

Strategic Area 6: Urban development

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Strategic area 6

Urban development

Introduction

This provides a succinct outline of the key challenges we face, our long term approach, the outcomes we seek, the types of things we do towards those, and an indication of the measures we use to monitor progress. We also state what we'll focus on for the next three years.

Strategy tree

The diagram shows the links between the community outcomes, our long-term outcomes and the activities we do towards those

6.1 Urban planning and policy

This activity covers our planning and the development of supporting policies to manage urban growth. We outline what we do, provide context as to why it's important, and outline the budget and performance measures for this area.

6.2 Building control and facilitation

This activity covers our issuing and monitoring of building consents and providing guidance to make sure buildings meet the standards required. We outline what we do, provide context as to why it's important, and outline the budget and performance measures for this area.

6.3 Development control and facilitation

This activity covers our assessments of resource consent applications against the District Plan, the issuing of consents, and monitoring compliance. We outline what we do, provide context as to why it's important, and outline the budget and performance measures for this area.

6.4 Earthquake risk mitigation

This activity covers our work to mitigate the potential impact of earthquakes through studies and by assessing buildings for earthquake risk, and working with owners to ensure that older buildings are strengthened to required standards. We outline what we do, provide context as to why it's important, and outline the budget and performance measures for this area.

6.5 Public spaces development

This activity covers our work to upgrade street environments and other public areas in the city and suburbs. We outline what we do, provide context as to why it's important, and outline the budget and performance measures for this area.

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Strategy at a glance

OUR AIM	OUR ACTIVITIES - WHAT WE DO TO SUPPORT OUR AIM	CHALLENGES WE FACE	OUR LONG-TERM APPROACH	OUR FOCUS / PRIORITIES	HOW WE KNOW WHEN WE'VE SUCCEEDED
<p>A compact, vibrant, attractive city</p>	<p>6.1 Urban planning and development 6.2 Building control and facilitation 6.3 Development control and facilitation 6.4 Earthquake risk mitigation 6.5 Public space development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The economic slowdown makes it crucial that the Council controls building and land development appropriately, ensuring safety and sustainability but not inappropriately hindering growth. ▪ Planned changes to the Resource Management Act will require changes in Council processes. ▪ Meeting the needs of a population that is growing and aging, and managing demand for smaller households, and for apartment and townhouse living. ▪ The need for more sustainable transport, land use, and safe building practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintaining the city's 'compactness' ▪ Focusing development along a 'growth spine' running from Johnsonville through the city centre to Newtown and Kilbirnie ▪ Allowing intensive development in some areas while protecting others ▪ Better integrating land use and transport ▪ Improving the quality of urban design. ▪ Focusing growth and development in areas where the benefits are greatest and causes the least harm, while protecting and enhancing the city's unique character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advancing our planning work along the growth spine so that we are well placed to work alongside developers when economic conditions improve. ▪ To keep the inner city retail and entertainment areas buoyant while improving public transport connections. ▪ Strengthen the city's capital city status by adding a processional route – a tree lined street – along Taranaki Street to the new national Memorial Park that is planned around the Cenotaph in Mt Cook. ▪ Ensuring our processes align with any new requirements that arise for the Government's amendment of the Resource Management Act. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When a high percentage of Wellingtonians agree the city is developing in a way that takes account of its unique urban character and natural environment. ▪ When our resource consent and building processing times are matched by customers rating our services favourably. ▪ When an increasing percentage of Wellingtonians express a sense of pride in the city and the vast majority of New Zealanders see Wellington as an attractive destination.

Urban development

A compact, vibrant, attractive city

Wellington has:

- a vibrant city centre framed by the harbour and bush-covered hills
- well-connected and attractive suburbs
- distinctive architecture in the inner suburbs
- examples of its creativity around the city in public art
- a fantastic waterfront and high quality urban parks.

The city is safe, attractive, and easy to get around. Its compact nature makes it an ideal home for festivals and events that give the city its buzz.

Almost all Wellington residents rate their quality of life positively and take pride in the way the city looks and feels.

These strengths reflect a combination of landscape and urban design.

The challenges we face

Even with the global economic slowdown, in coming decades the city will have to respond to:

- population growth and ageing
- demand for smaller households, and for apartment and townhouse living
- demand for office and retail development
- the need for more sustainable transport, land use, and safe building practices, and

- the need to be adaptable in the face of economic and environmental uncertainty.

These challenges must be faced in ways that retain the city's special character.

At the same time, the city needs to continue to improve the quality of its urban design, and in particular ensure that it reflects its status as the nation's capital.

The economic slowdown makes it crucial that the Council streamlines its processes and works collaboratively with potential investors to maximise the economic potential of the city.

Planned changes to the Resource Management Act will require changes in Council processes – for example in relation to resource consents and District Plan development.

The long term approach

Wellington City Council's long term approach to urban development is focused on:

- maintaining the city's 'compactness'
- focusing development along a 'growth spine' running from Johnsonville through the city centre to Newtown and Kilbirnie
- maintaining and strengthening the city's centres to provide accessible shopping, facilities and services
- improving the quality of urban design
- protecting places that have citywide character and heritage value
- ensuring that the city's urban environment is resilient to shocks over the long-term
- providing the necessary urban infrastructure in a timely way to support population and economic growth.

Overall, this approach aims to manage growth and development by focusing it in areas where the benefits are greatest and the least harm, while protecting and enhancing the city's unique character.

This approach should also:

- support more affordable transport options
- improve accessibility to jobs, services and facilities
- encourage more affordable housing options
- reduce long term costs on ratepayers by focusing development in areas with existing infrastructure.

Supporting policies

More detailed information about the Council's approach to urban development is available in the District Plan and the Centres Policy available from www.Wellington.govt.nz. Our work in this area is also supported by our Development Contributions Policy (contained in volume two of this draft plan) and Earthquake Prone Building Policy (which is currently under review). *Wellington – Our Sense of Place* also guides our work so that the look and feel of Wellington is retained.

Links with other strategies

The Council's Urban Development Strategy supports the Council's economic, social and environmental strategies in several ways – for example by fostering a compact urban form that encourages sustainable land use, makes the city easy to move around for business, social and recreational activities, and helps events to succeed.

