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

I also want to respond to: Other

Name:	Don Sherman
Organisation:	
Daytime Phone:	03-339-0319
Evening Phone:	03-339-0319
Email:	don_sherman@hotmail.com
Address:	4 Dalkeith St. Hoon Hay Christchurch 8002
Your Submission:	**Do you have any comments on the major projects in our Draft Community Plan?**
	Do you have any comments on groups of activities (The activities and services the Council provides?)
	Do you have any other comments or suggestions you want to make?
	The council has voiced concerns that businesses are leaving the downtown area. After noticing how I, myself, respond when faced with going downtown to purchase something, I have to say that my biggest concern is parking. Not only is it difficult to find a place to park, but I face having to carry around large quantities of gold coins to feed the voracious parking meters; find myself constantly having to check the time to see when my measly one hour parking is about to be up; and generally get pretty stressed out by the entire affair. I often go to a parking garage which reduces the time stress of an impending expiring meter, but still manages to substantially lighten my pocket book when I exit. Alternatively, I could leave my house and arrive downtown in a mere 40 minutes by waiting for and taking the bus. I'll try not to dwell on the considerable inconvenience of carting back home anything which I may have purchased. I mentally contrast this to jumping in my car and arriving at Westfield Mall in just 5 minutes where I quickly find a free of charge parking place and proceed inside for a leisurely afternoon of recreational shopping therapy. To make a long story short, the city is not only loosing the battle, but the decline will accelerate as more and more businesses abandon the inner city and are replaced with more brothels, homeless people, drug addicts and drunk hoons. Spending large sums of money ($13million 2006/7, $14.6million 2007/8, $13.9million 2008/9) to improve the look of the inner city is not going to draw the people in. Raising the parking meter fees to $2.50/hour and the parking garages to $2.20/hour will definitely discourage people even more and push them to the free parking at the shopping malls.

Your Submission (Cont'd)::	If the council is actually serious about making the inner city attractive to the local residents, and not just tourists, the city should do as the shopping malls do and provide ABUNDANT FREE PARKING for everyone. This simple act is the biggest Welcome Mat that the city can place at the feet of the local residents. Of course there will be problems caused by the increased number of people in the shops, but I am confident that the grateful shop owners will be able to adjust. Since I am talking about using the Westfield Mall as a good business example of how free parking attracts customers, they provide this service to their tenants and include the parking space costs in the store rent. The council can recoup the lost parking meter revenue by charging "targeted rates" to the inner city businesses, amortize the costs over all Christchurch residents from the general rates, and/or add an additional charge on the GST charged by inner city businesses such as 13 ½% instead of the usual usurious rate. Thus, the poor customer will still be paying the bill, but the money will be extracted in a less painful manner. If this approach is taken, the council will soon realize that additional parking garages will be needed to keep things running smoothly, and, unfortunately this will require the expenditure of more rate payers' money. Another problem which will arise is the street parking places will immediately be filled by shop attendants reporting to work by 8:00 o'clock. Since the businesses want the customers to have these parking places, something must be put in place to prevent shop employees from parking on the street.
Your Submission 2 (Cont'd)::	I am forwarding a MSN article which covers the introduction of a city wide WiFi network. Providing this service in the center city will also serve to make the downtown area more attractive to young adults. As you will see, it is not ready yet, but should be in the long range plan for the city. Updated: 9:34 p.m. ET April 23, 2006 ST. CLOUD, Fla. - Joe Lusardi's friends back in New York couldn't believe it when he told them he'd have free Internet access through this city's new Wi-Fi network. It's free all right, but residents are, to some extent, getting what they pay for. More than a month after St. Cloud launched what analysts say is the country's first free citywide Wi-Fi network, Lusardi and others in this 28,000-person Orlando suburb are still paying to use their own Internet service providers as dead spots and weak signals keep some residents offline and force engineers to retool the free system. "Everybody's happy they were going to have it, but I don't know if they're happy right now," said Lusardi, a 66-year-old retired New York City transit worker. The same troubles with the small town's big Internet project could be lessons for municipalities from Philadelphia to San Francisco considering similar networks. St. Cloud officials are spending more than $2 million on a network they see as a pioneering model for freeing local families, schools and businesses from monthly Internet bills. It also promises to help the city reduce cell-phone bills and let paramedics in an ambulance talk by voice and video to hospital doctors. Instead, what they have so far is a work in progress. "All technology has its hiccups, and sometimes more than hiccups," St. Cloud Mayor Donna Hart said. "I think that it's going to be a major challenge, and it'll probably be a major challenge for some time until the technology is such that it works properly." Wi-Fi is the same technology behind wireless Internet access in coffee shops, airports and college campuses around the country. Several cities have Wi-Fi hotspots, but St. Cloud's 15-square-mile network is the first to offer free access citywide, said Seattle-based technology writer Glenn Fleishman, who runs a Web site called Wi-Fi Networking News.

