

# Summary of consultation and feedback on Draft Centres Policy

August 2008



**Absolutely**

**POSITIVELY**

ME HEKE KI PŌNEKE  
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

**Wellington**

**SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION AND  
FEEDBACK ON DRAFT CENTRES POLICY**

**AUGUST 2008**

# CONTENTS

Summary of Consultation .....	3
A hierarchy of centres – this differentiates between different centres and industrial areas based on their size, role and function .....	4
Improving urban design quality in centres – through developing a centres design guide and taking design into account in assessing resource consents for new development.....	6
Achieving a greater mix of uses in centres – including apartments on upper storeys and more entertainment and recreational activities .....	8
Ensuring most general retail activities locate within centres – including restricting the development of some large-format retail outside of centres .....	10
Retaining current industrial land – by restricting other activities that can be located there .....	12
Business Improvement Districts (BID) – local partnerships between the Council and businesses to promote economic development and manage local improvements.....	14
Would you, your business or your organisation be interested in establishing a BID in your local centre? .....	16
Additional comments .....	17

# SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION

Throughout May–July 2008, Wellington City Council requested feedback from the public on the Draft Centres Policy. Consultation is summarised in the table below.

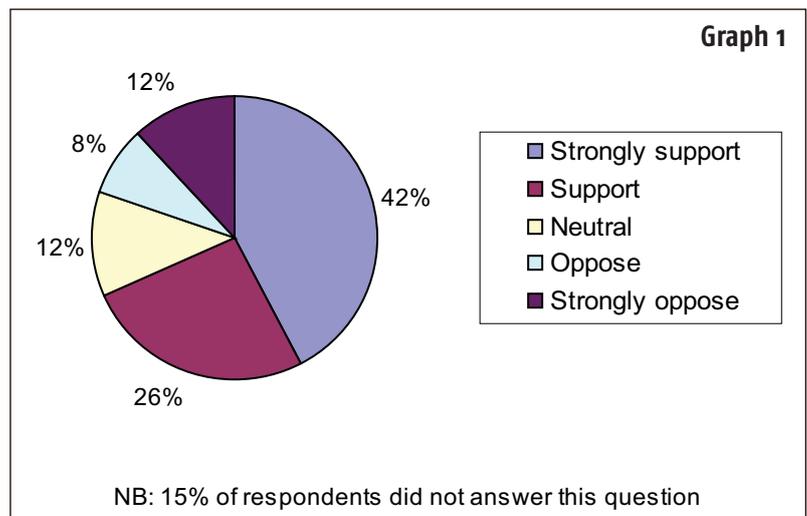
Date	Details
Thursday 24 April	SPC Meeting – Draft Centres Policy
Thursday 24 April	Media briefing on Draft Centres Policy
Friday 9 May	<a href="http://www.Wellington.govt.nz">www.Wellington.govt.nz</a> go-live webpage on “Have your say – Draft Centres Policy”
Saturday 10 May	Mailout to all Wellington city residents explaining two sets of consultation (residential infill and Centres Policy), including public meeting and display times
Monday 12 May	Mailout to all residents associations, key stakeholders, landowners, developers and submitters to previous consultation (Suburban Centres brochure) containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Centres Policy</li> <li>• Letter explaining consultation</li> </ul>
Thursday 15 May	Copies of Draft Centres Policy to libraries/service centres
Tuesday 27 May	Public display 1–3pm, Salvation Army Hall, Tawa Public meeting, 7–8.30pm, Salvation Army Hall, Tawa
Tuesday 3 June	Meeting with Karori Rotary Club
Wednesday 4 June	Public display 1–3pm, Johnsonville Community Centre Public meeting, 7–8.30pm, Johnsonville Community Centre
Tuesday 10 June	Meeting with IPENZ
Wednesday 11 June	Public display 1–3pm, St John’s Hall, Karori Public meeting, 7–8.30pm, St John’s Hall, Karori
Thursday 12 June	Meeting with Tawa Community Board
Tuesday 17 June	Public display 1–3pm, Newtown School Hall Public meeting, 7–8.30pm, Newtown School Hall
Tuesday 17 June	Meeting with Tawa Rotary Club
Tuesday 24 June	Kilbirnie Residents Association meeting, 7.30– 9pm, Kilbirnie Community Centre
Thursday 26 June	Public display 1–3pm, Holy Cross Catholic Church, Miramar Public meeting, 7–8.30pm, Holy Cross Catholic Church, Miramar
Monday 30 June	Public display 1–3pm, Kilbirnie Library Public meeting, 7–8.30pm, St Catherine’s College School Hall, Kilbirnie
Monday 14 July	Feedback period closed
Next steps	Feedback analysed and summary of feedback available on project page <a href="http://www.Wellington.govt.nz">www.Wellington.govt.nz</a> Finalised Centres Policy to set the framework for the Suburban Centres Review.

