

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

WHAT'S YOUR VIEW

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6. URBAN DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Urban planning and policy

To build a great urban environment, you have to start with a plan.

The city's population is expected to grow by nearly 20 percent over the next decade, placing greater demands on infrastructure and land. Our work aims to ensure this growth occurs in ways that make efficient use of land and transport, and don't compromise the qualities that make Wellington special.

The appeal of a city and the quality of life that it provides are directly related to its urban form and design. A well planned city is attractive and should be easy to get around. It has a distinctive character and 'feel'.

Wellington has so much going for it – its rugged natural environment, its compact nature, the character and colour of its buildings, and the fact that it has a vibrant heart around the city centre and harbour. These hold appeal to residents and visitors alike. They are a draw cards and are likely to be of increasing importance in world where people have greater awareness – through the internet and travel – and choices about where to choose to live and work.

In our urban planning work, we're aiming to retain and enhance these qualities – to sustain city that's compact, liveable, sustainable, prosperous, and retains a strong 'sense of place'.

A key part of our planning is to focus growth in areas that cause least harm and bring most benefit.

We develop policies and plans to encourage high-quality urban development. This includes plans for the 'growth spine' from the north through the city and Kilbirnie. We're aiming to cluster development around the key town/suburban centres along this 'spine' to ensure the city's land is used wisely and its transport systems are as efficient as possible. This vision will help make the city more sustainable, as well as helping us to preserve the character of other parts of the city.

Our urban planning work also includes:

- Developing the Wellington 2040 Central City Framework (discussed further in Public Spaces Development). The framework plans for the growth and enhancement of Wellington's city centre for the next 30 years. It is the first time we have taken such a comprehensive and long-term view of the city centre.
- Commencing work on the Miramar Peninsula Framework.
- Developing plans for areas of the city where most growth is expected to occur in the future.

We'll also continue with our work on the Kilbirnie Town Centre Plan. Strategically located on the transport corridor between the airport and the central business district, the town centre performs an important role as an employment and services hub for the southern and eastern suburbs.

With the help of the local community and businesses, we'll develop a plan that will revitalise the town centre and creating an attractive, vibrant, people-friendly and prosperous part of Wellington city.

Another proposed project is the development of a computerised model for analysing possible future central city infrastructure changes and their relationship to economic aspects of vehicle and pedestrian movements.

Fees and charges

We charge out our time for any private planning work we do (including private plan changes), alterations and extensions to designations. To cover our costs we are proposing to increase some of our fees and charges associated with this activity (please see appendix x for further detail).

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2010/11 are:

- 80% of residents agree the city is developing in a way that takes in to account its unique urban character and natural environment.
- Complete ten centre plans (including implementation plans) for other key centres as part of the Growth Spine Framework implementation.
- Monitor the proportion of District Plan appeals that are mediated (settled) before reaching the Environment Court.

WHAT IT WILL COST

6.1 Urban Planning and Policy	Operating expenditure 2010-2011			Capital expenditure 2010-2011
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.1.1 Urban planning and policy development	(32)	2,757	2,725	190
2010/11 6.1 Total	(32)	2,757	2,725	190
2009/10 6.1 Total	(12)	2,692	2,680	1,738

6. URBAN DEVELOPMENT

6.2 Building control and facilitation

Buildings should be safe and sustainable, and enhance the city's character.

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.

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.

Overall, we want the city to become more sustainable, safe, and prosperous, and to retain its compactness and unique 'sense of place'.

Our building control work ensures these objectives are met. This work includes:

- issuing and monitoring building consents and consents required under bylaws
- carrying out inspections
- issuing Code of Compliance Certificates
- dealing with building warrants of fitness.

We also provide information to raise public awareness of the need for, and benefits of, the consenting process, and we offer homebuyers and others access to property information including Land Information Memoranda (LIMs).

Our work goes beyond regulation. We also encourage greater use of energy-efficient design and renewable energy technology.

We have developed guidelines on sustainable building to help homeowners, tenants, architects, developers and builders. We also provide incentives to support installation of energy efficient building solutions such as solar water heaters and on-site electricity generation. These incentives help to reduce the city's carbon emissions (read more about this in our climate change initiatives).