Your Submission 2 (Cont'd)::	Other cities like Tempe, Ariz., have networks over a larger area (187 square miles), but access isn't free. Planned projects in places like Chicago and Philadelphia would also dwarf St. Cloud's network, but also require a fee for access.
	Google Inc. and EarthLink Inc. are teaming up to build a $15 million Wi-Fi network across San Francisco, and their proposal is entering final negotiations. EarthLink's faster offering would cost $20 per month, while Google would provide a slower, free service financed by advertising.
	St. Cloud launched the network on a trial basis in May 2004 in a new division of town to help give businesses an incentive to relocate. After further exploring the benefits, officials decided to expand it citywide.
	Project supporters say increased efficiency in city government will cover the network's $2.6 million buildout and estimated $400,000 annual operating expense.
	For example, phones that use the Wi-Fi network will allow it to cut cell-phone bills for police and city workers. The city can avoid adding 10 more building inspectors because the network will existing employees to enter and access data onsite instead of driving back to the office.
	The network also could keep the estimated $450 that St. Cloud households now spend each year on high-speed access in the local economy.
	As of last week, nearly 3,500 users had registered for the network, logging 176,189 total hours of use. St. Cloud contracted with Hewlett-Packard Co. to build the project and provide customer support.
	"HP is working with the city and its partners to optimize the solution and install additional access points to help improve signal strength in isolated areas of the city," the company said in a statement.
	So far, there have been plenty of calls from frustrated residents. Some can see receivers from their homes and still can't sign on - even on the porch. Others have tried to connect countless times.
	Still, HP said that there were only 842 help-line calls out of more than 50,000 user sessions in the first 45 days of service.
	At first, a desktop computer in Lusardi's house could use the Wi-Fi network with no problem, but his laptop would only work outdoors. Even then it was too slow and unreliable, so he kept his $20 per month Sprint DSL service. Now the desktop doesn't even work, and he's completely abandoned the idea of dropping his pay service and using the network.
	"It's just total frustration," Lusardi said. "I'm going to stay with the DSL and just forget it, because I don't think it's going to work. Very few people are going to use it, and they're going to say it's underutilized and they're going to shut it down."
	Lusardi didn't shell out the money for a signal-boosting device St. Cloud recommends for those having trouble connecting - City Hall sells them for $170.
	Fleishman said the fact that others share Lusardi's frustration is a crucial technical and public relations problem for the vanguard project. He said residents should understand many won't be able to use the free network without additional equipment to strengthen the signal.
	"It's very large and it's very ambitious, so they're going to hit some of these problems before some of the marketing and technology is out there," he said. "Products have to catch up to this new market."
	Fleishman said other cities would likely have the same problems - in bigger cities, even larger ones - if they didn't fully inform the public of necessary equipment and network limits.
	Former Mayor Glenn Sangiovanni, who spearheaded the project, stressed that kinks were still being worked out, but noted that not everyone was having problems.
	"There's a lot of variables, and that's part of it," Sangiovanni said. "It could be the block construction you have, it could be the tin roof you have. There's lots of different things that could be unique to your environment as opposed to my environment.
	"We went into this with the expectation that it's really a year plan that we're going to implement," he added. "You don't know what you're going to get into when you take on the whole city because you can't stress test that."

| **Your Submission 2 (Cont'd)::** | Ashley Austin, a freshman at nearby Florida Christian College, said she likes using the network to do homework on the city's picturesque downtown lakefront. She said it's also the only way to get online if Internet service is down at the wireless telephone store where she works.
"So far I haven't had any problems with the use that I've gotten out of it," she said.
Resident Chuck Cooper, a former city commissioner, bought an antenna, but still gets a shaky connection. Navigating from one site to another still produces errors.
Generally, he says, it's slightly faster than dial-up access. But even critics like him are quick to praise the endeavor in between grumbles over early problems.
"All in all, I guess it's a good idea," Cooper said. "I equate it to cell phones 10 to 15 years ago. You used to have a lot of dropped calls, but now they're substantially better. Hopefully, this will get a little better a lot quicker." |