State of the city - key facts

- Population in 2009 (NZ Statistics estimate): 193,400
- Forecast growth in population 2009-29 (median projections): 18%
- Number of people living on each square kilometre of land in the city (Census 2006): 618
- % of Wellingtonians who walk or take public transport to work: 44
- % of Wellingtonians who have pride in the way the city looks and feels: 86.

Negative effects

Population growth and urban development, if not well managed appropriately, can have negative effects on a city's environment and on social well-being. Left unchecked, growth can result in a reduction of open and green spaces with consequences for recreational opportunities, amenity values and even some ecosystems.

Development in the wrong areas, or the wrong types of development, can place strain on infrastructure and reduce people's ability to access services and enjoy the opportunities the city offers. Poorly-planned growth, and poor development and construction of individual buildings, can reduce the attractiveness of the city and the 'sense of place' that people identify with and it can have a direct impact on people's safety. As explained above, we aim to avoid or mitigate these negative effects by guiding future development into areas where the benefits are greatest and the negative effects least.

The tools we use include planning, working with landowners, direct investment in development of public spaces, and using our regulatory powers under legislation such as the Building Act and Resource Management Act.

What we want – the outcomes we seek

Wellington City Council aims to achieve the following long-term goals or 'outcomes' for the city. Along with the Council, businesses, community organisations, central and regional government, and individuals all play crucial roles in contributing to these outcomes.

MORE LIVEABLE/MORE SUSTAINABLE – Wellington will be a great place to live, offering a variety of places to live, work and play in a high quality urban environment. The city's buildings and urban design will use land and other resources efficiently and sustainably.

The Council contributes through its urban planning work – for example by focusing growth around key transport and employment 'hubs.' We also contribute by controlling building and land use to ensure safety and sustainability, and to minimise or manage negative effects.

We measure progress towards this outcome by monitoring the number of residents that continue to see the city as a great place to live (95% in 2008), and that believe the city offers a variety of places to live (92%), work (80%) and play (91%).

BETTER CONNECTED – Wellington will be accessible, pedestrian-friendly and offer quality transport choices on a highly interconnected public transport and street system.

The Council contributes to this outcome by focusing growth close to existing transport networks, and through construction of pedestrian friendly areas in the city and suburbs.

We measure progress towards this outcome by monitoring the percentage of residents that find the city easy to move around (91% in 2008).

MORE PROSPEROUS – Urban design will contribute to economic development through good transport linkages and a flexible approach to land use planning.

The Council contributes through its support for centres and appropriately managing the location of activities.

We measure progress towards this outcome by monitoring the value of commercial and residential consents each year. We also monitor the completion of our specific streets and public space improvement projects.

MORE COMPACT – We develop policies and plans that encourage a city with a contained urban form and more intensive development focused on the city centre, key suburban centres and major transport corridors.

Wellington is a compact city, and that is increasing with more people choosing to live in the city centre and close to suburban centres. The Council encourages this 'compactness' through urban planning and District Plan requirements.

We measure progress towards this outcome by monitoring population density and growth in target areas in the city. These areas are: the growth spine; suburban centres; and outer residential areas.

SAFER – Wellington will be a safe city.

Most Wellington residents feel safe. Some residents express concern about graffiti, street lighting, and poorly maintained or dangerous public areas.

We contribute to safety by controlling building and land use to ensure safety and sustainability, and by working with owners to upgrade earthquake prone buildings. We also contribute through urban design work: safety is enhanced by well designed and well lit buildings and public spaces.

We also contribute to safety through urban design that encourages vitality and visibility in the city and suburban centres.

We measure progress towards this outcome by monitoring residents' perceptions of safety and actual crime statistics.

HAVE A STRONGER 'SENSE OF PLACE' – Wellington will be a memorable, beautiful city, celebrating its capital city status, distinctive landforms and landmarks, its heritage, and its high quality buildings and spaces.

Nearly all residents (86%) are proud of the way the city looks and feels, and the vast majority (79%) of New Zealanders see Wellington as an attractive destination. Nearly all residents (91%) see heritage as contributing to the character of the city.

We contribute to 'sense of place' through our development of public spaces such as the waterfront and Lambton Quay, and by protecting heritage buildings and supporting public art.

We measure progress towards this outcome by monitoring residents' pride in the way the city looks and feels, amongst others.

Our focus for the next three years

We anticipate some downturn in the number of developments in the city in the coming year. The uncertainty around the economy means that large scale developments are less likely to proceed in the short-term. We have already seen a decline in the number of consents we are receiving. Changes to interest rates may soften the downturn.

Our urban development programme takes this into account. Our general approach for the next three years is to focus on planning and on maintaining the city's appearance. We'll advance our planning work along the growth

spine so that we are well placed to work alongside developers to stimulate and facilitate investment in the area as the economy improves.

This approach takes into account the fact that we have completed a number of important public space improvements around the city in recent years. Waitangi Park, Glover Park, Cog Park in Evans Bay, Taranaki Park and the upgrade of Lambton Quay have all added to the city's vitality.

We are, however, keen not to lose that momentum and are proposing to complete works that will:

- aim to keep the inner city retail and entertainment areas buoyant while improving public transport connections. Our work on the Golden Mile includes a proposal to revert Manners Mall back to a street.
- strengthen the city's capital city status by adding a processional route – a tree lined street – along Taranaki Street to the new national Memorial Park that is planned around the Cenotaph in Mt Cook.

