

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

City promotions, events and attractions

Events and visitor attractions add to our sense of shared identity, make the city vibrant, and bring economic benefits.

Through our involvement in city promotions, events and attractions, we aim to position Wellington as an internationally competitive city, attractive to residents and visitors alike.

In this work, we aim to help the city maintain its edge as a prime tourist and conference destination, maximise economic value from promoting and hosting high-profile events, support the development of a thriving retail sector, and build on the city's strengths – such as its compactness and its strong sense of identity – to enhance prosperity and contribute to higher quality of life for all Wellingtonians.

We support a wide range of events, attractions, and city promotions.

We:

- provide funding for Positively Wellington Tourism, the city's official tourism marketing organisation, so it can run its highly successful domestic and international visitor attraction campaigns
- support Te Papa – with more than one million visitors each year, it is one of the city's major attractions
- provide funding support for the Carter Observatory, which is being redeveloped into a leading science-based visitor attraction
- operate an events development fund, which contributes to the city's buzz by supporting a huge range of events – including the World of WearableArt Awards, Rugby Sevens, Chinese New Year festivities and more
- manage the Wellington Convention Centre, which provides venues for arts/entertainment and sports community events, and attracts out-of-town visitors to conventions
- help keep the city centre lively over the weekend by providing free parking
- carry out work to maintain and enhance Marsden Village in Karori
- promote the city as Creative Wellington – Innovation Capital.

In 2008/09, we'll complete the first stage of the upgrade of the Cable Car precinct – a significant visitor destination at the top of Wellington Botanical Gardens and continue with the revitalisation of the Carter Observatory. We'll also develop our plans to promote the city as part of the 2011 Rugby World Cup.

From 2008/09, we're increasing our funding for Positively Wellington Tourism.

In the last few years, people have become less likely to select tourism products and services through books and magazine articles and purchase those products through travel agents. Instead, they have embraced research and purchasing of tourism products and services online.

Positively Wellington Tourism will create a fully interactive online experience where users can research, plan and book their visits to Wellington and interact with previous visitors via blogs and forums. We're budgeting \$519,000 in 2008/09 and more in future years for this project.

Wellington has a tight labour market and retaining skilled and experienced staff is a priority for Positively Wellington Tourism. We're increasing Positively Wellington Tourism's salary funding by \$81,000 per year and trustee fees by \$24,000 per year.

Funding for Positively Wellington Tourism comes from the downtown levy, which is paid by central city businesses – not from general rates.

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2008/09 are:

- major events supported by the events development fund will have an estimated economic impact of at least \$20 million – a 20:1 return on our investment, and at least 90% of residents surveyed will be satisfied with Council-supported events (these targets are unchanged from 2007/08)
- Te Papa will attract at least 1.1 million visitors (with 35% of adult visitors coming from outside New Zealand and 35% of adult domestic visitors coming from outside the Wellington region)
- the Wellington Convention Centre will hold more than 855 events (including more than 105 concerts); achieve occupancy rates of 66% (a 1% increase on our 2007/08 target) for the Town Hall, 72% (unchanged from 2007/08's target) for the Michael Fowler Centre, and 61% (1% increase) for the Queens Wharf Events Centre; and maintain its 4-star Qualmark rating and its ISO9001 accreditation (maintain levels)
- at least 62% (a 2% increase from our 2007/08 target) of residents surveyed say they're more likely to come in to the city at weekends, for other reasons than work because WCC on-street parking is free, and the turnover rate for WCC city car parks will be 4.7 cars per day at weekends (unchanged) and 7.5 per day on weekdays (unchanged).

We will also measure the total number of events we support. We do not have a target for total number of events. Instead, we aim to support as many worthwhile events as possible that meet our funding criteria, subject to budget limits.

APPENDIX 1

Performance targets for Positively Wellington Tourism are shown in the council-controlled organisations section of this annual plan – see the appendix.

