

Questions for further exploration from assessment of Wellington's strengths/weaknesses against the Megatrends:

	Current Strengths	Current Weaknesses	Strategic Questions and Opportunities to explore further
Place is Everything:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World beaters and entrepreneurs that choose to be in Wellington (eg Weta, Icebreaker, 42 Below). High quality of life rankings. Compact urban form. Vibrant city life eg events and arts capital. Waterfront development. Attractive natural setting. Walkable/accessible. Low levels of deprivation and steady well-paid government employment. Unique heritage and indigenous history. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many strengths diminish further from the central city. Missing some services due to scale (eg large indoor venue). Modest employment growth and Auckland region now leads average regional income standings. Weather. Diversity/quality of jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are our head-starts (eg events, sustainability, arts) being eroded as other cities expand their competencies? What would it take for us to regain our lead (eg an indoor events facility to cement our events capital status?) Is a "quality of life" advantage that keeps the likes of Weta here a recipe for future success? Are there "barriers to entry" or sustainability issues (eg skilled young people move elsewhere for cheaper living) with a quality of life based strategy? What are the elements that best retain our unique identity in a world of increasing "sameness?" (Eg how long can we say no to a Westfield? Should we re-launch our brand built on our capital city status? Build a strategic economic development alliance with Mana Whenua to reinforce unique identity? Brand ourselves based on environmental sustainability?).
i-City:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityLink. Comparatively high levels of technology use. Youthful population. Relatively adaptable mindset – some early adopters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor broadband outside the central city – certainly, no affordable ubiquitous wifi broadband. Nationwide scarcity of resources – reliant on imports/modifications of imported technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does transformational investment in information technology, compared to investing just to keep up with the world, look like? Eg cutting-edge broadband infrastructure (well beyond the Government's initiative) to support niche hi-tech industries in Wellington? How prepared are we for a socially networked, handheld digital device orientated world? Eg should the Council take advantage of social networking/new digital technology to anticipate (rather than just respond to) customer needs?
Older and Bolder:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low dependency ratios. Relatively talented, wealthy workforce – including older people. 'Cooler', more active older people? Diverse population, and a city that is tolerant and welcoming of diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High threshold for first-home ownership. Rating base vulnerability. Absence of older persons services. Negative net migration – role of natural increases uncertain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we become a new centre for boomer retirement to meet the needs of a hipper, more active generation? Or grow the workforce/boost migration to meet cost of increased demand on public services? What are the flow-on effects from a national economy struggling under the weight of boomer retirement (eg will boomers start to gravitate to main centres to access medical services as they are rationed?). What are the implications for community life and public services if boomers choose to semi/retire in the City? Is there an emerging intergenerational war that will play out in issues like property tax reform and leaky homes resolution?
It's Not Easy Being Green:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparatively low carbon footprint. Abundant renewable energy sources. Relatively good public transport. Relatively eco-minded community. Growing awareness of common environmental outcomes across agencies and community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still fossil fuel dependant. No infrastructure to convert distinctive advantages into comparative advantages. Climate change victim – sea level rise and coastal impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What proportion of green initiatives will be about retrofitting (eg home insulation, biodiversity) or new value-add (eg on-site wastewater management)? Do we have a future niche in new technologies like nanotechnology, renewable energy production, and biotechnology? What opportunities are there from climate change adaptation (eg develop expertise in coastal engineering, tidal/wind energy generation)? Do we partner with other cities or companies, become an international trial ground (eg Copenhagen wheel), or develop the intellectual property/patents by ourselves? Will NZ get advantages as an early ETS adopter and what are the flow-on impacts for Wellington given we are not primary beneficiaries? Is 'green' about lifestyle and/or technology changes? Do we become a full-fledged sustainable city with a 'green' economy and jobs?
Basic Commodities as Scarce Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have adequate water in the region. Easy access to food by global standards. Indirect benefits from commodity boom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a food basket ourselves. Comparatively weak distribution networks – commodities ship north and south of us. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the future of commodity prices (eg will the boom return and if so, how long will it last?) and the flow-on effects for Wellington? What role could Wellington have (eg a distribution hub for primary commodities for the lower North Island and upper South Island? A regional exporter of high quality food and wine products?) What could Wellington's place be in the Government's push for more investment agri-biotechnology?
Big Cities, Big Growth:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have countervailing successes (eg Weta). Central government presence provides a bulwark to the most extreme impacts. We have research expertise that can be used to grow potential commercial opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not an agglomeration – Government strategy is to invest in Auckland as our best agglomeration prospect). Loss of corporate head office. Long haul flight capacity. Lack of entrepreneurship and general risk adverse local culture. Inability to leverage-off our countervailing successes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should Wellington find a specialised role as part of a larger mega-region (eg Australasia/Asia-Pacific), or forge its own path as a global player (eg by embracing new technology to bridge the distance to global markets)? Can we grow our international city-partnerships and 'Wellington Inc' brand help us develop a global presence? Is there a specialised role for Wellington as part of a larger mega-region? Eg a financial services hub for the Asia-Pacific region based on our 'early warning/mover' ability? A research 'laboratory' specialising in nano-tech or other technology?