Feedback closed on Monday 14 July 2008. A total of 89 responses were received.

## 1. A hierarchy of centres – this differentiates between different centres and industrial areas based on their size, role and function

A large majority of the responses (68%) supported or strongly supported the Council's proposals to introduce a hierarchy of centres. This will provide guidance on their role and function and to help assess the suitability of proposed developments. A number of responses received (12%) strongly opposed the introduction of a centres hierarchy.

Some responses received are below:



*"... [We] **strongly support** the Draft Centres Policy as this allows different centres to develop character, role and function suitable to the needs of the area ..."*

### Residents association

*"In **general** we are **supportive** of the Draft Centres Policy. There are a number of areas where the policy will offer improved planning – largely through identifying a hierarchy of centres and targeting different solutions based on the hierarchy. This more granular approach will enable more targeted solutions for each suburban centre – based on more detailed knowledge and understanding of the centre's functions, environment and potential."*

### Local resident, Island Bay

*"I **strongly support** the differentiation of centres into suburban, industrial and on their size. However, this policy does not go far enough to include smaller mixed-use centres that have been zoned residential. For example, the small neighbourhood centres, such as on the corner of Onepu Road and Wha Street in Lyall Bay or the shops that surround the Empire Cinema on The Parade in Island Bay. I could name at least another dozen small neighbourhood shopping areas that should be retained and enhanced with support of this Centres Policy ... if you truly want a spatial, integrated framework that manages and creates a compact sustainable Wellington, these small neighbourhood centres need support, enhancement and the right type of zoning. Therefore, I propose that the Centres Policy needs to go to a smaller scale and include small neighbourhood centres."*

### Local resident, Lyall Bay

*"[We] **support** the identified approach to establishing a hierarchy of town centres within the city as part of providing a spatial framework for integrated planning.*

*The approach is a common one throughout New Zealand ..."*

### Commercial landowner

*"...[We do] **not support** the 'concept' of a hierarchy of centres if the District Plan measures subsequently introduced to support the concept do not enable centres to fulfil their reasonable role and function as determined by the Council's wider strategic planning initiatives ..."*

### Owner/developer

*"I think the emphasis on central city is overstated and artificial. You will not be successful long-term and will drive businesses away."*

### Business Association

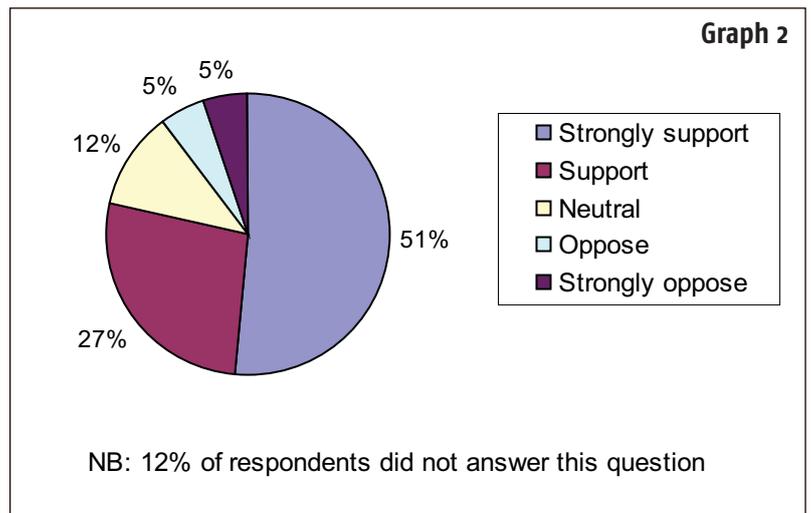
*"I **strongly oppose** the Council providing protection for CBD retail. The CBD has a daily unchallenged environment to do business with all the CBD workforce, plus the attraction of its cafés, bars, night life and speciality shops, which will not change because of Wellington's special geographical make-up and location."*

