

18 April 2018

10 Year Plan Submission
Greater Wellington Regional Council
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Re: Draft Long Term Plan 2018-2028 consultation

This submission from the Architectural Centre. We are an incorporated society dating from 1946, which represents both professionals and non-professionals interested in the promotion of good design.

We agree that: climate change, public transport, resilient infrastructure, water supply, freshwater quality, and biodiversity are important priorities for the Wellington region. We have the following points to make:

We consider that **reducing carbon emissions and mitigation of climate change to be the highest priority**. In this regard we strongly encourage the GWRC to develop a net-zero emissions region by 2050, in conjunction with the city councils and central government, with a staged strategy with specific targets set (for geographic areas and sectors) and progress monitored.

We also note that the Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency (WREDA) needs to be in tune with the new work being done in Treasury using a greater number of performance indicators (e.g. well-being, sustainability) in contrast to the traditional narrow focus on GDP, inflation etc., and should include civic and social performance indicators.

Public Transport

- (a) the GWRC needs to move beyond the rhetoric of stating a "*vision of a world-class public transport system*" (p. 7). Implementing **light rail (LRT) will be key to achieving a world-class public transport system**. We ask you to use your voice in the Let's Get Welly Moving (LGWM) process to ensure that LRT is budgetted and planned for, and built by 2028.
- (b) implementing a more comprehensive PT system will take money. Currently, for example, there is no resilience in the bus system. We ask that you **lobby central government** to change the Land Transport Management Act's allocation of funding to increase the funding for public transport and other sustainable transport modes, and indicate GWRC support for the draft GPS on Land Transport.
- (c) the GWRC must proactively work to **increase PT mode share**, including through provision of high quality PT, including LRT. A **single integrated ticketing system, including transfers**, will be an important part of this, and needs to be given much greater priority than indicated in the documentation. We also believe that key to increasing PT mode share will



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be understanding **behavioural change** (using psychological expertise) to effect mode shifts to sustainable and active transport modes. In this regard we believe that Traffic Demand Management (TDM) must be prioritised over roading improvements to increase PT demand.

- (d) we need sustainable public transport infrastructure and electric buses, not the current "100% diesel" situation. We note that last week Sweden opened the world's first electrified road, where tracks in the 2km road recharge batteries in electric cars and trucks, with plans for 20,000km of highway to be electrified.¹ Given the planned resurfacing of roads to accommodate heavier buses, perhaps GWRC could be forward thinking and (with the WCC) look into the technological advances achieved in **electrification of roading** by Sweden at the same time. We equally support the GWRC prioritising **the electrification of all railway lines in the Wellington Region**.
- (e) we support better rail services to the Wairarapa, and encourage investigation into a high speed train service.
- (f) we also support the GWRC working to incentivise and facilitate **increased use of rail by freight companies**

Resilience

- (g) we support the maintenance and upkeep of "invisible" infrastructure for resilience (e.g. storm and foul water systems) as these are easily deferred because they are not seen, or often thought of by the public, until too late. This is likely to become increasingly important with the increasing frequency and intensity of storms due to climate change, and **the need to ensure that the capacity of such infrastructure is sufficient into the future**. Consequently we support the proposed infrastructure strategy to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of infrastructure assets over the long term.
- (h) in this regard we also recommend that the GWRC (along with the WCC) support **distributed infrastructure systems (e.g. rain water tanks, solar energy generation)** to build regional resilience. These could be supported through policy, reduced consent fees and reduced rates etc., with private water tanks, for example, also assisting to achieve improved water quality and water quantity aims.
- (i) with respect to transport resilience, we note that following the Canterbury earthquakes, **cycling** was the most reliable form of transport across the city, and building a cycling culture and comprehensive infrastructure (including cycling priority routes) **is another important aspect of resilience**.
- (j) we also support ongoing **earthquake strengthening** (with an awareness of the relative risk of earthquakes occurring when prioritising funding)
- (k) we note that the GWRC has an important role in **cultural resilience**, in particular through giving effect to the Regional Policy Statement policies which require local councils to **identify and protect historic heritage**. Examples such as the former Wellington Teachers Training College in Karori, which we believe clearly meets the criteria in RPS policy 21 and therefore is required to be identified and protected in the Wellington District Plan, demonstrate a need for the GWRC to do more work to ensure that local councils are meeting their legal obligations under the RPS.

Water

- (l) in addition to the above comments in relation to water, we recommend that the council work toward achieving **drinkable water quality** in our water ways, not just swimmable water- water sensitive urban design; green corridors

¹ Boffey, Daniel "World's first electrified road for charging vehicles opens in Sweden" *Guardian* (12 April 2018) <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/12/worlds-first-electrified-road-for-charging-vehicles-opens-in-sweden>

- (m) we also support the daylighting of streams (e.g. Kent/Cambridge Tce), **water sensitive urban design** to improve storm water quality, and green corridors as another important urban infrastructure
- (n) we support research on climate change mitigation and adaptation, rather than increased irrigation and dairy farming.

Food Protection

- (o) we consider that there are at least two important land use aspects to food protection. Firstly the setting aside of land, and **preventing suburban sprawl**, so that food producing land is proximate to urban areas. Secondly we note that not all land is equal. The regional council has an important role in **identifying highly fertile land** and prohibiting development on these sites.

We also consider that **waste reduction** must be included in the regional council's stated priorities. This should include:

- (a) advocating for taxes on plastic,
- (b) a shift from recycling to reusing (e.g. the past use of glass bottles and the system of returning these (e.g. to dairies) for reuse, rather than current dominance of plastic bottles)
- (c) a focus on source reduction²
- (d) a plastic reduction strategy
- (e) advocating for a NZ based plastic recycling centre, now that China is no longer going to recycling other countries' waste
- (f) the regional council establishing a waste reduction unit to:
 - (i) develop waste reduction policy and model bylaws to reduce waste throughout the region
 - (ii) implement waste reduction strategies within the regional council, to test and model behaviour, priority to regional-wide implementation
 - (iii) public education (including developing school curriculum on waste reduction)

For all of the above we strongly encourage the council to look for ways in which inter-council collaboration can occur to enable sharing of good practice, reduce costs and improve efficiencies.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit on the GWRC draft Long Term Plan. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully



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co-presidents
Architectural Centre

² "Source Reduction and Recycling" *NJ Green Building Manual* (5 May 2011)
<http://greenmanual.rutgers.edu/newcommercial/strategies/sourcereduction.pdf>; Smith, Brent
"Source Reduction: Alternative to Costly Waste Treatment"
<http://infohouse.p2ric.org/ref/03/02962.pdf>