

15 May 2018

Chief Executive
Wellington City Council
PO Box 2199
Wellington 6140

Regarding: Draft Long Term Plan

Tēnā koe

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written submission on the Wellington City Council Draft Long Term Plan 2018 -2028.

Council and Regional Public Health have a common agenda – working with communities where they live, work and play to protect and improve their quality of life. Regional Public Health (RPH) wants to support Council with public health knowledge and skills where appropriate. By working together we can be more efficient, reduce the burden of engagement on our communities and be more effective in achieving our common goal. A collaborative approach will also facilitate smarter use of each agencies finite resources.

This submission provides a public health perspective and information for Council to consider in their planning decisions. Wellington City Council's (WCC) policy and planning are an integral part to the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Please note a separate joint submission between the Primary Healthcare Organisation (PHO) in Wellington and RPH has also been made with a particular focus on the impacts of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes on our communities.

We are happy to provide further advice or clarification on any of the points raised in our written submission. We request to be heard in support of our written submission. The contact point for this submission is:

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Kind regards

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How this document is structured:

- A. An overview of Regional Public Health
- B. General comments on the Long Term Plan (LTP)
- C. The three waters
- D. Responses to your specific questions

A. WHO WE ARE – Regional Public Health

Regional Public Health (RPH) serves the greater Wellington region, through its three district health boards (DHBs): Capital & Coast, Hutt Valley and Wairarapa and is based at the Hutt Valley District Health Board, and are located at three bases – Porirua, Hutt Valley DHB and Masterton.

Our business is public health action – working to improve the health and wellbeing of our population and to reduce health disparities. We work with others to promote and protect good health, prevent disease, and improve quality of life across the population, with a particular focus on children, Māori and working with primary care organisations. We are funded mainly by the Ministry of Health and we also have contracts with the District Health Boards and other agencies to deliver specific services. We have 130 staff with a diverse range of occupations, including medical officers, public health advisors, health protection officers, public health nurses, analysts and evaluators.

B. GENERAL COMMENTS ON YOUR LONG TERM PLAN

RPH respects and acknowledges that WCC decisions have a significant impact on health. We see this through appropriate management of infrastructure (e.g. water and sewage) and creating environments that support wellbeing through reducing the exposure to tobacco, facilitating access to healthy food and promoting urban design that encourages physical activity. This is the basis for making a submission on your Long Term Plan (LTP).

In light of the 2016 Kaikoura earthquake¹ and an increase in adverse weather events² RPH commends WCC on their approach to assessing and investing in key infrastructure that will protect the health and wellbeing of our communities in an adverse event. We also commend WCC for making resilience a priority. We see this through the work already started such as earthquake strengthening buildings and exploration of alternative water sources³. We support your view that resilience is also about making sure growth is sustainable.

Council and RPH have important roles to play readying and responding to adverse events in our region. For RPH that means maintaining civil defence and public health emergency planning and response capacity, and ensuring there are appropriate numbers of staff trained in emergency management. For council that could mean readying similar response mechanisms as well as

¹ The risk for a significant earthquake affecting the Wellington region has increased following the 2016 Kaikoura earthquake. A significant earthquake would affect infrastructure and key transport routes

² Many of New Zealand's towns and cities are affected by flooding from rivers, lakes, overland flow, the sea and in some cases, a combination of all of these. Regular flooding has a toll on communities, it can move people out of their homes and make it difficult to move around and get to work. This impacts on the economy and an individual's social connectedness.

³ Wellington City Council Long Term Plan 2018-2018, p.3

protecting core infrastructure such as water supply and public transport from the effects of emergency events, and making sure they are in a position to recover.

It is important that we continue to work together in building resilient infrastructure and communities. Through this collaborative emergency planning and response, the impact of emergency events on vulnerable communities (particularly Māori) will be minimised. We will also be able to grow each other's knowledge and skills.

Our organisations are already working together on issues around disease surveillance, drinking water, wastewater and stormwater. We look forward to continued and enhanced collaboration. We also have staff who work with other agencies in emergency preparedness and management and are willing to assist WCC on request.

C. THE THREE WATERS

The LTP process provides an opportunity to document the council's pathway to addressing the management of drinking water, wastewater and stormwater ('the three waters') infrastructure as a critical factor in building long-term resilience and emergency management. RPH acknowledges that there are significant challenges and drivers around actions to be taken in this area. These include:

- the development of infrastructure to keep pace and meet the need for new urban development;
- the challenge of increasing frequency of severe weather events (e.g. leading to flooding) and other natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes) which determine how well the infrastructure can perform;
- the impacts of the DIA three waters infrastructure review and government recommendations from the Havelock North Drinking Water Campylobacter Outbreak Inquiry Report;
- meeting the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management targets;
- the current review of the Greater Wellington Proposed Natural Resource Plan and associated new requirements for monitoring and management of stormwater and wastewater discharges; and
- progressive implementation of the catchment specific whaitua committees to determine local water quality and quantity parameters.

