

Our 10 year plan 2021-31: Early engagement feedback results

This document summarises feedback from the early engagement survey 2 December 2020 – 18 January 2021, eight community meetings held in December 2020.

A series of hui were also held in 2020 with our mana whenua partners to assist Council to frame the priorities.

Purpose

The purpose of the early engagement for our online survey and community meetings was to:

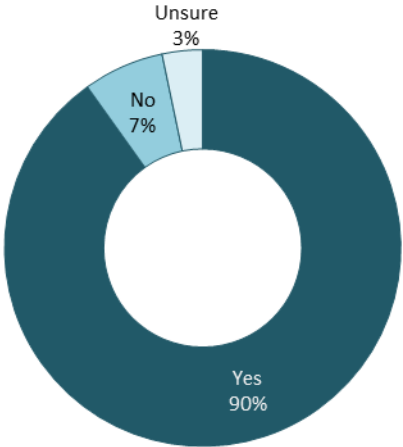
- Inform our community about the six key priorities we believe will guide our work over the next ten years
- Seek feedback on these priorities and collect ideas from our community on the projects and work that might contribute to each of these, and
- Establish our neighbourhood engagement approach and start building our network of community champions and advocates who wish to be part of future consultations

Key feedback

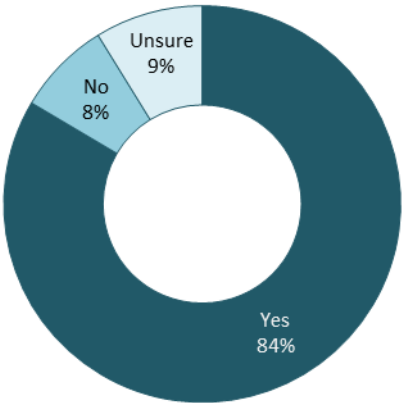
- By Monday 18 January, 2021 91 people had given feedback via the online early engagement survey.
- Most online respondents (over 80%) agreed the following three priorities were on the right track. They were investing in infrastructure (90%), caring for and protecting our environment (84%) and being financially sustainable (82%).
- Around a fifth (20%) of online respondents were unsure if increasing housing supply or an innovative, agile economy should be a priority and over a quarter of respondents were unsure about connecting communities being a priority.
- Between 6% and 16% respondents felt that the themes mentioned were not priorities
- However 100% of those who attended the workshops agreed with the key priority areas once they were fully explained.
- Workshop attendees welcomed the opportunity to meet face-to-face and participate in the early engagement.

Level of agreement with the six priority ideas

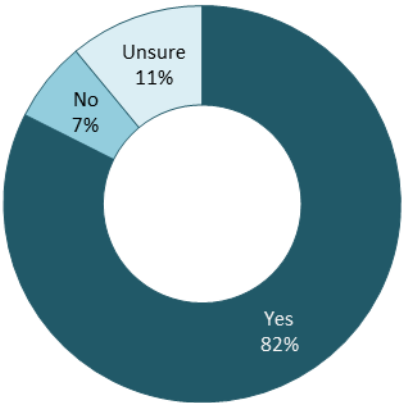
Investing in infrastructure



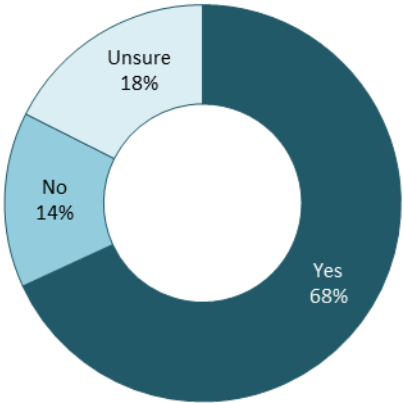
Caring / protecting our environment



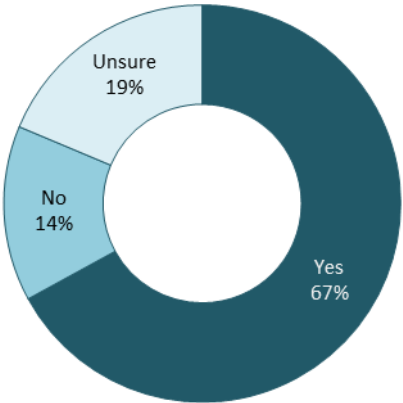
Being financially sustainable



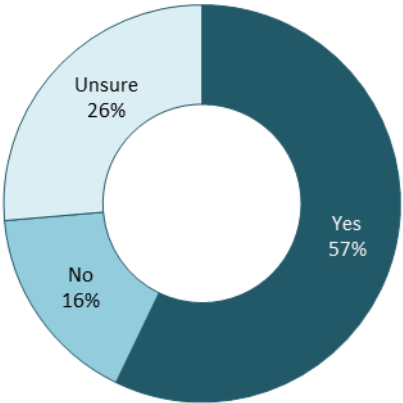
Increasing housing supply



Supporting an innovative, agile economy



Connecting communities



Specific comments on the six key priorities

48 people gave feedback about the priorities and their responses. These have been included under each of the six key priority themes.