### Local resident, Johnsonville



## 2. Improving urban design quality in centres – through developing a centres design guide and taking design into account in assessing resource consents for new development

The majority of the responses (78%) supported or strongly supported the Council's proposals to improve the urban design quality of all centres. Sense of place can be enhanced by implementing design guides in the District Plan, requiring active street frontages, and investigating and identifying heritage areas where appropriate. Only 5% of responses strongly opposed the improvement of urban design in the city's centres. Some responses are below:



*"I **strongly agree** with design guides for all centres. I have been trying to get the Council to develop a design guide for the Rongotai Industrial Area for the past eight years. If this had happened it might not be facing the present retail proliferation that it presently has in this area. I also believe centre design guides should be a priority of the council. Recent developments in Kilbirnie such as the Pak'n Save petrol station, and the Repco development should not be allowed to occur as they do nothing for the streetscape and vitality of Kilbirnie. The Pak'n Save petrol station has created a car-orientated space where there were a number of buildings and the Repco building has produced a tilt slab concrete wall that is only any good for signage. Both facilities are totally car-orientated and negative to the overall streetscape in Kilbirnie."*

**Local resident, Lyall Bay**

*"[We] **strongly support** as some current developments meet current minimal urban design standards, but will be artistic and environmental detractors to area in future. A higher standard would ensure quality new development that is better match with historical development in area and ensure preservation of uniqueness and quality of town centre."*

**Residents association**

*"[We] **support** improving urban design quality in centres, as long as high quality developments are not unduly restricted."*

**Local business**

*"The Policy places emphasis on improving the quality of urban design in urban areas and maximising their potential to achieve more sustainable forms of development. This framework supports policies [in the Wellington Regional Policy Statement] which encourage high quality urban design and sustainable urban form."*

**Greater Wellington Regional Council**

*"Aesthetics are very important and not to be compromised. Individual home-owners rights need to be protected more vigorously. Elimination of shadows over existing dwellings and high pedestrian areas. Issues of loss of sunlight create serious health and sustainability problems. Building design should ensure maximum sun too."*

**Local resident, Houghton Bay**

*"Limit height in centres to five floors, ie Paris to allow sunlight into streets, look at the mistakes other cities have made; keep our city and centres people-friendly."*

**Local resident, Johnsonville**

*"To improve the urban design quality of all centres, of particular importance are the requirements for 'active street frontage' where allowance is made for safe pedestrian access. It is suggested all centres take pedestrians' needs into consideration as part of improving urban design in centres ..."*

**Local resident, Johnsonville**

*“Urban design quality – attractiveness is subjective. A design guide to prevent out-of-character construction may hinder a proposal that is unusual but otherwise sound ... Brooklyn’s commercial centre is losing its attractiveness as older buildings are replaced with unattractive utilitarian commercial premises – shops, workshops and offices. Brooklyn is losing its heritage buildings and needs urgently to have this investigated. Some protection is required.”*

**Local resident, Brooklyn**

*“...The need for active edges is even more vital at small suburban centres, and should be a solution designed from the outset, not attempted to be resolved later via efforts at planting out blank walls or instigating antigraffiti patrols. The Council’s Objective 7, to improve the urban design quality of the suburban centres, is to be encouraged. While we do not necessarily support the strict application of design guidelines, as this can lead to an unappetizing ‘tweeness’ if not carefully managed, the involvement of urban designers in the small suburban centres is to be encouraged. Too often the smaller suburban centres are drab, unloved, and dingy places, badly thought out in all aspects except for vehicle servicing and retail car parking.”*