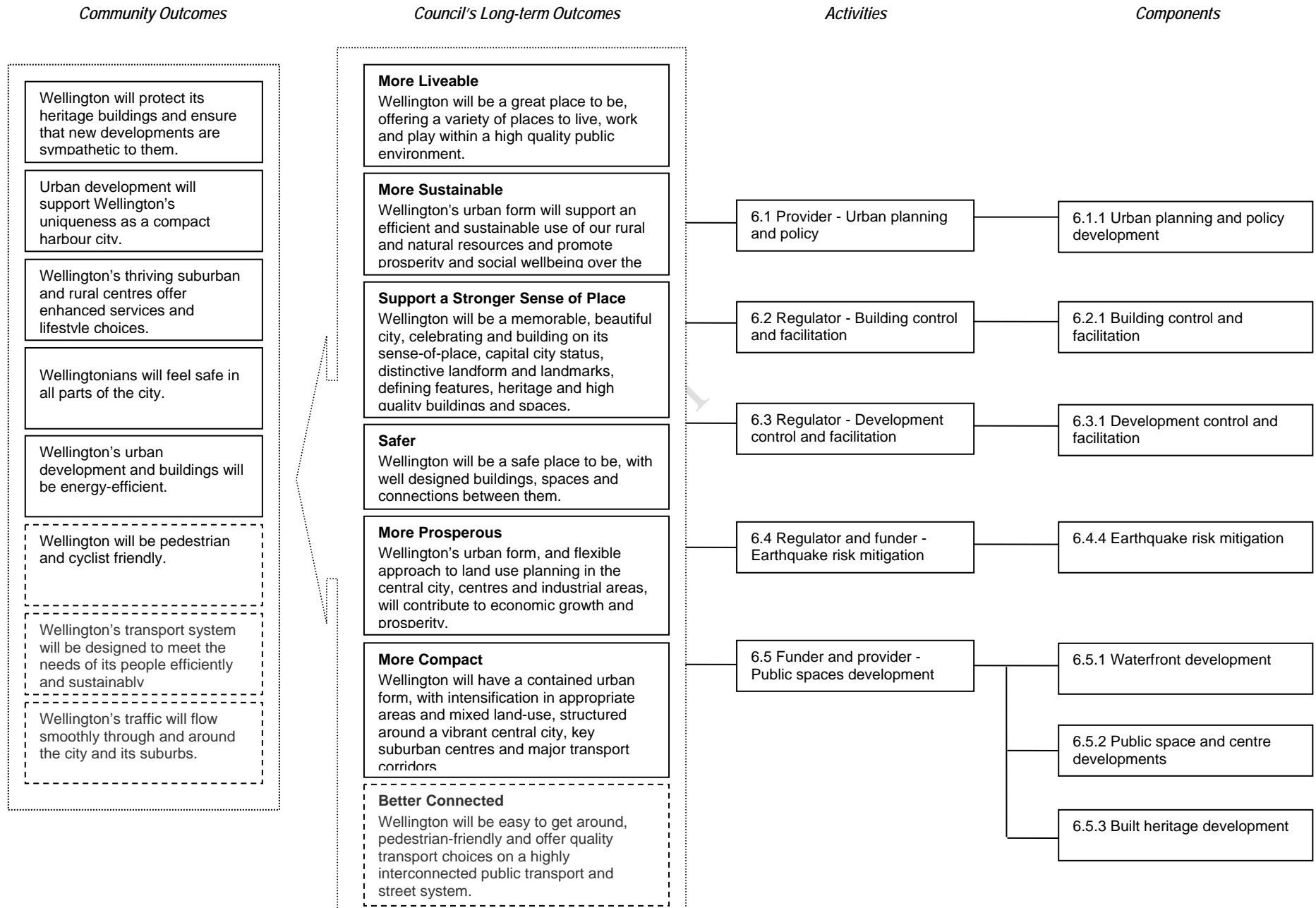
We'll also ensure our processes align with any new requirements that arise for the Government's amendment of the Resource Management Act.

Our investment in the city

In the next three years we plan to spend \$45.98 million in operating expenditure and \$22.93 million on capital projects in this area.

Over the next few pages, we provide detailed information about our activities in this area, what they cost, who we think should pay, and the other measures we use to monitor our performance.

Strategy tree



6.1 URBAN PLANNING AND POLICY

What's included here

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 people friendly and easy to get around. It has a distinctive character and 'feel'. Our aim is to manage urban growth in ways that make efficient use of land and transport options so they don't compromise the qualities that make Wellington special. This requires planning and the development of supporting policies.

Why it's important

Wellington city's population is expected to grow by nearly 20 percent over the next decade. This places demands on infrastructure and on land use. More people, means more dwellings are required. This poses questions about how and where the city should grow. Our urban planning and policy development work guides our answer.

It's important that we guide growth to ensure that we hold on to the things residents like about the city – such as its compact nature, the fact that it has a true 'heart' around the city centre and harbour, the character of its hillside residential areas.

It's also important that we manage development in ways that minimise harm to neighbours and to the wider environment.

Our approach is to focus development around key 'centres', which will bring together more intensive residential development, places of work, shops and other facilities, and public transport, in ways that support sustainable development and high quality of life.

The Council is required to prepare a District Plan under the Resource Management Act 1991. The District Plan is the primary document that manages land use and development within the Wellington City Council's territorial boundaries.

This includes rules around heritage protection, design guides and other town planning objectives. We have a rolling review the District Plan and institute plan changes as required. These are subject to formal consultation procedures, so that people can have a say about the policies that may affect them or their area. This is necessary and aligns with our commitment to engage with our communities.

Contribution to community outcomes

This activity contributes towards the following community outcome: 'Urban development will support Wellington's uniqueness as a compact harbour city,' and 'Wellington's thriving urban and rural centres offer enhanced services and lifestyle choices'.

What we'll provide – our level of service

Our overall aim is to develop policies and plans to encourage high-quality urban development, ensuring we focus growth in a way that makes the city more sustainable, while also preserving its character.

An important focus in the immediate future will be on understanding and implementing changes to the Resource Management Act following their enactment.

The Government believes that repetitive and costly consultation processes, broad appeal rights and extensive reporting requirements can add substantial costs and time delays to plan preparation and change processes. They are proposing amendments aimed at removing frivolous, vexatious and anti-competitive objections to consents, streamlining processes for projects of national significance and generally simplifying resource consent processes nationwide. We'll monitor this as it progresses through parliament.

We will monitor its progress to ensure we are well placed to respond to the changes that are introduced. Our work programme is subject to change depending on the final amendments and when they are introduced.

Our intended focus for 2009/10 is on our rolling review of the District Plan. Under the current Act we are required to have completed a full review of the District Plan by 2010. This mandatory 10 year review process is one of the requirements the Government has indicated it will amend.

Our review programme is driven by the need to ensure the District Plan reflects the overall objectives we seek for the city.

The review programme includes: new controls to better protect special character in the 'inner residential areas' and 'residential coastal areas'; new controls to better protect heritage building in Thorndon and some older commercial areas; revisions to the Residential Areas and Suburban Centres chapters of the plan; proposed changes to the management of telecommunications facilities; and controls around earthworks.

Our work also includes resolving appeals. We aim to resolve as many of these as possible through mediation.

Other work under this activity, includes implementation of the Northern Growth Management Framework, including facilitation of the regulatory process to complete John Sims Drive and Westchester Drive. With work on these starting in 2010.