Being financially sustainable

- Aotearoa and Lower Hutt are facing big problems. While prudent spending is always important, I don't want Council to be scared of spending money to fix big problems, especially when a good return on investment is likely.
- Financial stability is the keystone for everything HCC does. It is vital HCC invests in infrastructure to allow the city to thrive.

Caring for and protecting our environment

- I would also like to see Lower Hutt be more forward thinking in terms of climate change. Why are we increasing density in parts of the city that have a high risk of flooding in a decade or two, and not making a huge effort to make sure those people have a place to move when that starts happening?
- As long as protecting the environment is fact based and not based on climate change speculation, practical changes not radical virtue signalling changes
- Care for the environment means more than the Council reducing emissions. Active transport and more public transport need to be factored in to infrastructure planning and environmental improvements.
- For environment, use the reserves to advertise sponsors and generate revenue to pay for stuff to help keep rates down.
- If we consider environment sustainability in designing all of the above, it'll be like the foundation that ties them all together. Everything else will be useless if we don't look after the environment.
- The council should prioritise increasing funding for conservation in green areas
- Need more business compliance checks to prevent release of waste into our environment, glaziers blue foam tabs, construction tails, nurdles and takeaway/fast food container waste are the worst problems affecting our beaches and water ways.
- Under environment you want to create a smart low carbon city so unclear why then there is also focus area that may come in conflict with that, or at least isn't expressed in the same way. Have to focus on one or the other - my votes with green business.
- We need to put more investment into our local council reserves. Putting a larger investment in tree planting of natives, planting along our waterways, putting in a concerted effort for animal predator control, weed control increase tree planting to enhance our urban forest and linking our reserves together with planted walkways.
- We are moving into times of increasingly constrained energy and environmental services resources to support our activities. The impacts of the past externalisation of environmental and ecological costs will exert an increasingly onerous burden of the City and its residents. I agree all 6 are priorities. However, there is one that is now over-riding all the others simply because to not address it as the primary may open Council to all manner of future liability. It may also lead to the unnecessary degradation of the Hutt as a great place to live work and play. The primary priority is "Caring for and protecting our environment". Choosing to process activities through the lens of "how well will this [activity] care for / protect our environment" will help determine what should and can happen, and what can't happen.

Supporting an innovative, agile economy and attractive city

- Arts and culture are a powerful and effective way of supporting an innovative, agile economy and making a city attractive.
- Attractive city needs to include ensuring new developments are visually attractive, footpaths and roads are maintained, gardens around the city are colourful and well-kept and green spaces are well maintained
- Being able to provide employment locally as part of the economy in the Hutt would be amazing (including Wainuiomata)
- Having more people living in the Hutt, spending money in the Hutt will do wonders for the economy and really make the Hutt the place to be. Supporting this growth with adequate housing supply (or densification) and good infrastructure is paramount to safeguarding the future of Hutt City.
- If the public supports investment in these priorities that exceed Council's revenue, rates increases can be used to support popular increased investment. If revenues are constrained, HCC should focus on the core services as set out in Section 11A of the Local Government Act. Regional Economic Development is not one of these. Also, lumping an "attractive city" in with regional economic development is not helpful. Much of the attractiveness of Lower Hutt relates to caring and protecting our environment, increasing our housing supply and investing in walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure.
- The attractiveness of the Hutt etc. are less important to me than infrastructure and especially transport - as many of us live here but work and spend much of our time in Wellington city. So basic infrastructure, safety of communities, and transport are more important than having things to do here in the Hutt.

Connecting communities

- The arts are also a powerful tool for connecting communities, beyond just digital access. A connected community is a resilient community.
- Connecting communities sounds good but what does it really mean?
- Connected communities to me means good public transport options. I want to take the bus to work but at the moment there is no easily available option for that to happen. So I drive.
- Connecting communities has to include "getting everyone on board" with the plan so that there is minimal opposition
- Connecting communities, this is like paddling upstream with no paddle if your priorities for housing keep sprawling.
- I would like to see better and more transparent support of communities, funding community centres and community groups better.
- I'm not sure that "connecting communities" should be a key priority. In terms of possible actions, I don't know what you mean by "connecting communities" (from the Council's description of this), and it seems to me that communities in Lower Hutt are already pretty well connected.

