

## 7. Opportunities

This review has identified a number of opportunities which, if pursued in combination with a programme to address key issues, would strengthen the Wellington region and the well-being of its citizens now and into the future.

Structural change options although not considered in any detail in this report are highlighted in the next section. The scope of our Review was to focus on the consideration of issues and opportunities.

In the course of the Review, the following generic opportunities were identified:

- Developing a single spatial planning regime for the region;
- In lieu of governance changes, developing an approach to ensure agreed regional priorities are mandated and adopted as policy at the local level and executed;
- Utilising technology to enable economic development at a local and regional level e.g. building on the metropolitan broadband infrastructure already in place along the rail corridors;
- Regionalising key infrastructure, e.g. transport and water management;
- Reforming regional and local service delivery, including economic development, so that delivery is based on who can best achieve the outcomes;
- Operating and leveraging services and assets as a single region while maintaining local connectivity;

- Building on sub-regional initiatives/sharing achieved to date, e.g. landfill, district planning, water and wastewater;
- Improving efficiency and service delivery through the prioritisation and adoption of common IT standards, portals and software;
- Defining and optimising the place of the Wairarapa sub-region within the greater Wellington region;
- Maintaining and reinforcing local identity and influence in decision-making while achieving the benefits of greater regional collaboration and service delivery; and
- Considering the role of central government as a major employer and ratepayer to understand future potential collaboration opportunities.

The initiatives overleaf have been derived taking into account the current status of the elements and overlaying sector guiding practice, current reforms and emerging trends.

Implementation of further regionally based activities, e.g. rating, water management, will impact on the critical mass of the smaller Councils in particular. This will need to be an overriding consideration during any change process.

Regional Strategic Framework	<p>Utilisation of a regional forum comprising regional and local government representatives to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– develop a single coherent regional vision and strategic framework;</li> <li>– develop a “spatial” implementation plan with specific actions, timeline and accountabilities;</li> <li>– oversee implementation;</li> <li>– consider how efficiency could be enhanced through the utilisation of CCO operations;</li> <li>– make recommendations to Central Government agencies on their policy and expenditure;</li> <li>– develop a single integrated district plan for the region; and</li> <li>– agree how this will be implemented in a binding manner on all the participants including a possible binding agreement between local and central government on priorities.</li> </ul>
Economic Development	<p>Explicitly identify, debate and resolve all issues that result in local competition or resistance to change, e.g. retail strategy, industrial / commercial area zoning, economic clusters, government department hosting.</p> <p>Wellington regional economic development strategy once agreed should be adopted by the Councils to implement.</p> <p>Develop an agreed understanding of the role of the different communities and areas in an integrated regional strategy.</p> <p>Develop an agreed understanding of the role of central government as the major rate paying regional customer.</p> <p>Explore the opportunity for technology based opportunities given the broadband infrastructure already in place along the Hutt rail corridor.</p>
Transport	<p>All Councils give effect to the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS).</p> <p>Councils consider the merits of a national bulk funding arrangement with NZTA consistent with the RLTS.</p> <p>Councils review the merits of a regional transport entity subject to standard CCO provisions.</p> <p>This could incorporate regional arterials and rail infrastructure could be transferred to the transport entity.</p>
Three Waters	<p>Regional water forum established to produce a Three Waters strategy (including irrigation) which parties must give effect to.</p> <p>Establish a jointly owned vertically and horizontally integrated water entity.</p> <p>Consider as a region the approach to how funding the irrigation opportunity can be progressed.</p>

Regional Facilities	All Councils fund designated regional facilities, according to the agreed regional plan.
Regional Services	<p>Define and agree activities which are best delivered locally and regionally to consider options for more effective and efficient delivery. Generic back office functions, e.g. rating to be divested into a dedicated regional shared services CCO, subject to business case.</p> <p>Waste management and landfill management to be considered on an integrated regional/sub-regional basis, through a CCO framework.</p> <p>Consideration of the impact of technology as a major service and efficiency transformation tool, could be harnessed regionally to improve effectiveness and efficiency of services.</p> <p>Consider leveraging off changes currently occurring in the wider legislative environment e.g. RMA, Building Act.</p>