**Architectural Centre Inc.**

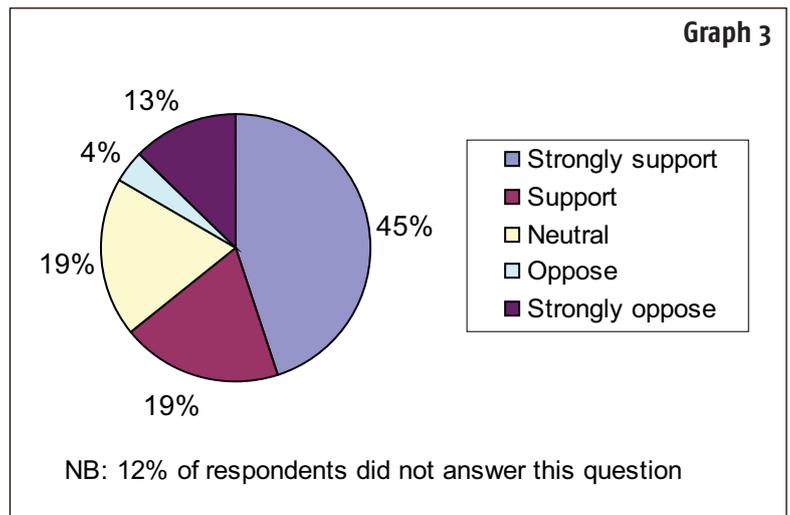
*“... Subjective urban design guidelines can place additional restrictions on the design of a project. They can also limit innovative solutions and design outcomes, as the focus of the design becomes based around achieving the guidelines. However, more importantly, urban design guidelines create a level of uncertainty. Development, while profitable in favourable economic conditions, involves substantial risk. Uncertainty increases this risk, increasing holding costs and undermining the feasibility of any given project. We therefore do not consider that urban design guidelines are conducive to encouraging innovative development.”*

**Commercial real estate**



### 3. Achieving a greater mix of uses in centres – including apartments on upper storeys and more entertainment and recreational activities

A large majority of the responses (64%) supported or strongly supported the Council's proposals to achieve a greater mix of uses in centres, including apartments on upper storeys and more entertainment and recreational activities. 13% of responses strongly oppose a greater mix of uses in the city's centres. Some responses are below:



*"[We] **strongly support** mixed-use development within Wellington city in order to minimise travel costs, and strongly oppose the development of large-format retail stores in places away from high-capacity, high-frequency public transport routes. Council planning such as that set out in the Draft Centres Policy, is essential to achieve this."*

#### **Transport 2000 Plus NZ**

*"I **agree** that with retail central city, town, neighbourhood and smaller neighbourhood centres having a minimum requirement for residential dwellings, office or recreational purposes in upper levels. I do not want to see developments such as the Kilbirnie Woolworths, Pak'n Save, Repco, or the Airport retail area repeated. These developments all should have been mixed use and reduced their dependence on car-orientated journeys to and from them."*

#### **Local resident, Lyall Bay**

*"**Strongly support**, however, if the mix of activities reduces the main function of the suburban centre (providing retail and other services to the community) then they should not be facilitated."*

#### **Residents association**

*"... it depends on the activities in the mix and proposed intensity of development."*

#### **Local resident, Johnsonville**

*"Our centres already have an adequate mix of activities. An increase in the number of activities and residential apartments in the central area has potential for noise problems etc."*

#### **Local resident, Brooklyn**

*"Having the ability to develop apartment-type dwellings in suburban areas is a little worrying as it sounds like to me it could become an extreme case of infill housing and the end result could be loss of privacy, outlooks etc."*

#### **Local resident, Newlands**

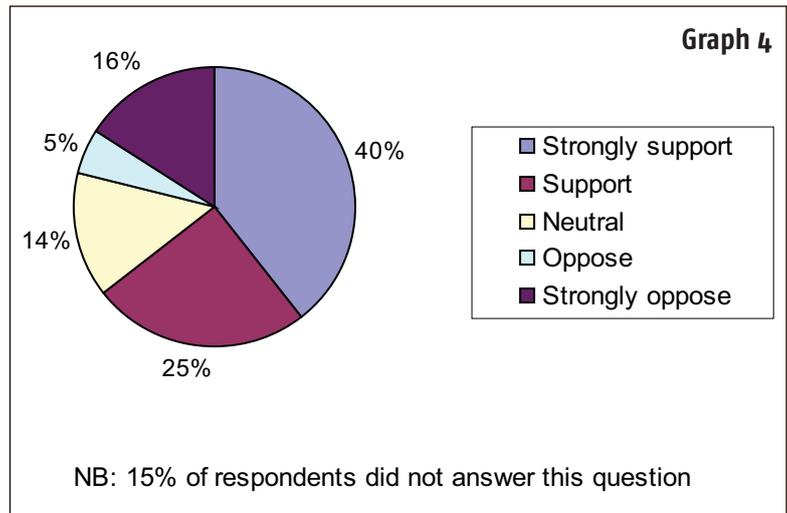
*"Mixed-use buildings with upper storey residential creates conflict – clash between residents, visitors, workers and shoppers for car parking – clash between residents and entertainment seekers; conflict over noise at night with residents seeking peace and quiet and entertainment seekers noisy on footpaths and creating extra traffic."*

