

# OBJECTIVES FOR THE CENTRAL CITY

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These objectives will guide Council decisions and actions about the future of Wellington's central city. While the Council sets planning parameters and provides the urban environment, the achievement of these objectives will depend on the actions of many people and organisations, including property developers and landlords, businesses, central government, inner-city residents and so on.

## **Create a prosperous central city**

This will require the central city to retain and enhance its mix of residential, retail, hospitality, business, government, education and other uses. The central city will continue to rely on government, services, and creatives as the main drivers of employment. It will be attractive and offer quality of life so that people choose to live here, retailers and hospitality businesses can prosper, and smaller creative businesses can choose to cluster here (perhaps in areas of renewal). It will offer a mix of building types so smaller, independent businesses can exist alongside larger corporate ones.

## **Accommodate growth and change**

The central city will be adaptable, flexible and robust to accommodate growth and change in uses, lifestyles and population

and natural hazards. This will require the Council to understand developers, and developers to understand community wants and needs. There will be flexibility in use of buildings, public space and infrastructure to accommodate changes in use and reduce the impact of earthquakes and climate change. Buildings and infrastructure will be designed for energy and resource efficiency. More efficient approaches to transport, traffic management and parking will be supported.

## **Make our streets green**

Wellington's streets will become greener and more attractive through a combination of planting, new and upgraded inner-city parks, and initiatives such as 'stream streets' and wetlands in our city open spaces. Some major routes will become tree-lined boulevards. Planting and development of urban wetlands will not only make the city more attractive but also provide ecological benefits such as improving stormwater filtration. The city's heritage can also be acknowledged through the development of 'stream streets', in which the sites of underground streams are acknowledged through landscaping and planting.

## FACTS FOR NOW

**52** PERCENT OF THE REGION'S GDP IS CONCENTRATED IN THE

**2.1** (STATISTICS NZ MEDIUM SERIES POPULATION PROJECTIONS)  
SQ KM OF THE CITY CENTRE

## PROJECTIONS FOR 2040

**50** PERCENT OF THE WORKFORCE WILL HAVE GROWN UP WITH FACEBOOK OR THE NEXT GENERATION OF COMMUNICATIONS

**68%** THE PROPORTION OF THE REGION'S GROWTH THAT WILL OCCUR IN WELLINGTON CITY

### Build the city in response to the local setting

Wellington is dominated by its natural landscape – its harbour and hills – in a way that very few other cities are. This landscape provides drama and interest, makes the city attractive, and shapes the city's growth. The city's special relationship with the water will continue to be protected and enhanced. Design guidance and regulations will support

building design that is more sensitive to this landscape and existing context – for example, by ensuring that building height and form are sensitive to ridgelines and other natural features, and that relevant view shafts along streets are protected and enhanced. The local climate and variability of weather conditions are major parts of the Wellington context. The streets, buildings and open spaces within the city will need to respond and be resilient to these conditions.

### Create an eco inner-city

The city will support sustainable transport choices, by encouraging people to walk, bike, skate, or use public transport – only driving when needed. Buildings will also reflect an eco-city ethos, meeting strong environmental standards and providing high levels of comfort for building users while minimising use of energy and water. Innovations such as solar energy, rainwater harvesting and green

walls and roofs will be supported where practicable. Some areas of the city may be designated for leading-edge green development.

### **Ensure connections are easy to make**

Whether you're walking, cycling, or driving, it should be easy to orient yourself in the city and find your way around, and move from place to place efficiently. Wellington's streets, buildings and public spaces can be better integrated physically and visually into their surroundings. This will improve access and encourage a stronger sense of connection between different parts of the city.

Likewise, visual and physical connections between the city and the waterfront can be improved. So can connections between the city centre and the Town Belt, as well as visual connections between related buildings such as the public institutions clustered around Parliament.

### **Create inner-city neighbourhoods**

Though Wellington's central city is compact, it is also made up of a series of distinct precincts or neighbourhoods, each with its own character and 'sense of place' – from the Lambton quarter to Courtenay Place, Cuba Street and various parts of Te Aro. While some of these neighbourhoods are highly developed, others (such as those in Te Aro) are ripe for renewal and growth.

Each central city area will continue to be distinct, with its own character and unique mix of uses. In some areas, retail, offices, or hospitality businesses will predominate while others will develop into inner-city residential neighbourhoods. These vibrant neighbourhoods will be safe, comfortable, varied and attractive. They will offer a range of places for people to get together. New developments will complement and enrich their surroundings.

### **Tell our stories**

The central city will clearly reflect its own past and the identities of its people. Wellington's capital city status will be reflected in its urban environment, particularly in the area around Parliament. It will celebrate tangata whenua and the diversity of its population in the design of its streets, buildings, parks and squares, signs and public artworks, building upon the exciting 'sense of place'.

The city will also reflect the changes in its natural environment, for example through the stream streets referred to above. As we walk around the city, we should be aware of the history beneath our feet.

