

# Quality of Life in New Zealand's Largest Cities

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# Overview

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# Background

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- Began in 1999
- 6 cities (40% NZ population)
- 8 largest cities (46% NZ population)
- Focussed on the growing pressures on urban communities
- [www.bigcities.govt.nz](http://www.bigcities.govt.nz)

# Why are we monitoring?

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- Concern about the impacts of urbanisation
- Effects of this on the well-being of citizens
- Tool for advocacy on urban issues

To advocate for quality of life and sustainable development in the largest urban centres of NZ through applying indicators of social, environmental and economic and governance conditions.

- Aimed at central govt plus our own councils

# QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS

## **SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS**

Community Strength & Spirit  
Electronic Communication  
Quality of Life  
Diversity

## **CIVIL & POLITICAL RIGHTS**

Involvement in Decision Making  
Treaty of Waitangi  
Representation  
Voter Turnout

## **BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Look and Feel of the City  
Traffic and Transport  
City Green Space  
Public Transport  
Noise Pollution  
Graffiti

## **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Waste Management & Recycling  
Beach, Stream & Lake Water  
Drinking Water Quality  
Biodiversity  
Air Quality

## **KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS**

Suspensions & Stand-downs  
Early Childhood Education  
School Decile Ratings  
Community Education  
Qualification Levels

## **HOUSING**

Housing Costs and Affordability  
Government Housing Provision  
Urban Housing Intensification  
Household Crowding  
Household Tenure

## **HEALTH**

Mental Health & Wellbeing  
Modifiable Risk Factors  
Low Birth Weights  
Teenaged Parents  
Life Expectancy  
Infant Mortality  
Access to GPs  
Health Status  
Diseases

## **PEOPLE**

Families and Households  
Population growth  
Ethnicity  
Age

## **SAFETY**

Perceptions Of Safety  
Road Casualties  
Crime Levels  
Child Safety

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Growth in Businesses  
Building Consents  
Economic Growth  
Employment  
Retail Sales  
Tourism

## **ECONOMIC STANDARD OF LIVING**

Household Expenditure  
Social Deprivation  
Income  
Costs

# Method

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- Local, national, international best practice
- Alignment – locally and nationally
- Initial framework and broad indicator set
- Consultation on this and narrowing down
- Criteria applied
- Analysis by region, by city, by ward, by ethnicity, by age - to rest of NZ or whole of NZ for each indicator
- Looked for linkages - cause and effect - trends

# Data collection issues

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- Data availability (eg mental health)
- Lack of robust time series data
- Data age (e.g. Census is 5 yearly)
- Data Consistency
  - *Differences in definitions (eg graffiti count TA to TA)*
  - *Differences in the way TAs measure (eg open space)*
- Monitoring of long term trends
- Differences in geographical boundaries
- Cost of data

# How we used the information

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- Informs TA planning (LTCCP) & outcome measurement
- Framework for consistent monitoring
- Other TAs indicator programmes
- Looks at the 4 well beings in a holistic manner
- Supports LGA 2002 - measuring outcomes/collaboration
- Refocus LGNZ Metro Sector Group
- Informed the Metro Mayors policy programme
  - e.g. *transport, law and order, youth at risk*

# How we used the information

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- Contributed to government monitoring reports
  - *Joint approach with MSD and MFE*
- Focus on urban issues
- Minister of Urban Development portfolio
- Contribution to the debate on sustainability
- Encourage informed debate on the issues in the report
- Contribution to central government policy

# How our reports hang together

Monitoring Progress Toward A Sustainable NZ

MSD  
The  
Social  
Report

MED  
NZ  
Economy  
Report

MFE  
State of the  
Environment  
Report

Min  
Maori Dev  
& Pacific  
Isl Dev  
Reports

Quality of Life in NZ Largest Cities

State of  
city

State of  
city

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# Local Govt Act

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Local Authorities must:

- Monitor community outcomes
- Must attach 'measurable' and realistic indicators to outcomes
- Data must be available at a local level to be able to do good monitoring
- Partnership approach
- Need to build data relationships
- Need to address data challenges

# Links to the LTCCP

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- Indicators of whole of city
- Break down to smaller parts of the city
- Use demographics to highlight issues (eg. age)
- Use indicators to highlight issues (eg. Health)
- Link to council activities
- Go for specificity

# Monitoring, measurement & community well-being

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- Can involve the community
  - *Participation = ownership*
  - *Ownership = action*
- How do we make a difference?
  - *PLAN – using indicators to determine gaps*
- Where do we start to make a difference?
  - *PRIORITISE – using research to see what's most important*
- How will we know we've made a difference?
  - *MEASURE – using indicators to see whether you got it right*

# Where are we at now?

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- Monitoring for 8 cities completed
- Report about to be launched
- Website up and running
- Advocacy work being identified

# Where to from here...

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- Joint surveys
- Indicator alignment
- Measurement standards on environmental indicators
- Enhancing and developing data partnerships
- Expand our range of activities
- Expand reach of work to other local authorities
- Provide 'best practice' advice on indicators / surveys / outcome measurement
- Mayor's policy programme