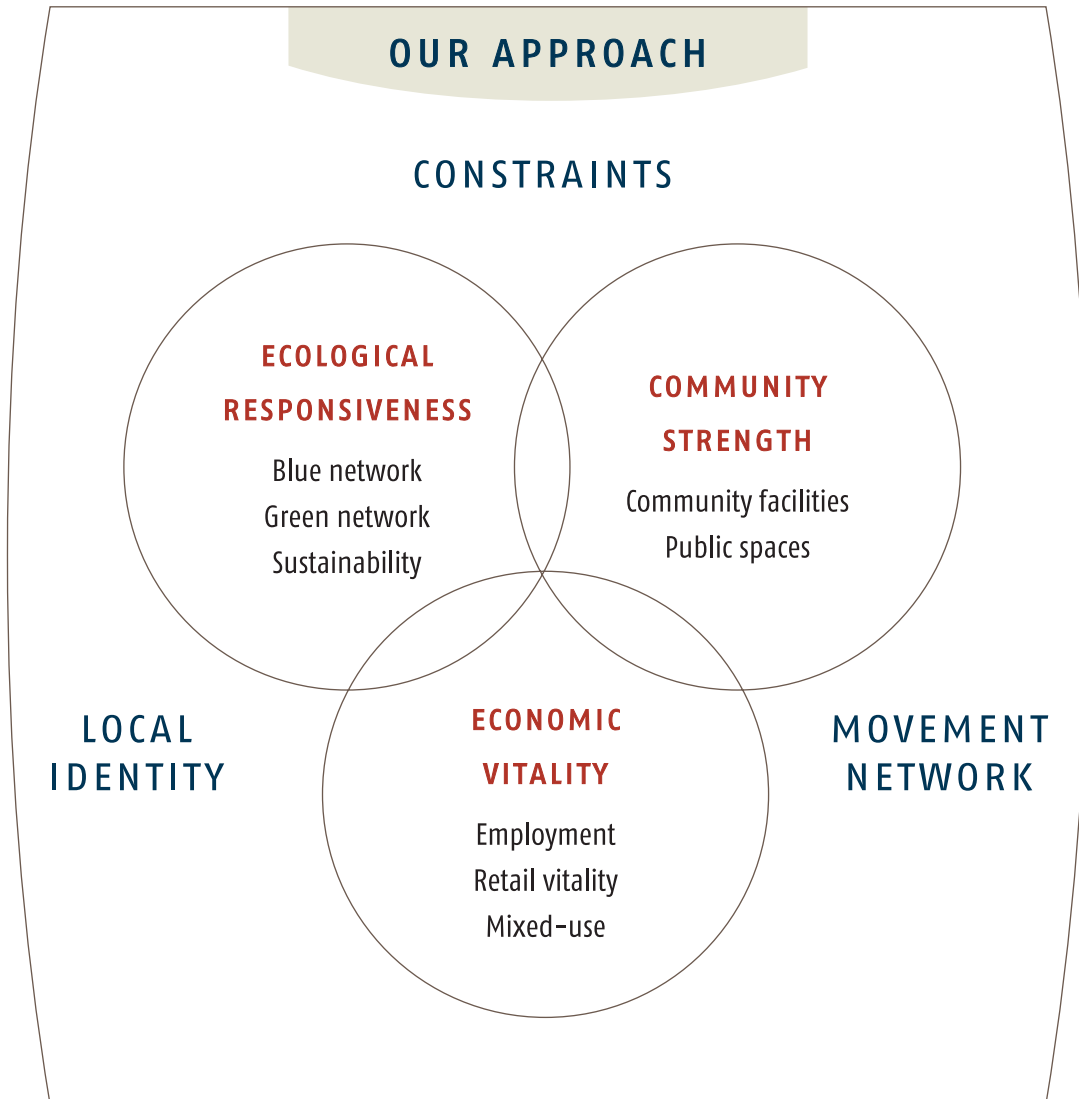


REGIONAL – OPPORTUNITIES, TENSIONS AND PRESSURE

On a regional level, Wellington wants to allow for growth, while managing it to best advantage. Population increase brings economic and social growth, which sustain existing communities. But this growth can also put pressure on the social and physical infrastructure of a region, as well as on the environment as shown in the diagram below.



