



Tō Tātou Tāone 2055 – Our City 2055

Ethnic Communities Hui

Summary



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At a hui on 21 November 2024, we asked members of our ethnic communities to share their thoughts on what they like about Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt, future challenges and opportunities for the city and what we want to leave for future generations.

In this summary we've pulled out major topics to help guide us as we plan for what the next 30 years will look like for our city.

The valuable views of our residents inform the development of a city strategy: **Tō Tātou Tāone 2055 – Our City 2055**, a document that will set goals and identify plans to guide our city into the future.

Key topics included:

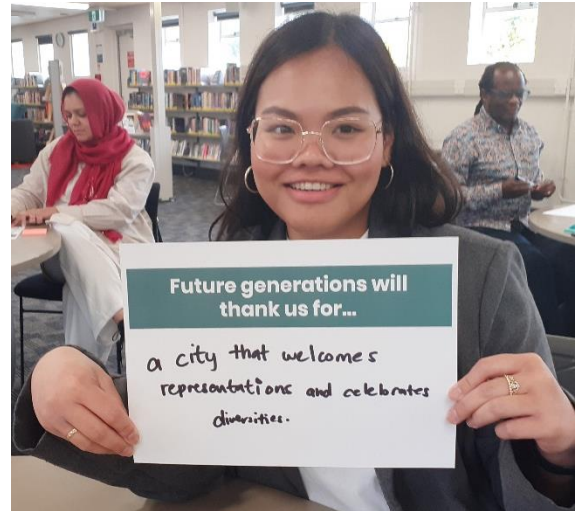
- **Valuing cultural diversity**
Ensuring the strength of diversity is recognised, migrants and former refugees are welcomed, and ethnic people are included in decision-making.
- **Inclusive education, health and housing**
Building culturally inclusive schools and tackling access to healthcare and housing.
- **A green and resilient Lower Hutt**
Preserving nature and green spaces and preparing for natural hazards.
- **A fun, beautiful and safe city**
Making Lower Hutt an attractive and fun place to be, offering fun entertainment such as bungy jumping, a luge or gondola.
- **Work and business opportunities**
Supporting migrants to find work or establish a small business.
- **Infrastructure for the future**
Prioritising public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure.

Major topics

Valuing cultural diversity

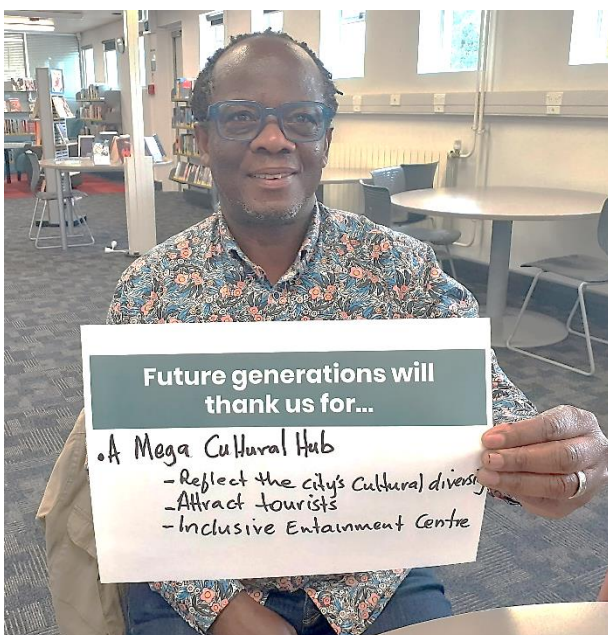
People valued the cultural diversity of Lower Hutt and commented that it was generally a tolerant, welcoming and inclusive city. Diversity was seen as a strength, making neighbourhoods more exciting, enjoyable and vibrant.

However, there were concerns about future challenges of racism, hate and discrimination. Ethnic communities may be 'absorbed' or viewed as 'outsiders' rather than New Zealanders.



For migrants and former refugees, building a connection to their new country was important *"this is the only place I can live legally."* Making 'newcomers' feel welcome and supported was a priority.

As well as settling into their new home, *"not forgetting roots"* was important to migrants, and their children born in Lower Hutt. Enabling people to practice their culture, religion and language was critical. Suggested improvements included:



"More Halal meat shops"

"Swimming classes for women only (religious need)"

"Accessible interpreting services"

There was also a need to raise broader community awareness of the benefits of diverse views and cultures and improve cultural competency. This included building understanding of the refugee experience (not leaving home countries by choice, but to stay alive).