### **Strengthen character and coherence**

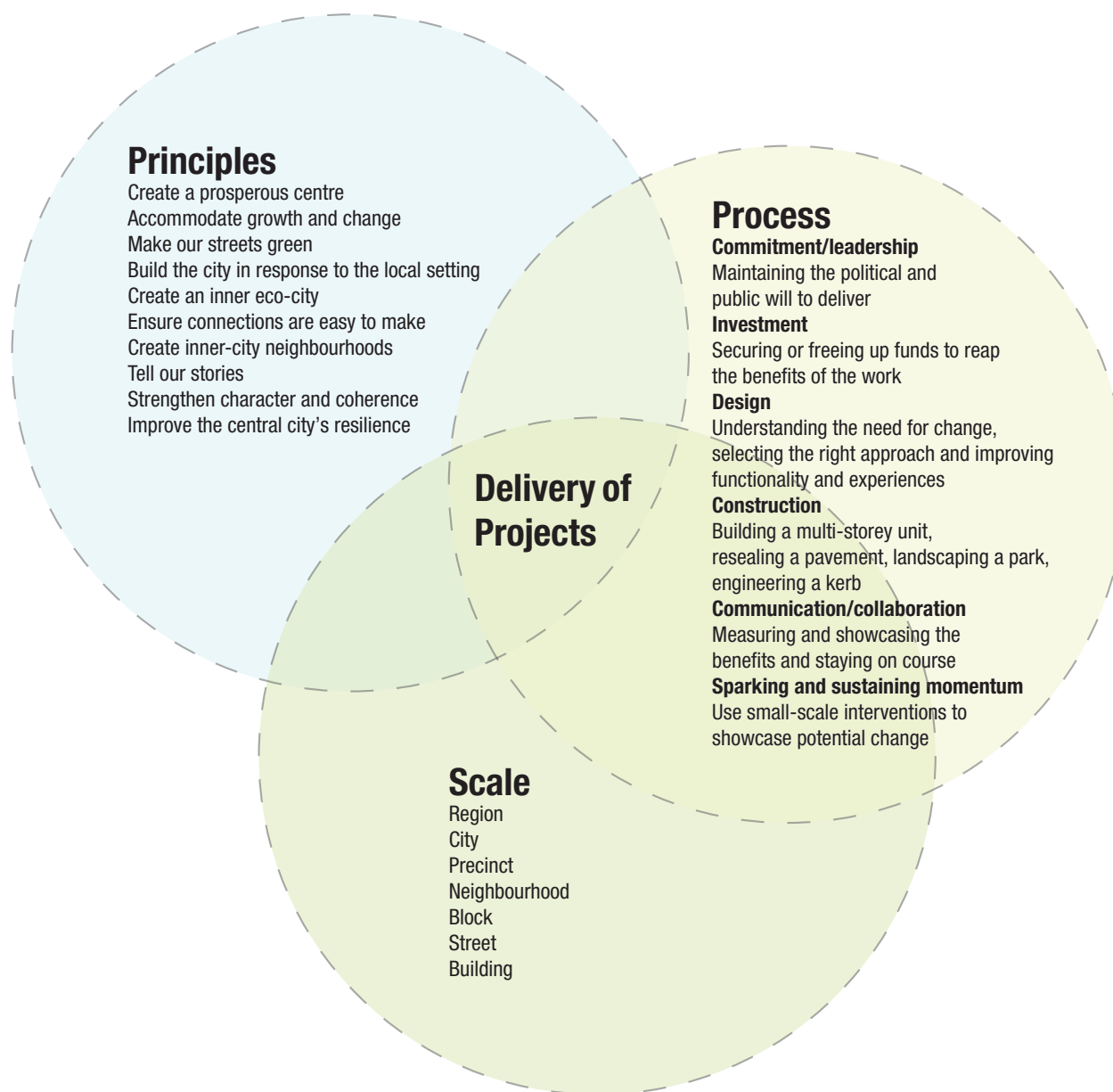
Many parts of the central city have clearly defined built character, with most buildings conforming to a distinctive size, shape and relationship with the street. Overall, Wellington has an urban and 'gritty' feel that

sets it apart from other cities in New Zealand. Cuba Street, for example, is characterised by low-rise heritage buildings built close to and opening out onto the street. Similarly, the medium and high-rise buildings of Lambton Quay and Willis Street – though of various ages and styles – have a direct relationship with the street and provide activity at ground level.

In contrast, some parts of the city have a mixture of building shapes, sizes and styles, with inconsistent street frontages. These can be successful and form a character of their own as in areas such as East Te Aro. More consistent approaches to buildings' form and street relationships will enhance character and make the city more attractive and walkable.

### **Improving the central city's resilience**

Proposed areas of opportunity have been recommended based on the objectives above. See table on the following page.



**Figure 4.**  
 The design principles, the scale of project and the process will be key in the implementation of the Central City Framework

OBJECTIVES	Create a prosperous central city	Accommodate growth and change	Make our streets green	Build the city in response to the local setting
Areas of opportunity				
<b>STREETS</b>				
North-South boulevards	✓	✓	✓	✓
East-West Connectors	✓	✓	✓	✓
Laneways	✓	✓		
Irregular streets	✓	✓	✓	
<b>BUILT STRUCTURE</b>				
Building quality	✓	✓		✓
Case study sites		✓		✓
<b>OPEN SPACES</b>				
Triangular spaces	✓	✓	✓	
Green walls and roofs	✓	✓	✓	
Stream streets	✓		✓	✓
Landscape (precincts)	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>PRECINCTS</b>				
Parliamentary precinct	✓		✓	
Memorial precinct	✓	✓	✓	✓
East Te Aro precinct	✓	✓	✓	✓
Victoria/Cuba precinct		✓	✓	✓
Waterfront connections			✓	✓
Pipitea precinct	✓	✓		✓
<b>SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE</b>				
Green Infrastructure		✓	✓	✓
Movement	✓	✓	✓	
Climate	✓	✓	✓	✓

Figure 5. The identified Areas of opportunity have been assessed against the objectives.

Create an eco inner-city	Ensure connections are easy to make	Create inner-city neighbourhoods	Tell our stories	Strengthen character and coherence
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓		✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓		✓		✓
		✓		✓
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✓	✓		✓	✓
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✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓		✓	✓
	✓	✓		✓
✓			✓	
✓	✓	✓		✓
✓			✓	✓