Within the region, growth pressure is concentrated in the corridor along State Highway 1 from Johnsonville north to the Kapiti Coast. Here there is the demand and space for 'greenfield development'. Four local authorities have jurisdiction in this area: Wellington City Council, Porirua City Council, Kapiti Coast District Council and the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

At the same time, the neighbouring Hutt City and Upper Hutt City Councils face predictions of relatively static population in their areas.

Wellington City Council believes population changes are best addressed through a cooperative, forward-looking approach across the region. This allows the region to prosper as a whole, while local issues are addressed before they become difficulties.

The northern area is a vital hub for the region as a whole. It is central to the larger Wellington urban area, and is well-connected with road and rail links. New developments could help improve

the connections and facilities available to people in existing residential and industrial areas, some of which are isolated with few community facilities. Innovative business development in the area has the potential to benefit the entire region. Undeveloped and rural areas contain noteworthy streams, gullies, remnant vegetation, ridgelines and hilltops that merit protection and careful management.

Well managed growth here will help create good economic and transport links between the communities and will secure the future of a vulnerable zone of open space and natural waterways.

Population projections

Wellington City Council has opted to plan for a moderate level of growth in its northern areas. We have chosen not to compete for growth with other local authorities but recognise the need to allow for the projected population increase in the northern areas.

Current projections by the Greater Wellington Regional Council show a likely population increase in the northern suburbs of 5,000 in the next 20 years. If current growth rates are maintained, however, this is more likely to reach 10,000. The current Wellington City Council District Plan zoning regime allows for 4,000 more people in the northern area.

The NGMF is predicated on a growth of 9,000 over the next 20 years.

Transport issues

The northern area of Wellington City straddles two key transport links for the region: State Highway 1 and the main trunk railway. A review of transport infrastructure in this area offers the opportunity to improve the links between Porirua, Wellington and the Hutt cities.

Growth in communities distant from the main urban centres can put pressure on public transport and roading systems, as numbers of commuters increase.

Wellington City Council is keen to help address these regional transport issues as part of its land-use planning in the area.

Building a regional perspective into planning

The NGMF has drawn together the various local authorities and transport agencies to develop a sustainable 'regional form' for the future. This allows us to understand the interdependencies between the regions and to limit growth plans to suit the actual expected increases. It also provides a common goal of all areas having local employment, a sense of place, and good access to facilities and other communities.

To make this possible, we involved the regional council, neighbouring local authorities and the regional transport agencies in the plan development process². In particular, we worked closely with the Porirua and Kapiti councils to plan growth in ways that recognised the flow-on effects on their communities. We recognised the need to coordinate planning for new greenfield development, water management issues (particularly for the Porirua Stream) and development of new industrial land.

