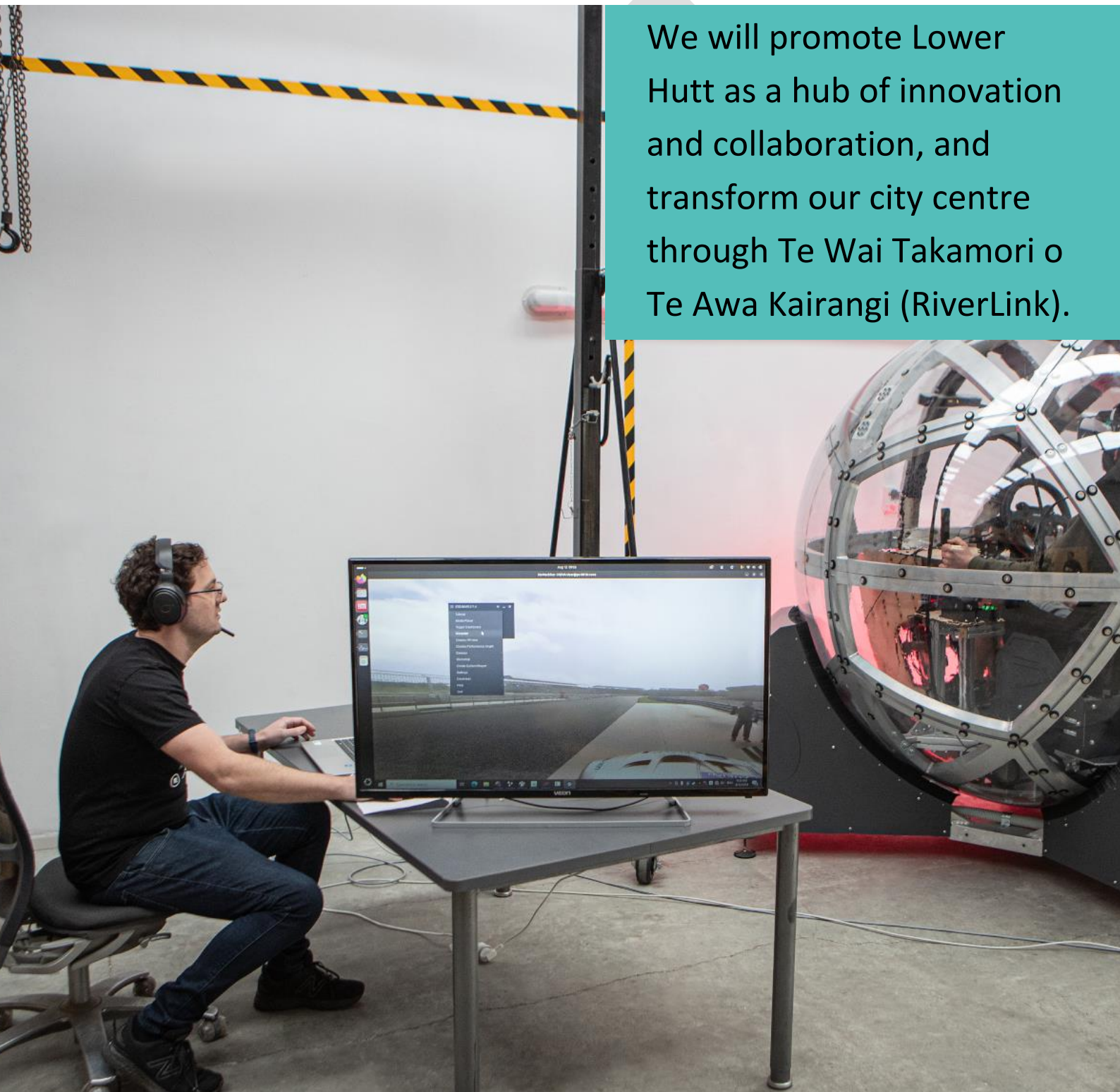


THRIVING BUSINESSES

We will promote Lower Hutt as a hub of innovation and collaboration, and transform our city centre through Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi (RiverLink).



IN 2055, OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS DRIVING PROSPERITY FOR ALL

Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt is the second-largest economy and employment hub in the Wellington region. Our city contains over 11,000 businesses, with an economy of \$7.5 billion in GDP in 2024.

Lower Hutt is brimming with innovation and creativity, experienced professionals and ambitious newcomers, and has a strong base of world-leading businesses. It is situated next to the capital city, regional port and airport. With its strong manufacturing heritage, Lower Hutt is one of Wellington region’s main industrial hubs. Additionally, our city is home to some of New Zealand’s most significant science and research organisations. The construction of new housing and infrastructure projects are also driving economic growth.