Fees and charges

The building control work that we do benefits private individuals – the people and companies that build or redevelop homes, offices and other buildings. Those individuals pay user charges such as building consent fees to cover the costs of this work. To ensure that ratepayers are not subsidising building control work that benefits private individuals, we propose to increase some of our user charges and fees (for further information please see appendix [x](#))

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2010/11 are:

- 100% of building consents are issued within 20 working days.
- 100% of Code Compliance Certificates are issued within statutory timeframes (20 working days after we are advised by the owner that work is complete).
- 100% of Land Information Memorandums (LIMs) are issued within 10 working days.
- 95% of urgent complaints are responded to within 24 hours and 80% of non-urgent complaints are responded to within three days.
- Retention of Building Consent Authority (BCA) accreditation.
- 80% of customers rate building control services as good or very good.

WHAT IT WILL COST

6.2 Building Control and Facilitation	Operating expenditure 2010-2011			Capital expenditure 2010-2011
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.2.1 Building control and facilitation (building consents)	(7,191)	11,808	4,617	-
2010/11 6.2 Total	(7,191)	11,808	4,617	-
2009/10 6.2 Total	(6,691)	11,358	4,667	-

6. URBAN DEVELOPMENT

6.3 Development control and facilitation

Land development and subdivisions should be sustainable and in keeping with the city's character.

Growth and development is important to the city's prosperity – but it is also important that growth occurs in ways that enhance our quality of life and keep within the city's character.

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 developments, plans to clear native bush, changes to historic buildings, and other factors set out in the District Plan.

We assess resource consent applications against the District Plan, issue resource consents, and monitor compliance to ensure land and other resources are managed sustainably. Each year we consider more than 1,200 resource consent applications.

These controls are necessary to ensure resources are used sustainably to protect public health and safety, and future users of land and buildings. They're also needed to protect urban character and to preserve the city's heritage, for example the workers' cottages and grand villas from the early 1900s in suburbs like Mount Cook and Thorndon.

We separate our policy and regulatory roles in relation to land/resource use. This is important to ensure that resource consent decisions are considered independently and conflicts of interest are avoided.

Fees and charges

Although there is public benefit to ensuring resource consent conditions are met, the main beneficiaries of this work are the individual people and businesses involved in land subdivision and development or use of other resources. To ensure those who benefit most from our service and cover their costs, we propose to increase some of our fees and charges (further detail can be found in appendix x).

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2010/11 are:

- 100% of non-notified resource consents are issued within 20 working days.
- 90% of resource consents are monitored within 3 months of project commencement.
- 100% of section 223 subdivision certificates are issued within statutory timeframes (10 working days) and 100% of section 224 subdivision certificates are issued within 20 working days.
- 90% of noise control (excessive noise) complaints are investigated within 1 hour.
- 95% of environmental complaints are investigated within 48 hours.
- 80% of customers rate development control services as good or very good.

WHAT IT WILL COST

6.3 Development Control and Facilitation	Operating expenditure 2010-2011			Capital expenditure 2010-2011
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.3.1 Development control and facilitation (resource consents)	(3,181)	6,528	3,347	-
2010/11 6.3 Total	(3,181)	6,528	3,347	-
2009/10 6.3 Total	(2,946)	6,148	3,202	-

6. URBAN DEVELOPMENT

6.4 Earthquake risk mitigation

Wellington is built on an active faultline, making the city and its heritage vulnerable to earthquakes.

We work to mitigate the potential impact of earthquakes by assessing buildings for earthquake risk, and by working with owners to ensure that older buildings are strengthened to required standards. This work is require under legislation.

The Council's own buildings are subject to the same test and a programme has been established to assess an upgrade those as part of our asset management work in the coming years.

The coming year will be the final year of a five-year research study *"Wellington: It's Our Fault"*. This \$3.6 million research-science project that we have part funded aims to provide a better understanding of the region's vulnerability to large earthquakes including the likelihood and frequency of a large earthquake, the likely size, physical effects, and social and economic impacts. The study is being led by the government-owned research company GNS Science, in collaboration with a number of public and private sector organisations. The findings will help us better prepare for a large earthquake and guide our decisions about the risks and priorities for the city.

