

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL
"OUR COMMUNITY PLAN : 2006-2016"

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Dear City Councillors,

I have recently returned from a two weeks attachment to the city of Liuzhou in Guangxi Province, China to participate in a design review for a major recreational strategy along the Liu River. Hence, it has not been possible for me to make a submission on the City Council's 2006 – 16 Community Plan by the due date of 5 May 2006.

I trust therefore that you will allow me some latitude for consideration of the attached submission that I see could have some substantive bearing on the final outcome of the LTCCCP. In that connection, I make this submission in my capacity as a private citizen and rate payer; as a town planner of wide experience; and also as a member of the Board of the Christchurch Civic Trust Inc.

I wish to speak on the main points in my written submission to be held between 25 May to 7 June inclusive. I further request that the Council Officers' report on the submission be sent to me in advance of the hearings.

Yours sincerely,



E.G. Pryor

(Sent by e-mail and post)

**CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL
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GENERAL COMMENT

The City Council is to be congratulated in having produced a generally well constructed and attractively illustrated consultative document covering most of the essential components relating to the holistic development of the city relative to a range of assumed outcomes.

SPECIFIC POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

p22

Issue 1

It is stated that both City Care and the Red Bus Co. have been removed from the list of strategic assets. Surely, both these bodies deserve to be recognised as "significant assets" on the grounds that:

- City Care is responsible for maintaining the operational efficiency of a range of key services, significant disruptions of which could severely prejudice the desired outcome of maintaining satisfactory standards of safety and health at all times.
- Red Bus Co. currently provides an efficient and extensive system of public transport services for the general community, significant disruptions of which or failure to maintain satisfactory levels of service for extended periods would undermine the image of Christchurch as an "attractive and well-designed city." There will, in future years, be needs to depend more and more on good, energy-efficient public transport, as steadily escalating prices of fuel will decrease the viability and use of private transport modes on which a high proportion of commuters currently depend.

Recommendation

Reinstate City Care and Red Bus Co. as significant assets.

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Issue 2

Under **Our Community Today** it is stated that the population of Christchurch is projected to grow by another 16% between 2001 and 2026, resulting in a growth from 344,100 to 388,800 persons. For forward planning purposes, it would be prudent to assume that such a trend is likely to continue over the long term, thus requiring periodic and timely updating of the City Plan in the context of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy,

Recommendation

That the broad implications of such predictions be generally stated as follows under **Our Community Today** :

Clearly, such predictions will require continuing steps to be taken for the updating of the current City Plan for new development areas and related infrastructure, set within the context of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy that assumes a design year of 2041.

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Issue 2

Under the **headline indicators** relating to **A Safe City**, an important factor to achieve a city that is "free from crime, violence, abuse and injury" would be the rate per capita of deployment of available police resources. An anthology of events reported in "The Press" over the past 3 years indicates that security problems are a matter of growing concern.

Recommendation

Under the **headline indicators** include:

The rate per capita of deployment of available police resources.

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Issue

Under the **headline indicators** relating to **A Well-Governed City**, it would be desirable to have some measure of the degree of public participation in response to invitations to comment on key proposals (e.g the LTCCP)

Recommendation

Under the **headline indicators** include :

"The number of responses made to CCC requests for public submissions on key proposals."

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Issue

Under the **headline indicators** relating to **An Attractive and Well-designed City**, bus patronage figures provide only one crude measure of performance. The level of accessibility by people to the nearest bus route is of particular importance. That could be measured, for example, by assessments of the numbers of households/persons living within a "reasonable" walking distance of each principal bus route. From such an assessment, a corollary would be the number households/persons who would not be in easy walking distance of a bus route.

Recommendation

Include an indicator eg:

Number of households/persons within easy walking distance of a bus route.

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Issue

Under **item 2** the second bullet refers to "**providing affordable housing.**" A point of concern here is that the provision of affordable housing depends on the interaction between market-led supply of private housing, on the one hand, and public sector supply of subsidized housing, on the other. How can the supply of housing from these two sectors be "managed" to meet the needs of low-income households in a timely, sufficient and financially appropriate way?

Recommendation

Amend the second bullet point to read:

Institute measures to facilitate the supply of affordable housing for low income households through the combined endeavours of private and public sector bodies.

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Issue

Under **Key Challenges** , bullet 6 relating to "**Decreasing civic engagement,**" it is stated that as *with elsewhere in the development world, people are becoming less involved in local democratic processes in Christchurch.* Where is the firm evidence to support that conclusion?

Recommendation

Give an authoritative basis for such a statement e.g.

The number of voters in City Council elections over a stated period of time relative to the population of eligible voters.

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Issues

- (a) Under **item 1**, relating to water supply, waste and wastewater services, it should be made clear that – given the inclusion of the Banks Peninsula – the provision and maintenance of such services applies to both urban and rural areas.
- (b) Under **item 2**, relating to improved air quality and energy efficiency, besides encouraging more efficient practices, there also is a need to have management controls to help ensure that standards of quality and efficiency are maintained.