Lower Hutt has the capability and capacity to achieve more – we plan to grow GDP by 35% over the next 10 years, delivering business and community prosperity. Businesses across every sector contribute to our collective success. However, there are three high performing sectors which offer the greatest potential for overall employment, highly skilled jobs, productivity gains and contribution to GDP.

Our city’s top industries by GDP are professional, scientific and technical services,

followed by manufacturing. Construction provides the most jobs. These are also the sectors of focus for the future:

- Manufacturing
- Construction & Infrastructure
- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services

Long-term business priorities include delivering Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi (formerly RiverLink) and creating a thriving Lower Hutt CBD-river district.

We will build Lower Hutt’s reputation as a centre of innovation, proudly celebrating our creative business successes.

By creating an environment that promotes connection and collaboration between businesses, government and industry, we will super-charge growth.

There will also be a focus on developing local talent and attracting skilled migrants, to grow career opportunities and support business needs.

This chapter outlines key initiatives to help realise our vision for business and economic growth in Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt by 2055. It concludes with a “What You Can Do” section, offering practical ways you can support and contribute locally to building Tō Tātou Tāone 2055– Our City 2055.

INDICATORS

WE WILL TRACK PROGRESS OF THE FOLLOWING INDICATORS:

INDICATOR	LATEST DATA	TARGET
GDP	\$7.47b (2024 Infometrics)	+ 35% by 2035
PRODUCTIVITY		+ 18% BY 2035
HIGHLY SKILLED JOBS	20,976 (38.5%) (2023 Infometrics)	+ 16% by 2035

BACKGROUND

With its strong base of world-leading businesses, Lower Hutt has great potential for the future. There is significant infrastructure investment planned over the next decade including Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi, Wellington Water and Hutt Valley transport, which will provide jobs, transform the city centre, and provide business and investment opportunities.

Employers in Lower Hutt provide 52,500 jobs across a diverse range of sectors, including retail, education and manufacturing, as well as emerging industries such as game design, research and deep tech.

The construction industry is the city's largest employer, followed by health care and social assistance sectors. Lower Hutt's top industries by GDP are professional, scientific and technical services, followed closely by manufacturing. Nearly 40% of jobs in Lower Hutt are classified as highly skilled, with an increasing proportion of residents holding tertiary qualifications.

Professional, scientific and technical services

Lower Hutt is home to several key science and research organisations, including GNS Science, Callaghan Innovation, and Victoria University's Ferrier Research Institute and Paihau-Robinson Research Institute. The Gracefield Innovation Quarter provides facilities and expertise to set up high-tech businesses, such as Hot Lime Labs and Bspkl - which have spun out of Callaghan Innovation and GNS Science. There is potential for more start-up businesses to grow towards their commercialisation stage in partnership with science and research organisations and universities. There are also a growing number of lawyers, accountants and other professional services in Lower Hutt.

Manufacturing

Lower Hutt has a long history of manufacturing, and this sector contributed 9.4% of GDP in 2023 (\$713m). Manufacturers include Fraser Engineering, Metco Engineering, Times-7, Formway and Displayways. There are strong opportunities in advanced manufacturing, and harnessing Industry 4.0 technologies (digital transformation) to overcome geographical limitations, enhance competitiveness and reduce carbon emissions.

Construction and industry

Over 7,000 people in Lower Hutt are employed in construction, which accounted for \$599m in 2023, nearly 8% of Lower Hutt's total GDP. Lower Hutt is also home to New Zealand's largest trades training facility, Wellington Regional School of Construction (WelTec).

The broader context

"We have a convergence of education, research, innovation, manufacturing and collaboration that establishes the region as the centre for high value manufacturing, technology and science for Aotearoa."

Patrick McKibbin, CE, Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce.

