

Submission on 2006 draft rates/community plan

My details I ask that this submission be considered – I don't need to speak to it.

I run the one-person enterprise Science on the Rocks, www.sotr.org.nz. It has an analytical focus on science and culture, sometimes restricted to NZ and Christchurch.

My submission refers to the Summary Plan, the 24-page booklet posted to me at SOTR.

I do make submissions on 'Development Contributions' (and on other items, under the group heading 'Financial, Development Contributions Policy, and Other').

Nancy Sutherland, Science on the Rocks, 3/221 Edgeware Rd, St Albans, Christchurch.

386 2522 nznancy@netaccess.co.nz

NJ Sutherland 5 May 2006

1. Major projects

Page 4 – **Essential: Tree renewal = \$17.2 m**

If \$17.2 m is a major new or greatly increased amount, some of it might be better delayed until after some of the biodiversity strategy is underway. It would not be satisfactory to spring a wholesale native-species strategy onto Christchurch, before (controlled) debate.

Page 4 – **Essential: Fit-out for new Civic Offices + Civil Defence building = \$7.9 m**

Could these be combined to save costs? Wellington's Civil Defence is under Parliament I learn! It is more the functioning than the building that determines the quality of service!

Page 4 – **Discretionary: Botanic Gardens project = \$11.1 m**

I attended some talks in 2005 by the then Botanic Gardens Curator, David Given (now deceased), including one about the history and directions of botanic gardens. I submit that David Given's vision be considered (for an indication, see www.sotr.org.nz/2005-11).

I support the current Gardens being enhanced by new approaches and features that give more attention to indigenous species, and their unique assemblages and special communities and habitats (eg, greywacke screes). Educational, scientific, technical and aesthetic benefits and aspects of botany and natural New Zealand should be reflected in any new plans. History, culture, genesis and Gardens plantings must also be honoured. Long-term, NZ-resident, professional staff should be engaged before overseas workers.

Page 4 – **Discretionary: City Mall renovation \$10.3 m** (also see *Development costs*)

At the webpage <http://www.ccc.govt.nz/LTCCP/Draft/Plan/Introduction/IntroFromMayor.pdf>, the Mayor refers to the city as "a series of villages". Though this is perhaps warm and engaging, it is inconsistent with promoting/nurturing Christchurch city. A city has extra complexity and this name should predominate. 'Village' and/or other more 'cellular' concepts could be used in restricted ways for some planning purposes in Christchurch.

This point is linked to a conceptual view of City Mall and related business areas, and I see the need for concepts before physical work. I suggest we think first of a notion of, say, 'Centre City' (including for bus strategies), where it would mean a location just as 'The Palms', Hornby, etc. do. Currently Centre City is the hole-in-the-bagel, unidentified by name and known more for what goes on around it (in covered malls), than for itself. Centre City could gradually develop some new character from this basis. I think it would include the streets and precincts at least from High and Lichfield to Armagh, and from the Avon to Manchester. Centre City should also be conceived of as a natural gravitation point for Christchurch-Canterbury people, of all age groups, not just predominantly youth and students.

Because of a buy-in as a concept, of all Christchurch people, to City Mall as part of their Centre City, there would be NO need to add development rate burdens to the businesses.

Centre City should conceptually promote a quietly-sophisticated inclusiveness, to draw more people, more suburbanites, in all their variety.

2. Groups of Council-provided activities and services

Photos: Council support for people of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds is positive, but in the absence of strong unifying initiatives is unbalanced or incomplete. A city should be enabled to grow organically from its past, into new necessary unifications, not separated into pools by race, or age, or anything. I believe science as an activity could help in this, linked as it is to unifying cultural, educational and enlightenment values.

3. Financial, Development Contributions Policy, and Other

a. Page 5 - Operating costs: Save time and money by better administration

Some City Council items via internet are delivered in frustrating ways. The LTCCP pdf file took over 1 hour to download! Emails for Refugee & Migrant forum minutes are by attached files, but would be easier to access in the email body. This submission could not be made by typing into a form. Can admin improve, and save time and costs?

b. Supported-business opening-hours problem

The City Council (or an adjunct, or WINZ) seems to be subsidising selected businesses, including in suburbia. Fully-privately-owned businesses being run by men and women perhaps six or seven days a week, sit next to supported ones (receiving grants) that are closed on Mondays. This gives these shopping strips a partially closed face on Mondays. This spills over to affect the locality on other days because passersby associate the area with being closed or unreliable. This is unfair on private businesses, and a negative in the area.

c. Development Contributions Policy

I am not sure that I want to see development costs in any areas of the Centre City or elsewhere landed on the backs of the businesses there, any more than at present.

It is not a happy situation if the Council seems to target businesses for development in their area, when businesses do in large part the city make, for all residents and visitors. The mayor has called Christchurch the 'engine-room' of Canterbury. Just as the industrial and suburban parts of Christchurch do work as cogs in this big 'engine room', so does the Centre City, in terms of commerce, culture, history, and many other things. Therefore it does just fall to those of us who live here to support it, the central city. There would be a buy-in if developments from now on were un-stratified by politics, a turn of the tide that is wanted.

d. Local body authority structures

I do not see the need for a unitary authority of Christchurch with ECAN, or Regional authorities. Christchurch can be seen as supporting/supported-by, its 'rural garden' without it. Extreme views –some are abroad – can be best moderated by the distribution of power like this.

e. Representation of LTCCP Submission results should use correct terminology

The submissions – only 850 so far! – should not be represented as “what the community said”, as the earlier leaflet after the Urban Development Strategy submissions, did. The methodology – small, random samples – means quantified results are not necessarily representative.