The response to such large challenges requires a strong focus on collaboration between multiple agencies with a willingness to share expertise and resource across traditional council boundaries, it also requires consideration of models of shared resources and asset management to achieve economies of scale and equitable access to the limited technical expertise at the regional and national levels.

One such collaborative approach that has resulted from the Havelock North Inquiry is the regional drinking water joint working group. That is in the process of being established for the greater Wellington region but requires the mandate and support from all councils to achieve the agreed aim of "safeguarding the Wellington region's drinking water".

A significant challenge is the management of water demand while maintaining water quality. Water demand is an issue for the whole region and not only in areas that have had to implement or explore a more urgent response.

Due to the complexity and inter-relatedness of managing all three waters infrastructure and the impact that this infrastructure has on the built environment (e.g. location of urban growth; how we use the environment for recreation and activity) we recommend a spatial planning approach using citizen panels, and other forms of face to face community consultation, that captures the interactions and supports coordinated decision making for the built environment.

The LTP consultation process also provides another opportunity to engage the community in awareness of the challenges around the three waters management and being part of finding the best way forward. Often this infrastructure is hidden and not well understood compared with other infrastructure such as roads.

Raising the profile of this critical part of a safe and healthy urban environment will facilitate community “buy-in” for the hard decisions that need to be made around how to distribute funding for maintenance, improvement and capacity building.

Additionally there are actions the community can take to support additional planning, performance and resourcing. It is important to have ongoing initiatives which increase the community’s understanding and engagement with the hidden infrastructure and the values they attach to the impact on their environment.

A collaborative and coordinated regional approach would strengthen this awareness raising, including linking to current actions that are associated with specific programmes (e.g. enviroschools) or legislative requirements (e.g. resource consent requirements including public engagement for managing specific discharges).

D. IN RESPONSE TO YOUR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

RESILIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT | TE MANAHUA ME TE TAIAO

We need to prepare our city to better cope with natural events such as storms, floods and earthquakes. By investing in our environment and strengthening our infrastructure, we can help create more resilient communities. We’re proposing a range of initiatives that are at different stages of advancement. Let us know what you think.

Water storage capacity and network improvements

We propose to improve water storage capacity at the Prince of Wales/Omāroro Reservoir, in Upper Stebbings and in Horokiwi.

→ Strongly support

The current water storage and supply network is extremely vulnerable which could leave thousands of residents without water for significant periods. We support the proposal to improve water storage capacity at the proposed sites.

Wastewater network improvements

We propose to upgrade parts of the wastewater network to make it more resilient and able to accommodate population growth.

→ Strongly support

The current wastewater network is under pressure, which often sees discharges into the stormwater network or nearest stream or estuary during heavy rainfalls. The impact of climate change and population growth will continue to burden the city's wastewater network. Wastewater system overflows are a significant public health concern due to the discharge of untreated sewage into watercourses and are particularly concerning to Māori. We support the proposal to improve wastewater network improvements at the proposed sites.

Tawa and Miramar Peninsula stormwater network improvements

We propose to upgrade stormwater networks in Tawa and the Miramar Peninsula and to invest in core infrastructure in Shelly Bay, to better cope with storms and flooding.

→ Strongly support

We support the wastewater network improvements proposal. In order to: help keep rivers, lakes and beaches cleaner and safer for swimming, fishing and other recreational activities; reduce the risk of flooding and erosion in the region.

Built Heritage Incentive Fund

We propose to increase the amount the Council currently budgets to help owners maintain their heritage buildings.

→ Neutral

Building accelerometers

We propose to install accelerometers in buildings across the city to help us access better information immediately after an earthquake, which would allow us to respond more quickly.

→ Support

We support the idea of investing in technology that can provide better information about a building, immediately after an earthquake, and therefore act more quickly to protect and advise the community.

Predator Free Wellington

We propose to gradually eradicate predators across the city and create the world's first predator-free capital city.

→ Strongly support

RPH has a statutory role in approving pest control operations using vertebrate toxic agents, mostly 1080 and cyanide.

Protection of native and exotic flora along with the return of native fauna go hand in hand with improving community wellbeing.

Community-led trapping

We propose to fund community groups installing and managing traps in Wellington's reserves, and to provide compost subsidies to manage the impact of poor food waste management.

→ Support

Resilience of the transport corridor

Much of Wellington's transport network is on steep hills that require substantial retaining walls below and above the road. We propose to strengthen a number of these in the coming years.