We'll also continue our work on the 'growth spine'. This concept involves focusing intensive development around key transport networks and town centres. The plan aims to make greater use of existing infrastructure and reduces the need for urban sprawl and the negative impacts that can have. Our planning work over the past couple of years has focused on Johnsonville at the northern end of the growth spine and the Adelaide Road precinct bordering the central city area.

Key projects in the coming three years:

- The Adelaide Road area: this includes widening the road corridor and a range of works aimed at making it easier to get around and a more appealing area. We'll also develop detailed plans for the area and consider whether land acquisitions are a way to achieve our outcomes.
- Johnsonville: work will include planning and delivering key roading intersection improvements.
- Kilbirnie: we'll develop a planning framework looking at the future of the town centre. And considering what uses and activities will be needed by a growing population in the area. The town centre upgrade is scheduled for years five and six of this plan.

Our longer term focus will be aimed at local centres and surrounding areas to ensure they serve the changing needs of our neighbourhoods. We developed a Centres Policy in 2008. The overall intent of the policy is to maintain and strengthen existing town and suburban centres – to provide the conditions to keep them viable. Our planning work in the future will take account of this and the wider mix of services that are available in the area.

How we'll measure our levels of service and performance

We'll know we're succeeding when a high percentage of Wellingtonians agree the city is developing in a way that takes account of its unique urban character and natural environment. Other measures of our progress include:

OUTCOMES WE SEEK	MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OUTCOMES					
MORE LIVEABLE MORE SUSTAINABLE MORE PROSPEROUS BETTER CONNECTED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resident perceptions that Wellington is a great place to live, work and play ▪ Population density throughout the city ▪ Value of residential and commercial building consents 					
COUNCIL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF SERVICE	MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE	PERFORMANCE TARGETS				
We plan and develop policies with an overall aim to encourage high-quality urban development, ensuring we focus growth in a way that makes the city more sustainable, while preserving its character.	Residents (%) who agree the city is developing in a way that takes into account its unique urban character and natural environment	BASELINE 2008 77%	2009/10 80%	2010/11 80%	2011/12 80%	2012/13 – 2018/19 80%
	Urban heritage and character protection – work schedule (Note: Plan changes, notified and with Council decision in place by the end of 2010)	New measure	1) New controls to better protect special character in the 'inner residential areas' and the 'residential coastal edge'; 2) New controls to better protect heritage buildings in Thorndon and selected older commercial areas.	NA	NA	NA
	District Plan proposed changes – work schedule (Note: Plan changes, notified and with Council decision in place by the end of 2010)	New measure	1) Revised Residential Areas and Suburban Centres chapters; 2) Management of telecommunications facilities;	NA	NA	NA

			3) Wellington Waterfront policies and rules; 4) Earthworks controls			
	District Plan changes - appeals that are mediated (settled) before reaching the Environment Court	80%	No target – we will use this information for monitoring capacity only			
	Growth Spine Framework implementation - milestones	Commenced development of Adelaide Road Framework	Planning Framework completed for Kilbirnie Town Centre / Report back on feasibility on the need for further 'areas of change'	10 centre plans (including implementation plans) completed for other key centres		

Who should pay

Activity component	User fees	Other income	Rates	General rate	Residential target	Commercial target	Downtown/Other
Urban planning and policy development (6.1.1)	-	-	100%	100%	-	-	-

For more information on how we fund our activities see the Revenue and Financing Policies in volume two.

What it will cost

6.1 Urban Planning and Policy	Operating expenditure 2009-2012			Capital expenditure 2009-2012
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.1.1 Urban planning and policy development	(12)	2,692	2,680	1,738
2009/10 6.1 Total	(12)	2,692	2,680	1,738
2010/11 6.1 Total	(12)	2,790	2,778	0
2011/12 6.1 Total	(13)	2,677	2,664	0

6.2 BUILDING CONTROL AND FACILITATION

What's included here

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. Our work includes issuing and monitoring building consents and providing guidance to make sure buildings meet the standards required.

Why it's important

All cities control building work according to the provisions of the Building Act and codes. These controls are necessary to protect public health and safety, and to protect future users of land and buildings.

Our work covers both the residential and commercial sector. 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.

The accreditation scheme was introduced under the Building Act 2004 to help ensure that buildings are built right first time. It focuses on strengthening the building process at the consent processing, inspection and approval stages. This change was brought about primarily in response to the nation-wide issue around leaky homes.

To gain accreditation, we were audited by an independent accreditation agency appointed by the Department of Building and Housing and had to demonstrate that we have appropriate systems and processes, resources and equipment, and technical capability to enforce building control regulations.

Our work goes beyond regulation. We're also eager to encourage greater use of energy-efficient design and renewable energy technology in Wellington's buildings. The incentives we offer in this regard are important because sustainable building solutions will help reduce the city's carbon emissions.

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

Contribution to community outcomes

This work contributes to the following community outcomes: 'Wellingtonians will feel safe in all parts of the city', and 'Wellington's urban development and buildings will be energy-efficient'.

What we'll provide – our level of service

We'll regulate building activity in the city to ensure it complies with the Building Act, Council bylaws and other legal requirements. This work includes: making decisions about building consents and consents required under bylaws; carrying out inspections; issuing code of compliance certificates; and dealing with building warrants of fitness.

Recent changes to the Building Act, making some minor works exempt from building consents, along with an expected slowdown in the construction industry is expected to result in us handling fewer consents than we have in recent years. We expect this to result in an improvement in our processing times. A national shortage of skilled staff had put pressure on us meeting our targets in recent years.

We'll continue our scheme to offset some building consent fees for new and retrofitted residential dwellings that make use of sustainable building features including solar or heat pump water heating, wood pellet stoves with 'wetbacks', and micro electricity generation. A total grants pool of \$30,000 per annum has been set aside – this equates to between 60 – 100 households each year.

Our work also includes providing information to raise public awareness of the need for and benefits of the consenting processes. We publish a general guide on the consenting process and brochures on specific activities such as pool fences. We've developed guidelines on sustainable buildings to help homeowners, tenants, architects, developers and builders make Wellington's buildings more

sustainable. We also produce *On the Level* a quarterly magazine that highlights changes in the industry. We'll continue to produce these and ensure their easy to access online.

We'll also continue to offer homebuyers and others access to Land Information Memoranda (LIMs) and other property information. LIMs are comprehensive reports containing everything the Council knows about a property or section. Our aim is to provide them within 10 working days. We also offer building plan search services online.