WHAT IT WILL COST

What it will cost		Operational Spending			Capital Spending
		User charges and other revenue \$000	Expenditure 2008/09 \$000	Net expenditure / rates funding requirement \$000	Expenditure 2008/09 \$000
3.1.1	Tourism promotion		4,740	4,740	
3.1.2	Visitor attractions		2,300	2,300	1,300
3.1.3	Convention venues	(5,201)	9,760	4,559	1,239
3.2.1	Suburban and city centres vitality		1,223	1,223	
3.3.1	Events attraction and support		1,858	1,858	
3.6.1	Creative workforce		1,430	1,430	
Total for 2008/09		(5,201)	21,311	16,110	2,539

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Business support

We want Wellington to be an internationally competitive, prosperous city.

Through our business support work, we aim to enhance residents' quality of life by raising overall levels of prosperity. We aim to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship, and to enhance Wellington's competitiveness as a world-class location for talent, business/industry and investment.

We also aim to support the city centre's development as the region's premier retail, knowledge and entertainment district. We also aim to make the city more 'connected', by securing the communications and transport infrastructure so vital to business success.

We support a range of projects that enhance economic development.

We:

- provide grants for one-off projects that bring economic benefits to the city
- run a move to Wellington campaign aimed at attracting and retaining skilled, creative people
- are supporting Positively Wellington Tourism and Wellington International Airport in their bid to attract at least one daily long-haul air service to the city from an Asian destination
- are working on a policy that aims to enhance the city's communications infrastructure and build ICT skills
- represent Wellington's interests to central government and other agencies, the business community, and sister cities.

We also advocate for our community's interests through *Grow Wellington* – the new regional economic development agency.

We're also working towards our broadband vision.

Over the last 10 years, the telecommunications sector has undergone unprecedented change. High capacity broadband networks are fast becoming a 'must have' infrastructure for modern cities. Businesses, investors and skilled workers expect cities to provide affordable, very high speed, universally available broadband. This is happening in many cities around the world, and Wellington needs to follow suit to capture the significant potential economic and social benefits.

Overseas studies show these are in the areas of increased employment and productivity, greater economic activity, and ability to innovate. The impacts on better education and health provision are also likely to be significant.

The Council's vision is for Wellington to achieve this – universal access to high-speed affordable broadband – by 2012. We've asked potential industry partners for their help in how best to turn this vision into a reality. Several costing models are being explored, including private/public partnerships and user pays. The objective is to stimulate more investment that will result in better services – which doesn't necessarily mean the Council has to start building its own infrastructure, although that is an option.

We'll continue to work on options in the coming year. We'll also work with other local authorities in the Wellington region with a view to making a joint approach to the Government's \$500 million Broadband Investment Fund. We have budgeted \$200,000 in 2008/09 to carry out planning and feasibility work.

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2008/09 are:

- at least one long-haul airline is flying daily to Wellington (we are reviewing the performance target for the long-haul project as the production of the aircraft being targeted in this initiative (Boeing's new B787 and Airbus' A350) were delayed, and are initially being allocated to existing routes)
- positive growth in the number of businesses and jobs in Wellington's education, ICT, professional engineering, creative and film, manufacturing, and biotechnology sectors, along with positive growth in Wellington's location quotients for each sector
- at least 15 events/activities (this target is unchanged from 2007/08) held with our formal international partnership cities (both in Wellington and overseas).

We record the number of economic grant applications we receive, the number receiving grants, and the total budget allocation. Our target is for all economic grants to be distributed in accordance with eligibility criteria.

We will also report on our work with stakeholders to enhance the city's information and communications infrastructure.

APPENDIX 1

WHAT IT WILL COST

What it will cost <i>Activity</i>		Operational Spending			Capital Spending
		User charges and other revenue \$'000	Expenditure 2008/09 \$'000	Net expenditure / rates funding requirement \$'000	Expenditure 2008/09 \$'000
3.4.2	Transport gateway connections		200	200	
3.5.2	Economic grants		165	165	
3.7.1	Regional and external relations		269	269	
Total for 2008/09			634	634	