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Committee       Wellington Regional Strategy Committee  
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                      Regional Strategy

## Wellington Regional Open Spaces Project

### 1. Purpose of report

To provide an overview and progress update of a “Good Regional Form” project that is being led by the Wellington Regional Strategy Office and Greater Wellington - Regional Open Spaces.

### 2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002.

### 3. Background

Page 36 of the Wellington Regional Strategy document identifies that:

*“Quality open spaces are fundamental to world-class cities and regions. There are opportunities to improve the open space network and to gain economic benefits from these assets.”*

Open spaces provide a wide-ranging contribution to the promotion of individual and community health and social inclusion assisting with economic prosperity. Four of the WRS community outcomes link to a quality regional open space network. These include:

- Healthy Community
- Sense of Place
- Quality Lifestyle
- Healthy Environment

The Regional Policy Statement also recognises the importance of compact, well designed sustainable regional form through integrated public open spaces.

The Open Space project is part of the work being done to ensure there is an investment in good regional form. By identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in our public space network, this action area will help to identify where greatest regional benefit could be gained through collective action.

It should be noted that Greater Wellington Regional Council's Parks department is currently reviewing the role of regional parks. This is a separate project, but will help to inform the development of a strategy for the regional open space network.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for this project has been signed off by the Senior Officers Resource Team (SORT), and the Chief Executives Group, and now the project is at the stage where it can be outlined to the WRS Committee.

See **Attachment 1** for full TOR.

#### **4. Regional Open Space working group**

The Open Spaces Working Group is a sub-group of SORT and is comprised of members representing the region's territorial authorities, Regional Council, Department of Conservation and Queen Elizabeth II Trust.

The working group is jointly led by Victoria McGregor (Wellington Regional Strategy Office), Murray Waititi and Bruce Geden (Greater Wellington).

The working group is being championed by David Benham, CEO of Greater Wellington Regional Council.

#### **5. Phased approach**

This project has been divided into two phases. The indicative timeline is below.

**Phase 1      By 30 June 2009:**

Development of a Wellington Regional Open Space Strategy to 2025

**Phase 2      By 31 October 2009:**

Investigate the development of a regional portal for public open space – to promote, educate, raise awareness of open spaces, accessibility and opportunities, and promote quality of life (for public use).

## 6. Open Space Definition and Vision

For the purpose of this project, *open space* is defined as:

*“Any area of land or body of water to which the public has physical and/or visual access.”*

The working group has developed a vision for the Wellington region open space network to 2025. This vision reads:

*“The Wellington region will provide its residents and visitors with a safe, convenient, appropriately maintained, linked and integrated regional open space network. This vision will provide opportunities for a wide range of leisure activities for residents and visitors, recognise the region’s rural and natural open space character, and contribute to the wellbeing of its communities.*

In particular, the vision will ensure that:

- 1. Members of the public are well informed about the Wellington regional open space network*
- 2. There is a coordinated approach for the development, management and protection of open space across the Wellington region*
- 3. The needs of the Wellington community are well met*
- 4. There is collaboration across partner organisations so that resources and solutions are shared and exchanged*
- 5. Opportunities and mechanisms to enhance the regional network are identified across the partner organisations*
- 6. A Wellington Regional Open Space Strategy will be in place with a realistic and achievable programme of action.”*

The vision will be implemented through voluntary participation of partner organisations namely: Greater Wellington Regional Council, Department of Conservation, Queen Elizabeth II Trust, Hutt City Council, Upper Hutt City Council, Kapiti Coast District Council, Porirua City Council, Wellington City Council, South Wairarapa District Council, Carterton District Council, Masterton District Council.

## 7. Regional Open Space Strategy

A Regional Open Space Strategy to 2025 will be developed. This strategy will be owned and monitored by the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee. The strategy aims to:

- Identify and recognise the scale, role, function and values of a regional open space network

- Develop a list of opportunities and priorities to better integrate and link the regional open spaces network in the future (management, planning, accessibility and public awareness)
- Promote the sharing of resources and collaboration across agencies in the management of open spaces across Wellington region (to assist with management and planning)
- Assist in promoting, educating, raising awareness of open spaces, accessibility and opportunities (for public use)
- Develop a programme of action - short-term (1 year), medium-term (2-3 years) and long-term (3-5 years)
- Establish a regional open space steering group to oversee the implementation of the strategy
- Develop a review process to monitor the successful implementation of the Wellington Regional Open Space Strategy
- Require all partner organisations open space strategies to take into account the vision and outcomes of the regional open space strategy

## 8. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Endorses the Terms of Reference for the Wellington Regional Strategy Open Spaces Working Group***

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

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**Attachment 1: Terms of Reference for the Wellington Regional Strategy Open Spaces Working Group**