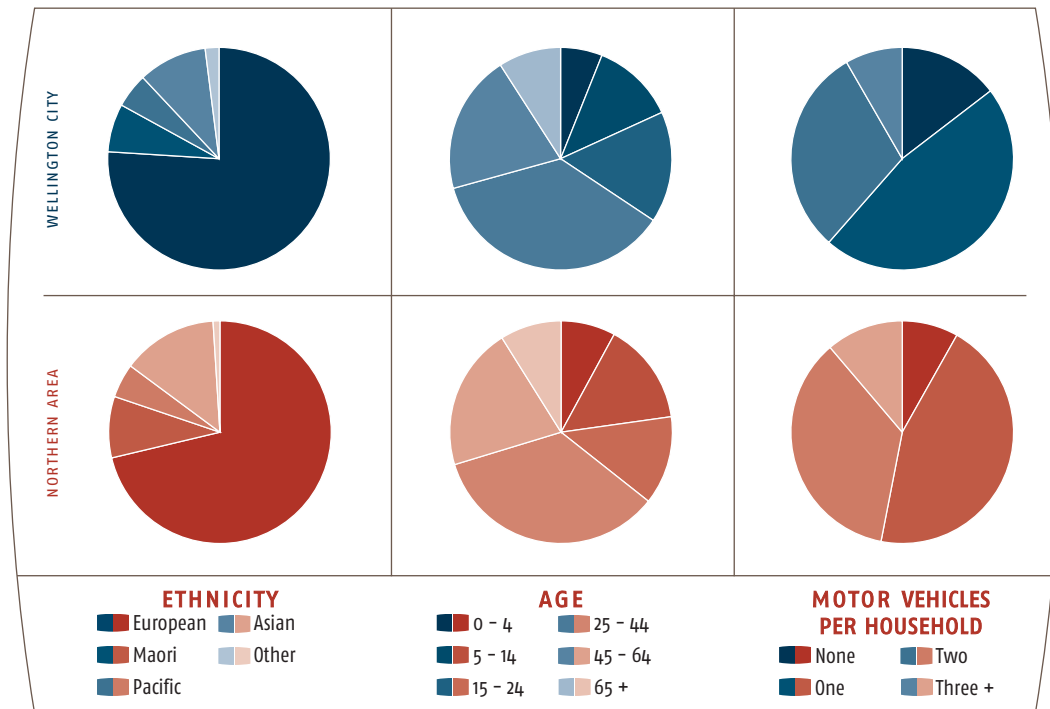
² Greater Wellington Regional Council; Porirua City Council, Kapiti Coast District Council, Hutt City Council, Upper Hutt City Council, Transit New Zealand and TranzRail.

CITY CONTEXT

Key facts		Wellington City	Northern area
Population		163,824	38,019
Ethnicity	European	76%	72%
	Maori	7%	9%
	Pacific	5%	5%
	Asian	10%	14%
	Other	2%	1%
Age	0-4	6%	8%
	5-14	12%	15%
	15-24	16%	13%
	25-44	36%	35%
	45-64	20%	21%
	65+	9%	9%
Population growth (1996-2001)		5.89%	6.25%
New dwellings constructed (1996-2001)		5.81%	7.83%
Average number of persons per household		2.56	2.74
Motor vehicles per household	None	14%	8%
	One	45%	44%
	Two	29%	35%
	Three +	8%	11%
Median house price		\$301,800	\$218,683
Key industries		Property and business services, public sector, retail	Manufacturing and warehousing, property and business services, retail

Sources: 2001 census; Wellington Regional Council

This Framework was founded on analysis of the following trends within the northern area, viewed in the context of the whole city and region. We also consulted with our Treaty of Waitangi partners, represented by the Wellington Tenths Trust and Te Runanga O Toa Rangatira.



Population and communities

- The total population of the northern area is 38,019 (2001 Census) represents 23% of the Wellington City population.
- There are more under 15-year-olds in the northern area, compared to the whole of Wellington City, while the proportion of people over 65 is similar across the city.
- There are fewer people of European descent and a slightly higher proportion of Maori and Asian people in the northern area, compared to the overall Wellington ethnic profile.
- There is a significantly higher proportion of one family households in the north, and a smaller proportion of single person households (and also multi-person households (eg flats)).
- A smaller proportion of the northern population is on a benefit; the most common benefit in the area is superannuation.
- Employment levels are slightly higher than Wellington as a whole (69% employed, compared to 68%); of those, 21% are part-time, which is the same proportion as in all Wellington. Just over a quarter of all working age people in the north are not in the labour force (similar to Wellington as a whole).

Economy

- The northern area's biggest employers are heavy industry (manufacturing and storage), retail trade and real estate related businesses. There are 2,306 businesses in the area.
- Many residents commute from the northern area (which lies at the geographical centre of the regional population) to other areas for employment (particularly central Wellington).
- The area has three main retail centres – Johnsonville, Tawa and Dres\$mart – and two smaller convenience centres – Newlands and Linden.
- Population growth of 9,000 over 20 years could result in approximately \$50 million increase in total potential retail expenditure in the area (up to \$250 million).