Key project over the next three years:

The building code sets out national standards, meaning all consenting authorities are working to the same set of rules. This raises the opportunity for Councils to consider how they could work together – to share services where economies of scale can be identified. We'll be working with other Councils in the region on what the benefits might be of sharing these services and the possibility of implementing those. We'd expect this to cover things like standardised forms, and common points of access, including online portals that are designed to make processes convenient for builders and other customers. Providing shared services like these is more complex than it appears on face value. We'll work alongside the other Councils to ensure that the benefits are clear and achievable and to ensure that any implementation can be done right first time.

How we'll measure our levels of service and performance

We'll know we're succeeding when our processing times are matched by customers rating our services favourably. We monitor our work using the following measures.

OUTCOMES WE SEEK	MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OUTCOMES						
SAFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See outcome indicators for earthquake risk mitigation and public spaces development 						
COUNCIL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF SERVICE	MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE	PERFORMANCE TARGETS					
We regulate building activity in the city to ensure it complies with the Building Act, Council bylaws and other legal requirements.	BASELINE 2008	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 – 2018/19		
	Building consents issued within 20 working days	76%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Code of Compliance Certificates issued within 20 working days	87%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Land Information Memorandums (LIMs) issued within 10 working days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Complaints - urgent (initial investigation within 24 hours) and non-urgent (initial investigation within 3 days)	New measure	Urgent 95% Non urgent 80%	Urgent 95% Non urgent 80%	Urgent 95% Non urgent 80%	Urgent 95% Non urgent 80%	
	Building Consent Authority (BCA) accreditation retention	Achieved in June 2008	Building Consent Authority status retained	Status retained	Status retained	Status retained	
Customers (%) who rate building control services as good or very good	New measure	80%	80%	80%	80%		

Who should pay

Activity component	User fees	Other income	Rates	General rate	Residential target	Commercial target	Downtown/Other
Building control and facilitation (6.2.1)	65%	-	35%	35%	-	-	-

For more information on how we fund our activities see the Revenue and Financing Policies in volume two.

What it will cost

6.2 Building Control and Facilitation	Operating expenditure 2009-2012			Capital expenditure 2009-2012
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.2.1 Building control and facilitation (resource consents)	(6,691)	11,358	4,667	-
2009/10 6.2 Total	(6,691)	11,358	4,667	-
2010/11 6.2 Total	(7,149)	11,858	4,709	-
2011/12 6.2 Total	(7,894)	12,602	4,708	-

6.3 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AND FACILITATION

What's included here

Land development and subdivisions should be sustainable and in keeping with the city's character. We have controls in place to ensure these objectives are met. These include the assessments of resource consent applications against the District Plan, the issuing of consents, and monitoring compliance.

Why it's important

All cities control development work according to the provisions of the Resource Management Act and District Plan. These controls are necessary to ensure resources are used sustainably, to protect public health and safety, and to protect 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 and resource use. This is important to ensure that resource consent decisions are considered independently and conflicts of interest are avoided.

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.

A resource consent is required for any proposal that is not permitted as of right under the District Plan. If a consent is required, the process varies depending on how much environmental impact a proposal has and who is affected. Where the effects are not minor the consent is publicly notified, which allows affected parties and members of the public to have their say.

Decisions about publicly notified resource consents are made by a panel of commissioners, which may include councillors. The hearing of resource consents is a quasi-judicial process and extensive training is provided before appointments are made to a hearings panel.

If we are a party in the resource consent proceedings, if particular skills or expertise are required, or if there is any possibility of a conflict of interest, we appoint independent commissioners to these hearings panels.

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

Contribution to community outcomes

This activity contributes towards the following community outcomes: 'Wellington will protect its heritage buildings and ensure that new developments are sympathetic to them,' 'Wellingtonians will feel safe in all parts of the city,' and 'Urban development will support Wellington's uniqueness as a compact harbour city'.

What we'll provide – our level of service

We'll ensure that resource consents are considered in a consistent way and to a high standard. This means ensuring that developments are inline with the overall policy goals of the District Plan: to contain urban form, with intensification in appropriate areas and mixed land use, structured around vibrant city centre, key suburban centres and major transport corridors. Our aim is to be efficient in the way we process consents.

The time it takes to process consents depends on the volume – the number of applications we get – and the complexity of those. We anticipate that during the economic downturn the number of consents we receive will decline on past years. A decrease in the number of applications in the past few months compared to the same period last year is an early indication of this.

Because we know the work load in this area fluctuates we have always retained a flexible workforce – drawing on contractors at peak times. This, combined with the fact that the cost of consents are met by the applicants, means that even if there are fewer consents there is no 'saving' for ratepayers. We would however expect to be in a position to improve our processing times.

We'll also be working hard to ensure that landowners comply with resource consent conditions. These can include height restrictions and reducing noise or other nuisances that arise from development and construction work that can impact on neighbours. The number of resource consents that need to be monitored has increased and consent conditions have also become more complex in line with enhanced District Plan rules. We bolstered our resources in this area

in 2008 and plan to continue them at that level – sufficient for us to respond to complaints in a timely way.

As part of our commitment to ensure that developments are of a quality that met the District Plan and can be processed on time we offer pre-application meetings. Our staff will meet with applicants to discuss requirements and the reasons for them. They are designed to facilitate the smooth processing of applications. We offer these free of charge.

How we'll measure our levels of service and performance

Our success in this area is linked to our urban planning objectives. As such, the key measure is Wellingtonians agreeing that the city is developing in a way that takes account of its unique urban character and natural environment (see 6.1 above). As our current objectives are about intensification we also monitor building density in different parts of the city and their proximity to public transport. It's also important to ensure that our work is of a high quality and completed in good time. The following measures show the timeframes we're working towards and how we'll ask customers to rate our services.