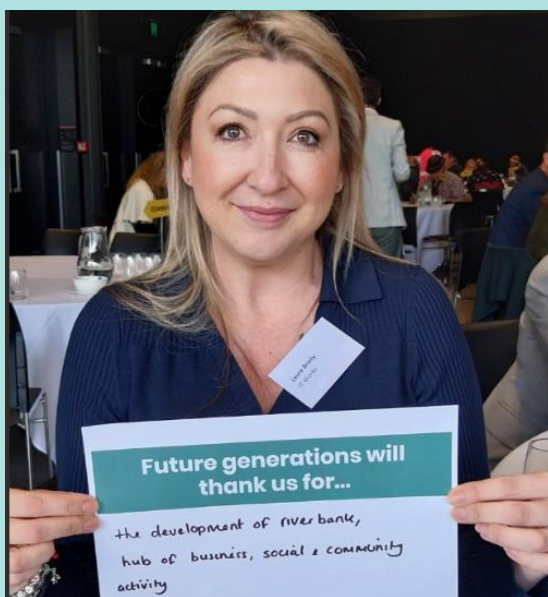
Our city has weathered a difficult economic period following the COVID-19 pandemic, but growth is projected to pick up slowly. The OECD short-term forecasts for the global economy indicates "cautious optimism," with confidence improving post-covid.

However, recent job losses throughout the public sector in Wellington, high inflation, high interest rates, increased insurance, rates and rental costs are having an impact on Lower Hutt's economy and businesses.

Our country and city have an ageing population, which will affect the future workforce. In 1960 New Zealand had seven workers for every retiree; by 2075 that ratio will be 2:1. Educating and training our younger, growing Māori and Pacific population will be important. International migration will be a critical contributor to population growth. Technological advancements, developing a low-emissions economy, and responding to the impacts of climate change are critical issues now, and into the future.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE LOWER HUTT COMMUNITY

People saw great potential in innovation & technology, with suggestions of transforming Lower Hutt into 'Technology Valley,' establishing a deep tech hub on the back of CRIs/Gracefield, advanced manufacturing, and a research centre of excellence. There was hope that in the future *"we are known for our city's innovation,"* and a *"connected community of entrepreneurs that turn opportunities into jobs."* People were positive about Te Wai Tamamori o Te Awa Kairangi and hoped for a more vibrant, well-designed CBD, which becomes a 'destination location'. Challenges facing businesses included a lack of suitable commercial space, and lack of amenity in places like Gracefield, workforce shortages and difficulty attracting skilled talent. There were concerns about the future of High Street and potential closure of small businesses if they were not supported locally. The community were keen to grow local employment opportunities, particularly for young people, with calls for a 'living wage' city, and more highly paid jobs.



The wider region faces an industrial land shortage over the next 30 years. Seaview and Petone (Pito One), in particular, have significant resilience, planning, and affordability challenges due to sea level rise and natural disaster risks. A Regional Industrial Land Study aims to identify suitable locations to meet future demand.



Our goal to achieve Thriving Businesses aligns with SDGs to provide decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, and responsible consumption and production. It also helps to reduce inequalities and eliminate poverty.



FUTURE FOCUS

This strategy focuses on sectors which have experienced historical growth, and hold the greatest potential for the future:

- Manufacturing
- Construction & Infrastructure
- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services.

We will also work to increase highly skilled jobs. These strategic priorities align with Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce's ten-year roadmap '35 by 35'.

In the following pages, you will see the initiatives that will help us realise our goals.

INITIATIVE 5

DELIVER THE FULL POTENTIAL OF TE WAI TAKAMORI O TE AWA KAIRANGI

Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi will be a transformational project for Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt. We need to make the most of this opportunity and create a thriving Lower Hutt CBD-river district that attracts visitors and becomes a desirable destination for businesses, workers and residents.

Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi is a partnership between iwi – Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika and Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Greater Wellington, Hutt City Council and NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi.

Face the awa (river)

This project will reconnect our city with a taonga and one of Lower Hutt's greatest assets - Te Awa Kairangi - Hutt River. Our future city will have excellent riverside amenity, with buildings and a promenade overlooking a green river corridor – Riverside Park. Other opportunities include celebrating our Māori heritage and stories of Te Awa Kairangi, enhancing the indigenous biodiversity of the river corridor with native plantings, and recreational opportunities, including connecting the Hutt River Trail to the regional cycling and walking network - Te Ara Tupua and Tupua Horo Nuku (See *Treasured History and Culture*).

Revitalise the city centre

Our central city is a priority area for future growth in housing and business development. There will be a programme of physical enhancements and activation aimed at creating a vibrant, mixed-use environment that combines hospitality, inner city living, and commercial office spaces. This area represents prime real estate for new retail spaces, apartments and offices, making

collaboration with developers, investors and businesses essential.

Initial priorities include integrating with the new stopbank to create a promenade and mixed-use development, and key development sites along Te Awa Kairangi Hutt River. There will also be street upgrades, including a pedestrian friendly corridor from the new CityLink bridge to Queensgate, The Dowse and civic precinct. The design of our central city will be important, celebrating our Māori heritage and unique Te Awa Kairangi story, supporting active lifestyles, connecting people to the natural environment, and reflecting a diverse, modern city.

