

7. CHRISTCHURCH VISITOR STRATEGY

General Manager responsible:	General Manager Strategy and Planning Group, DDI 941-8177
Officer responsible:	Liveable City Programme Manager
Author:	Lizzy Pearson, Senior Policy Analyst

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To recommend the adoption of the Christchurch Visitor Strategy (attached).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Christchurch City Council is, directly and indirectly, the largest tourism operator in Christchurch. The Council manages many of the resources on which tourism relies, provides core infrastructure and attractions such as the Botanic Gardens, facilities such as parking, and supports regional marketing and visitor information. Expenditure is spread across a number of activity management plans in the LTCCP.
3. The Christchurch Visitor Strategy has been developed by the Christchurch City Council, in partnership with Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism, Canterbury Development Corporation, and key tourism industry stakeholders in Christchurch.
4. The strategy is based on research and analysis of the current situation and challenges, which has led to the development of a strategic vision, goals and objectives for the destination management of Christchurch.
5. The general direction and contents of the Draft Visitor Strategy were discussed with Councillors at seminars on 28 March 2006, 3 October 2006 and 12 December 2006. The Council approved the Draft Visitor Strategy for consultation on 26 October 2006. Public consultation took place between 6 November 2006 and 5 February 2007. Since that time staff have been working with Ngāi Tahu to finalise their input into the strategy.
6. This report presents the Christchurch Visitor Strategy for approval by the Council.
7. In response to submissions and consultation with Ngāi Tahu the Draft Visitor Strategy has been revised to take account of some of the issues raised. The notable changes are:
 - Reference to 'The Garden City' in the Vision Statement.
 - Expansion of the Current Situation and Challenges section to include specific sections on Banks Peninsula and the City, the Rugby World Cup, and the global challenges facing tourism in Christchurch.
 - Additional actions reflecting consultation with Ngāi Tahu - protecting, interpreting and improving the visibility of the unique Ngāi Tahu culture.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8. The staff and financial resources needed to implement the strategy in the short-term have been met within existing budgets. For 2007/08 financial year: \$850,000 has been allocated by the Council for targeted domestic and international marketing campaigns (Public Affairs Group and Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism budgets. This was agreed following the presentation of the draft visitor strategy.
9. Additional resources may be required in the medium and long-term to continue domestic and international marketing campaigns, and to implement key projects:
 - Interpretation Programme for historic, cultural and environmental sites.
 - The integration and amenity of tourism transport facilities.
 - The protection and enhancement of gateways to Christchurch.
10. The extent of this will need to be discussed with the key partners throughout the industry and any Council funding will need to form part of the 2009-19 LTCCP process.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

11. The Christchurch Visitor Strategy has been developed in accordance with the decision making and other provisions of the Local Government Act 2002.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

12. The Christchurch Visitor Strategy is part of the Council's economic development programme, as set out on pages 117 to 121 of the 2006-16 LTCCP.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

13. The Christchurch Visitor Strategy is aligned with the:
 - *Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy* Strategic Direction to 'Encourage Prosperous Economies'. A key outcome of the Visitor Strategy will be a robust visitor industry that provides economic benefits to individuals and Christchurch as a whole.
 - *Christchurch Events Strategy* Goal to attract visitors and strengthen the distinctive identities and lifestyle qualities of Christchurch. Through the Visitor Strategy, co-ordinated and well-funded domestic and international marketing campaigns will attract visitors to Christchurch's icon events.
 - *Central City Revitalisation Strategy* Objective to strengthen the Central City as a vibrant and prosperous business centre. The Central City is the heart of Christchurch's visitor industry. The Visitor Strategy includes the improvement of visitor transport facilities, visitor safety, and interpretation/signage in the Central City.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

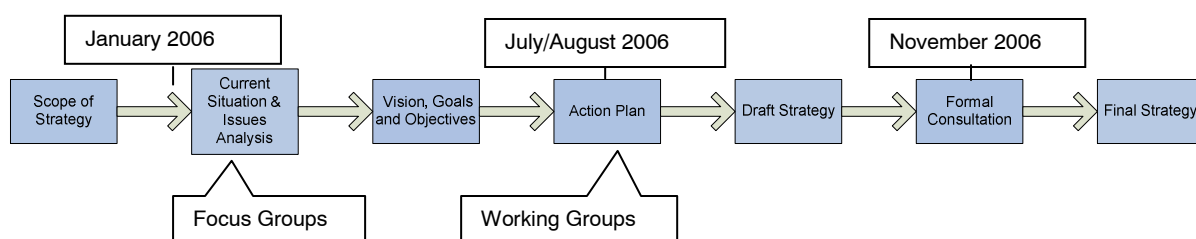
14. The Christchurch Visitor Strategy has followed the consultation requirements of the LGA with the principle of consultation throughout the development of the strategy. This has meant that stakeholders have had the opportunity to shape the development of the strategy, not just comment on its final form.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council adopt the Christchurch Visitor Strategy.