Increasing housing supply

- Building affordable housing while protecting our nature reserves and natural environment is my biggest issue
- Council needs to keep to its core purpose and function. For a country housing is a national issue, council just needs to be partner however it is not our core.
- Council shouldn't be in the business of building houses

- Having a home to live in is a human right. This has to be a priority because at the moment it seems to be a privilege
- Housing affordability should be the single biggest focus followed by infrastructure necessary to support the housing.
- Housing is increasing where I live, but none of it is affordable; and none are for low income earners
- Housing supply is a central government responsibility, why is the Council getting involved? Unless in changing the regulatory environment? Although Council may have various ideals/aspirations etc. it is critical that Council stays in its lane, and enable central government to do its role. Council needs to focus on its core role, and endeavour to do those things well.
- Housing: stop urban sprawl. It kills town centres and creates more congestion for people to move around. Support more housing developments that go upwards. Encourage developers to create life style apartments with communal facilities to make them attractive. More population in the city centre helps businesses and makes it attractive to tourists.
- Increased housing supply should be done by rezoning areas close to mass transit to increase the viability of services and encourage people to leave their cars at home.
- Not at all happy with all the infill housing going on at the moment, especially in communities like Wainuiomata. By allowing this type of development council are creating tomorrow's Ghetto's. The developers involved in these housing developments are only interested in profits.
- Housing is critical, but not at the sacrifice of best-practice town and community planning.
- Regarding housing supply - need to be clear on what aspects you can and can't control. Enabling housing supply for example through things like your district and spatial plans, or supporting the Wellington Regional Growth Framework. Possibly connecting housing supply with infrastructure could be useful - getting the city ready for growth.

Investing in infrastructure

- Transport generally: the backlog of cars along the Petone foreshore in the middle of a Saturday is frustrating. There are some odd roundabouts and traffic lights in places that don't make sense e.g. Kmart.
- I would say that transportation infrastructure is the most urgent priority area to focus on. A robust transportation infrastructure makes a prosperous economy possible, and helps support increased housing and population growth. Good transport options and capacity can also have a positive impact on the environment if done correctly.
- As our Hutt community grows, it would be a huge mistake to not repair and restore or rebuild this essential facility.
- Naenae pool is not a priority, it is a nice to have. This money could provide a lot of homes.
- The council should prioritise the construction of the cross valley connection so the Petone Esplanade can be regenerated into a waterfront entertainment centre for the entire region.
- Infrastructure upgrade is the top one priority for lovely Lower Hutt due to the rapid population growth.
- Need a focus on transport road links, especially at Melling and Petone. Need more temporary and permanent solutions to get the traffic flowing all times of the day down the Petone foreshore. For example better monitoring for compliance of the bus/taxi lane and updated timing to match the traffic flow. Cameras would be a great start.
- Seems a shame to be talking about cross valley links which need substantial government support. It isn't there.

- Too much focus on roads in the integrated transport plan. Instead of a cross valley link (which will encourage more cars, pollute and quickly become congested) - how about we look at extending the railway into sea view and other areas.
- Melling link is massive
- Money must be spent on infrastructure before anything else. If infill housing is to be considered the upgrading of sewer, stormwater and water pipes must be carried out by the developer. Infill housing is overloading existing infrastructure.

General/Other

- Support housing and ratepayers through the 4 r's should be the key for this 10yr plan. The four R's are - Rubbish, Road(Active Transport), Reticulation (3 waters) and Recreation). Get these sorted out first without large rate increases.
- Prioritise a plastic recycling plant
- I am delighted with the priorities - they focus on both the immediate needs and long term environment and climate needs.
- I feel that even though they were all important, some of the key priorities were more so than others but there was no way to show that in this feedback form.
- Overall, the categories are too vague, and are not helpful: investing in infrastructure could mean anything from climate-damaging projects like the Cross Valley Link (which will induce increased driving demand) to positive and necessary water, flood protection or walking and cycling infrastructure.
- It is difficult to argue these are all important. However, it comes down to how we achieve them and their relative affordability
- Please continue to keep improving and beautifying Petone Esplanade. Not with sculptures, but with upgraded paths, rest areas and picnic and BBQ zones. This has to be one of the most widely used areas/resources in Lower Hutt. Beautifying this area will and can be appreciated by hundreds if not thousands of people each week and is still a major draw card to Petone.
- Stop increasing rates more than the rate of inflation. Exorbitant increases like this year's and forcing rate payers to pay extra for rubbish removal from next year is totally out of order in the current climate. Stop spending money on nice to haves and concentrate on reducing core costs for "essential" products and services.
- The above points are all important and are priorities and most are mandated by the various pieces of legislation that Local Government operates under.
- The proposed rates increase is too high.
- Think you've covered the right areas of priorities. However it's disappointing that the "method" of implementing one area (environment) has had a direct detrimental impact on another area (encouraging local business).
- This seems like a push-poll that is trying to get me to say everything is a priority, so I had to think harder about what might actually be meant. For example, while I support financial sustainability in practice I would rather the debt limit be raised than us having rate increases or worse cuts to council services.
- Your survey is overly simplistic - of course all those things are priorities in a functioning city.

