

Executive Summary

This summary highlights the key issues outlined in each chapter of the State of Waitakere City report. An understanding of the social, natural and economic environment and the links between them gives a total picture of our City.

The key messages are:

1. The way we have been doing things must continue to improve if we are to be a truly sustainable City.
2. Waitakere City is very close to being great at business, arts and culture, and planning our City well.
3. There are lots of little things that are having a cumulative effect, from local groups managing weeds to paved driveways adding to stormwater runoff.
4. There are choices that each of us makes about the way we deal with each other (e.g. noise), property (e.g. graffiti), local economy (e.g. buy local), and the natural environment (e.g. pollution).

● SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Who lives in Waitakere



Over the last 10 years Waitakere City's population growth rate has been the second highest out of the six largest cities in New Zealand..

Key issues:

- The population of Waitakere City at March 2001 was 168,750.
- A third of residents are under the age of twenty.
- Waitakere City is becoming increasingly ethnically diverse with 38% of the population identifying as non-European.

Maori Community



61% of Maori leaving Waitakere City schools in 2000 had gained a school qualification, and 39% left school with no qualifications.

Key issues:

- 21,390 people in Waitakere City identified as Maori in the 2001 census (13.4%).
- Maori in Waitakere City have better employment and income statistics than Maori elsewhere in New Zealand.
- Maori in Waitakere City have high rates of infant mortality and low birth weight babies.

City Wellbeing



76.2% of school leavers aged 15 or over had gained a school qualification in 2000.

Key issues:

- Waitakere City has a relatively high level of social needs.
- 57% of children attend low decile schools (1-4) in the City.
- Only 13% of residents' overnight stays at hospitals were local in 1999/2000.
- 31% of homes were rented in 2001 (compared to 25% in 1996).

Arts and Culture



There were 2,045 workers (full time equivalents) in creative industries in Waitakere City in 2000. This represents 4.7% of all jobs, against a national average of 3.8%.

Key issues:

- Diversity of cultures and languages.
- Only 25% of artists are paid spending more than half their working hours on their artistic/cultural practice.

Democracy and Community Participation



34% of residents say they have a reasonable or good understanding of the local Council's decision-making process.

Key issues:

- Lack of understanding of and involvement in the democratic processes – only 38% voter turnout at local elections.
- 27% of residents feel they don't belong to any community. 51% of residents have connections to community of interest, compared to 22% with connections where they live.
- Under-representation of minority ethnic groups on school boards and the Council.

City form and design



There are 12.2 properties per hectare in the Urban Living environments and 19.9 properties per hectare in Community environments at June 2001.

Key issues:

- The population of Waitakere City is expected to double by 2050, with pressures on the environment and transport systems.
- There is a need for local employment, higher density of housing and efficient use of resources to accommodate the expected population and business growth.

Heritage (Social)



207 heritage sites and 28 archaeological sites are listed in the Proposed District Plan at June 2001

Key issues:

- Heritage and archaeological sites require on-going guardianship and protection.
- Conservation plans and maintenance programmes are not in place for most of the City's heritage buildings.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Treaty of Waitangi



Key issues:

- The two iwi with mana whenua (customary authority) in Waitakere City are Ngati Whatua and Te Kawerau a Maki. They have the obligations of manaakitanga (caring for the people) and are guardians of the natural environment.
- Resource management arrangements are in place and iwi issues are identified and starting to be addressed.
- The partnership between Iwi and the Council is a developing relationship.

The State of our Air



Levels of fine particulates (less than 0.01 mm) in Lincoln Rd exceeded health standards for 7 days in the 2000 calendar year.

Key issues:

- 90% of residents believe it is important to maintain clean air.
- Carbon dioxide and CFCs have effects on global warming and the ozone hole.
- Carbon monoxide and fine particulates can affect human health.
- Other issues are air visibility, spray drift and noise.
- Motor vehicle emissions are the major contributor to air pollution.

The State of our Water



Domestic water consumption shows a downward trend, with 192 litres per person per day in Waitakere City in 2001/02.

