

What's new

Much of this plan is about sustaining the many services that the city offers.

The city's reputation as a tourist destination will, for instance, be strengthened. We'll host thousands of international visitors as part of the Rugby World Cup 2011 – the city will be home to pool games and two quarter finals. We'll complete the extension to the City Gallery and re-launch the Carter Observatory at the top of the Cable Car as new science-based visitor attraction. A new visitor centre at the Karori Sanctuary will also add to the range of attractions Wellington has to offer.

But we are proposing changes; here are some of the key things that would be different if we implemented this plan:

- We're also proposing to extend our funding for Te Papa. With over a million visitors a year it plays a key role in the city's attractiveness to visitors. We're proposing to increase our annual grant by \$250,000 to \$2.250 million per annum to recognise the value this national icon brings to Wellington.

What do you think? Should we continue to stimulate Wellington's employment rich tourism sector?

- There would be improved access to sports and recreation facilities. Wellington's weather is invigorating but it can also limit people's ability to get out and be physically active. In recent years, poor weather has caused the cancellation of many sports fixtures. This fact combined with a growth in the number of people playing some sports and a greater variety of recreational pursuits has led us to consider new ways to meet growing demand. We are proposing to introduce a number of synthetic sportsfields across the city. A practice surface will be completed at Nairnville Park, Khandallah in the coming months. We then plan to construct one in Mt Cook with a further five surfaces proposed between 2013-19.
- We're also planning to construct the Indoor Community Sports Centre at Cobham Drive (pending an appeal to the Environment Court) and in the coming year will be reviewing how

to best address growing demand for our swimming pools. In the immediate future we plan to change the way we programme the various use of our pools, with priority given to learn to swim programmes.

We see improved access to sports and recreation as important. It encourages healthy lifestyle and brings the community together.

What do you think? Should we improve access to sports and recreation in this way?

- Community networks would be stronger. We'll continue to support the work of volunteers and provide our range of community and cultural festivals. Residents will have new and convenient ways to engage with the Council on-line. Our partnerships with mana whenua will be enhanced and their special place in Wellington will be more prominent with, for example, the construction of a wharewaka on the waterfront and display space in an extended City Gallery. And we would have created a new arts hub at Toi Poneke – making it a focal point for local artists to interact and share resources.
- Our connections to the world will also be improved. We'll continue to advocate for increased broadband investment in the city and also work with others to attract a regular long haul airline from Asia. We've set aside \$200,000 for next two years for broadband and a further \$200,000 per annum towards the long haul project. The overall aim is to increase our access to other markets and promote Wellington's attractiveness.

What do you think? Are these the right initiatives to be focussed on – are there others that you think will add to people's quality of life in the city? Let us know. Remember these are only some of the things we are doing – see Part 3: Our Work in Detail to understand the full programme.

Some services would be reduced. To keep rates at affordable levels we've had to look hard at the services we provide. The key changes we're proposing include:

- Shifting the responsibility for the Move to Wellington website. This website is designed to attract skilled migrants to Wellington. We remain committed to the objective but given that it is a primary goal of Grow Wellington we see the function being better delivered by them. This is also true of our economic development grants programme. We'll reduce the programme from \$165,000 per annum to \$50,000. A number of past applicants have been eligible for grants under other programmes such as our cultural pool.
- Holding the community collections, at our Archives, to current levels in favour of meeting our growing obligations under the Public Records Act. We'll also be exploring opportunities to secure external funding for Archives – i.e. aspects of the work could be eligible for lotteries grants.
- Reducing funds for public art activity for the next three years. We would still provide funding to the Wellington Sculpture Trust and for a limited number of projects, including exhibitions in the Courtenay Place Park light boxes, through its Public Art Fund. It is proposed that the Public Art Panel would continue to operate through this period and provide independent advice to the Council on its public art activity. This approach would see savings of \$600,000 over three years on what we had previously forecasted.
- In response to community feedback during early engagement, we are no longer looking to reduce library hours or spending on library books. We are however proposing to save \$180,000 a year by doing some things differently. This includes reducing publicity materials, administration and security and replacing the returns desk in the Central Library with return slots. We're also proposing to defer computer and library furniture upgrades for three years to save \$280,000 a year for three years.
- Limiting our Sports Development Fund. This provides sports and active recreation clubs grants for them to access professional advice and support for programme development. We are proposing to continue the fund but at a reduced level. This reflects the fact that the grants have been undersubscribed and that clubs are able to apply for funds through the Social and Recreation grants pool. The Sports Development Fund will retain \$500,000 for allocation over then next ten years.





- The way we fund community access to Information Communication Technologies (ICT). We've set aside \$100,000 a year for our libraries to increase their ICT services – a portion of which will be set aside to help support the Smart Newtown project – and will also be providing computer facilities as part of our social housing upgrade project. In light of that – and in recognition that the overall goal of community access to computers and the internet is increasingly being met through the private market – we're also proposing to reduce our in-house support for community ICT projects and services, disestablish the programme to roll-out additional computer hubs throughout the city, and review our grants funding support to organisations that deliver ICT services for the community.
- Deferring our programme to upgrade and extend the track network on Town Belt and reserve land for the time being. We currently have 365km of walkways and tracks extending throughout the city's open space areas, and while we're proposing to not add new tracks, we will continue to ensure existing tracks are maintained to current standards and work towards promoting greater use of them in the coming years.

- The reprioritisation of maintenance programmes for gardens and beaches – meaning that less will be spent on mowing, maintenance and garden beds for the next three years. We also plan to decommission – at a cost of \$103,000 – the Patent Slip jetty at Evans Bay which has limited current use and is in poor condition. The alternative is to restore the Patent Slip to a safe standard at a cost of \$1.4 million.
- Reduce our heritage grants budget by about 40 per cent to \$200,000 per year. We had originally considered – as part of the early engagement process – to remove the heritage grants budget 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.

We always work to ensure what we do is as effective and efficient as possible. For example, in preparing this plan we have reviewed our purchasing practices across the organisation to ensure we continue to get the best value for money. Looking ahead we'll work with other councils in the region to see what opportunities exist to share services, reduce costs and improve the way people can access the services they need.

Many of these options were discussed as part of our early engagement exercise but we remain interested in your views. Do you think these are the most appropriate options to reduce spending – can you identify other areas? Let us know.