Comments relating to what was missing from the priorities

30 respondents left comments about what they felt was missing.

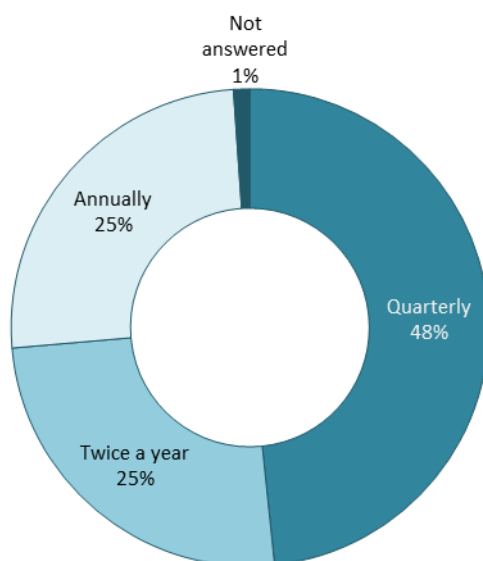
- A focus on water safety and teaching Tamariki of the Hutt community vital water safety skills. It would be great if they had the opportunity to learn water skills for life as kids in other areas of the Wellington region do
- A modern public transport system, with trains and busses on the same payment scheme (not cash!) and busses linking with the train timetable.
- Addressing rising sea levels must be a priority (may already be included in one of the above?)
- Plan for a different mind-set about transport - and while you're at it, reconsider rubbish and recycling incentives to reduce overall waste
- Attracting big business headquarters to the Hutt. Reducing crime. Reopen the tunnel under the Wainuiomata Hill, either for traffic or for walking. Could be an opportunity for tourism.
- Climate change resilience.
- Detail about the direction of investment within each category.
- Does the Council provide a Financial Statement to the public? Would be good to see how our rates are spent. Might also get more support when rates increases are announced as we can see it is necessary.
- Focusing on building suitable arts spaces for the community especially performing arts spaces in key areas like Naenae - like Te Oro music arts centre in Auckland, with purpose built theatres especially as little theatre is out of action. We need spaces for our rangatahi to grow and express themselves in the arts. This is critical and lacking in our city.
- Future rising sea levels affecting roading, housing, water bores, businesses. What is your response to this?
- Given the broadness of the headings, not really. These hit the key issues. However, I think trying to achieve them all is not possible. There is some significant tensions playing out in the priorities and it would be better to do two or three really well, rather than missing on all 6.
- HCC needs to seriously think about its long term plan for cemeteries; we cannot rely on Akatarawa cemetery forever.
- Houses will be uninsured in the next 15 years what is the council doing about this
- Housing affordability, not just housing supply, needs to be considered. I am sick of investors buying up local properties that previously would have been purchased by first home owners. How will property developments be made accessible to first home owners? You can't "connect communities" if the properties being bought locally are being purchased by investors who have no investment in the local community.
- How do we exploit the Petone to Ngauranga cycleway being built and the huge growth in Ebikes? Feeder routes to this cycleway or grants to get people an e bike?
- I would like to see the arts - especially the performing arts - play a big role in the "attractive city" goal.
- Investing in high-tech (such as big data and the internet of things) is also a priority for Lower Hutt's beautiful future. We need to develop a high-tech industry (may focus on one area) as a backbone of Hutt's economy in the future. Beautiful people create a great city. Investing in better education is also always the priority for Lower Hutt.
- Investing in young people should be a priority.
- It would be great to include public art in priority four and community based art investment in priority 5. There is lots of evidence to back up the efficacy of the arts in building strong communities and attractive cities that people want to visit and live in

<https://www.creativenz.govt.nz/development-and-resources/advocacy-toolkit/the-evidence-for-advocacy#rejuvenates>

