

# URBAN PLANNING AND POLICY

We plan ahead so that Wellington can develop without compromising what makes the city 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's urban environment is shaped by its landscape – the harbour, hills and rugged coast. It's compact, has a vibrant heart in the city centre/waterfront area and has good access to transport. But it will only hold on to these positive traits if future development is carefully managed.

To preserve these things as the city grows takes planning. Growth needs to occur in ways that make efficient use of land and transport, and don't compromise the qualities that make Wellington special.

In our urban planning work, we're aiming for a city that's compact, liveable, sustainable, prosperous, and retains a strong 'sense of place'.

A key part of our planning work 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 to Newtown and Kilbirnie. We're aiming to cluster development around the key town/suburban centres along this 'spine', in order 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 plans for areas of the city where most growth is expected to occur in future
- a rolling review of the District Plan, which sets out rules on land use, subdivision and building in the city
- improving the way infill development is managed (including using focus groups to gauge resident perceptions of infill housing).

In 2008/09 we'll continue to explore options for growth and change in key areas.

We'll create an Urban Development Framework for the Adelaide Road area between the Basin Reserve and John Street. This will build on a series of planning sessions that we'll hold with local businesses and residents, and will guide development of the area over the next 10–20 years. As a predominately flat area close to the CBD and arterial roads, the area has many of the key ingredients to establish an urban village.

We'll also continue our work on the Johnsonville town centre plan and on the establishment of a new neighbourhood centre for Churton Park. For more information on these, visit our website [www.Wellington.govt.nz](http://www.Wellington.govt.nz) and click on 'projects'.

## MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2008/09 are:

- 89% (a 2% increase from our 2007/08 target) of residents surveyed agree the city is developing in a way that takes in to account its unique urban character and natural environment
- 95% (unchanged) of the District Plan team's scheduled work programme is completed on time
- no items listed in the District Plan are demolished or removed
- develop a concept plan and implementation framework for Adelaide Road, the third of the three centres along the growth spine.

## What it will cost

| Activity                                    | OPERATIONAL SPENDING                 |   |                           | CAPITAL SPENDING          |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | User charges and other revenue \$000 | Net expenditure / rates funding requirement \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 |
| 1.1.1 Urban planning and policy development | (12)                                 | 2,128   | 2,140                     | –                         |
| 1.2.1 Smart growth                          | –                                    | 399   | 399                       | 108                       |
| <b>Total for 2008/09</b>                    | <b>(12)</b>                          | <b>2,527</b>                                      | <b>2,539</b>              | <b>108</b>                |

# BUILDING CONTROL AND FACILITATION

# DEVELOPMENT CONTROL & FACILITATION

## MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2008/09 are:

- 100% (unchanged from our 2007/08 target) of building consents are issued within statutory timeframes (20 working days)
- 100% (unchanged) of code compliance certificates are issued within statutory timeframes (20 working days after we are advised by the owner that work is complete).

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

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. They're also needed to protect urban character, for example by providing height restrictions for building in suburban areas, and to preserve the city's heritage.

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.

We assess building consent applications to ensure proposed work will comply with the Building Code, issue building consents, and monitor compliance.

**In 2008/09 we're introducing incentives for sustainable building practices.**

We are committed to dealing with climate change and are providing incentives to encourage greater use of energy-efficient design and renewable energy technology in residential dwellings – things like solar water heating, roof-mounted micro wind turbines and water heat pump systems. Sustainable building solutions will help reduce the city's carbon emissions.

We're introducing grants to offset the cost of building consent fees for homeowners who install sustainable building features in new or existing homes. A total grants pool of \$30,000 has been set aside for each of the next three years – this equates to between 60-100 households each year.

We've also established a free eco design advisor service for designers, builders and homeowners planning to build or renovate and seeking information about ways to improve energy efficiency and make homes more sustainable.

### What it will cost

| Activity                                | OPERATIONAL SPENDING                 |   |                           | CAPITAL SPENDING          |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | User charges and other revenue \$000 | Net expenditure / rates funding requirement \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 |
| 1.4.2 Building control and facilitation | (7,332)                              | 4,219   | 11,551                    | -                         |
| <b>Total for 2008/09</b>                | <b>(7,332)</b>                       | <b>4,219</b>                                      | <b>11,551</b>             | <b>-</b>                  |

## MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2008/09 are:

- 100% (unchanged from our 2007/08 target) of non-notified resource consents are issued within statutory timeframes (20 working days)
- 100% (unchanged) of applications for certification of subdivision plans are processed within statutory timeframes (10 working days).

In the coming year, we're putting more resources into our district planning and resource consent conditions.

We're responsible for making sure that developments in the city comply with resource conditions. These can include height restrictions and reducing noise or other nuisances that arise from development and construction work and 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.

In 2008/09, we're increasing staff numbers in our planning team, so that we can better inform residents about resource consent applicants on neighbouring properties, and so that we can improve monitoring of property owners' compliance with resource consent conditions.

We are also budgeting for increased legal costs associated with changes to District Plan requirements and to appeals against resource consent decisions.

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

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.

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

**We have controls in place to ensure these objectives are met.**

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.

