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Christchurch

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To the Christchurch City Council

This is a private submission from Kate Shuttleworth that comments on the full version of the plan. It details my own thoughts about the plan from the point of view of a Banks Peninsula resident.

I have found the plan is not particularly user friendly. I have had to spend many hours just trying to find things and try to comprehend what is happening. Many people would probably give up and say it is all too hard.

The future of the city is really important and this is a key document. Somehow a better way has to be found to communicate future plans with residents.

My submission will take the form of a series of bullet points about the plan.

General comments:

- A vision statement drives a process. The vision that has been articulated for Christchurch does not create the sort of place I want to live in. A first world lifestyle in my mind means make money at all costs, forget people and the environment.
- I want to live in a place where people, the environment, and the economy exist in better harmony. The economy should not dominate everything.
- Where is the Banks Peninsula community vision included in this document? It was more focused and holistic in approach.
- This plan is incredibly hard for any one on the Peninsula to understand. It would take weeks to gain an understanding of all the supplementary reports that underpin much of the document and yet we are expected to comment and approve of the outcomes.
- Apart from a few pictures, a few words and mention of \$132 million for capital expenditure on the Peninsula, the Peninsula seems to have disappeared!
- The Peninsula had more detailed reports on spending programs than the city. It is really difficult to comment on any activities if the supporting reports are not included.

- Citizens can only make informed comments and participate effectively if they have access to information. This plan does not provide enough information. The web site does not contain many of the reports that are referred to in this document.
- From my perspective the plan looks disjointed. What are the threads that connect it together? How have this group of random capital projects been selected.
- The Christchurch vision seems to focus on economic growth. Where is sustainability in all of this? This plan is for a ten-year period but it seems like a roll out of more of the same. Major challenges face us in the next decade. Climate Change and peak oil are two significant things that will change our lifestyle. We need radical change to steer a different course. This plan has small incremental changes but nothing significant. I think more of our residents want something more. There is a new mindset that certainly exists in the Lyttelton community that the way we are doing things now can be improved significantly. We must think more collectively than as individuals. We need to create communities that actively work together to localise activities and reduce their impact on the planet.
- So many of the assumptions adopted by the plan seem wrong. Will traffic growth continue, will the population endlessly increase? The plan keeps projecting forward on old behaviour patterns The next ten years are going to be very different. Oil will get more expensive and less people will be able to afford to drive. We need to plan for more localised activities that enhance walking, cycling and public transport.

Major Policies

- City Care and Red Bus should continue to remain significant assets. If they aren't deemed significant they could be sold off without public consultation. Money earned from these activities should be reinvested in our community and not to pay profits to private investors if privatised.
- Similarly the Port Company should remain a significant asset and remain in the control of the local authority. It should not be sold to a foreign company. Residents don't want these key decisions made by non-accountable entities such as ChCh City Holdings.
- I haven't had a chance to read the developers contribution policy but I agree with the concept that "growth should fund growth". The developers should fund all green fields development. Incentives should be provided for growth that contributes to walkable neighbourhood communities in existing suburbs.

Capital works Program

- Much of the plan seeks funding for already existing asset management plans. Are these plans the best way forward? Do they lock us into old ways of thinking that in some cases require over engineered solutions?

- Does Christchurch really need new leisure centres? These centres draw people from their local communities. Wouldn't it be best to maintain community pools where locals can access them on foot/cycle etc.
- Should 187 million be spent on street and transport improvements? I suspect a large part of this budget is for building new roads. In an era of rapid price increases for oil products the cost of driving may not prove economical for many. Increasing the road network will be a bad investment. This budget needs review. Re-allocate some of the funding to maintain pools, halls and libraries. Keep communities local. Other savings could be applied to smaller capital projects identified that develop neighbourhoods. For example the urban regeneration project, new footpaths, street art etc.
- Other key initiatives such as implementation of the Bio Diversity Strategy and the Water re-use project should have funding priority.

Governance and Democracy

- What is the role of Community Boards? Little has been mentioned about them in the plan. I think they are the vital link into the communities and can encourage their communities to get actively involved. They have a key role to play in improving the localness of neighbourhoods. The plan feels like the central role of the council strengthens. Power should be decentralised through the community boards to empower local communities to take more responsibility for their own needs.

Community Support

- I believe this should be the area that received the most funding as it is most vital to the existence of our communities.
- Existing funding for community grants is much appreciated and supported. These amounts need to be increased to take into account more residents in the ChCh area and to encourage greater community participation in their well-being.

Refuse Minimisation and disposal

- I don't see any commitment in your plan to target zero waste, this is inadequate.

Streets and Transport

- I see no commitment to address the crisis we are facing with rising fuel prices. I feel it is essential to be focusing on cycleways. I would like to see buses become more flexible about accomodating cycles with racks on the front of buses. I live in Lyttelton and do not feel there is a system that adequately accomodates helping cyclists get their bikes through the tunnel to enable them to cycle from there.
- I am in favour of Christchurch investing its money in light rail instead of looking at moving the bus exchange.

Water Supply

- What is the council planning to do about the crisis of our reservoirs drying out, or our aquifers whatever they are called. National Radio and the Listener have conducted interviews outlining that Canterbury is at risk of “drying up”. What is being done to address the pollution of our waterways by the dairy industry.
- I am opposed to the move to “get rid” of ECAN. I feel that without them our local natural environment would suffer further. They are our only real advocates for making people accountable for their effect on the environment.

I hope these comments are useful.

Regards

Kate Shuttleworth