

## **SUBMISSION TO CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL - OUR COMMUNITY PLAN (DRAFT LTCCP)**

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The Draft LTCCP is a very substantial step towards an effective framework within which to consider the future of our City, providing clearly stated outcomes and recognising linkages between different aspects of City life that may not be so obvious in less holistic approaches.

Obviously there are a large number of potential issues, both general and specific, that arise with such a comprehensive plan. I would like to highlight a few with comments which I would like the Council to consider but will try to keep them brief.

### **1) Smart Growth**

I believe that a sharper focus on the principles of 'Smart Growth' would improve delivery of all the outcomes listed in the LTCCP (see pp. 24-28 of Volume 1). Such a focus appears to have been lacking in the past. Examples local to Halswell are the Aidenfield development and the isolated housing estate on Kennedy's Bush road above Halswell Quarry.

This type of piecemeal, sprawling, purely residential development is not effective in fostering a sense of community, encourages car use and makes inefficient use of space. Properly planned mixed use development, based on making the best use of existing assets rather than scattered around piecemeal, would help to build communities, lessen the need for car journeys and minimise use of additional greenfield sites. We should aim to build 'mini-Curitiba's' not 'mini-LAs'.

We must also ensure that future growth does not cause further damage to important natural features adjacent to the City, such as the Port Hills. There are many statutory and other mechanisms that can be used to this end (for example see Appendix 3 of "Managing Change in Paradise, Sustainable Development in Peri-urban Areas" (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, June 2001)).

### **2) Flat Water Recreation Facility (Volume 1, page 29)**

Whilst I can see the attractions of such a facility I believe it is a 'nice to have' rather than an essential, and that achieving the desired outcomes of the LTCCP, particularly a City which is safe, liveable and with healthy and active people, would be better accomplished by focussing such expenditure on affordable/social housing, upgrading sub-standard housing and improving heating systems as a

contribution to better air quality. The provisions of the Building Bill (2003), such as those to promote and facilitate energy efficiency and conservation (see the general policy statement and s.22 (l)) may also be helpful in this regard when it becomes law. There is substantial deprivation in the City (while 12% may be below the national average it still amounts 35 - 40 000 people) and The Press has recently highlighted that some 40 families are made homeless each week in Christchurch. \$11 million could have a significant impact on these areas of deprivation.

**3) Public Participation (Volume 2, pp. 11-12)**

Present mechanisms for public participation in decision making do not get the majority of the people of Christchurch involved and are less effective than they should be in supporting a healthy and vibrant local democracy. The section on democracy and governance in Volume 2 of the Draft LTCCP follows a very traditional approach and is unlikely to lead to a marked improvement in public involvement.

I believe that we need to put in place creative and innovative mechanisms designed to encourage involvement and interest in City affairs and make people feel not only that they count but also that they want to count. I am also pursuing this matter separately with the Council and have written to the Mayor's Office.

**4) Wet Weather Flows in the Sewerage System (Volume 2, page 111)**

The volume of storm water and wet weather infiltration arriving at the wastewater treatment plant is projected to roughly double over the next few years. A policy of, wherever practicable, separating storm water (drainage from roofs, roads and other impervious areas), 'plugging' point sources of infiltration and using porous surfaces where possible (e.g. in car parks) would decrease maximum wet weather flows hence helping extend asset life and decrease operating energy requirements and costs (e.g. for pumping). The provisions of the Building Bill (2003) to promote and facilitate water efficiency and conservation (see the general policy statement and s.22 (m)) may also be helpful in this regard when it is enacted.

**5) The Christchurch to Little River Railtrail**

The Christchurch to Little River Railtrail is a project that would help achieve virtually all of the desired outcomes (social, environmental and economic) identified in the Draft LTCCP (see Volume 1, pp 24-28). The Railtrail has widespread support from both the public and organisations, such as Rotary Clubs and the Waihora Ellesmere Trust, and, judging by the impact of the Central Otago Railtrail, would have very significant benefits for local people and be a strong tourist draw. It would also be an excellent sporting venue for running and cycling (and maybe a triathlon-type event, say cycling, hill-running and kayaking, between Christchurch and Akaroa?).

- 6) In order to proceed with the project as quickly as possible it would be very helpful if the City Council could bring forward the \$59 000 and \$172 000 allocated in the capital expenditure programme to years 2004/05 and 2005/06 respectively and give a high priority to building the Hornby to Marshs Road section.

Looking to the future I would like to see the Railtrail as only the first of a network of safe, off-road cycle and walkways throughout Canterbury and would ask that City Council consider this as a long term planning goal and when liaising with other Authorities. To this end a start could be a link from Halswell to the proposed Railtrail via the Old Tai Tapu Road (with a connection to the Port Hills tracks) and Tai Tapu.

T F J Taylor.

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