions and land dealings, plans to clear natural changes to historic buildings, and other factors set out in the District Plan.

KEY PROJECTS

During the year:

• We have previously streamlined the resource consent decision-making process in anticipation of the 2009 amendments to the Resource Management Act. This work laid the foundation for achieving all legislative timeframes, with 100% of resource consents and subdivision certifying being issued on time (see ‘How we performed’).

• During the year, we issued 778 resource consents. This compared with 924 consents in 2009/10 and 1172 the previous year.

WHAT IT COST

We measure efficiency and effectiveness by monitoring which services (such as the issuing of building consents) are completed on time.

Building consents (%) issued within 20 working days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
<th>VARIANCE</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCC Building Consents and Licensing

Land Information Memorandums (LIMs) (%) issued within 10 working days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
<th>VARIANCE</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCC Building Consents and Licensing

Building Consent Authority (BCA) accreditation took place 24-27 May and IANZ accreditation took place 24-27 July. The IANZ accreditation was subsequently confirmed BCA accreditation has been made for any activity that is not permitted under the District Plan.

This measure relates to certificates for survey plans issued under section 223 of the Resource Management Act 1991.

How we performed:

• We aim to ensure any development is of high quality, and comply with the District Plan and resource consent conditions. We are monitoring the rates of customer satisfaction with the service we provide and our timely issue of consents and certificates.

Resource consents (% that are monitored within 3 months of project commencement)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
<th>VARIANCE</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCC Building Planning and Compliance

Customers (%) who rate development control services as good or very good

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
<th>VARIANCE</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCC Development Control Services Customer Experience Survey 2011

We have previously streamlined the resource consent decision-making process in anticipation of the 2009 amendments to the Resource Management Act. This work laid the foundation for achieving all legislative timeframes, with 100% of resource consents and subdivision certifying being issued on time (see ‘How we performed’).

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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>93</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
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<th>BUDGET</th>
<th>VARIANCE</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCC Development Control Services Customer Satisfaction Survey 2011

We offer grants for homes that use sustainable building features such as solar or heat pump water heating or wood pellet stoves with ‘wetbacks’.

Building Act and codes. These controls are necessary to protect public health and safety, and to protect future users of land and buildings.

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earthquake risk mitigation

We aim to protect the safety of Wellingtonians by working to mitigate the potential impact of an earthquake. Wellington is built on an active faultline, which makes it prone to earthquakes—a fact brought into stark focus as events in Christchurch unfolded this year. We work to mitigate the potential impact of earthquakes by assessing buildings for earthquake risk and working with owners to ensure that buildings are strengthened to required standards. This work is guided by our Earthquake-prone Buildings Policy which is currently under review.

WHY IT’S IMPORTANT

New Zealanders were shocked by the scenes from Christchurch as a result of the quakes in September and February. Among other things, it was a reminder that Wellington is situated on an active fault zone and it is at risk of a similar event.

In 1855, the country’s most powerful quake ever struck the city, raising the harbour by 1-2 metres and shifting Lambton Quay inland. We need to understand the impact of a similar quake today and plan to reduce and manage those impacts.

In short, it’s not a matter of if, but when. The more we know about earthquakes, the better prepared Wellington can be. Our support to the city’s recovery and working with owners to ensure that buildings are strengthened to required standards.

We also implement and review an Earthquake-prone Buildings Policy. This sets in place processes for identifying buildings that are below the required earthquake standards and the requirements and timeframes for building owners to bring them up to the necessary standard.

Wellington’s high earthquake risk means this work is critical. It protects public safety, as well as preserving the city’s heritage and the economic investment made in buildings and infrastructure. In addition, implementation of the Earthquake-prone Buildings Policy is a statutory requirement.

KEY PROJECTS

During the year:

• Following a review, a new Earthquake-prone Building Policy was introduced on 1 July 2009. The review aimed to ensure that at-risk buildings are identified and that owners have sufficient time to plan and undertake the strengthening work. At that time, the review took into account learnings from the Gisborne earthquake. As a result of the Canterbury earthquakes the Council considers it is appropriate to re-evaluate the policy. This process will be undertaken during the next planning period.

• The current policy means that strengthening work will be required on several Council buildings. Investigation and design work has got under way for strengthening of the Town Hall. Work to continue in 2011/12.