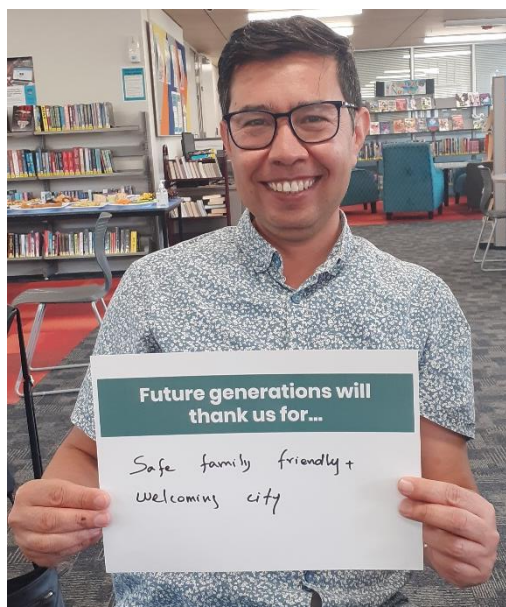
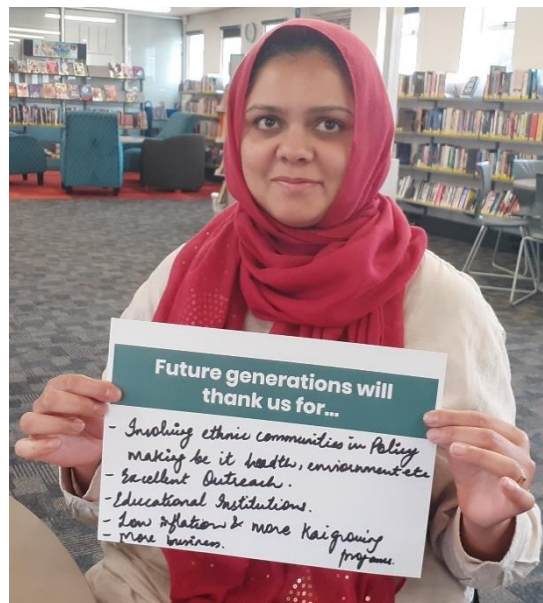
A Cultural Hub was suggested as a way of celebrating the city's cultural diversity and bringing ethnic communities together.

There was a sense that city priorities and policies did not reflect the increasingly ethnically diverse population, *"We don't have policies that represent for migrants."* Outreach to ethnic communities was important, ensuring the voices of migrants and former refugees were heard. In the future there should be *"more ethnic people in policy/decision making"*.

Inclusive education, health and housing

There was a hope for *"culturally inclusive educational institutions"*, where both former refugee and migrant children and families would feel welcome and supported. This could extend into classroom structure, teaching, and providing support for parent-teacher interviews.

People appreciated their proximity to the hospital, but identified health challenges for the city, including *"health services becoming too stretched,"* with GP and midwife shortages. New migrants to the city faced long waitlists for local GPs. There was an opportunity to invest in health services, including mental health. People suggested incentives and reduced rates to attract GPs and health clinics.



"Expensive housing" and "homelessness" were also critical challenges.

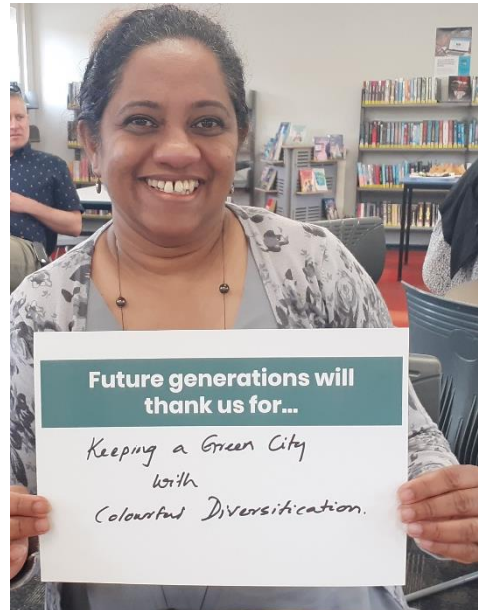
It was important to break *"...the cycle of persistent disadvantages for marginalised people."*

A green and resilient Lower Hutt

People commented that Lower Hutt's natural environment was a key attraction of the city for them – this included the river, green spaces and nature, which young people and everyone could enjoy.

