

Proposed District Plan Submission

**To the District Plan Panel,
Wellington City Council**

Due date: 12th September 2022

Wellington City Youth Council

Te Rūnanga Taiohi o te Kaunihera o Pōneke

We wish to appear in person to support our submission.

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Introduction

1. The Wellington City Youth Council (Youth Council) welcomes the opportunity to submit on the Proposed District plan.
2. We have the opportunity to create a thriving, accessible, and beautiful City with the Proposed District Plan. Youth Council urges Council to employ long-term and evidence-based thinking with an eye to future generations when considering the proposed District Plan.
3. Youth Council emphasises the importance of Council placing the impacts of climate change, the rights of tangata whenua, and the importance of creating an accessible, vibrant, and prosperous city front of mind when considering the District Plan.

Overview of Submission

4. The submission by Youth Council on the Proposed District Plan will address the following topics:
 - a. Tangata Whenua
 - b. Three Waters
 - c. Natural Environment and Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori
 - d. Historical and Cultural Heritage
 - e. Residential and Character Housing
 - f. City Centre
 - g. Business
 - h. Design Guides
 - i. New Urban Areas (transport), Rural and Open Spaces

Tangata whenua

5. Youth Council recognises the role of tangata whenua of Aotearoa as kaitiaki over the land. Land use by Crown institutions such as Council has often been in conflict with the holistic nature of the Māori world view and has not allowed tangata whenua to exercise kaitiakitanga over their ancestral lands and to carry out customary activities. Youth Council emphasises the importance of repairing these injustices and working to ensure that the institutional barriers restricting tangata whenua from exercising their rights are removed and repaid.

6. Youth Council emphasises the importance of Council's partnership with mana whenua throughout its decision-making processes, including that of the District Plan. It also recognises the fact that iwi resources are often stretched by the demands of Crown authorities and notes the importance of tools such as Hapū/Iwi Resource Management Plans and of properly remunerating those who spend time developing such resources and guiding Council on its plans, policies, and decisions.
7. Youth Council urges Council to always think about how its decisions impact tangata whenua, often disproportionately, and therefore the importance of actively seeking and actively listening to the voices of mana whenua as a matter of utmost importance.
8. Youth Council urges Council to use its resources in partnership with local iwi to provide for papakāinga housing, marae, and Māori customary and commercial activities to support the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of tangata whenua across Te Whanganui-a-Tara.

Three Waters

9. Well-functioning three-waters infrastructure has often evaded Wellington. Youth Council urges significant investment to be made to this critical infrastructure for te mana o te wai and the health and wellbeing of Wellingtonians.
10. Youth Council supports Council's actions for water management under the proposed District Plan and urges the importance of te mana o te wai to be upheld as it is clear that the current system is failing. Youth Council supports a strengthened focus on upholding the rights of mana whenua in relation to water.
11. Renewal and replacement of ageing infrastructure with a growing population and the impacts of climate change considered is essential. Reducing cost and disruption through coordination of different sub-street-level utility replacement or renovation projects is encouraged.
12. Youth Council endorses hydraulic neutrality as a consideration in developments and thinks that this should inform a future-proof water management approach.
13. Council should consider how it can better manage and use greywater to avoid inefficient use of our limited clean water resources.

14. Youth Council supports the proposed actions. Anticipation of future demand, designing urban and residential areas with strong water sensitivity, and the protection of areas of particular importance and vulnerability are welcomed.

Natural environment - Sites and areas of Significance to Maori / Historical and cultural heritage

15. Wellington City was built on top of significant sites for tangata whenua such as Te Aro Pā and Pipitea Pā. Ensuring that these sites are protected and the rights of mana whenua to exercise rangatiratanga over their ancestral land is essential.
16. Using Council resources to remove barriers to tangata whenua exercising kaitiakitanga over their ancestral lands is of utmost importance.
17. Youth Council emphasises the importance of implementing plans alongside mana whenua to protect sites of spiritual and cultural significance from the impacts of climate change and pollution.