OUTCOMES WE SEEK	MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OUTCOMES					
MORE COMPACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building density throughout the city ▪ Proportion of houses within 100m of a public transport stop 					
COUNCIL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF SERVICE	MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE	PERFORMANCE TARGETS				
		BASELINE 2008	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 – 2018/19
<p>We make decisions on resource consents (which may involve notification) based on ensuring developments are in line with the overall policy goals of the District Plan.</p> <p>We monitor developments to ensure they comply with resource consent conditions.</p>	Resource consents (non-notified) issued within 20 working days	72%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Resource consents that are monitored within 3 months of project commencement	New measure	90%	90%	90%	90%
	Subdivision certificates - Section 223 certificates issued within 10 working days	31%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Subdivision certificates - Section 224 certificates issued within 20 working days	71%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Noise control (excessive noise) complaints investigated within 1 hour	82%	90%	90%	90%	95%
	Environmental complaints investigated within 48 hours	New measure	95%	95%	95%	95%
	Customers who rate development control services as good or very good	New measure	80%	80%	80%	80%

Who should pay

Activity component	User fees	Other income	Rates	General rate	Residential target	Commercial target	Downtown/Other
Development control and facilitation (6.3.1)	50%	-	50%	50%	-	-	-

For more information on how we fund our activities see the Revenue and Financing Policies in volume two.

What it will cost

6.3 Development Control and Facilitation	Operating expenditure 2009-2012			Capital expenditure 2009-2012
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.3.1 Development control and facilitation (resource consents)	(2,946)	6,148	3,202	-
2009/10 6.3 Total	(2,946)	6,148	3,202	-
2010/11 6.3 Total	(3,034)	6,392	3,358	-
2011/12 6.3 Total	(3,126)	6,543	3,417	-

6.4 EARTHQUAKE RISK MITIGATION

What's included here

Wellington is built on an active faultline, which makes it vulnerable to earthquakes. We work to mitigate the potential impact of these through studies and by assessing buildings for earthquake risk, and working with owners to ensure that older buildings are strengthened to required standards.

(See also emergency management in section 5.4.)

Why it's important

Each week, at least one shallow quake is recorded under the city, though most are so small they're not even noticeable. In 1855, the country's most powerful quake ever struck the city, raising the harbour by 1–2 metres and shifting Lambton Quay inland. We need to understand the impact of a similar quake today and plan to reduce and manage those impacts.

In short, it's not a matter of if, but when. The more we know about earthquakes, the better prepared Wellington can be. Our support of a major research project in this area will provide an unprecedented amount of information on Wellington's earthquake risk, which could then be used by engineers, planners, emergency managers and the insurance industry to better plan for and respond to a major earthquake.

It is being led by government-owned research company GNS Science, in collaboration with a number of public and private sector organisations. Financial support comes from the Earthquake Commission, ACC, Greater Wellington, and

We also implement and review an Earthquake-prone Buildings Policy. This sets in place processes for identifying buildings that are below the required earthquake standards and the requirements and timeframes for building owners to bring them up to the necessary standard.

Wellington's high earthquake risk means this work is critical. It protects public safety, as well as preserving the city's heritage and the economic investment made in buildings and infrastructure. In addition, implementation of the Earthquake-prone Buildings Policy is a statutory requirement.

Contribution to community outcomes

This activity contributes to the following community outcomes: 'Wellington will protect its heritage buildings and ensure that new developments are sympathetic to them,' and 'Wellingtonians will feel safe in all parts of the city'.

What we'll provide – our level of service

We'll continue to contribute funding to a research project designed to determine the likely impact of a major earthquake on the city. *Wellington: It's Our Fault* is a seven-year, \$3.6 million research-science project aimed at better understanding the region's vulnerability to large earthquakes. There are four main strands to the research – the likelihood and frequency of large earthquakes, the expected size, the physical effects, and the social and economic impacts. The project is in its third year.

the Council. The findings will help us be better prepared for a large earthquake and inform our planning of the city.

We'll complete the review of our Earthquake-prone Buildings Policy and continue our assessment of buildings inline with the Building Act. Changes to the Act have

expanded the requirements for strengthening buildings to prevent them from collapsing during earthquakes. The changes reflect the significant advances in building techniques in the past few decades. The effect is that a number of existing buildings now fall short of the standards required for new buildings. This means buildings have to be checked and, where necessary, strengthened.

In certain circumstances this places substantial costs on property owners. We are currently reviewing our policy to reach an appropriate balance between ensuring at risk buildings are identified and that owners have sufficient time to plan and undertake the strengthening work.

The Council's buildings are also subject to the policy. We have not yet completed assessments of all our buildings, however we know that the Town Hall, Thistle Hall in Upper Cuba Street, Municipal Office Building in Civic Square, Opera House, Embassy Theatre, Old Stand at the Basin Reserve and Chest Hospital are subject to the policy and require strengthening ahead of 2020. The detailed design and planning work for strengthening these buildings is yet to be finalised, however the initial cost is forecasted to be \$42.08m.

How we'll measure our levels of service and performance

We'll measure our progress by the number of assessments of potentially prone buildings that we've undertaken. We'll also receive regular updates on the *It's Our Fault* research programme.

OUTCOMES WE SEEK	MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OUTCOMES					
SAFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified earthquake-prone buildings that have been strengthened 					
COUNCIL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF SERVICE	MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE	PERFORMANCE TARGETS				
		BASELINE 2008	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 – 2018/19
We work to mitigate the potential impact of earthquakes through studies and by assessing buildings for earthquake risk, and by working with owners to ensure buildings are strengthened to required standards.	Initial assessments of earthquake-prone buildings completed*	605 assessments	500 assessments	500 assessments	500 assessments	500 assessments (until 2014)
	Earthquake-prone building notifications** (%) that are issued without successful challenge	New measure	95%	95%	95%	95%

* Further performance measures and targets may be identified following the review of Earthquake-prone Building Policy.

** Section 124 of the Building Act 2004

Who should pay

Activity component	User fees	Other income	Rates	General rate	Residential target	Commercial target	Downtown/Other
Earthquake risk mitigation(6.4.1)	-	-	100%	100%	-	-	-

For more information on how we fund our activities see the Revenue and Financing Policies in volume two.

What it will cost

6.4 Earthquake Risk Mitigation	Operating expenditure 2009-2012			Capital expenditure 2009-2012
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.4.1 Earthquake risk mitigation	-	641	641	3,103
2009/10 6.4 Total	-	641	641	3,103
2010/11 6.4 Total	-	663	663	-
2011/12 6.4 Total	-	569	569	-

6.5 PUBLIC SPACES DEVELOPMENT

What's included here

Attractive, well-designed parks and public spaces are crucial to people's enjoyment of a city. They encourage people to get together, support shops and cafes, and provide connections between businesses.

We fund work to upgrade street environments and other public in the city and suburbs.