Improve connections to the CBD

This project will improve access to the city centre by foot, bike, train, bus and car. In the future, visitors will be able to travel by train from Wellington to a new Melling station, then wander across a pedestrian bridge into the city centre, reducing a current 20-minute walk to around 5 minutes. Walking, cycling and accessibility paths will also enhance connections through the CBD and to adjoining neighbourhoods. A new State Highway 2 Melling interchange and new Melling Bridge will provide the main way into the city for vehicles, with additional improvements to local road connections (See *Smart Infrastructure*).

STEPS TO GET THERE	OWNER
Improve connections to the CBD including relocating Melling station, a new pedestrian bridge connecting the station and city centre, and a new Melling interchange.	NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, GWRC
Programme of physical enhancement and activation to revitalise the city centre including riverside park, urban design and street improvements.	HCC, Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika, Ngāti Toa Rangatira

INITIATIVE 6

PROMOTE LOWER HUTT AS A HUB OF INNOVATION

Lower Hutt is home to world-leading manufacturing, research, science and technology industries - developing innovative products and services. We will build our reputation as a thriving ecosystem for innovation, celebrating our creative business successes with Aotearoa and the world.

Harness Industry 4.0 technologies

Lower Hutt has a strong manufacturing history and is one of the main industrial hubs in Wellington region. We will promote investment in Industry 4.0 technologies, such as automation, robotics, artificial intelligence and digitalisation to optimise manufacturing processes, improve productivity and enhance competitiveness in the global market. By enabling training programmes and incentives, the Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce will help businesses adopt and implement these technologies.

Stimulate STEM commercialisation

There will be a focus on supporting new businesses starting out into transforming ideas, knowledge and inventions into the commercialisation stage. The Chamber of Commerce will advocate for and support establishing a science, technology, engineering and high-value manufacturing (STEM) commercialisation innovation space, with an on-site workshop for prototyping and product creation.

Celebrate and showcase success stories

We will highlight and celebrate local innovative businesses – sharing success stories, including Māori businesses and young entrepreneurs. This could include case studies, testimonials and promotional

materials showcasing unique products and technologies developed in Lower Hutt. We will celebrate business success through the Wellington Regional Business Excellence Awards and encourage innovative businesses to enter local and national awards.

Research and development

The Chamber of Commerce will advocate for collaborative research and development projects between businesses, government and education-based research organisations. This could involve joint grant applications and collaborative research agreements to address industry challenges, develop innovative solutions and drive technological advancements. It will also support events and initiatives where businesses can learn about the latest research developments and explore potential collaboration.

Innovation activities

To foster creativity, problem-solving, and cross-sector collaboration, we will support innovation challenges and hackathons. These events will connect businesses, start-ups, researchers, entrepreneurs, and students to address industry challenges, explore new opportunities, and develop innovative solutions and products.

STEPS TO GET THERE	OWNER
Build a thriving ecosystem for innovation by supporting Industry 4.0 technologies, STEM commercialisation and innovation activities.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce
Celebrate and showcase local success stories to build Lower Hutt's reputation for innovation.	HVCC, HCC

INITIATIVE 7

NURTURE COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

We will create a fertile environment that promotes connection and collaboration between businesses, government and industry to super-charge growth.

Industry-specific forums and networking events

The Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce will establish industry-specific forums and run an ongoing programme of events for the key sectors of focus:

- Manufacturing.
- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services.
- Construction & Infrastructure.

Forums and events provide an opportunity to share insights, exchange ideas, address common challenges and identify opportunities for joint projects or initiatives. Events may include site visits, speakers and discussions, and small round tables. We will encourage local business leaders to participate - bringing their expertise and guidance to actively support the growth of their sector in the Hutt Valley.

Cross-sector partnerships

The Chamber of Commerce will also play a key role in connecting individual businesses to foster collaboration and will run ongoing cross-sector networking events.

Business incubator and accelerator

To support early-stage startups and expediate the growth of existing startups, we will advocate for the establishment of a business incubator and/or accelerator space in the Hutt Valley focused on the three key sectors. This would include appropriate workspace,

facilities and equipment to support startups into viable businesses.

Mana whenua and Pacific partnerships

We will work to strengthen partnerships between Lower Hutt's business community and mana whenua, and businesses and the Pacific community. By engaging earlier in planning, we can leverage each other's strengths, resources and expertise to achieve common objectives and drive positive outcomes for the city.