→ Strongly support

Providing the community and its growing population with robust and safe travel routes will reduce delays and minimise disruption caused by incidents affecting the region. We support improvements to the transport corridor.

Security of water supply

We propose to spend more to improve the resilience of the city's water supply network and accommodate population growth.

→ Strongly support

The current water storage and supply network is extremely vulnerable which could leave thousands of residents without water for significant periods. We support the proposal to improve security of water supply.

Waste management and minimisation

We propose to reduce the region's waste to landfill by one third over the next 9 years, in partnership with all councils in the Wellington region.

→ Strongly support

We support the proposal to reduce waste to landfill space as this will also reduce environmental impacts associated with extracting, transporting, manufacturing and processing waste materials.

Storm clean-up

We propose to spend more on reducing the impact of erosion from last year's storms, supporting storm clean-ups, and undertaking coastal resilience work.

→ Strongly support

The impact of sea level rise increases, coastal storms and severe weather events increases infrastructure vulnerability. The consequences of this involve not only the costs associated with the clean-up, repair, and/or replacement of affected infrastructures but also economic, social, environmental and social well-being is threatened.

Addition of land to the Wellington Town Belt

In 2017, the Council acquired a vegetated gully between Aro Street and Devon Street to add to the Wellington Town Belt. The Council requires feedback on this proposal as required under the Wellington Town Belt Act 2016.

→ Support

We would support council actively engaging and working in partnership with Mana Whenua in this process.

Your comments on the resilience and environment proposal and projects:

We support Option one – increase levels of service.

As mentioned in sections B and C we strongly support Council’s prioritisation of resilience.

HOUSING | NGĀ KĀINGA

As our population grows, we need to make sure everyone has access to safe and affordable quality housing. We’re proposing a range of initiatives that would see the Council take a more active partnering role in this area. Let us know what you think.

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP)

We propose to make better use of existing Council housing sites to increase the number of social and affordable housing units in Wellington.

→ Strongly support

Wellington Housing Strategy

We have developed a draft housing strategy, which aims to make sure that all Wellingtonians are well housed. The strategy provides a framework for how we will resolve housing issues in the city.

→ Strongly support

Special Housing Areas (SHAs)

We propose to work with central government to explore opportunities for developing Special Housing Areas in Wellington. Qualifying developments could benefit from quicker consenting processes and other incentives.

→ Strongly support

Inner-city building conversions

We propose to look more closely at how we can make better use of the inner city for housing by working with commercial building owners on a pilot project to convert properties for residential use.

→ Support

It is important to consider alternatives to increasing the housing supply. We would encourage a health and social impact study is woven into the pilot. This will help identify if the existing building is supported by a healthy environment such as healthy food and beverage retailers, green space (physical activity and recreation) and public transport.

Special Housing Vehicle (Urban Development Agency)

We’re proposing to take a more active approach towards delivering both major housing capital projects and urban regeneration initiatives in the city.

→ Strongly support

Rental warrant of fitness

We propose to evaluate the results of a rental warrant of fitness system we trialled last year in partnership with the University of Otago, to see whether Wellington needs a standard to lift the quality of housing.

→ Strongly support

Te Whare Oki Oki

We propose to establish supported living options for our most vulnerable homeless population, in partnership with others.

→ Strongly support

Your comments on the housing proposal and projects:

We support Option one – increase levels of service.

We highly commend and support Council's focus on housing. Whilst it is important to address supply we would urge council to keep in mind the wider social environment within which intensification might occur. Specifically in the design process we would encourage consideration of access to affordable healthy food and beverages, access to green spaces for recreation and community cohesion.

We would like to thank council for your continued participation in the regional healthy housing response group⁴.

TRANSPORT | NGĀ WAKA HAERE

Our population is growing, and this is putting pressure on our transport system. We need to invest in a more efficient network to reduce congestion and the city's carbon emissions. We're proposing a range of initiatives that are at different stages of advancement. Let us know what you think.

Cycling Master Plan

We propose to deliver the Cycling Master Plan that relates to cycling improvements outside the city earlier than planned, in 20 years instead of 35.

→ Strongly support

Introduction of weekend parking fees

We propose to introduce weekend parking fees to offset parking revenue losses and encourage the use of public and active modes of transport.

→ Strongly support

We support council encouraging the use of public and active transport.

Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM)

We propose to improve transport in the city to accommodate a growing population and address congestion issues, in partnership with others. Four possible scenarios have been presented to the public for feedback.

⁴ A group comprising central and local government, not for profit organisations, regional health services, He Kainga Oranga (University of Otago) working towards a collective vision of *Everyone in the Wellington Region Lives in Warm, Dry, and Safe Housing by 2025*.