- Nothing generally - but would be interested in seeing more of the detailed implementation methodology to achieve the final targets.
- Please give Incentives and help home owners to install water tanks for drought times. Remove taxes and city council fees for water tank installation.
- Please sort out Melling exchange
- The city should leverage its relationships with the local iwi and promote the use of te reo Maori along with other initiatives to showcase the diversity of the resident population.
- The detail
- The new proposed bird sanctuary next to Wainuiomata. I'm excited about this idea and am keen for the council to support it.
- Transport - especially SH2 into the city, by car.
- Try to reduce the rates bill not increase it.
- You are not doing enough about active transport. The increasing population you forecast will be gridlocked without the ability to get around. The cross valley link is certainly a missing piece of the puzzle - but to avoid gridlock on most of our already congested arterial routes we need a "transformational" mode shift to public transport and active transport modes.
- Your priorities mention the investment in the Eastern Bays and Riverlink shared paths. These are "orphaned" projects unless they are part of a fully connected and attractive cycle network, underpinned by a district plan and active promotion which aims to make active transport the easy choice. This requires a commitment from council to not only produce strategies and plans - but to resource delivery. This has been your weak link in the past. Sadly, your long term plan does not fix this weak link.
- Within the investing in infrastructure priority, focus continues to be on new shared paths but a new project is required (of greater priority) to leverage the benefits of these by integrating shared paths with schools and shopping areas. In particular the area between Waterloo station and Hutt CBD (area encompassed by Woburn Rd, High St, Waterloo Rd and Pohutukawa St) has potential for massive benefits. We're increasing population so we need to get this right to avoid stacking on further congestion.
- The fact that those priorities are inter-linked and dependent. I believe there is insufficient future environmental context being applied to this planning for this next decade; a decade that will be framed by how quickly we manage to reduce our overall environmental footprint - not just as a Council, but as a city, a country, a world.

Reporting on the LTP and priorities

Nearly half of those who responded to the online survey would like to see progress reported quarterly. The other half of respondents were split between twice yearly and annual reporting.



A few respondents left comments relating to reporting on progress once the LTP has been adopted.

Workshop (face-to-face) feedback

Attendees agreed with the priority areas and welcomed the early information sharing. They offered several ideas and were keen to hear more in the New Year once the consultation document was finalised.

The wording of one theme did not resonate with some and a suggested change was put forward; change from “supporting an innovative, agile economy and attractive city” to “supporting an innovative, agile economy and inviting city”. It was felt the word ‘attractive’ suggested clean, beautiful buildings and parks rather than a city that was welcoming and inviting to business.

Ideas by theme from workshop participants

An innovative agile economy and attractive city

- Look into Tearfund / microfunding / microbusiness opportunities
- Sharing skills sessions
- Business planning in hubs for start-ups / new businesses / people thinking about starting up a business e.g. info on gst, companies register, legal requirements, how to be an employer / team leader / manager
- Spaces (e.g. Naenae) that allow for co-operative working and partnerships to form and potentially could sell products from

Financial sustainability

- Don't bog children and students with debt, we don't want to bog down Council
- Does the consolidated fund still exist? Council should be putting money aside

Increase housing supply

- Need to facilitate tiny homes – the time on property and number allowed on a property; look at rules and regulations around leasing land
- We don't have enough housing but solution needs to come from local and central working together
- Need to look not only at greenfield development but also at opportunities to turn commercial into residential

Connecting communities

- Forms and rules around use of parks and reserves are a pain point and barrier to community partnerships
- Need a retain creative communities partnership fund – increase funding to increase partnerships
- Free entry to pools for your under 14, or college and below
- Several groups who could assist in getting the LTP message out to the community where suggested: St. David's, Wainuiomata Women's Group, Team Naenae and, Christians against poverty

Caring for and protecting our environment

- How effective is house solar power? – can they be partly subsidised?
- Street bins – what happens to them under upcoming changes? Why not a recycling option at these?
- Rainwater collection needs to be a requirement for new developments – incentivise their inclusion and use
- Turbines technology needs to be investigated – use the power from the Hutt River
- Mine the landfill rather than not having one

Investing in infrastructure

- What technology is Wellington Water using or looking into using? Need to ensure the best solutions are being considered
- Naenae Pool – is there a lightweight option?
- Need to show the problems at Naenae Pool on a video: "seeing is believing".

Other

- The 'tomorrow' on the advertising for the workshops need to be complimented with the actual day and date
- Council should employ a videographer for large projects so people can see the progress being made
- The agendas for Council meetings needs to be in plain English, use consistent language and font, and have images and pictures added where relevant. They need to be easier to read and easier to find.