#### **Local resident, Brooklyn**



## 4. Ensuring most general retail activities locate within centres – including restricting the development of some large-format retail outside of centres

A large majority of the responses (65%) supported or strongly supported the Council's proposals to manage the location of retail activities to ensure that most general retail activities locate within centres – including restricting the development of some large-format retail outside of centres. 16% of responses strongly oppose the management of general retail activities within the city's centres. Some responses are below:



**“Strongly support ...** there are areas in the city and suburbs that are well suited to large retail centres, eg Kilbirnie retail development, but other centres like Island Bay that are suited to smaller specialised retail outlets and targeted small businesses.”

### Residents association

**“[We] support** centre and edge-of-centre development because of the significant benefits it brings to communities in the form of social and functional amenity. Significant and long-term impacts can arise from out-of-centre development, even the so-called ‘large format’ development, which is sometimes claimed to be in a different market to high street and other in-centre stores. The objectives and policies against out-of-centre large format retail are strongly supported.”

### Commercial developer

**“[We] strongly oppose** the development of large-format retail stores in places away from high-capacity, high-frequency public transport routes. Council planning such as that set out in the Draft Centres Policy is essential to achieve this.”

### Transport 2000 Plus NZ

**“I agree** with restriction on large-format retail outside of centres ... this Policy needs to retain and create smaller neighbourhood centres like the Wha Street/ Onepu Road shops.”

### Local resident, Lyall Bay

**“The approach by Council to manage the location of retail activities is supported** and reflects the approach initiated within previous Council-initiated Plan Changes, such as 52 and 45, in particular. [We] encourage location of large supermarkets within or on edge-of-town centres due to the compact urban form this promotes.”

### Commercial landowner

**“Many Tawa residents choose to shop in either Porirua or Johnsonville. Many Khandallah and Ngaio residents shop in Johnsonville. Johnsonville would be the major Wellington centre outside the CBD. Johnsonville triangle urgently needs a co-ordinated development between mall owners and the Council to provide for planned northern suburbs future growth and to solve traffic congestion.”**

### Local resident, suburb not stated

**“... [We] accept that, from an urban design and transport perspective, there can be adverse effects that occur as a result of not well planned, designed and integrated large format retail activities. However, [we]... are strongly of the view that there is a role and demand for this type of retail in Wellington, and if this is not met, large-format retail activity will locate outside Wellington city in Porirua and the Hutt Valley”.**

### Property investor

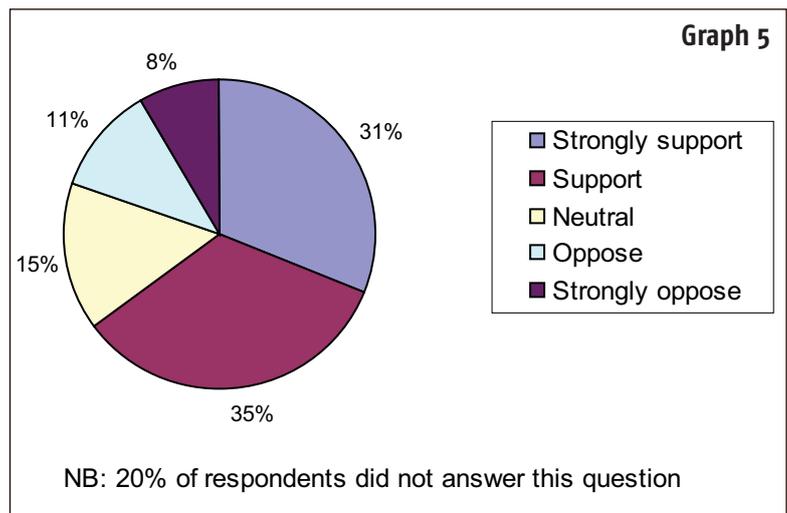
**“I do not want to be forced to go to the CBD. Prefer local access to 95% of needs. CBD is a parking problem. It is also costing the use of scarce resources, such as petrol, and is a great waste of time.”**