### What it will cost

| Activity                                   | OPERATIONAL SPENDING                 |   |                           | CAPITAL SPENDING          |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | User charges and other revenue \$000 | Net expenditure / rates funding requirement \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 |
| 1.3.1 Development control and facilitation | (2,562)                              | 2,733   | 5,295                     | -                         |
| <b>Total for 2008/09</b>                   | <b>(2,562)</b>                       | <b>2,733</b>                                      | <b>5,295</b>              | <b>-</b>                  |

# EARTHQUAKE RISK MITIGATION

## MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

- 500 initial assessments and 200 reassessments of earthquake-prone buildings are completed.

We will also monitor the number of resource consents for addition to/alteration of heritage buildings (listed in the District Plan).

Older buildings add to the city's character.

Preserving them makes a difference to the city's appearance and to our sense of identity as Wellingtonians. But looking after them is also important for public safety. Wellington has four major, active earthquake faults, and a number of second-order faults. Older buildings, if not properly looked after, can be earthquake risks.

### We work with owners to ensure older buildings are strengthened.

In line with our Earthquake-prone Buildings Policy, this work includes identifying and assessing earthquake-prone buildings, and can include offering financial and property management assistance, and/or requiring the owner to carry out strengthening work.

We are also supporting a five-year research study on the likely timing and impact of a major earthquake on the city. We will use its findings to guide our decisions about urban design.

We also work with property owners and others to aid restoration of heritage buildings and assets (see the next section: public spaces development).

### We're increasing resources for assessing earthquake-prone buildings.

We began the process of identifying and assessing the city's earthquake-prone buildings in 2006/07. At that stage, we expected to be able to assess 1,200 buildings a year. This work, which requires structural engineers, has turned out to be more complex and time-consuming than we had expected, and only about 500 assessments a year have been completed.

We're increasing our funding for this project in 2008/09 by \$130,000 and extending the life of the project through to 2013/14 at a total cost of \$465,000 per year from 2009/10, so that all buildings identified as needing assessment for earthquake risk will be assessed.

### What it will cost

| Activity                         | OPERATIONAL SPENDING                 |   | CAPITAL SPENDING          |                           |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                  | User charges and other revenue \$000 | Net expenditure / rates funding requirement \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 |
| 1.4.1 Earthquake risk mitigation | -                                    | 584   | 584                       | -                         |
| <b>Total for 2008/09</b>         | -                                    | 584   | 584                       | -                         |

# PUBLIC SPACES DEVELOPMENT

We want Wellington to have vibrant, liveable, high quality public spaces.

Attractive, well-designed parks and public spaces in the city and suburbs are crucial to people's enjoyment of the city. 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.

The waterfront is a prime example of how well designed public spaces can transform an area. The waterfront is now the city's heart – it's a festival venue, a place where people gather to relax, an area of colour and charm. Sensitive development of this area enhances people's enjoyment of the city and contributes to our sense of what makes Wellington unique.

Heritage buildings – along with other heritage assets such as monuments, historic trees and archaeological sites – also add to the city's character.

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

To achieve this, we fund new parks and street upgrades, and support enhancement of the waterfront.

- We oversee development of the waterfront and fund the waterfront enhancement project (the implementation is managed by a Council-controlled organisation, Wellington Waterfront Ltd).
- We fund work to develop the street environments and other public areas 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.

In 2008/09, we'll upgrade Cobblestone Park on Vivian St. This was agreed as part of our long-term plan and will complement the new pocket-park currently being constructed on the north western end of Courtenay Place. We'll also continue to work alongside the Government on the creation of Memorial Park adjacent to the National War Memorial.

## MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

Our targets for 2008/09 are:

- 93% (1% increase from our 2007/08 target) of residents surveyed agree that the central city is lively and attractive
- 65% (unchanged) of residents surveyed agree that their local suburban centre is lively and attractive.
- 100% (unchanged) of scheduled public space and centre development projects are completed on time.

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

## We're adding a final piece to the enhancement of the Cog Park area ...

The Cog wheel was the main driving wheel at the now closed Evans Bay patent slip. The slip – which operated from 1871 to 1972 – was the main ship maintenance facility in Wellington. The Cog wheel represents an important part of Wellington's heritage and is an integral component of what is thought to be the oldest remaining example of a steam-powered engine in New Zealand.

In 2008/09, we'll be returning the Cog wheel, providing a context for its placement and upgrading the surrounds to better reflect the history of the patent slip area. This will include the addition of interpretation panels telling stories about the area. The budget for this work is \$122,000 in capital spending.

## ... and waiving some resource consent fees for heritage buildings.

Waiving resource consent fees for heritage buildings acknowledges that these buildings add to the city's character and that there are extra conditions imposed on the owner because of the heritage nature of their building. The budget for this initiative is \$50,000 per year.

## What it will cost

| Activity                                   | OPERATIONAL SPENDING                 |   |                           | CAPITAL SPENDING          |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | User charges and other revenue \$000 | Net expenditure / rates funding requirement \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 | Expenditure 2008/09 \$000 |
| 1.5.1 Waterfront development               | –                                    | 2,620   | 2,620                     | 5,971                     |
| 1.5.2 Public space and centre developments | –                                    | 1,271   | 1,271                     | 2,399                     |
| 1.5.3 Heritage development                 | –                                    | 656   | 656                       | –                         |
| <b>Total for 2008/09</b>                   | –                                    | <b>4,547</b>                                      | <b>4,547</b>              | <b>8,370</b>              |