• We continued to contribute funding to Wellington: It’s Our Fault, a seven-year, $3.6 million project aimed at better understanding the region’s vulnerability to large earthquakes. The project began in 2005 and is led by GNS Science. It is assessing the likelihood and potential impacts of a large earthquake in the city.

• A summary of the Council’s current state of resilience to natural hazards was outlined in a report to the Council in June. (See the feature on p76.) The report highlighted the extensive steps that have been undertaken to date and further actions that can be taken.

WHAT IT COST

The expenditure variance is due to a lower level of reassessment work being required.

The amount of time taken to issue land information has resulted in dramatic improvements in the amount of time taken to issue LIMs—averaging 2.5 days to issue a LIM in 2009/10 to 1.7 days in 2010/11.


The report highlighted the extensive steps that have been undertaken to date and further actions that can be taken.

HOW WE PERFORMED

To protect the safety of Wellingtonians, we work to mitigate the potential impact of earthquakes. Progress is measured through the number of earthquake prone building assessments we’ve undertaken, and the proportion of notifications that are not challenged.

The more we know about earthquakes, the better prepared Wellington can be.
**public spaces development**

High-quality developments make the city a more attractive place to live, attract visitors and support business opportunities. In addition, the waterfront development is giving new life to many of the city’s most prominent heritage buildings. Heritage buildings contribute to the city’s distinct identity and enhance its sense of place. Encouraging the upgrade of heritage buildings may also contribute to public safety.

Overall, our work in this activity aims to make the city more liveable and visually appealing. We also aim to improve public safety. Lighting and the free movement of people are important environmental design principles. Incorporating these in urban design can prevent crime and improve safety and the perception of safety.

**KEY PROJECTS**

**Public spaces**

During the year:

- The upgrading of lower Cuba Street as a pedestrian priority shared space was completed in August 2011. The development provides a public space immediately adjacent to already established Cuba Mall and Manners Street.
- Drummond Street has been upgraded with new steps, planting and open spaces. This has helped create a safer, more attractive and more visible pedestrian connection from Tasman St to Adelaide Rd, which was identified as an opportunity in the Adelaide Road Framework.
- We completed designs for the upgrade of McCollin Court in Newtown. The upgrade will proceed in 2011/12 concurrently with the construction of a new supermarket.

This will help bring vitality and visual appeal to the currently car-dominated space, and is one step towards implementing the Newtown Town Centre plan.

**Heritage**

- Provided heritage input for various projects within Council such as Point Defence Reserve Management Plan and the Tapu to Ranga planting plan.
- Completed consultation with Thorndon community groups, culminating with the Thorndon Place-Based Study.
- Provided support to the owners of 10 heritage buildings to facilitate the upgrade of buildings through the Built Heritage Incentive Fund.

**WHAT IT COST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Budget 2011</th>
<th>Actual 2011</th>
<th>Variance 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.5.1 Waterfront Development 1</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>+85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,246</td>
<td>1,291</td>
<td>+45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5.2 Public Space and Centre Development</td>
<td>2,236</td>
<td>4,156</td>
<td>-1,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5.3 Built Heritage Development</td>
<td>4,260</td>
<td>3,444</td>
<td>-816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Expenditure</strong></td>
<td>11,029</td>
<td>2,040</td>
<td>-8,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td>111</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Expenditure</strong></td>
<td>8,096</td>
<td>8,096</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HOW WE PERFORMED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Budget 2011</th>
<th>Actual 2011</th>
<th>Variance 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residents (%) agreement that the city is lively and attractive</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents (%) agreement that their local suburban centre is lively and attractive</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public space and centre development projects - scheduled work programme</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents (%) rating of their waterfront experience as good or very good</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage buildings (adaptive re-use) - heritage buildings that are granted resource consents for additions or alterations</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The operational variance is due to lower interest costs as a result of reduced capital funding for the Wellington Waterfront project.
* Overspend relates to a Council approved decision to bring forward budget from 2011/12 relating to Lower Cuba Street upgrade. To be complete by August 2011.

* Not included in a Council-legal sense as being forward funded from 2011/12 relating to Lower Cuba Street upgrade. To be complete by August 2011.

* The reserves include the following items: Wellington Waterfront Framework, Thorndon Place-Based Study, Tapu Te Ranga Reserve Management Plan, and the Wellington Waterfront Incentive Fund.