### Local resident, Johnsonville



## 5. Retaining current industrial land – by restricting other activities that can be located there

A large majority of the responses (66%) supported or strongly supported the Council's proposals to retain industrial land by restricting other activities that can be located there. Only 8% of responses opposed the retention of the existing industrial land by restricting other activities that can be located there. Some responses are below:



*"We are very concerned at the loss of industrial land in the Kilbirnie area to retail centres, eg Rongotai, Miramar and in Kilbirnie next to Placemakers. Industry contributes to the viability of the Eastern Suburbs with regards to employment, as well as economically."*

**Local resident, Kilbirnie**

*"I support industrial land being kept industrial and restricting other activities. I do not agree with Rongotai Industrial Area becoming known as a "Retail Destination" and being renamed "Rongotai Retail Park". It should be an industrial area. This area is an important work area for the community. I was one of the few people who objected to Wellington International Airports' large shed retail area. Vehicle traffic along Salek Street and Coutts Street ... has increased dramatically to the detriment of the Rongotai neighbourhood. My mother can no longer cross the road and talk to her neighbours in the weekend. I do not want to see the retail component in this area increased without a major road connection being made via Cobham Drive and along Bridge Street on Wellington International Airport-owned land. I also feel that the industrial office component of this area needs to be retained and your Centre Policy does not do this."*

**Local resident, Lyall Bay**

*"We strongly support retaining current industrial land. Inappropriate 'retail parks' should not compromise Wellington's industrial capacity."*

**Landowner/Developer**

*"It is imperative that only industrial land that has a true supply of land issue, which requires a separate work area, is catered for in a Work Area. For example, industries requiring: a large amount of space; are carrying out activities which have reverse sensitivity issues that cannot be catered for in other areas such as mixed use. Until such demand is demonstrated and a clear definition of what industrial uses is provided for in this policy, the above objectives and policies are strongly opposed ..."*

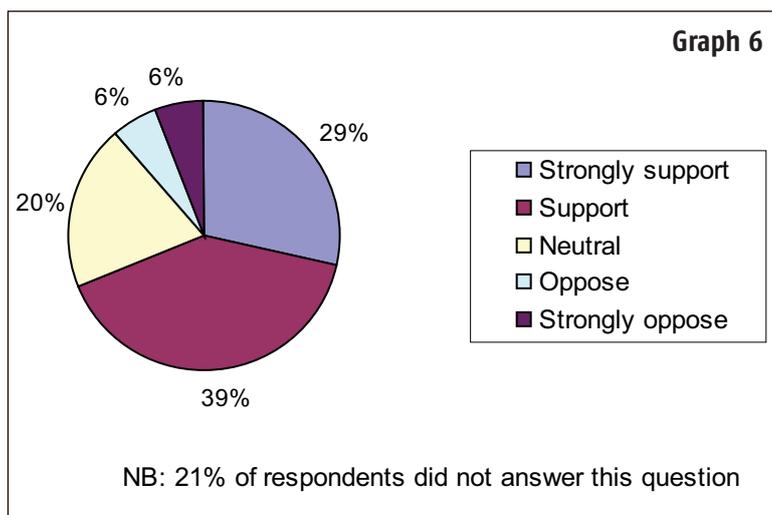
**Property investor**



## 6. Business Improvement Districts (BID) – local partnerships between Council and businesses to promote economic development and manage local improvements

A majority of the responses (68%) supported or strongly supported the Council's concept of Business Improvement Districts to promote economic development and manage improvements in local centres.

