We group our work into seven areas. Describing our work in this way provides coherence, and ensures we retain a clear sense of direction.

Governance
Our governance work includes running local elections, holding meetings of the Council and its committees, producing policies and strategies to guide our work, seeking feedback on our proposals from members of the public, producing annual plans and annual reports to make ourselves accountable to residents, engaging with Maori and stakeholder groups, and providing information about our services and activities.

The key challenges we face are to increase participation levels and build trust and confidence in civic decision-making.

Environment
We look after the city’s 34+ square kilometres of reserve land, as well as beaches, coastline, and botanical gardens. We provide funding support to the Zoo and Zealandia.

We also: provide water supply, stormwater and sewage disposal; provide recycling and waste disposal services; offer grants for environmental initiatives; and promote energy efficiency and sustainability. The environment is by far our biggest area of spending.

One of our long-term goals is for Wellington to be an ‘eco city’, one that has an environmental leadership role and responds proactively to environmental challenges. Our aim is for Wellington to move steadily towards a lower carbon future based on ‘green’ innovations that also provide an economic edge and support outstanding quality of life.

Though Wellington enjoys a stunning natural environment, the challenges we face are significant. We need to make our network infrastructure more resilient, and like other cities, we need to find ways of becoming more sustainable – to address broad issues such as climate change – by producing fewer greenhouse gas emissions, dumping less waste, using resources such as water and energy more efficiently, and protecting biodiversity and ecosystems.

Economic development
We work to attract major events such as the World of WearableArt Awards and the International Sevens. We also fund tourism promotions, and support attractions such as the Carter Observatory and conference venues such as the Wellington Convention Centre.

To support businesses, we advocate for the city’s interests to central and regional government. We maintain links with other markets through sister city relations. Our initiatives complement the regional economic development programme provided by the regional development agency Grow Wellington.

A key aspect of our 2040 vision is for Wellington to have a smarter and stronger economy – one that is based on knowledge, skill and innovation; that provides a wider range of exciting and rewarding jobs; that leads to greater prosperity, and is based on stronger connections between people and businesses both within the city and around the world.

We continue to work towards this vision while recognising the constraints imposed by the global economic slowdown.

Cultural well-being
We fund the city’s popular art galleries and museums, operate Toi Poneke – the Wellington Arts Centre, and support the NZ International Arts Festival, and other institutions.

We also provide cultural grants, and support community events and festivals

A key aspect of our 2040 vision is for Wellington to be a ‘people-centred’ city – one that is welcoming and friendly, and embraces diversity and change. This doesn’t just mean maintaining our edge as New Zealand’s arts and culture capital, it also means ensuring that the city remains friendly and vibrant, and continues to have a strong sense of identity expressed through its urban form, openness and accessibility.

Social and recreation
We provide some homes for people whose needs are not met by state housing or the private housing market, fund projects to help homeless people, support community organisations, and provide community centres and halls.

We also work to protect public health and safety through projects such as monitoring the city centre, banning liquor consumption in public in parts of the city, licensing food and liquor outlets, animal control, regulating other public health risks, providing toilets and cemeteries, and preparing the city to deal with emergencies such as earthquakes.

Our recreation work includes: providing playgrounds, swimming pools, recreation centres, sports fields and marinas; running recreation programmes; and reducing the costs of using sport and recreation facilities for people eligible for our Leisure Card subsidy scheme. We also provide libraries throughout the city.
A key aspect of our 2040 vision is for Wellington to be a ‘people-centred’ city – that is, a city that puts people first, is healthy and safe, welcoming and friendly, provides opportunities for all, has strong neighbourhoods and communities, and embraces diversity and change.

Key challenges include providing for a population that is growing in size, getting older, and getting more diverse, and catering to demand for more and better facilities.

**Urban development**

Our urban development work includes enhancing the waterfront and city and suburban centres, developing public spaces such as urban parks and squares, looking after heritage sites, assessing and issuing building and resource consents, ensuring earthquake-prone buildings are strengthened, and planning for the city’s future development.

The growth expected in Wellington over the next 20 years creates some challenges. We’re aiming to respond to those challenges in ways that are sustainable and preserve the city’s special character. A key approach is to improve land use and transport by focusing development in key centres or ‘hubs’.

Our 2040 vision is for a people-centred city that is vibrant and resilient, has strong communities and a powerful sense of identity and ‘place’ expressed through urban form, openness and accessibility. A key aspect of that vision is a dynamic central city – an attractive place for creativity, exploration and innovation.

**Transport**

We look after 684km of streets and roads, as well as footpaths, cycle lanes, traffic signals, car parks and so on.

We also: support public transport through bus priority measures such as bus lanes, letting buses go first at traffic lights, and providing bus shelters; work suburb by suburb to improve traffic safety; and plan to ensure the city’s transport network meets future needs.

A key aspect of our 2040 vision is for Wellington to be a ‘connected city – one that is easy to move around. We also aim to be an environmental leader, which means promoting transport options that minimise energy use and emissions.

Our transport system is generally performing well – Wellington’s streets are safe by national standards, we’re relatively high users of public transport, and most residents believe the city is easy to get around. However, we do face challenges such as ensuring the transport network can keep up with growing demand, and reducing effects such as noise, water and air pollution.

Further details about what we plan to do are available in the ‘Our Work in Detail’ section of this long-term plan.
Key facts
- The city’s population is 200,100 (Statistics New Zealand as at 30 June 2011)
- Proposed total operating expenditure 2012/13 is $379 million
  - Income from general rates 35%
  - Income from targeted rates 31%
  - Income from fees and charges 21%
  - Income from other areas 13%
- Equity per resident in 2012 is $31,326
- Forecast equity per resident in 2022 is $35,660 (based on forecast population level of 216,478)
- Rates limit in 2012/13: 3.8% after allowing for growth in the ratepayer base
- Rates increase in this plan 2012/13: 3.6% after allowing for growth in the ratepayer base.

Did you know
- 5%: the amount of efficiencies that we are targeting to find in the next decade equated to the average funded operating expenditure
- Approximately $1 billion: the cost of renewing the city’s core assets till 2022
- 3,043: kilometres of pipes are maintained by the Council
- 335: kilometres of walkways are offered in the city
- 2.5 million: visits to the city’s libraries each year
- $2,564: average cost of residential power per annum in the region (Statistics New Zealand)
- $2,012: the average spend on telecommunications per annum in the region (Statistics New Zealand)
- $1,951: the annual rates on an average residential ($522,570) house in Wellington City
- This equates to less than 2.3% of the average household income in the city (Statistics New Zealand).