

**Wellington Regional Strategy Submissions**  
**Greater Wellington Regional Council.**  
**Freepost 3156 Wellington.**

Wellington Regional Strategy:

Submission from the Kapiti Coast Chamber of Commerce

The Kapiti Coast Chamber of Commerce represents the business sector on the Kapiti Coast and has approximately 150 members.

The Kapiti Coast Chamber generally supports the Wellington Chamber of Commerce submission.

We believe that more time is required to plan the strategy properly, that representation and involvement at a top level of the relevant sectors that will drive the areas of opportunity is paramount to any success.

**A. Chamber supports strategy growth goal:** The Chamber supports a Wellington Regional Growth Strategy and shares the goal of increasing the region's annual growth rate to 4% a year.

**B. Strategy itself needs more work:** The strategy as presented is not yet robust enough to generate 4% growth per annum. It would benefit from more work on how this level of growth and how some of the worthy goals of the strategy are to be achieved

**C. Chamber willing to assist:** We would be very willing to increase our resource to assist with additional work.

**D. Funding basis a start, but needs further thought:** We suggest that it is premature to take decisions on the level of rates increase (or decrease) needed to achieve the goals of this strategy. We suggest that once the strategy is clearer all funding options will be considered beyond just increasing rates. This is an issue that the Chamber as a major stakeholder wishes to discuss further.

We believe that it is important that all Communities are involved and that a concerted effort will be required to incorporate their concerns.

**E. Business community wants its say:** The business community expects a full say in how its strategy contributions are spent. If the business community is asked to contribute over 50% of the costs of implementing the strategy we would expect a commensurate level of representation at the top level.

**F. Development committee makeup to be merit based:** We suggest a strategy development committee for Wellington that is transparently selected by using merit based selection criteria that includes (among other things) members collectively having experience in the main sectors relevant to the Wellington regional economy. Local Government would not have the majority of votes in such a committee.

**G. Key initiatives deserve most focus:** We propose that any strategy should be based around a small number of key initiatives that go well beyond business as usual, and should be a product of the key interests that have the potential to grow rapidly. Early success in a stage one will be essential to develop buy in on an ongoing basis – this will not happen if the targets are too wide.

**H. Strategy detail before establishment action:** We also feel that it is premature to take any decisions on the establishment of an economic development agency for the region, before a decision is taken the detail of the strategy. A number of specialist EDA's might be a better way forward than one large EDA.

**I. Performance analysis of possible value:** While we support much of what is being proposed as the way forward in this strategy, we believe a detailed analysis of why we have performed so badly relative to the rest of New Zealand in recent years, might be useful.

**K. More emphasis on existing businesses:** There needs to be more emphasis than is in the documents on keeping existing business in Wellington. Keeping the major employers in the region, and encouraging them to grow their businesses is going to be just as important for our economic future as growing new businesses or encouraging new businesses to relocate to Wellington.

**L. More economic data required:** There seems to be a scarcity of economic data provided in the strategy document. It is hard to develop a properly formed economic development strategy on the basis of the very general information provided.

**M. Local authority contributions:** We are surprised that there is relatively little focus on those things that Local authorities can actually deliver in this strategy – e.g. efficiencies created by amalgamation of various authorities, infrastructure, and business friendly rates rises.

The debt to asset level is low and there is potential to borrow for major infrastructural initiatives.

**N. Port and shipping:** We welcome the focus on air links, but wonder why there is relatively little focus on the regional port and on shipping issues. For example, a major efficiency gain would be achieved for the Wellington region if a new port were to be developed at Clifford Bay across the strait. This is not mentioned.

**O. More involvement for the economic players:** The Centres of Excellence concept/proposals leave the impression that centralised planning can select the targets and lead the charge. Excellence is driven by risk taking and entrepreneurial behaviour. This must be supported by the right environment and infrastructure. The economic players need to be the ones that set and drive the agenda, rather than some well-meaning working party and regional politicians.

The Kapiti area long term development opportunities rely on a vastly improved transport system of roading and rail along with future water infrastructure in the future.

Opportunities in Telecommunications, Computer hub, logistics and the development of Kapiti Airport into a regional airport are seen as immediate goals for our area.

Thank you.

Mike Olsen,  
Chairman.