Some responses are below:



*"Business Improvement Districts work well in other cities and I support the promotion of these within Wellington city."*

**Local resident, Lyall Bay**

*"Partnerships between businesses and Councils are potentially good. However any solution also needs to take into account the needs of people living and owning property in the area. As potential users of the services and as neighbours of the business, local residents should have a role to play in proposed development with the opportunity to respond to all resource consents involving infill housing that significantly impacts on the nature of the centre".*

**Residents association**

*"The mention of BIDs is interesting, but seems only the tip of the iceberg in finding alternate models of business-community-council interaction."*

**Architectural Centre Inc.**

*"We strongly support the nurturing of public-private partnerships in the creation of 'main street' programmes. We recommend that Council play a largely facilitative and supportive role in working with local communities and business to develop centre plans ... [We are] particularly interested in providing a public health contribution to key Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), through initiatives such as Courtenay Accord. Regional Health regulatory and health-promotion activities, particularly those addressing: community alcohol issues, liquor licensing, and promoting physical activity through good urban planning, clearly link to the potential work areas of these BIDs."*

**Regional Public Health**



## 7. Would you, your business or your organisation be interested in establishing a BID in your local centre?

A question on the feedback form asked whether the respondents would be interested in establishing a BID (Business Improvement District) in their local centre. Some responses are below:

*"We already have one – that was established in 1998 and it operates well."*

**Marsden Village Association Inc**

*"We would be very interested but would require more information before we would commit to a BID."*

**Local resident, Kilbirnie**

*"Yes, but solely for the benefit of the people and the district (combined) as a whole, not to lead but as a contributing member in order to ensure that the interests of the residents are considered and made known."*

**Local resident, Tawa**

*"No, I feel Miramar residents love the "village" feel of the place and 'business-guided-only' sentiments will meet opposition when business becomes domineering."*

**Local resident, Miramar**

*"Our association would welcome a Council-convened forum of business owners/landlords to develop planning guide for the future of our neighbourhood centre."*

**Residents association**

*"Not particularly in my current area (Thorndon) as it isn't suffering from the kind of malaise that a BID might fix. Northland, however, needs a BID, as does Aro Valley. It's important to get services and facilities that will encourage lively interaction that builds communities. This means particularly encouraging people on foot and on bikes rather than in cars (the 'closed-cell' approach to mobility), in families and taking leisure activities to be in these centres."*

**Local resident, Thorndon**

*"Working and communicating together must always be beneficial."*

**Local resident, Seatoun**

*"Why would we want to give our opinions on this when the Council will do what they want when they want anyway."*

**Local resident, Johnsonville**

*"We're happy to work with others if a group forms to develop something."*

**Local resident, Island Bay**



## 8. Additional comments

Additional general comments on the Draft Centres Policy are as follows:

*"We believe that the Draft Centres Policy is a critical tool for well-managed urban development across the city. Densification of key town centres, strengthening of major public transport routes supporting growth nodes, and protection of the city centre will have a positive impact on public health, community well-being and our physical environment ... [We] support the Draft Centres Policy ... [and] ... the development of frameworks to enable integrated development and management on a place basis and support Plan Change 48 as a means of enabling policy."*

**Regional Public Health**

*"Essential to keep the 'heart' of Wellington city. Overseas visitors comment how Wellington has a heart and a European feel; is easy to get around. This helps make Wellington the best city in NZ to live in. We don't want to be like Auckland – 50 villages that you drive between!"*

**Local resident, Mt Victoria**

*"Generally supportive of the Centres Policies to provide viable commercial centres that support the compact nature of Wellington, with continued really good public transport and walking access to the centres from their residential catchments."*

**Local resident, Tawa**

*"I support the Draft Centres Policy, as it is a proactive approach to ensuring that Wellington is an attractive and coherent city to live, work and recreate. In particular, the policy is an excellent measure in support of ensuring Wellington becomes more sustainable. I believe it fits well with DPC 66 and DPV 5 which I also support."*

**Local resident, Kelburn**

*"I think the Centres Policy is generally good – in keeping with overseas modern cities – we do need to be looking ahead ..."*

**Local resident, Seatoun**

*"Council's approach to planning for the city is becoming increasingly prescriptive. Such a prescriptive approach existed under the Town and Country Planning Act, which was criticised and replaced with the RMA. Why are we heading back to prescriptive (Nanny State) planning?"*

**Local resident, Lyall Bay**

*"The area of Rongotai including these work uses should be distinguished from the residential/mixed-use area of Rongotai in Appendix 1 and categorised as a Work Area to ensure that this land is safeguarded for necessary future work uses."*

**Local resident, Rongotai**