Why it's important

Sensitive development of public squares and parks enhances people's enjoyment of the city and contributes to our civic pride and our 'sense of place'. The waterfront's public spaces bring people together and provide venues for a wide range of events and recreational opportunities. High-quality developments make the city a more attractive place to live, attract visitors and support business opportunities. In addition, the waterfront development is giving new life to many of the city's most prominent heritage buildings.

Heritage buildings contribute to the city's distinct identity and enhance its sense of place. Encouraging the upgrade of heritage buildings may also contribute to public safety.

Overall, our work in this activity aims to make the city more liveable and visually appealing. We also aim to improve public safety. Lighting and the free movement of people are important environmental design principles. Incorporating these in urban design can prevent crime and improve safety and the perception of safety.

Contribution to community outcomes

This activity contributes to the following community outcomes: 'Wellington will protect its heritage buildings and ensure that new developments are sympathetic to them', 'Urban development will support Wellington's uniqueness as a compact harbour city', 'Wellingtonians will feel safe in all parts of the city', and 'Wellington's thriving suburban and rural centres offer enhanced services and lifestyle choices'.

What we'll provide – our level of service

We'll complete a comprehensive street improvement programme in the central city. Our focus is on enhancing the Golden Mile. The work will complement the recently completed upgrade of Lambton Quay. The programme aims to further strengthen the connection of the city's primary shopping and entertainment areas with public transport and pedestrian links. It includes our proposal to turn Manners Mall back into a street - for use as a bus lane.

The proposed ten year programme includes consultation, design and street improvements in the following streets:

- 2009/10 – Manners Mall and the intersections of Cuba Street, Victoria Street and Dixon Street
- 2010/11 – Lower Cuba Street
- 2011/12 – Willis Street
- 2012/13 – Molesworth Street
- 2013/14 – Tory Street
- 2014/15 – Mercer Street
- 2016/17 – Whitmore Street
- 2018/19 – Featherston Street.

We also plan to refresh Midland Park on Lambton Quay in 2010/11. The park is a popular destination for mid-week office workers and weekend brunches. It's an important open space in the centre of town and by 2010/11 will be in need of an upgrade. Designs are not yet complete but the canopy and new planting are expected to be part of the work.

We also expect to purchase land in 2013/14 to develop an inner city park. We are budgeting \$3.75 million for land acquisition and development of the park.

We have contributed \$2 million towards the government's \$11 million project to establish a national park of remembrance adjacent to the Cenotaph in Mt Cook. The development of Memorial Park is being led by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage. It is currently scheduled to be open for Anzac Day commemorations in April 2010.

We're also proposing to 'green' Taranaki Street. The project aims to link Memorial Park with the Waterfront by planting trees and forming a processional route through the city. The project will also provide safe and easy pedestrian access across Taranaki Street. The design and construction components are budgeted at \$3.5 million and are scheduled for 2010/11.

We will also continue to complete minor street improvements in the suburbs. These works are aimed at improving the accessibility, safety and vibrancy of the public spaces in the suburban centres. Two specific centres are currently targeted for upgrades: the Tinakori area of Thorndon in 2011/12 and Hataitai in 2014/15.

In terms of heritage, we'll refresh the heritage information and interpretation material we provide to the public. We also plan to update the built heritage inventory and make this information available on the internet and in print. In the longer term, we plan to undertake a city wide heritage stock take, including a 10-year listing programme.

We are proposing to reduce our heritage grants budget from \$329k to \$200k per year. We had originally considered - as part of the early engagement process - to dispense with heritage grants for a period of three years but are proposing to retain them (at a reduced level) to support preservation of heritage in the city. We also preserve the city's heritage through District Plan provisions and by providing a waiver on some resource consent fees for listed heritage buildings to acknowledge that protecting a heritage building by listing it in the District Plan can impose costs on building owners by restricting what they can do with the building.

After trialling the 'Anti Graffiti Flying Squad' for a number of years, we're proposing to make it a permanent service in the city. Graffiti makes the city less attractive. Unless it is removed quickly, it can lead to further property damage and, ultimately to other forms of street crime. The Flying Squad is tasked with making certain areas unattractive for graffiti, for example by installing murals, and eliminating graffiti from the city's public spaces and, if owners consent, from private property facing public areas.

We're proposing to spread developments on the waterfront over the next 10 years instead of 4 years as previously planned. The time frame allows greater flexibility to phase the projects in a way that minimises the impact on ratepayers. It also reflects delays in consenting process and the timing of key projects. As part of this approach we're considering asking Wellington Waterfront Ltd to spend the next two years completing plans and getting the required consents for the development works that are still to be completed. The plans would then be implemented by the Council.

Specific projects that are covered by the waterfront project include:

- Waitangi Precinct: the preferred design for the Overseas Passenger Terminal has received resource consent but has been appealed to the Environment Court. This is expected to be heard in May 2009 and the project undertaken in 2012/13.
- Taranaki Street Wharf and Lagoon: final designs are being completed on the Wharewaka. It is anticipated that this will be completed in 2009/10.
- Frank Kitts Park: the design for the park upgrade has been selected and further work regarding the resource consent is being done. Lodgement of the resource consent is expected in 2009. The development includes a Chinese Garden.
- Queens Wharf Precinct: the resource consent for the proposed Hilton Hotel was declined. This will be incorporated into a broader planning exercise for the area, including traffic control improvements at Hunter Street.

- Kumototo Precinct: detailed designs and consents for the three remaining sites (8,9 and 10). The sites will then be marketed. Further public space works in this precinct will be completed (anticipated completion 2017/18).

We'll also renew the piles around the wharf and continue to integrate public art into the waterfront to enhance the public spaces.

