

Our role and approach

Our Role

Under the Local Government Act, we have two key roles.

- 1. To promote the well-being of Wellington and its people.*
- 2. To facilitate democratic local decision-making.*

The Wellington City Council is made up of 15 elected representatives – the mayor and 14 councillors.

It's their job to make bylaws, set the city's overall strategic direction, and approve budgets, policies and plans aimed at achieving that direction. A key part of their role is to listen and take the pulse of the community before making decisions.

The mayor and councillors are supported in their work by the Tawa and Makara/Ohariu Community Boards.

The elected representatives are supported by the Council's chief executive and 1,450+ staff, who provide advice, implement Council decisions, and look after the city's day-to-day operations.

Strategic framework

We manage the city in line with community aspirations.

After public consultation during 2005 and 2006, we set 13 long-term goals (or "outcomes") for Wellington – that the city will become more liveable, develop a stronger sense of place, and become more compact, eventful, inclusive, actively engaged, sustainable, safer, healthier, better connected, prosperous, competitive, entrepreneurial and innovative.

The projects we fund aim to fulfil these community expectations, and also reflect the feedback we have received from residents and groups during the development of this plan (see page 21 for more on the way we consulted).

Our work is delivered through seven, interconnected strategies.

These strategies cover governance, the environment, economic development, cultural well-being, social and recreation services, urban development, and transport.

They are interconnected; together they contribute to social, environmental, economic and cultural well-being. For example, economic development, social cohesion and cultural well-being are possible only when 'core' Council infrastructure and services deliver a safe and sustainable physical environment.

We get involved if the benefits outweigh the costs.

Supporting community well-being involves balancing competing interests and aspirations. Some residents will want a service to grow; others would prefer a lower rates bill. To achieve the right balance, we aim to deliver services as cost-effectively as possible, and to ensure that the benefits of Council involvement clearly outweigh the costs.

For example, we don't provide services if other organisations will provide them, and we seek to work in partnership with others to maximise benefits while minimising costs.

Our approach is influenced by the changing environment.

This long-term plan has been prepared in an environment of economic uncertainty, pressure on household budgets, growing concern about climate change, competition from other cities, changing technology, and demand for services from a population that is growing, ageing, becoming more diverse, and expecting more from Council services.

In light of these developments, we have sought to develop a programme that is affordable, leaves us 'agile' or able to respond to a changing environment, focuses resources on areas that enhance Wellington's competitive advantages, and seeks to manage demand for services in preference to building new assets to meet ever-increasing demand.

For more, see the section on *Setting Our Direction*.

Our vision is for Wellington to be a vibrant, internationally competitive, and affordable city.

This vision builds on Wellington's strengths – as a genuinely world class small city, a great place to live, work and play – while also recognising the need to focus effort and resources in areas where the city has a genuine 'edge': things like its cultural capital status, compact nature, natural environment and creative industries.

Accountability

This plan is part of an ongoing planning process.

The Local Government Act requires us to plan in three-year cycles. Every three years, we publish a long-term plan setting out our intentions for the decade ahead – what we'll do, how we'll do it, how much we'll spend, who will pay, the levels of service we'll provide, and how we'll measure the quality and effectiveness of our work. Our last long-term plan was adopted in June 2006.

In-between these long-term plans, we take a fresh look each year at our work programme, consider whether any changes are needed, and publish an annual plan setting out changes to the long-term plan.

We make ourselves accountable by reporting on how we do for the year.

Every September, we publish an annual report. This sets out how we performed against the long-term plan or annual plan for the year. Did we do all we said we'd do? Did we meet our budgets? Did we perform as expected? Did we contribute to improvements in the overall well-being of Wellington and its residents?

The report is made available on our website and through libraries and service centres, and a summary is sent to all Wellington households.

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