Residential and Character Housing

18. Supporting more housing development is important for easing the unaffordability of housing for young people now and in the future. Permitting housing in proximity to the central city, public transport, and town centres is particularly important for supporting vibrant tight-knit communities and reducing medium-long term climate emissions.
19. Youth Council strongly supports the upzoning of most residential land to medium-density, in keeping with the MDRS. This will allow more housing across current suburbs, providing more choice for young people of where to live in the future and reducing reliance on new greenfield developments.
20. Youth Council commends the Council for their focused approach to character housing protections. The affordability and wellbeing benefits from densification and development are on balance more important than preserving large swathes of pre-1930's housing, but we support finding a balance between different city priorities, as has been achieved.
21. Youth Council urges the Council to adopt a stronger implementation of the NPSUD by

- a. Increasing high-density walking catchments around the CBD to a 20 minute radius. Housing 10-20 minutes from the central city is still a relatively desirable distance from the city where many people commute to for work. Transport options are very important, and these distances are highly conducive towards active or public transport which can shelter residents from the cost of lengthy commutes. We note that character precincts would still be exempt from these provisions so it is important that the higher-density provisions go far enough. We consider it inconsistent to now have 10 minute walking catchments from the CBD and mass rapid transit hubs given the additional time required to travel on mass rapid transit compared to when walking is the only aspect of the transport journey.
- b. Reversing the removal of high-density walking catchments along the Johnsonville train line. We do not support carving out suburbs to exclude from development without compelling justification. Existing public transport corridors should be improved and utilised to promote climate-friendly housing development.
- c. Working to improve the Councils consenting process to support in-fill developments overcome logistical and delay challenges.

City Centre

22. Youth council supports the increase to the building height limits in Te Aro and along a portion of Adelaide road to accommodate for more people such as young professionals and students living in CBD.
23. We support keeping the building heights on the edge of City Centre in order to maintain a smooth transition into graduated residential areas.
24. Youth Council supports the introduction of the 'City Outcomes Contribution' mechanism, ensuring larger commercial, residential and mixed use developments will become more publicly beneficial for everyone.
25. Furthermore, we support maintaining the protection of sunlight access to listed public space in City Centre, including increasing the number of protected parks.
26. City Center accessibility is vital, and council can facilitate this by considering accessibility when making decisions around parking and drop off zones which can be part of ensuring CBD access to people with disabilities.

27. Non-car parking such as for E-Bike and e-scooter 'Locky Docks' should be incorporated into city design, incentivizing the use of alternative and green modes of transport.

Business

28. Youth council agrees with the PDP's emphasis on promoting productive use of City Center spaces, including requiring accommodation sites to have non-residential use of the ground floor such as cafes, restaurants, dairies, etc.

29. Ensure the District Plan places an emphasis on the City Center being people-centric place to live, work, and enjoy. As such, the PDP should facilitate further pedestrianisation of areas such as Cuba street to stimulate business activity and make better use of the limited space we have.

30. Further, Youth Council welcomes the idea of providing business activities spaces for mixed used and industrial areas of city centre.

Design guides

31. Youth Council emphasises the importance of high quality housing and urban form, both for the mental and physical wellbeing of our people, but also for environmental sustainability.

32. Youth Council supports making design guides clear and concise to facilitate easier access and accessible knowledge about design standards.

33. Youth Council emphasises the importance of high quality, high density residential development and urban form, ensuring that people have access to green spaces, light, warmth, and air. High quality, sustainable materials should be a focus for buildings and infrastructure that stands the test of time. Ensuring spaces are clean, welcoming and have an attractive aesthetic are also immensely important to contribute to wellbeing for everyone in the city.

34. Mixed use residential and commercial areas along public transport lines is encouraged to facilitate shorter trips for climate and wellbeing and better accessibility.

35. Always ensuring that new builds and developments are safe for those with different access needs is key.

36. Youth Council believes design guides should reward use of environmentally sustainable building materials to promote climate friendly development.
37. Youth Council endorses and emphasises the importance of current, new, and renovation toward high-performance Buildings.
38. Partnering with mana whenua especially for high impact urban developments is essential to weaving te ao Māori throughout the urban landscape.

New Urban areas (transport), rural and open space

39. Youth Council supports the main developments of Upper Stebbings/Glenside West and Lincolnshire Farm and the accompanying zone redesignation for both areas. Provision of housing for a growing population is important, and creating new higher density areas plays a role in this.
40. Youth Council also emphasises the consideration of possible effects upon existing natural environments in the development of “greenfield” zones.
41. Youth Council thus, also supports the increase of density in existing urban areas.
42. Youth Council then emphasises the role of maintaining high efficiency, high volume and accessible public transport in the process of increasing urban space density.
43. Youth Council promotes environmentally friendly urban planning techniques. This including - but not limited to - Creating neighborhoods that are more walkable, less car-centric, and have direct access to public transport lines, in addition to recreational community spaces with green amenities.

Conclusion

44. In summary, the Youth Council urges council to look to the future as it considers how Wellington can become the best city it can be as we face a cost-of-living crisis, housing crisis, and changing cultural and economic dynamics.
45. Increasing housing supply, climate resilience and designing a city that meets the needs of its people, in partnership with mana whenua, is paramount.