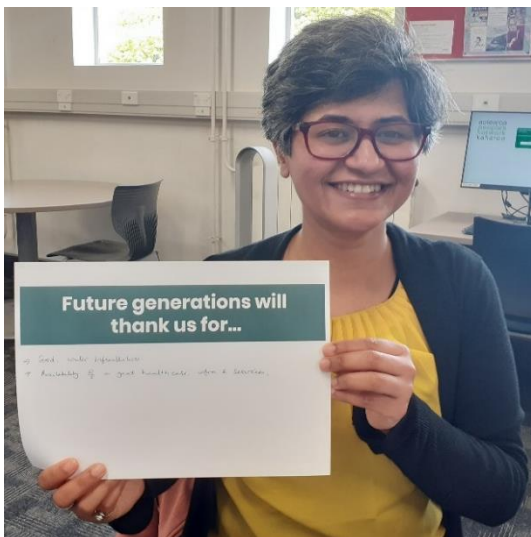
There was a concern about the challenge of keeping beaches and water bodies clean. Another concern was the impact of housing intensification in reducing green spaces.

Preserving nature and green spaces was a priority, with a call for more green projects, parks and reserves.



"Develop environmental protection policies – eg. build up and not out."

Several people identified natural disasters as a key challenge for the future, including the impacts of climate change, flooding and earthquakes.



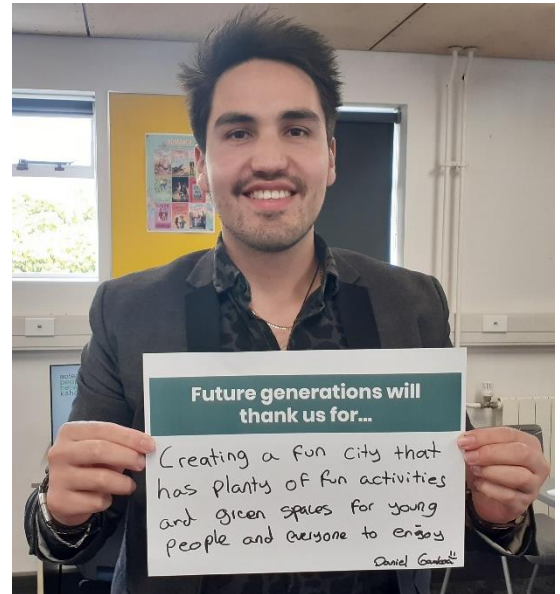
Emergency planning and flood management was important. There was also a suggested opportunity in a "sponge city – building our water system, climate resiliency".

A fun, beautiful and safe city

Current attractions of the city included the weekend markets (eg. Riverbank), shops and mall, events, The Dowse, Hutt Art, community facilities – hubs, libraries, swimming pools.

A challenge for the future was that Lower Hutt would “*become a boring city.*” There was also a concern that the “*city might become dangerous*” and “*unsafe for migrants*” with the rise of crime such as dairy shop ram raids.

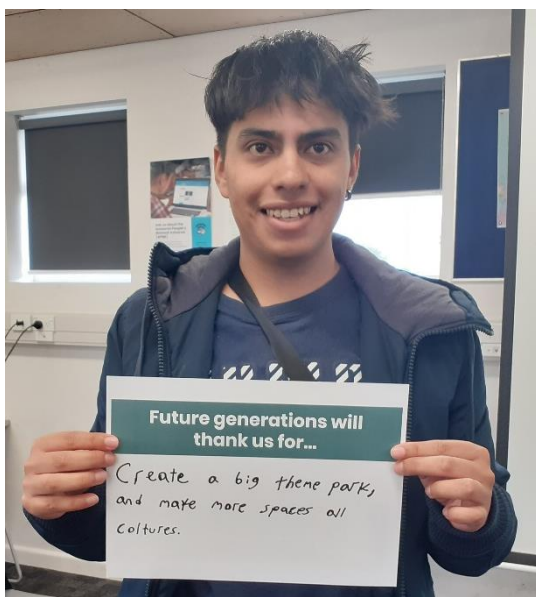
There was hope for a future city which was “*safe, beautiful and colourful*”. The success of RiverLink would be important.



