

It's the job of Wellington City Council to ensure the well-being of Wellington and its people, and to facilitate democratic local decision-making.

The mayor and 14 councillors comprise the Council. They are supported by two community boards, a Chief Executive and 1,400+ staff.

## **GOVERNANCE**

We inform and involve residents in decisions about the city's future, through elections, consultation, engagement, and publications.

*2010/11 operating cost: \$14.8m (\$75 per resident, \$0.21 per resident per day)*

## **ENVIRONMENT**

We support conservation-based visitor attractions such as Wellington Zoo, Zealandia and four botanical gardens. We also provide the city's 40+ square kilometres of Town Belt and reserve land, parks and coastline. We supplied water to the city's homes and businesses during the year. We also safely disposed of the city's stormwater, wastewater, and solid waste, offered grants for environmental initiatives, and promoted energy efficiency and sustainability.

*2010/11 operating cost: \$126m (\$637 per resident, \$1.75 per resident per day)*

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

We support major events such as the NZI Sevens and the World of Wearable Arts and visitor attractions such as Te Papa and the Wellington Convention Centre. We fund tourism promotion and keep the city centre vibrant by providing free weekend parking, and provide grants for community projects with economic benefits.

*2010/11 operating cost: \$24.8m (\$125 per resident, \$0.34 per resident per day)*

## **CULTURAL WELL-BEING**

We fund the city's art galleries and museums, operate Toi Pōneke Arts Centre, support the NZ International Arts Festival and the NZ Symphony Orchestra, operate the City Archives, provide cultural grants, and support a wide array of community events and festivals.

*2010/11 operating cost: \$14.4m (\$73 per resident, \$0.20 per resident per day)*

## **SOCIAL AND RECREATION**

We provide the city's sports fields, swimming pools, recreation centres, playgrounds, and libraries. We also provide over 2,300 homes, and protect public health and safety by monitoring the city centre, controlling liquor and food sales, regulating public health risks, providing toilets, and preparing the city to deal with emergencies such as earthquakes.

*2010/11 operating cost: \$88.1m (\$446 per resident, \$1.22 per resident per day)*

## **URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

We guide and control building and land development, enhance the waterfront and other public areas, and protect the city's built heritage.

*2010/11 operating cost: \$28.4m (\$144 per resident, \$0.39 per resident per day)*

## **TRANSPORT**

We look after 670km of streets and roads, as well as footpaths, cycle lanes, traffic signals, and car parks. We also support public transport through measures such as bus lanes and shelters.

*2010/11 operating cost: \$48.6m (\$246 per resident, \$0.67 per resident per day)*

## Mayor's report

### 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, costing 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. For example, we can move towards a 'weightless' economy based on knowledge and innovation, bringing higher incomes, more opportunities, and a more harmonious relationship with the environment.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### A vision for a smart, green city

In June 2011, the Council released *Towards 2040: A Smart Green Wellington*, a draft strategic vision for the city's development over the next 30 years.

*Towards 2040* aims to enhance Wellington's existing strengths – such as its compactness, high quality of life, beautiful natural environment and skilled workforce – while positioning the city to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Those challenges include greater competition for people and investment, ever-increasing environmental and resource pressures, and changing demands from residents.

*Towards 2040* seeks to enhance Wellington's competitiveness as a people-centred city, an eco city, a city that is 'connected' in terms of both technology and communities, and a city with an exciting, dynamic centre.

Initiatives such as free Wi-Fi for the CBD and the roll-out of Ultra-Fast-Broadband are two key ingredients to ensure Wellington City has a sound digital infrastructure to meet the challenges of our diversifying economy, including biodiversity, energy and water management.

In doing so, it seeks to achieve economic success alongside improved quality of life and environmental performance. I'm delighted that both Council and city greenhouse gas emissions are back to 2001 levels.

### Cooler little capital

The *Lonely Planet* travel guide confirmed what Wellingtonians already knew when it recognised Wellington as New Zealand's 'most innovative and inspiring city' and as the coolest little capital city in the world.

The endorsement recognises the city's sophistication, its vibrant atmosphere, its dramatic environment, and the tremendous range of attractions such as Te Papa and Zealandia.

But most of all it recognises that Wellington's wonderful vibe comes from the diverse range of people who live here and call this great city 'home'.

It is this diversity advantage – people from all over New Zealand and from foreign shores – that gives Wellington its creative edge; an edge we celebrate in our culture, and capitalise on with our growing economy.

### **Celebrating Wellington**

By the time this is being read, Rugby World Cup 2011 will be under way. Wellington is hosting eight matches, including two quarterfinals.

The Cup provides an unmatched opportunity to showcase our vibrant, friendly and exciting city to thousands of international visitors.

Wellington's preparations for the Cup are an outstanding example of the success that can result from collaboration.

Alongside many others, we have worked hard to ensure that the city is ready for the influx of players and visitors, that our transport, accommodation and sports facilities meet their expectations, and that the city provides an outstanding party atmosphere for the duration of the Cup.

### **Improved services and strong stewardship**

The challenging environment this year has highlighted the importance of strong stewardship of the city's environment, facilities and finances.

During the year we have strengthened protection for reserves and town belt land, improved our recycling operations, and adopted a policy on management of carbon sinks and emissions.

We've continued to build on our strengths as the best city in Australasia to get around in: our cycling and walking networks continue to be improved to make them more enjoyable and safer to use, and our public transport services remain a key focus for Wellington City, culminating in the Public Transport Spine Study designed to ensure our city meets its transport challenges for the decades to come. Twenty-six per cent of Wellingtonians walk to work and 40 per cent of children walk to school.

We have learned from Christchurch's experience by strengthening requirements for buildings to be earthquake-ready.

We have invested judiciously in city facilities – for example by installing artificial turf on sports fields, and by working with others to deliver wifi in the central city.

We developed a digital strategy, which aims to position the city as a 'digital creative capital' and so give Wellington a position of leadership in the global transition towards a 'weightless' economy.

We have found smarter and more cost-effective ways to deliver Council services, for example by offering more online.

And we have maintained rates at levels that are moderate by national standards, in spite of significant cost pressures.

### **Collaboration and engagement**

The new wharewaka Te Raukura on the waterfront stands as a tangible symbol of a strengthened relationship with mana whenua organisations. Wellington City continues to enjoy warm relations with mana whenua.

And exploring a new approach to funding regional amenities, the Porirua Harbour Action Plan and joint waste management initiatives are examples of the region's councils working together for our communities.

### **Quality of life**

Wellington continues to offer its residents outstanding quality of life. In our 2011 Residents' Satisfaction Survey, 97% of residents rated Wellington as a great place to live.