

LTCCP 2006-16 SUBMISSION

Submissions close on 5 May 2006

I do NOT wish to present my submission at the hearing, and ask that this submission be considered.

I am completing this submission:
For yourself

Number of people you represent:

My submission refers to:

Page Number:

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>Many of these planned projects could and should be cut or trimmed with virtually no loss of services.</p> <p>Judging by local roading projects presently proceeding around Peterborough Street much of the "essential" roadworks may be not only unnecessary but driven by a "green" ideology that ignores economic realities. The narrow street designs are costly to implement since the lawns and plants are costly to maintain. In reality only occasional much cheaper basic roading repairs are needed.</p> <p>The budgeted cost of \$3.6 million for a civil defense bunker seems unnecessary and reflects the unfortunate reality that the city is handicapped by two having two squabbling councils that have lost sight of serving the public and spend money for the sake of it. The "potential issues" (p72) are not spelled out in the draft and look like weasel words. I would not like to have to depend on the competency of either council in an emergency.</p> <p>The bus-exchange in Lichfield street is a mess in the central city, so how is a new and even more expensive version going to be any better? How the Mayor can claim with a straight face that this exchange is a victim of its own success defies belief. It was obviously mislocated to begin with and too small. It is noisy, stinks, and is a dangerous place to be in at night.</p> <p>The Art Gallery has barely been commissioned and the gallery hardly seems overwhelmed by success when the present director is getting the boot. This call for an upgrade seems to be either pointless or yet another example of poor planning.</p> <p>The city does not need new civic offices so the fitout project should be scrapped. Many staff jobs overlap those in the private sector and the tasks could be replaced externally, as necessary. Many staff jobs are duplicates of jobs in the central government. The CDC should be merged with the Ministry of Economic Development. The council employs around a hundred town planners and yet they cannot specify a height restriction for new buildings. Since this is a time of low unemployment and good economic growth there is no need for the council to act as a social welfare organisation.</p>

**Your Submission
Cont'd:**

The rate at which young trees are broken and replaced in the central city makes me question the rationale for planting more trees.

Do you have any comments on groups of activities (The activities and services the Council provides?)

Funding spent on libraries is important and should be run by the central government rather than left to the whims of local bodies.

Some designated parks or reserves are too small to be practical and should be converted back to housing where there are plenty of local green areas e.g. Moa Reserve. This would boost the rates base, eliminate vandalism of equipment and maintenance.

Many of the activities funded duplicate very similar services funded by the government and should be cut. I don't accept that the council's reason for being is to redistribute its ratepayers income and so create vested interests to keep tapping the general ratepayer. The problem is that politically it is a very tempting strategy to hand out public money to various groups in an attempt to retain control of the public purse.

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

The Council should be restructured before it pauperises its citizens. So far the job of managing the council appears to be beyond the abilities of Ms McTurk who came from Public Health Management - an area in the public service that has constantly failed to provide sufficient services and to control costs.

Very poor management by recent Christchurch city councils has led to the call for a 10% rate increase this year. So many bad decisions have been made, so much public funding wasted, so many vested interests created, that the culture looks to have become entrenched. A large book could be written on these failed projects ranging from the Cathedral Square repaving, to the recent Converge "Conference". The worry is that the scale and frequency of these failures are increasing.

The budgets presented in this draft can hardly be believed when the Mayor can hook out \$800,000 for office renovations out of nowhere and later claim he can find \$16 million in unused assets to cover yet another increase in costs for the proposed new staff building, which has now climbed to \$100m

I don't accept that the council has really tried to cut costs for this budget. How could it get involved otherwise in wasting \$750,000 on the Converge Conference? And why is the chief co-instigator of "Converge" now employed as chair of the council holding company (CCHL) when she clearly lacks the skills? After the recently failed Lyttelton Port take-over debacle, all the assets controlled by the CCHL should be placed in an independent trust and looked after in the public interest by qualified trustees with the council as beneficiary.

The Council seems to have great trouble in coordinating its various strategies. It spends funds advertising and promoting the inner city, yet drives people away by raising charges for parking. It employs and equips an army to patrol the street parks and ticket cars, then forgives the fines of those that don't pay. This seems a very odd strategy to entice more people into the city. The Council also employs "planners" and "engineers" to design and implement projects to narrow the streets and reduce parking spaces. These drive people from the central city.

Under the Greenlinks program the Council buys properties to undercut its own rates base, and makes them into small parks that get vandalised, and require constant maintenance. This seems economically counterproductive.