Other suggestions included:

- “*River cruise*”
- “*Adventure sport (theme park) – ice rink, bungee jumping.*”
- “*Keep the city open at night.*”
- “*Creating a beautiful city centre by the river – like Europe.*”
- “*Gondola / Luge*”
- “*We need a square, or plaza for people.*”
- “*Make our city attractive to tourists!*”

Work and business opportunities



People hoped for more job opportunities in the future. “*Foreign degrees not recognised*” was a challenge that migrants faced.

There were also comments about the need for more support to start a small business, with suggestions such as simplifying the process to open a business, cheaper rates for small businesses and business awareness programmes.

A ‘*holistic approach to work*’ was also mentioned, adapting to a different way of working.

Infrastructure for the future

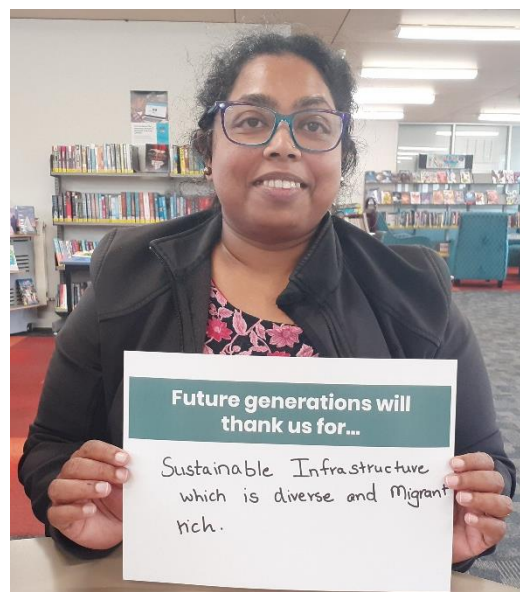
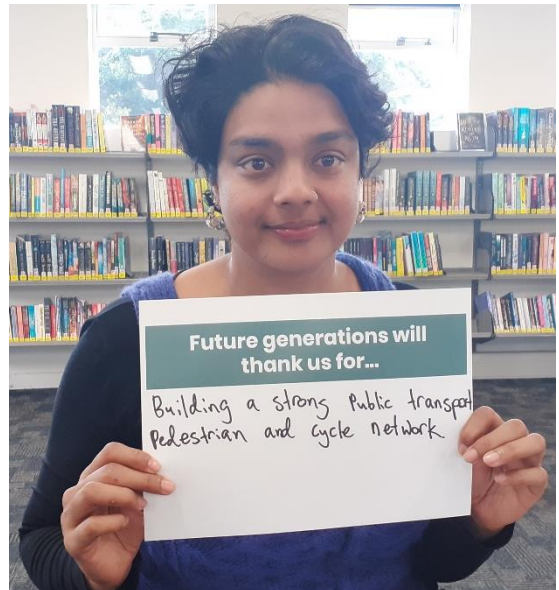
People appreciated the city's public transport – trains and buses but hoped for better public transport options to Porirua.

There were comments on the great cycling terrain in Lower Hutt, and it was positive that cycleways were *"starting to connect up."* However, there were also calls to *"Make this city more walkable!"*

While some were concerned about failing water infrastructure, and hoped for good water infrastructure in the future, others felt it was not a high priority for ethnic communities

"I don't see water infrastructure a high issue to me compared to community needs, eg. housing, increasing hate and discrimination, safety..."

People also commented on waste management, and the opportunity to train communities in recycling and composting.



Next steps

Community feedback tells us that the people of Lower Hutt are passionate, forward-thinking, and deeply committed to making our city a better place.

By working together and staying focused on our shared values, we can create a city that future generations will be proud of.

Now it's time to use these insights and turn them into action! We're taking next steps to create a City Leadership Group who will champion a case for change for Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt and drive the creation and delivery of city strategy outcomes.

Early in the new year we will develop and test key priorities and consult further with the community before finalising the City Strategy for endorsement later in 2025.

If you, your business, or organisation are interested in being involved in supporting the development of the Lower Hutt City Strategy, please let us know by emailing haveyoursay@huttcity.govt.nz or register on the website: <https://www.huttcity.govt.nz/city-strategy>