Recommendation

(a) Reword item 1 to read:

Within both urban and rural areas, provide reliable and efficient water supply, wasteetc

(b) For item 2 add another bullet point:

Set up and implement appropriate management controls and systems to help achieve and maintain improved standards of quality and efficiency.

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Issue

Under **Strategic Direction – Livable City**, besides the need to provide good housing, ease of getting around the city and enhancing a sense of cultural identity, a good built environment should also aim to achieve and maintain **acceptable environmental standards** e.g. providing effective buffers along high volume highways that can create high noise levels and pollution from exhausts.

Recommendation

Include a bullet point under “Strategic Direction – Livable City,” stating:

It provides a means to avoid/mitigate adverse impacts between incompatible land uses and also from transport-related activities.

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Issue

In respect of **Item 1** under **Goals and Objectives** relating to leading the **urban development of Christchurch.....**, an essential forerunner to urban development should of course be the formulation of a composite strategic plan bearing in mind also that the Banks Peninsula – with large rural areas -has been incorporated in the City. Additionally, what happens in other closely adjoining areas around the city (e.g. in Selwyn, Waimakariri) will also have significant impacts on the creation of a “livable city.” Hence there is a strong and recognised need to expedite the formulation of the **Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS)**.

In close association with that initiative is the need to formulate in parallel a **Central City Revitalisation Strategy**, which hitherto has been the focus of endeavours by the former Central City Forum that has apparently disappeared from the scene. In this connection it is to be noted that a highly likely outcome of the UDS could be a policy objective that aims at the more intensive redevelopment of the Central City, requiring a composite, inter-related approach to the land use, transport and environmental structure of the “heart” of Greater Christchurch. Some key issues that need to be addressed include:

- the identification and enhancement of functionally integral areas/precincts for economic activities, cultural pursuits, housing and associated community uses, recreational amenities, and pedestrian priority areas.
- objectives, policies and institutional and fiscal measures to promote the relocation of incompatible uses; the amalgamation of sites occupied by obsolete uses for comprehensive redevelopment; and the upgrading/regeneration of ageing neighbourhoods.
- a rationalized **energy-efficient** and **environmentally friendly** transport system that would - inter alia - (a) channel principal inter-zonal traffic flows around the central city (i.e. along the Four Avenues); (b) provide improved access to central city activities to meet local operational needs and, at the same time, discourage penetration through the central city by “through traffic”; (c) provide well located and designed bus interchange facilities and (d) create a core pedestrian priority area,
- the improvement of the city landscape to provide an attractive setting for neighbourhoods and the city as a whole.

Recommendations

- Rephrase **Item 1** under “**Goals and Objectives**” to read :

Lead the planning and development of Christchurch to achieve a balance for all constituent areas between the needs of the people and the environment, through the expedient and parallel preparation and subsequent evolution of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and a Central City Revitalisation Strategy, involving:

- Rephrase the heading of **Item 3** to read:

*Provide safe, efficient, affordable, **multimodal and energy-efficient** transport systems, that :*

- Add a further bullet point under **item 3** to read:

....facilitate the creation of pedestrian priority areas, especially within the Central City core.

- Add a further bullet point under **item 3** to read:

....review the need for long-term future intra and inter-city bus exchange facilities (in association with other compatible development) having regard to the outcomes from the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy.

- Add a further bullet point under **item 4**:

....improving the landscape quality along key transport corridors.

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Issues and Recommendation

Under **Key Challenges** echo the above and also the key principles of the RMA 1991 by rephrasing the **second bullet** to read:

Integrating land use planning with the planning of transport, utilities and social infrastructure in ways that would achieve and sustain improved environmental outcomes.

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Issues

With reference to paragraph 2 under **Who we need to work with**, the Christchurch Civic Trust Inc has, for many years, played a very active part in encouraging the better planning and development of Christchurch. The Trust has every intention of maintaining that role.

Recommendation

Under **Who we need to work with** amend the second line of the second paragraph to read:

*.....sector organizations (e.g. NZ Historic Places Trust, **the Christchurch Civic Trust Inc**).*

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Issues

Under **item 3 (third bullet)** relating to **Strategic Direction – Prosperous Economy**, the point needs to be recognised that the airport is also functionally dependent on a range of “off-airport” activities.

Under **item 5** relating to attracting **skilled workers**, a perceived need relates to the provision of support services to assist newcomers from other parts of NZ and other countries to “settle in.”

Recommendation

- Amend the third bullet to read:

Ensuring Christchurch International Airport and supporting key off-airport activities provide for increasing domestic and international air services.

- Add a third bullet to item 5 :

Providing support services to skilled newcomers intending to settle in the city.

