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Committee Wellington Regional Strategy Committee  
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## WRS Office Activities Update

### 1. Purpose

To provide an update on activities and current priorities of the WRS office, including an update on WRS council-led projects.

### 2. WRS Office update

#### 2.1 Appointment of team Leader

At the February WRS Committee meeting it was noted that the process of appointing the full time Team Leader role for the WRS Office was underway.

An appointment is confirmed with Melanie Thornton to take up the WRS Office Team Leader role from mid April.

Melanie brings a broad range of experience to the role. Most recently she was the programme coordinator for climate change office ICLEI Oceania, working with local government and other stakeholders. Previously she has held presenter/producer roles with Radio New Zealand, as well as having undertaken research and investigative roles for organisations such as the previous N.Z. Commission for the Environment, and Victorian Ministry of Arts.

Melanie's position will replace the Project Director role that Graham Spargo has held for the past 3 years. A "hand-over" period is planned to ensure a smooth transition. The contribution Graham has made to the WRS project has been very significant and this will be recognised in an appropriate way prior to him leaving the role.

#### 2.2 Work Programme

Over the March quarter the WRS office has had its major focus on establishing the work programme for the non-Grow Wellington elements of the WRS. This has included discussion with Grow Wellington around alignment with their task planning and reporting setup, and with council partners who are leading

aspects of the 'Good Regional Form' section of the WRS. An update on the projects is provided at **Attachment 1**.

Work is also progressing on the GPI (genuine progress indicator framework), and the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol.

### **2.3 New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (NZUDP)**

One of the main WRS actions relating to the NZUDP is that each council in the Wellington region signs up to the protocol. Hutt City Council has just been acknowledged as the 105th signatory to the Protocol.

The WRS office has met with officers from those councils who have yet to sign up to the protocol. Feedback obtained from these meetings indicated that information from the WRS Office would be helpful to assist understanding the implications of signing up to the protocol, and particularly the level of detail required for action plans. The WRS office has met with officials from Ministry of the Environment to obtain resourcing materials, and is currently working with these councils to achieve the WRS action by 30 June 2008.

#### **Genuine Progress Indicators (GPI) Framework**

The WRS office has been reviewing literature and methodologies associated with GPI as background to developing a GPI framework. The GPI will measure progress with the WRS across the economic, environmental, social and cultural sectors of the region. We are very fortunate to have secured two workshops with Dr Ron Colman from Canada on Thursday 22 April 2008 (one governance level session and one for officers / technical level).

Ron Colman has spent the last 12 years working on the development of a GPI for Nova Scotia and was commissioned by the NZ Ministry of Social Development in 2004 to write a report "Insights for New Zealand." He is considered an international leader in the field of GPI.

The governance level workshop will be a formal presentation on GPI including a background; where and how it is being used internationally; what difference GPI can make in the Wellington region, how it is used in practice, and how the results are best communicated. There will also be an opportunity for questions and answers.

Also of note is that as part of the Auckland region's endeavours around economic development and sustainability issues, work has been commissioned on investigating and developing a GPI framework for their circumstances. The WRS Office is exploring scope for collaboration.

### **2.4 Stakeholder engagement matters.**

The March quarter activities of the WRS office focused on:

- meeting council officers about council led aspects of the WRS including visits to Upper Hutt, Kapiti Coast, South Wairarapa, Carterton and Masterton District Councils

- interaction with Grow Wellington officials particularly around task plan reporting to ensure consistent reporting across the WRS projects, and telling the region's story
- interaction with central government partners including Department of Labour and Ministry of Social Development associated with the Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy
- meeting with Ministry for the Environment officials to canvass climate change initiatives at the central government level and to ensure that WRS work in this area is aligned accordingly
- meeting with Positively Wellington Tourism to discuss various WRS actions around tourism including the long-haul strategy and telling the regions story
- attending and presenting at the Combined Wairarapa Council meeting (20 March)

Stakeholder engagement activities will continue over the next quarter including the development of the communications and engagement plan for the implementation phase of the WRS.

## **2.5 Progress on WRS Council led projects (regional form actions)**

An update on the council-led projects was requested at the last committee meeting (see **Attachment 1** for details).

In summary the following regional form projects are currently being progressed:

- **Centre Plans and Big Box Retail - led by Wellington City Council**
  - Developing regionally consistent principles for managing big box retail depots and understanding and aligning the visions of individual centres
- **Industrial Land - led by Hutt City Council**
  - Undertaking a regional stocktake of supply and demand of industrial land using a common methodology and further investigating factors that affect supply and demand
- **Intensification / Infill Development - led by Wellington City Council**
  - Undertaking a regional stocktake of housing supply, intensification and infill overlays for each of the districts/cities
- **Rural/Residential - led by Kapiti Coast District Council**
  - Developing regional principles to guide the development and release of sustainable residential development opportunities, and

development of regional tools to facilitate and guide rural residential developments

- **Affordable Housing - led by Wellington City Council**
  - Undertaking a regional analysis of housing affordability and housing needs
- **Open Space - led by Greater Wellington Regional Council**
  - Identifying gaps and opportunities to improve regional integration of public open space, and working towards an agreed region action plan for public open space management
- **Quality Subdivision Design - led by Kapiti Coast District Council**
  - Developing a template of best practice principles to guide rural residential developments

### **3. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.**
- 2. Notes the content of the report.**

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**Attachment 1: WRS Implementation Projects**