→ Strongly support

We support council continuing to promote physical activity and public transport in Wellington City. This can be supported by implementing good urban design principles. For example, people are more likely to walk when they have access to green space and live close to schools and shops; when streets are well connected; and when neighbourhoods are designed to be walkable and safe.⁵ Providing safe spaces for pedestrians and cyclists around the central city as part of the “Let’s Get Wellington Moving” programme will help support this. A pro-equity approach could be to extend this programme outside of the central city to Wellington’s northern and eastern suburbs.

Transport - related initiatives

We propose to invest in transport-related initiatives including a range of renewal and resilience projects and improvements to bus routes and shelters.

→ Strongly support

Providing the community and its growing population with robust and safe travel routes will reduce delays and minimise disruption caused by incidents affecting the region. We support improvements to bus routes and shelters.

Your comments on the transport proposal and projects:

We support Option one – increase levels of service.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH | TE KAUNEKE TAUWHIRO

We need a sustainable economy to support our quality of life and provide jobs for our growing population. We’re proposing a range of initiatives that are at different stages of advancement. Let us know what you think.

Planning for growth

We propose to invest in a major review of where and how the city will grow over time to meet population growth. This includes a review of our District Plan, Urban Growth Plan and steps to make consenting and compliance easier and faster.

→ Strongly support

Kiwi Point Quarry life extension

We propose to open up and develop a new section of Kiwi Point Quarry to access additional rock resources.

→ Neutral

Wellington Zoo upgrades

We propose to upgrade facilities at Wellington Zoo to accommodate new attractions.

→ Not sure

⁵ Goodin, H. 2015. Promoting Physical Activity at the Local Government Level. Evidence Snapshot. New Zealand: Agencies for Nutrition Action.

Movie Museum and Convention Centre

We propose to continue to work in partnership to construct and support a Movie Museum and Convention Centre on land adjacent to Te Papa.

→ Not sure

If these facilities were to go ahead we would encourage council to adopt a healthy food and beverage policy and that these influence negotiations with food vendor contractors.

Your comments on the sustainable growth proposal and projects:

We support Council's focus on planning for growth and intention to involve community in this process.

We would encourage council to investigate the potential of a regional spatial planning approach to urban development. As mentioned earlier in this submission there are efficiencies to be gained by taking a regional approach to planning. The environment we live in has a huge impact on the health of a community. The World Health Organisation estimates 23% of all global deaths are due to modifiable environmental factors⁶.

In other words, nearly 1 in 4 deaths across the globe are due to environmental factors such as air, water and soil pollution, chemical exposures, climate change and ultra violet radiation. These factors contribute to more than 100 diseases and injuries⁷. The considerate design of spaces and place can help to promote good health.

ARTS AND CULTURE | NGĀ TOI ME TE AHUREA

Wellington is known as New Zealand's cultural capital. This is the result of deliberate investment over recent years by the Council and other partners. But we can't stand still. Other cities are investing and Wellington is now facing increased competition for this reputation. We're proposing a range of initiatives that are at different stages of advancement. Let us know what you think.

Strengthening cultural facilities

We propose to invest in earthquake strengthening Council cultural facilities including the Town Hall, St James Theatre and Wellington Museum.

→ Neutral

Additional support for the arts

We propose to support a coordinated programme of events, activities, theatre and public art to position ourselves as a globally competitive cultural destination.

→ Neutral

Investment in arts and cultural projects

We propose to continue to support an international artist residency programme and a range of arts organisations.

⁶ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2016/deaths-attributable-to-unhealthy-environments/en/>

⁷ <http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/environmental-disease-burden/en/>

→ Neutral

Your comments on the arts and culture proposal and projects:

No comment.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS

Overall, do you agree with spending more on these priority areas?

→ Yes

In summary, in what order would you tackle these priority areas?

1. Resilience and environment
2. Housing
3. Sustainable growth
4. Transport
5. Arts and culture

Your priorities

Tell us if you think there's anything else the Council should be prioritising over the next 10 years: The core services the Council already provides are not going to change. Refer to our [Statements of Service Provision](#) to see the core services.

We commend council on an increased effort to engage with community in innovative ways such as using Wellington city buildings as canvasses to stimulate conversations, and Deputy Mayor Jill Day actively encouraging Māori to have a say about the 10 year plan.

We commend council on your perseverance of raising the awareness and use of te reo Māori. Kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui.

We note that in your consultation document a lot of ground work was undertaken to shape the direction of the Long Term Plan. RPH is always keen to participate in these early direction-setting discussions. We understand that this is a significant time of influence. Please add us to your database of community and agency consultation stakeholders.

RPH offers its support, skills and knowledge in the areas of emergency management, three waters, housing quality, public and active transport, community development and empowerment, and healthy food environments to ensure the people of Wellington are thriving.