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Issue

Under **Key challenges (third bullet – Investing in Innovation)**, it is stated that *an improved standard of living for all New Zealanders depends on a shift from an economy based on primary production to one based on knowledge and innovation*. That statement appears to be overstating things on the side of “knowledge and innovation”, bearing in mind that rapidly growing major overseas economies – such as China and India, as well as already established markets with growing populations – can be expected to need more of our primary produce (food, timber, minerals etc). At the same time, it is acknowledged that there is room for more and better knowledge and innovation based enterprises relating to all sectors of our economy – but also including primary sector activities.

Recommendation

Rephrase the third bullet to read:

Whilst demand for New Zealand's primary produce can be expected to grow in response to needs from existing markets and expanding Asian economies, there is scope for broadening our economic activities based on knowledge and innovation across a broad spectrum.

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Issue

Under “**Operational Revenue**” it is stated that rates revenue (presumably in “real 2006” terms) is projected to grow from \$203 million in 2006/07 to \$329 million by 2015/16. When related to projected population growth (from about 350,000 in 2006 to about 360,000 by 20016), the rate yield per capita could change from \$580 per capita to \$913 per capita. That indicates the possibility for extending the scope of provision (in terms of quality and quantity) for capital and recurrent undertakings by the City Council.

Recommendation

Under “Operational Revenue” add a new second sentence to read:

In broad terms, the rate yield per capita could change from \$580 per capita to \$913 per capita. That carries the implication of widening opportunities to broaden investment in recurrent and new activities.

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Issues

Under “**Essential Capital Projects**” there is a proposal for expansion of the current bus exchange in Lichfield St for completion by 2010 at a cost of \$59.5 million. Whilst recognising that the present facility is inadequate the question has to be raised as to whether an expanded facility in the same general location would adequately serve the longer term needs for both inter and intra city services, having regard to the longer term growth needs anticipated under the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (with a time horizon of 2041). It is considered that this matter needs to be examined as a matter of priority in terms of the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002, which mandates the need for options to be carefully identified and evaluated against potential community costs and benefits. One option, for example, might be the provision of two bus interchanges respectively located in suitable eastern and western locations of the central city, having good vehicular access both to/from peripheral primary distributors (i.e. the Four Avenues) and also good pedestrian access to/from a core pedestrian priority area.

(see also following comments)

Recommendation

Delete the current statement relating to expansion of the current bus exchange and substitute the following under "Essential Capital Projects" :

"New Bus Exchange Facilities – the present exchange in Lichfield ST is already inadequate to meet growth in public transport use and proposals are in-train for short-term improvements. Having regard to longer term urban growth predictions envisaged in the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy, it is seen that an in-depth appraisal of options for inter and intra-city bus exchange facilities needs to be undertaken as a matter of priority.

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Issue

It is noted that under "Central City Strategy Projects" a set of proposals has been derived to improve the central city transport system over the next 10 years at a cost of \$7.8 million. It is acknowledged that certain of these proposals have self-evident benefits – especially the creating of a high-quality pedestrian-friendly environment.

However, (as noted above) it needs to be questioned whether the current location (or any adjoining extensions) is really the right place for a bus exchange given the resultant obvious adverse traffic conditions created from having a significant number of high-frequency buses passing through the pedestrian heart of our city. A better strategy would be to have facilities on the periphery of a pedestrian core. Also, it would seem that any extension would likely to be at the expense of the demolition of list heritage buildings.

Assuming a longer-term time horizon under the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (up to 2041), it is advocated by this author that more in-depth assessments need to be undertaken of options for revamping the current Central City transport system, but building upon a foundation of what can be accepted as essential and desirable projects for the next 10 years as derived from current studies.

Recommendation

Add to the end of the paragraph under "Central City Transport Strategy Projects" the following:

It is recognised, however, that a longer-term view needs to be taken of future bus exchange facilities having regard to the forecast extent and direction of urban growth in both Greater Christchurch (as anticipated by the Urban Development Strategy) and also having regard to relevant considerations relating to development trends in the wider region.

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Issues and Recommendations

The Community Plan lists 12 groups of "Significant Activities" and it is perceived that they each deserve that classification. However, some amendments and new items could well be included, namely:

- "City Development" should be changed to cover *City Planning and Development* to acknowledge that there are two inseparable sides to the future growth of the city.
- "Refuse Minimisation and Disposal" should include a reference to *Recycling*.
- Add *Cemeteries and Crematoria* on the grounds that these provide a strong spiritual link to the endeavours and contributions made by past members of the general community to the development and welfare of the city.
- Add *Air Quality* on the grounds that this matter has a major impact on the general health of the community and on the image of the city as a good place in which to live. There also remains a major task to work in cooperation with ECAN to improve and maintain satisfactory air quality standards that could have significant cost implications for local rate payers.
- Reintstate both *City Care* and *Red Bus Co.* as significant assets as both fulfill important recurrent roles in maintaining essential community-oriented services.

Finally, would it be appropriate for the list of Significant Activities to be arranged by some grouped orders of priority?