Business, government and industry events

Regular events and discussions will be held to enable local businesses to engage with elected officials, councillors and policy makers on issues of mutual interest. These forums encourage open dialogue, relationship building and collaborative problem-solving - fostering constructive relationships between the business community and decision-makers.

STEPS TO GET THERE	OWNER
Encourage collaboration in key sectors through establishing industry-specific forums and networking events, and advocating establishment of incubator/accelerator space.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce
Strengthen partnerships between businesses, mana whenua and Pacific community, and hold events between business, government and industry.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce

INITIATIVE 8

INCREASE WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION, GROWING SKILLS AND TALENT

As there is a strong correlation between the skill level of a city's workforce and prosperity, we will seek to equip our workforce with higher skill levels and attract new skilled workers to our city. A skilled talent pool will also attract and retain businesses. In 2023, 20,976 (38.5%) of Lower Hutt jobs were highly skilled. This strategy aims to increase highly skilled jobs by 16.5% by 2035.ⁱ

Build awareness of Lower Hutt as a great place to live, work and grow

We will support initiatives that build awareness of Lower Hutt as a great place to live, work and grow skills. Delivering this strategy's key initiatives will strengthen our reputation as a centre of innovation and vibrant city of diverse cultures, where everyone is warmly welcomed. We will highlight job opportunities, career prospects, and the many benefits of living and working in Lower Hutt.

Attract skilled migrants

There will be a collaborative effort between the Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce, government agencies, industry associations and migration support organisations to attract skilled talent and migrants to Lower Hutt.

Develop specialised talent

We will develop initiatives to attract, retain and develop talent in specialised fields, such as engineering and advanced manufacturing. This includes partnerships between the Chamber of Commerce and educational institutions to promote specialised training programmes, apprenticeships and internships. The Chamber of Commerce will also support further development of:

- Hutt Valley Manufacturing Academy
- Hutt Valley Infrastructure Academy
- Support establishment of a Hutt Valley Water Academy
- Scope and implement a Hutt Valley Science Academy.

STEPS TO GET THERE	OWNER
Attract new talent and skilled migrants, including initiatives that promote Lower Hutt as 'a great place to live, work and grow'.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce
Develop local talent in priority specialised fields, such as engineering and advanced manufacturing.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce

INITIATIVE 5: DELIVER THE FULL POTENTIAL OF TE WAI TAKAMORI O TE AWA KAIRANGI (RIVERLINK)		
STEPS TO GET THERE	OWNER	STATUS
Improve connections to the CBD including relocating Melling station, a new pedestrian bridge connecting the station and city centre, and a new Melling interchange.	NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, GWRC	
Programme of physical enhancement and activation to revitalise the city centre including riverside park, urban design and street improvements.	HCC, Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika, Ngāti Toa Rangatira	
INDICATORS	LATEST DATA	TARGET

INITIATIVE 6: PROMOTE LOWER HUTT AS A HUB OF INNOVATION		
STEPS TO GET THERE	OWNER	STATUS
Build a thriving ecosystem for innovation by supporting Industry 4.0 technologies, STEM commercialisation and innovation activities.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce	
Celebrate and showcase local success stories to build Lower Hutt's reputation for innovation.	HVCC, HCC	
INDICATORS	LATEST DATA	TARGET

INITIATIVE 7: NURTURE COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS		
STEPS TO GET THERE	OWNER	STATUS
Encourage collaboration in key sectors through establishing industry-specific forums and networking events, and advocating establishment of incubator/accelerator space.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce	
Strengthen partnerships between businesses, mana whenua and Pacific community, and hold events between business, government and industry.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce	
INDICATORS	LATEST DATA	TARGET

INITIATIVE 8: INCREASE WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION, GROWING SKILLS AND TALENT		
STEPS TO GET THERE	OWNER	STATUS
Attract new talent and skilled migrants, including initiatives that promote Lower Hutt as 'a great place to live, work and grow'.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce	
Develop local talent in priority specialised fields, such as engineering and advanced manufacturing.	Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce	
INDICATORS	LATEST DATA	TARGET
Number of highly skilled jobs		+18% 2035

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1

HIGHLIGHT SUCCESS STORIES.

Celebrate your business successes to showcase innovative work happening in Lower Hutt.

2

ATTEND NETWORKING EVENTS. Share insights, exchange ideas and seek out opportunities for joint initiatives.

3

TRAIN YOUNG TALENT. Offer training, internships and apprenticeships to develop talent.

4

PROMOTE LOWER HUTT AS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND GROW. Highlight job opportunities and benefits of living and working here to attract skilled talent and migrants.