
Project title: Wellington Regional Strategy
Strategy area: Economic Development

1. The Proposal

Fund two pieces of work:

1. Finalise Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) (finish work with Greater Wellington and other Councils in the region)
2. Implement initial WRS Strategy projects based on agreed outcomes (noting that the strategy development process may indicate the need for additional resource).

Four work streams have been established in developing four focus areas of the WRS. A workshop is held for each work stream once a month. **The required actions for each of the four work streams are detailed in Appendix 1 to indicate the extent of the strategy. The specific work requirements to be completed by June 2006 are also detailed.** In brief:

- *Unlocking economic potential*: led by Phil Lewin (Positively Wellington Business (PWB)). PWB acts as secretariat for delivery of Growth Framework elements in liaison with Go Wairarapa. Four action areas are being addressed under the 'Unlocking economic potential' focus area as well as the trade and inward investment components of the 'internationalisation' focus area.
- *Internationalisation (tourism focus)*: led by Kim Kelly (Hutt City Council). Positively Wellington Tourism (PWT) acts as secretariat for delivery of Growth Framework elements in liaison with Go Wairarapa and Kapiti Regional Tourism Organisations. This project team addresses marketing strategy, brand development and regional tourism.
- *Quality regional systems*: led by Jane Gunn (consultant). Council officer teams deliver the next phase of strategy elements. Five projects are being addressed. These are: review of the development intervention continuum; review of regional form (current state); review of social infrastructure, housing choice and labour markets; population impacts and sensitivity analysis; and review current thinking for key transport decisions.
- *Effective leadership and partnerships*: led by Kim Kelly. Council officer teams deliver next phase of strategy elements. Six action areas are being addressed.

Team leaders for each of the focus areas report back to the Project Executive Group who review the project teams' material and take material accepted from the project teams to develop the WRS document itself. This phase of the proposed work (stage 1) will determine implementation projects (stage 2).

Officers have considered including a provision for projects that would flow from the Wellington Regional Strategy but feel it is too early to attach accurate figures to those potential projects. At this stage no precise figures have been set by any of the region's Councils. To date:

- **Possible new WRS projects will be drafted by June 2006, and project costs will be able to better be determined after this date.**
- The budget for implementing the WRS will be drawn - in the first instance - from Positively Wellington Tourism and Positively Wellington Business.
- Greater Wellington has budgeted for \$1m per annum
- Several Councils have said it is still too early for them to provide any indication of funding commitments.
- Several Councils have indicated that they may struggle to insert 'additional' funding for the WRS given existing pressures on rates and borrowing as a result of the LGA 2002 focus on asset management upgrading.

In terms of overall resource for regional projects, the following observations can be made:

- The region has a significant level of resource available for transport projects, from existing funding streams and new funding commitments from central government.
- Significant resource is already attached to regional tourism and business activities, although there is scope to review these projects and delivery mechanisms.
- A major focus for projects is likely to be joint delivery of services which will potentially allow more cost-effective delivery.
- There is excellent potential for new projects that involve working in partnerships with central government agencies to utilise central government resource.

5. Project Outline

Wellington's success as a city relates closely to its ability to work as a coherent regional body. The WRS focuses on keeping and attracting the required skills and businesses for economic success, acknowledging that this depends on the lifestyle and environment the region can offer. The strategy offers a comprehensive long term vision for the region's economy and has been compiled with involvement from all Councils in the region.

The WRS provides the overarching strategic framework for the city's economic development strategy and its implementation is a key component of taking the city's economy forward.

Key dates:

- Draft content for each of the focus areas with interim actions will be completed by March 2006 and discussed at the WRS Forum workshop on 30 March 2006.
- A final draft will be circulated to the WRS forum on 21 June 2006 and a forum meeting on 29 June 2006 to adopt the draft for consultation.
- Consultation is scheduled to be launched 14 July 2006, and the strategy published by September 2006.

5.1 2006/07 Actions

This is dependent on the outcome of the WRS process, which will be determined by July 2006.

5.2 2007/08 Actions

As above

5.3 2008/09 Actions

As above

6. Conclusion

The region has to have a common approach to how it looks after and funds the proposed actions. The WRS will need to be underpinned by a regional investment agreement that sets out how to equitably fund and maximise the benefit from investment.