BACKGROUND

15. Christchurch is the gateway for tourism in the South Island. Our airport, port, scenic rail and road connections bring more than nine million visitors a year into Christchurch. In 2005 alone, these visits accounted for nearly \$2 billion of expenditure in Christchurch, contributing to the richness and variety of services available to residents as well as the economic prosperity of Christchurch. Tourism is the largest export industry in Christchurch and Canterbury, and employs 12% of the City workforce and more than 50% of Akaroa's workforce.
16. In 2003, Lincoln University research highlighted the need for a Visitor Strategy to provide a framework for the destination management of Christchurch, particularly due to the importance of tourism as an economic driver, the need to plan for growth, increasing competition from neighbouring destinations and the need for stakeholders to work together towards a common vision and goals.
17. The Council identified the Visitor Strategy as a priority for development in 2006.
18. The brief for the Visitor Strategy and the current situation and challenges, were discussed with Councillors at a seminar in March 2006. Since then, staff, working with Lincoln University, have been developing the Draft Visitor Strategy. In general terms the process used has been as follows:



19. In the 2006-16 LTCCP, the City Council identifies its vision for the future of Christchurch, which represents the Council's long-term focus and priorities in contributing towards achieving the Community Outcomes:

"Our future Christchurch is a world-class boutique city, where people enjoy a sustainable lifestyle, a healthy environment, a strong economic base and the diverse landscapes of the City and Peninsula.

Christchurch will be...

The Visitor Strategy will achieve the Community Plan vision by:

...a place where people enjoy living.

✓ *Supporting a prosperous tourism industry that will provide the economic stimulus that allows activities, cafes and restaurants to develop, helping to build a vibrant City that people enjoy living in.*

...a place of inclusive communities.

✓ *Fostering community understanding of other cultures through the visitors from around the globe that come to see Christchurch.*

...a thriving, healthy environment.

✓ *Protecting and enhancing our most important asset - the environment - through monitoring the impacts of visitors and enhancing the experience of our unique environment for both residents and visitors.*

...the most attractive city in New Zealand.

✓ *Ensuring our Garden City reputation is second to none, and that we provide unforgettable experiences for our visitors.*

...a global economic destination.

✓ *Putting Christchurch on the map, as an attractive, vibrant city in which to locate business.*

Connection to Events Strategy

20. The Christchurch Visitor Strategy was developed in parallel to the Events Strategy. These two strategies are closely linked: A key outcome of the Events Strategy was the development of 'icon' events, which are important in attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer. Conversely Objective 1.2 of the Visitor Strategy (effective and consistent marketing) is critical to getting Christchurch's events known both locally and nationally.

Consultation on Christchurch Visitor Strategy

21. The Strategy Steering Group (CCC, CCT, and CDC) have followed the principle of consultation throughout the development of the strategy. This has meant that stakeholders have had the opportunity to shape the development of the strategy, not just comment on its final form:
 - At the start of the development process in January 2006, an Industry Advisory Board was established to provide a forum for stakeholder feedback and peer review on different stages in the development process.
 - In February 2006 eight focus groups, covering a total of 80 stakeholders, met to discuss and prioritise tourism issues in Christchurch.
 - In June/July 2006 four working groups met to develop the objectives and actions of the Strategy. Each of these groups contained ten representatives from a mixture of public and private sector, and each group met 3-4 times over two months.
22. The Council approved the Draft Visitor Strategy for consultation on 26 October 2006. Public consultation took place between 6 November 2006 and 5 February 2007. Since that time staff have been working with Ngāi Tahu to ensure their input into the strategy.
23. During the public consultation period the Draft Visitor Strategy was:
 - Presented to key stakeholders (five meetings).
 - Available to the general public on the Have Your Say website.
 - Available in all Council Service Centres.
 - Sent to Community Boards.
 - Sent, with feedback form, to over 80 stakeholders.
 - Presented to representatives of Ngāi Tahu Runanga, with follow-up meetings.
24. Thirty-four submissions were received on the Draft Visitor Strategy. These raised a variety of issues, but some consistent themes included concern that the Council would not commit the financial and human resources necessary to implement the Strategy.
25. In response to submissions and consultation with Ngāi Tahu the Draft Visitor Strategy has been revised to take account of some of the issues raised. The notable changes are:
 - Inclusion of reference to 'The Garden City' in the Vision statement.
 - Expansion of the Current Situation and Challenges section to include specific sections on Banks Peninsula and the City, the Rugby World Cup, and global challenges facing tourism in Christchurch.
 - Additional actions reflecting consultation with Ngāi Tahu - protecting, interpreting and improving the visibility of our unique Ngāi Tahu culture.
 - The staff and financial resources needed to implement the strategy in the short-term have been met from existing budgets. Additional resources may be needed in the medium and long-term. These would form part of the 2009-19 LTCCP process.