



Phone 04 463 7406
Fax 04 463 6990
Email president@vuwsa.org.nz

NAME	Submission to Wellington City Council's Draft Long Term Plan 2015-25
PREPARED FOR	Wellington City Council
PREPARED BY	VUWSA Executive
DATE	17/04/2015

Contents:

1. Introduction
2. Executive Summary
3. A Longer Airport Runway
4. Inner City Regeneration
5. Revitalise the Civic Square Precinct
6. Reigniting Public Space
7. New and Improved Venues
8. Improved Management of Key Infrastructure
9. Use Smart Technology
10. Real Transport Choices
11. Further Comments
12. Contact



Phone 04 463 7406
Fax 04 463 6990
Email president@vuwsa.org.nz

1. Introduction

1.1 The Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association (VUWSA) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the Wellington City Council's Draft Long Term Plan for 2015-25. We are also interested in arranging to make an oral submission.

1.2 VUWSA is the oldest students' association in New Zealand and functions to represent and advocate for the interests of Victoria University of Wellington's 22, 000 students.

1.3 VUWSA acknowledges that the students of Wellington's largest university directly contribute at least \$610 million to the City's economy and rating base annually. Students are also an invaluable part of the Wellington community and contribute strongly to Wellington's vibrant and dynamic culture.

1.4 VUWSA acknowledges that Wellington as a city is a primary reason that prospective students choose to study at Victoria, and that students value the city very highly.

1.5 VUWSA notes the importance of the consideration of students' needs in the WCC Ten Year Plan due to Victoria's goal of doubling the number of students in the next 20-30 years. Students have historically been an integral part of Wellington and looking to the future will continue to hold this place.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 VUWSA commends WCC for direction taken in the Long Term Plan. VUWSA recognizes that the 'invest for growth' strategy will be positive for our students and university community as a whole. The plan shows an exciting future for Wellington residents.

2.2 Our substantive feedback is in regard to the inclusion of the introduction of a Rental Warrant of Fitness into the plan and a definitive move to uphold the Council's commitment in 2014 to become a Living Wage employer.

2.3 Further comment is included on the runway extension project, improved management on key infrastructure, use of smart technology, and real transport choices.

2.4 VUWSA applauds the fantastic support of WCC for the introduction of Fairer Fares for tertiary students in Wellington. The support WCC has shown despite the primary responsibility of introducing and funding the concession being held by the Greater Wellington Regional Council is indicative of strong leadership and a real value of students.

3. A Longer Airport Runway

3.1 VUWSA contests the proposed investment in an extended airport runway at Wellington Airport. It is noted that a primary justification of funding the project is that it



Phone 04 463 7406
Fax 04 463 6990
Email president@vuwsa.org.nz

is expected to contribute to the region's ability to attract international students. While VUWSA welcomes the interest in international students' interests, we contest that direct flights are likely to substantially impact the number of international students drawn to the city.

3.2 VUWSA notes that the Ernst & Young (2014) report has been contested by the Board of Airline Representatives New Zealand (BARNZ) on the grounds of the recent EY study that revealed that direct connections overseas is not a significant contributing factor to choices made by prospective international students. On that basis, further robust analysis is needed to substantiate claims that the project will result in significantly more international students.

3.3 VUWSA also notes that housing quality and transport cost are the key recurring issues that international students face during their time in Wellington. There is significant scope for the WCC to invest the \$90 million dollars planned for the runway extension in living conditions for students during their studies which is a noted key factor affecting choice of institution for international students.

3.4 VUWSA also notes that EY (2014) report neglects to mention or analyse the impact increasing flights will have on the city's carbon emissions or the impact of climate change on the airport's long term viability. Hence VUWSA worries that it, if developed, it may become a 'stranded asset' when there are other priorities (as mentioned in 3.3) which we believe will have a more immediate positive impact on students in the region and support long term sustainability objectives.

4. Inner City Regeneration

4.1 VUWSA echoes Victoria's call for more affordable private sector accommodation to increase availability of flats for students in Wellington central. The lack of availability of quality, affordable accommodation for students is of great concern to VUWSA and a year-on-year issue that is expected to worsen upon the enactment of Victoria's strategic plan that seeks to double the number of students over the next 20-30 years. The expected 5700 new homes from the Victoria Street, Adelaide Road, and Kent/Cambridge Terraces redevelopment provide a good starting point for this.

4.2 As such, VUWSA encourages the purview of an urban development agency to incentivise commercial investment in housing to the extent that it may begin to resolve this issue.

4.3 VUWSA notes the absence of a commitment to introduce a Rental Warrant of Fitness initiative in Wellington. A Rental Warrant of Fitness would ensure that students can live in homes that are insulated, dry, and healthy while they study. Housing in Wellington is a significant issue for a number of Victoria students and as such this would be a meaningful step towards solving an ongoing and significant issue.

4.4 We commend and appreciate the support for this initiative historically from the councillors, and particularly commend Mayor Celia Wade-Brown for her promise to work on this project at the 2013 VUWSA Healthy Homes forum. A definitive move to



Phone 04 463 7406
Fax 04 463 6990
Email president@vuwsa.org.nz

ensure this project comes to fruition in the Long Term Plan would give a meaningful indicator that the WCC will be proceeding with the introduction of the warrant.

4.5 VUWSA notes that the timing for such a move is optimum considering the recent voting down of Phil Twyford's Healthy Homes Guarantee Bill by central government.