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2010/11 are:

- Complete another 500 initial assessments of earthquake-prone buildings.
- 95% of earthquake-prone building notifications (under section 124 of the Building Act 2004) are issued without successful challenge.

WHAT IT WILL COST

6.4 Earthquake Risk Mitigation	Operating expenditure 2010-2011			Capital expenditure 2010-2011
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.4.1 Earthquake risk mitigation	-	667	667	117
2010/11 6.4 Total	-	667	667	117
2009/10 6.4 Total	-	641	641	3,103

6. URBAN DEVELOPMENT

6.5 Public spaces development

We want Wellington to be visually appealing and liveable - a city you feel safe in.

Attractive, well-designed parks and public spaces are crucial to people's enjoyment of the city and contribute to our civic pride and our 'sense of place'. They encourage people to get together, support shops and cafes, and make the city more attractive for Wellingtonians and visitors alike. They also provide important connections between businesses, making the city a more stimulating place to work.

Our overall aim is to make the city more liveable, retain its character, and enhance an even stronger 'sense of place' through continual improvement to public areas.

To achieve this:

- We oversee the development of the waterfront and fund the waterfront enhancement project (implementation is managed by a Council-controlled organisation, Wellington Waterfront Ltd). The coming year will see the completion of the Wharewaka.
- We fund work to develop the street environment and other public areas – such as parks and squares – in the city and suburbs, with the aim of making these areas safe, lively and attractive.
- We provide grants to developers and others to ensure that the restoration of heritage buildings and assets contribute to the city's character.
- We implement town centre plans – Kilbirnie in the coming year.

This year we plan to start construction of the Manners Mall bus route, and upgrading Midland Park.

In 2010/11, we plan to open up Manners Mall for bus use and extend Cuba Mall down to Wakefield St as part of the 10 year Gold Mile programme. This project has been appealed and is currently subject to court related proceedings.

We also plan to:

- Refresh Midland Park on Lambton Quay - a popular destination for mid-week office workers and weekend brunches.
- Develop plans to improve Taranaki Street by creating a tree-lined processional route between the waterfront and Memorial Park when it is constructed around the National War Memorial.

In addition, a recent structural assessment of the city's iconic City to Sea Bridge (linking Civic Square to the waterfront) identified the need to do remedial work and earthquake strengthening to meet current standards. We propose \$250,000 of capital spending to strengthen the bridge.

What will Wellington be like in 30 years time?

We are developing a strategic framework for the growth and enhancement of Wellington's city centre for the next 30 years. The aim is to develop a vision of what type of central city Wellingtonians want, and guide investment and development to achieve that vision.

The framework will cover the role of the central city and waterfront, including the built environment, and issues to do with transport and infrastructure. It will also deal with how the central city can work as a place to work, live, do business and hold events.

Initial public feedback was sought during 2009 and further work is continuing. During 2010/11, we are proposing to develop a Spatial Structure Plan to guide future decisions on the design and form of buildings, public spaces and public infrastructure. This will help to clarify the roles of key sites and streets, and better inform infrastructure improvements and private development in and around the central city.

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2010/11 are:

- 87% of residents agree that the central city is lively and attractive.
- 63% of residents agree that their local suburban centre is lively and attractive.
- 100% of scheduled public space and centre development projects are completed on time.
- 90% of residents rate their Waterfront experience as good or very good.
- 90% of residents agree heritage items are appropriately valued and protected in the central city.
- 75% of residents agree heritage items are appropriately valued and protected in suburban areas.
- No District Plan listed items are removed or demolished.
- Monitor the number of heritage buildings that are granted resource consents for additions or alterations.

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

WHAT IT WILL COST

6.5 Public Spaces and Development	Operating expenditure 2010-2011			Capital expenditure 2010-2011
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.5.1 Waterfront development	-	2,040	2,040	2,589
6.5.2 Public space and centre developments	-	1,291	1,291	2,486
6.5.3 Built heritage development	-	603	603	-
2010/11 6.5 Total	-	3,934	3,934	5,075
2009/10 6.5 Total	-	3,900	3,900	5,935