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How we'll measure our levels of service and performance

We'll know we're succeeding when: an increasing number of Wellingtonians express a sense of pride in the city (86% 2008); the vast majority of New Zealanders see Wellington as an attractive destination (79%); high numbers of residents (91%) continue to see heritage as contributing to the character of the city. We'll also monitor residents' perceptions of safety in relation to urban form. Other measures include:

OUTCOMES WE SEEK	MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OUTCOMES					
STRONGER SENSE OF PLACE SAFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resident perceptions that heritage items contribute to the city and local communities' unique character. ▪ New Zealander perception that Wellington is an attractive destination. ▪ Residents' sense of pride in the look and feel of the city. ▪ Resident perceptions of urban design/urban form safety issues (i.e. graffiti, vandalism, poorly lit public spaces, etc). 					
COUNCIL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF SERVICE	MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE	PERFORMANCE TARGETS				
		BASELINE 2008	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 – 2018/19
<p>We fund work to upgrade street environments and other public space areas in the city and suburbs.</p> <p>We oversee development of the waterfront and fund the waterfront enhancement project.</p> <p>We work with developers and others to ensure that the restoration of heritage buildings and assets contribute to the city's character.</p>	Residents (%) who agree the central city is lively and attractive	87%	87%	87%	87%	90%
	Residents (%) who agree their local suburban centre is lively and attractive	56%	60%	63%	68%	70%
	Public space and centres development projects - scheduled work programme	50% completed on time	100% of annual scheduled work programme is completed on time	100% of annual scheduled work programme is completed on time	100% of annual scheduled work programme is completed on time	100% of annual scheduled work programme is completed on time
	Residents (%) who rate their Waterfront experience as good or very good	89%	90%	90%	90%	90%
	District Plan listed items that are removed or demolished	No items removed or demolished	No items removed or demolished			

	Heritage buildings (adaptive re-use) - heritage buildings that are granted resource consents for additions or alterations	7% of heritage buildings	No target – we will use this information for monitoring capacity only			
	Residents (%) who agree heritage items are appropriately valued and protected in central city and suburban areas	Central city 91% Suburban areas 74%	Central city 90% Suburban areas 75%	Central city 90% Suburban areas 75%	Central city 90% Suburban areas 75%	Central city 90% Suburban areas 75%

How we manage our assets that support this activity

Most Council-owned public artworks and monuments are managed under our Monuments and Sculptures Asset Management Plan.

We aim to comply with all relevant legislation at all times, to maintain all assets covered by the plan in either excellent or good condition, and to make any hazards safe within 24 hours.

We carry out regular condition assessments to determine the state of each asset and determine the need for maintenance or upgrade. Condition assessments have been carried out for all assets managed under this plan. The vast majority are in excellent or good condition. All assets that require maintenance plans have plans in place.

Of the 118 assets managed under the plan, 9 have been identified as having heritage value. We manage these in line with our Built Heritage Policy, under which we have committed to conserving the city's heritage features.

This plan covers two monuments at Karori Cemetery. Other cemetery sculptures and monuments are managed under the Cemeteries Asset Management Plan or by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage.

Other assets that support this activity include footpaths, lighting, street furniture, urban squares and parks, and so on. These assets are managed as part of our transport network (see Transport) or our parks and gardens assets (see Environment).

Who should pay

Activity component	User fees	Other income	Rates	General rate	Residential target	Commercial target	Downtown/Other
Waterfront development (6.5.1)	-	-	100%	100%	-	-	-
Public space and centres developments (6.5.2)	-	-	100%	100%	-	-	-
Built heritage development (6.5.3)	-	-	100%	100%	-	-	-

For more information on how we fund our activities see the Revenue and Financing Policies in volume two.

What it will cost

6.5 Public Spaces and Development	Operating expenditure 2009-2012			Capital expenditure 2009-2012
	Income (\$000)	Expenditure (\$000)	Net expenditure (\$000)	Total (\$000)
6.5.1 Waterfront development	-	2,075	2,075	3,709
6.5.2 Public space and centre developments	-	1,157	1,157	2,226
6.5.3 Built heritage development	-	668	668	-
2009/10 6.5 Total	-	3,900	3,900	5,935
2010/11 6.5 Total	(3,254)	7,148	3,894	8,340
2011/12 6.5 Total	(3,252)	7,383	4,131	3,814

10-YEAR FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

<i>Operational Expenditure (\$000)</i>											
		Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Activity	Activity Name	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
6.1	Urban planning and policy	2,692	2,790	2,677	2,665	2,728	2,627	2,708	2,780	2,851	2,957
6.2	Building control and facilitation	11,358	11,858	12,602	13,077	13,401	13,730	14,112	14,485	14,824	15,481
6.3	Development control and facilitation	6,148	6,392	6,543	6,790	6,953	7,124	7,349	7,544	7,730	8,039
6.4	Earthquake risk mitigation	641	663	569	586	599	228	235	-	-	-
6.5	Public spaces development	3,900	7,148	7,383	7,372	7,152	7,502	7,771	7,866	7,816	8,054
Total Operating Expenditure		24,739	28,851	29,774	30,490	30,833	31,211	32,175	32,675	33,221	34,531
Less: Non-funded Depreciation		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Operating Expenditure		24,739	28,851	29,774	30,490	30,833	31,211	32,175	32,675	33,221	34,531
<i>Net operating expenditure funded by:</i>											
Direct activity income		9,649	10,608	11,458	12,076	12,723	12,632	13,013	13,406	13,809	14,353
General Rates		15,076	15,387	15,474	15,581	15,566	16,069	16,539	16,497	16,518	17,198
Targeted Rates		14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Grants & Subsidies		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Income		-	2,842	2,828	2,819	2,530	2,496	2,609	2,758	2,880	2,966
Net Operational Expenditure Funding		24,739	28,851	29,774	30,490	30,833	31,211	32,175	32,675	33,221	34,531

<i>Capital Expenditure (\$000)</i>											
		Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Activity	Activity Name	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
6.1	Urban planning and policy	1,738	-	-	18	220	1,700	-	-	-	-
6.4	Earthquake risk mitigation	3,103	-	-	-	-	580	5,099	7,033	14,689	11,525
6.5	Public spaces development	5,935	8,340	3,814	4,592	8,427	8,035	5,932	5,199	655	2,234
Total Capital Expenditure		10,776	8,340	3,814	4,610	8,647	10,315	11,031	12,232	15,344	13,759
<i>Capital expenditure funded by:</i>											
Depreciation		41	23	13	13	13	10	10	10	11	10
Grants & Subsidies		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Development Contributions		467	729	987	1,064	1,105	1,110	1,115	1,115	1,115	1,115
Borrowings and working capital*		10,268	7,588	2,814	3,533	7,529	9,195	9,906	11,107	14,218	12,634
Capital Expenditure Funding		10,776	8,340	3,814	4,610	8,647	10,315	11,031	12,232	15,344	13,759

* a debit balance indicates increased borrowings, while a (credit) balance indicates a funding surplus in that year which offsets borrowings and working capital.