- On the basis of population growth, the area could support approximately 33,600 square metres of retail floor space in 20 years time. Currently floor space is approximately 35,000 square metres, indicating unoccupied retail space.
- The northern area contains some industrial areas that contain storage and distribution companies and some manufacturing. Regionally there is a demand and preference for new (greenfield) industrial land.

New development

- There is already consented subdivision or residentially zoned land to accommodate a further 4,000 people in the northern area of Wellington City.
- The average growth in the number of new dwellings in the northern area over the last five years is slightly higher than in Wellington in general (7.8% compared to 5.21%).
- The rate of growth varies significantly across the area, with the highest to the northeast of the motorway around the Takapu junction (18%) and around Johnsonville and Churton Park (12%).
- Over the years cul-de-sac subdivision development has continued (for example, in Woodridge and Churton Park) with few or no services within walking distance. This has necessitated more cars and vehicle movements.
- Some pressure to develop “lifestyle blocks” has occurred in rugged areas with difficult access and where traditional pastoral farming has ended.

Open space and recreation

- Areas of open space continue to revert naturally to native vegetation following protection and/or retirement from farming.
- Community awareness about ecological values of bush and streams is increasing, supported by Council initiatives for pest control and planting.
- Walking continues to be the most important outdoor recreational activity.
- The desire for recreation choices is increasing.

Infrastructure

- The northern area is serviced by Wellington City Council’s northern landfill (for solid waste disposal). This is scheduled to close in 2006.
- As new development has occurred, small water reservoirs have been built to service specific subdivisions and these can sometimes deliver a performance below today’s standards.



Transport

Rail services

- Two rail lines service the northern area: one suburban line between Johnsonville and the city, and Tranz Metro commuter services on the main trunk line that runs between the city and Paraparaumu on the Kapiti coast (through Takapu Road, Redwood, Tawa, Linden and Kenepuru stations in the northern area).
- Just over five million trips are made each year on those two lines (Johnsonville 1.2 million, Paraparaumu 3.9 million). By comparison, 4.9 million are carried on the Hutt valley line.
- Patronage increased markedly between 1995 and 2001: 19% on the Johnsonville line and 21% on the Paraparaumu line. Both of these services are now close to capacity and patronage is static or increasing only slowly.

Bus services

- Three centres in the north have regular bus services: Johnsonville, Newlands and Tawa. Johnsonville and Newlands have comprehensive coverage, while only one bus route serves Tawa. Other communities, such as Grenada North and Greenacres, have limited or no direct access to public transport. Bus patronage is experiencing modest growth.
- Efficiencies of the current service in the area are affected by the circuitous street networks and much of the area is served only by "low frequency or shopper" services.

Road network

- The northern area lies on either side of State Highway 1. This provides fast travel in and out of the area, and may prove attractive to new industry, but the motorway also acts as a barrier between communities. Overall trends for car use are rising, both in terms of the average number of cars owned by each household, and number of kilometres travelled.
- Crossing points and points of access to the State Highway 1 are quite widely spaced which creates concentrations of traffic at these points and leads to pressure on local arterial roads near the interchanges.
- Local arterial routes such as Newlands Road, Moorfield Road/Burma Road, Johnsonville/Middleton/Willowbank Roads and Takapu Road are all important linkages in the study area.
- The proposed new highway through Transmission Gully would join the existing State Highway 1 at Linden. The location of the proposed new road has little physical impact on the immediate northern area, although it would change the traffic flows on the main arterial routes in the area.
- Motorway connections with the Hutt Valley are being investigated by the Greater Wellington Regional Council as part of its Hutt Corridor Plan. One option for this kind of link would run through the northern area between Grenada and Petone, via the Lincolnshire Farm area and Korokoro. This Plan is due for publication in mid 2003 and may lead to further investigation of this in the context of the Regional Land Transport Strategy.