

LTCCP 2006-16 SUBMISSION

Submissions close on 5 May 2006

I wish to talk to the main points in my submission at the hearings to be held between Thursday 25 May and Wednesday 7 June 2006.

I am completing this submission:
For yourself

Number of people you represent:

My submission refers to:
Summary Version of the LTCCP

Page Number:
4 & 8

I also want to respond to:

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Your Submission:	<p>Do you have any comments on the major projects in our Draft Community Plan?</p> <p>The Bus Exchange is only a few years old and already the Council is proposing an investment of \$59.5 million to expand it. Why wasn't more time spent on the original planning and projection stages the first time round so as to preclude another huge capital investment a few years down the road? Why didn't the planners get it right the first time? Certainly, we champion the improvement to bus services in Christchurch. However, we're also saying please consult planning experts with a proven track record, to avoid throwing money into rectifying costly mistakes caused by poor, short-term, myopic planning.</p> <p>As for the Botanic Gardens' Visitor's Centre, to our minds, it is not an essential project. Page 2 of the summary LTCCP says, "The Council is constantly being asked for more, such as enhanced facilities at the Botanic Gardens and an improved roading infrastructure." WHO is asking for such enhanced facilities? Is it a specific group like the tourism sector? Will the great majority stand to benefit or just a small sector of people? We think that \$11.1 million is a huge amount of money to spend on upgrading a facility that is going to benefit tourists more than rate-paying residents. Do we really need a flash centre to handle quick queries from visitors to the gardens? We believe the money would be better spent on improving roads and road lighting, as well as upgrading tired libraries. These would definitely benefit every sector of Christchurch society.</p> <p>Do you have any comments on groups of activities (The activities and services the Council provides?)</p> <p>1) We oppose the closure of any Christchurch public libraries, in particular, Bishopdale and Redwood libraries, and the mobile library. Libraries are an asset in every community. They are information and entertainment hubs for students, the elderly, migrants, homeschoolers, businesspeople, working folk, and families.</p>

**Your Submission
(Cont'd):**

Everyone who loves to read, wants to learn, wants ready access to information, and desires access to great resources, values our libraries. Closing down community libraries disadvantages the elderly and the handicapped who can easily get to them as well as those who have no means of transport or are unable to afford regular travel to a more distant library.

To cultivate a learned and educated population, it is essential that young children as well as schoolchildren have ready access to books. Research has shown that children who are exposed to books at a very young age are predisposed to do better at school. If NZ wants to build its knowledge economy, we need to start with our young people and show them that a penchant for lifelong learning will benefit not just themselves but our society and country as well.

Investing money in education and centres of learning and information like libraries is money better spent than millions of dollars dedicated towards building a snazzier Visitor's Centre for the Botanic Gardens, for example, since that will largely benefit temporary visitors. It makes more sense to invest in facilities that will benefit the citizens of NZ and the rate-paying residents of Christchurch rather than visitors who are only passing through.

Moreover, North West Christchurch is booming with over 20 schools and preschools/kindergartens in the area. With at least 15 schools close by and being ideally located in a Mall, Bishopdale Library, together with the Bishopdale Community Centre, gets a lot of traffic and is greatly in demand. The new libraries like South, Upper Riccarton and Parklands can, in no way, replace the Bishopdale and Redwood libraries because of sheer distance!

We don't need more fancy libraries with cafes. We simply want our rates to be applied to keeping our existing community libraries and mobile library open because their value cannot be measured in dollars and cents. Please consider what kind of people you want to live in Christchurch. If you want an educated, informed populace that loves learning and will contribute their skills and knowledge to making Christchurch a great city, then please vote to keep our community libraries OPEN. Close libraries and you close minds, and then you reap the whirlwind.

2) Re: raising parking fees. If you plan to increase on and off-street parking rates in the city centre, the increased rates as well as the rising cost of petrol will dissuade people from driving into town. As an alternative to taking our cars into the city centre, we suggest that you increase the frequency of bus services to and from the suburbs. Having buses come around every 15 minutes rather than every 30 minutes on a weekday and every hour on a weekend will go a long way towards helping commuters. Moreover, extending the Orbiter's route to include Bishopdale Mall, would be a great service to people living in the North West part of town, especially now that the new YMCA has been constructed and is expected to draw a huge following.

Do you have any other comments or suggestions you want to make?

We think that public submissions and consultations should have been proposed for DRAFTING the Community Plan, and not simply to react to it. How does the City Council involve the public in brainstorming which projects will receive priority funding and where cut-backs will take place?