Key issues:

- The Swanson, Opanuku, Oratia and Avondale Streams all flood properties in the lower, urban parts of their catchments.
- Most of the streams in the lower urban areas have poor ecological quality.
- The costs of maintaining and operating the City's water and wastewater systems are predicted to rise steeply as the systems age.

The State of our Land



Key issues:

- New development can contribute to soil loss and soil degradation through earth moving, stormwater runoff, removal of vegetation and covering of soils.
- Former landfill sites are at risk of causing soil contamination if not properly managed.
- Flooding is the most significant natural hazard in the City due to the slopes of the Waitakere Ranges.

The State of our Biodiversity



In some areas of the Tamaki Ecological District, up to 30% of the vegetation has been lost in the seven-year period between 1993 & 2000.

Key issues:

- The key threats to biodiversity are habitat loss and fragmentation, and introduced plant and animal pests.
- Other concerns relate to stream water quality and the ability to support life.

The State of our Landscape



98% of residents believe it is important to have programmes to protect bush and wildlife areas and to take an active interest in the natural world around them.

Key issues:

- Landscape values have changed over time with intensive development.
- Landscape needs to reflect the history of the area and the spiritual significance to local iwi.
- Design, location and scale of development needs to take into account landscape values.
- Outstanding landscape features and natural bush need to be protected.

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Economic Development



51% of Waitakere City workers work inside Waitakere City.

(From a survey of a sample of residents in June 2001).

Key issues:

- Waitakere City accounts for 15% of the Auckland Region's population, but generates only 8% of the region's gross domestic product and jobs.
- 18% of the City's businesses import goods from overseas, while only 12% export goods.
- Most Waitakere businesses rate Waitakere as a "good" place to operate a business (67%).

Industries and Businesses



Annual growth in gross domestic product in Waitakere City to March 2001 declined by nearly 3.0%. The outlook for the economy is a growth at a slow by steady rate.

Key issues:

- From 1996 to 2001 there has been an increase of 1,827 businesses in the City (an increase of 20% over that period).
- Businesses in Waitakere City are generally small, with 88% employing fewer than 6 people.
- However, larger businesses account for nearly a quarter of the jobs in Waitakere City.
- 90% of businesses in the City are in the services sector and 10% in the manufacturing sector.

Work and Income



Average hourly earnings of Waitakere residents workers (irrespective of where they work) was \$15.81 in 1999.

Key issues:

- Around half the workforce commutes outside Waitakere City, mostly to Auckland City.
- Only half of 15 to 65 year olds are in full time employment.
- Nearly half the work force have no educational qualifications.
- The present workforce is predominantly aged 20 to 59, but in future the proportion of over-50's is expected to increase substantially, leading to greater demand for part-time and volunteer work.

Business Clusters



There were over 1,172 jobs (full-time equivalents) directly employed in the wine, boat building and film industries in Waitakere City in 2000. This represented 2.7% of total employment in the City.

Key issues:

- Marine and film clusters have begun to emerge in Waitakere City.
- Interaction, rivalry and cooperation need to be encouraged to gain the benefits of a cluster.
- The Council's recognition of clusters in its regulatory approach can significantly affect the development of clusters.

Transport and Communication



4,030 kilometres travelled by motor vehicle per resident on the City's roads (including the motorway) in 2000.

Key issues:

- Reliance on the motor vehicle as the main means of transport, plus an increase in trip lengths.
- Low use of passenger transport – only 7% of residents use passenger transport services on a daily basis.
- Motor vehicle use causes pollution and injuries.
- Emerging communication infrastructure is creating a gap between the information rich and information poor
- 83% of Waitakere City businesses and 41% of residents had access to the Internet in 2001.

Energy, Resources and Waste



A downwards trend in solid waste generation, 154.0kg per resident in 2000/01.

Key issues:

- Waitakere City imports almost all its energy, and most of its other resources, with the one exception of water.
- Residual waste is disposed to the Redvale landfill outside of the City.
- Less than 1% of household waste collected is hazardous.
- There was 7.5kg of litter/illegal dumping per resident in 2000/01.