5. Revitalise the Civic Square Precinct

5.1 VUWSA supports the proposed plan to revitalize and strengthen the Civic Square through the establishment of a national music hub. Our students value the opportunity to perform in the city and embed their connections here through attending events around Wellington.

5.2 VUWSA notes particular support for collaboration between the WCC and Victoria University in ensuring the space is available for use for students to record in.

6. Reigniting our sense of place

6.1 VUWSA shares Victoria's concerns about student safety around the city. It is an issue of particular importance to us, and the inadequacy of or lack of street lighting is a particular problem that has been raised by students at Victoria on numerous occasions. VUWSA fully supports the Council's plan to improve of public spaces and make Wellington City a safer environment.

6.2 VUWSA supports the Council's intention to work on increasing economic and pedestrian activity in lanes and streets in the CBD. Wellington can improve its position as a student friendly city by increasing the vibrancy of its inner city spaces.

7. New and Improved Venues

7.1 VUWSA supports the WCC in its consideration of available events for music events, but considers that the proposal to create an 8000 – 12, 000 seat venue a move to fill the wrong gap in the city.

7.2 The lack of venues in Wellington that can host between 1000 and 5000 people has been a problem for VUWSA historically, particularly during Orientation Week. The TSB Arena is uneconomical to use and the Michael Fowler Centre serves specific, more formal needs.

7.3 VUWSA recommends that the WCC explore the options for creating a smaller scale venue before committing to a large scale arena. We suggest that this is done through a process of consultation with other interested parties.

8. Improved management of key infrastructure for greater efficiency and better environmental and social outcomes

8.1 VUWSA shares Victoria's desire for collaboration between the council and the University about the impact of climate change on the city. It is to the benefit of students, particularly young people, to have local climate change research as advanced as possible, in order to best equip us for mitigation and adaptation. VUWSA wishes to assist

this collaboration where beneficial, and work with both groups to communicate this research and increase awareness about climate change among the student body.

8.2 VUWSA supports the introduction of real time monitoring of the storm water content, and acknowledges that preserving the cleanliness of our oceans by minimising harmful waste flowing to sea is highly important.

8.3 VUWSA supports the commitment by Council on the need to prepare our city for the effects of climate change. The large portion of young people that make up our student body have a vested interest in effective adaption, as those who will bear the impact of climate change in decades to come. Ensuring the protection of Victoria's low lying Pipitea campus against sea level rise is of obvious particular importance to students.

9. Use Smart Technology Reduce energy use, make streets safer, and make parking easier

9.1 VUWSA supports Victoria's position on the investment in LED street lighting for Wellington's footpaths and streets. Both for the energy saving and increased light output benefits resulting in safer spaces, the proposition of LED lighting is an extremely positive one. VUWSA also supports Victoria's call for a specific budget on this initiative to be included in the Long-Term Plan. We would also like to reiterate our comments from 5.1 and note that there also needs to be improvements in lighting coverage to ensure all key areas and pathways used by students are well lit.

10. Real transport choices for an efficient, sustainable, and safe transport network.

10.1 VUWSA shares WCC's view that Wellington's transport network currently supports private vehicle transport more effectively than other modes such as buses or bikes, and notes that private vehicle transport is not a realistic travel option for most students due to cost, congestion, lack of parking space.

10.1 VUWSA shares Victoria University's disappointment in the Greater Wellington City Council's decision to remove route 18 from the bus network. This route served as transport to and from University for many students.

10.2 We are extremely pleased with WCC's decision to contribute to the funding of reduced public transport for students, on the back of VUWSA's Fairer Fares campaign. Particular mention is required, of the Council's efforts on this despite the provision of Public Transport primarily being the responsibility of the Greater Wellington City Council. The Council's ability to see the bigger picture on this issue and appreciate the significant benefits it will provide to Wellington City, is highly commendable.

10.3 VUWSA supports WCC's continued commitment to improving cycle infrastructure in Wellington City. We wish to emphasise that more people cycling means reducing emissions, reducing congestion on our roads, improving the liveability of our streets and improving health. We also wish to emphasise the benefits that separated cycleways have on people's likelihood to cycle, as identified in Wellington City



Phone 04 463 7406
Fax 04 463 6990
Email president@vuwsa.org.nz

Council's 2014 survey, and that cycleways to, from, and between University campuses would mean more students on bikes.

10.4 VUWSA supports WCC's commitment to improving particular areas of high congestion in the bus network. Both areas identified - Kent and Cambridge Terraces and Adelaide Rd, are on the routes of many students traveling to, from, and between campuses.

11. Further Comments

11.1 VUWSA is supportive of the WCC's notion of bringing Wellington Zoo and Museum Trust staff on to a Living Wage. We are also great supporters of the Council's 2014 commitment to become a living wage employer and implore that this commitment is upheld through paying all directly employed staff, and those employed in CCOs and by contractors a Living Wage. VUWSA also encourages the council to ensure the pay-rate is updated consistently to match the Living Wage rate as determined annually.

12. Contact

We would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss submission in more detail in person. Please contact us in the event further clarification of this submission is needed, or to arrange for VUWSA to make an oral submission.

Rick Zwaan | President

Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association

| M: 021 188 1705 | DDI: 04 463 6986

| E: rick.zwaan@vuw.ac.nz | president@vuwsa.org.nz

| W: www.vuwsa.org.nz

Level 4, Student Union Building

Victoria University of Wellington Kelburn Campus

PO Box 600, Wellington 6140.