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Draft Annual Plan 2007/08 Submission Form

1. Page 26 - 80 % State Satisfactions with the 'Look and Feel' of the City.

I find this statistic very hard to believe, as in my opinion the broken glass, rubbish, cans, glass bottles, paper, cigarette butts, chewing gum and general filth in the city is steadily worsening. This is in the suburbs as well as the inner city. The contractors are doing a very poor job and the city is slipping in its standards of cleanliness.

2. Water

Worldwide water is becoming more and more of a critical issue. Before Christchurch faces a crisis we should consider all re-uses of secondary water waste, such as houses having storage tanks in order to water their gardens. Water management is not an issue to put off lightly for another day because we live above the leading aquifers in New Zealand. Looking across the Tasman to Australia where they are staring at a major crisis of a lack of water must give lessons to us. The City Council needs to be proactive in its management of this critical life supply.

3. Page 63 - Uniform Annual Charge

I believe that the uniform annual general charge of \$115 should plan to rise more realistically over the future years in order to give a better reflection of the general universal costs to each household.

4. Page 43 - CCHL

The budget plans for \$32 million per year in the ten year plan, except for the \$2 million additional funding for 2007/08. There should be a realistic suggestion for a special dividend in the near future.

5. Page 44 – Audit Fees

I question the requirement that these audit fees rise \$6 thousand in one year, which is apparently a relatively straight forward year in Council budget planning.

6. Page 23 – Lyttelton Marina

\$3 million for the Lyttelton Marina has been re-programmed now from 2008/09 to 2009/10.

Christchurch and Banks Peninsula should be deeply ashamed that they have ‘dragged the chain’ so badly for so long over the re-development of this marina. We are the laughing stock throughout the country when you consider the facilities for all sorts of water sports and activities in other parts of New Zealand.

7. Under grounding

Not even mentioned in this budget. I consistently maintain that when a street is totally upgraded the overall budgeting should include under grounding, even if this requires the street upgrade schedule to be slower than presently planned. My philosophy is, “do the job once and do it well.”

I wish the staff to know that I have heard the arguments as to the costs hundreds of times, I simply do not believe that the present programme of under grounding is at all satisfactory and looking into the future there will be a requirement to return and renew the street with under grounding, when in fact it should be done in the first upgrade.

8. Service Centres/Community Boards

These should be staffed with people who care for and are familiar with the local areas that they are working in. We are talking local government and ‘local’ must remain in the managing of the city. Presently there would seem to be some dissatisfaction as to how Tuam Street regards the local Service Centres and Community Boards.

9. Event Funding

Although in the plan individual cultural events are not listed, it has come to my attention that the events funding for the Adam Cello Competition, the Jazz Festival, the Buskers Festival, the Dance Festival and the Readers and Writers Festival is to cease altogether, or be severely diminished. All these festivals to a major degree enhance the ‘living spirit’ of the city for the citizens of the city.

In the past it has been one of the factors that people comment on in discussing the way of life that we have in the city. It is well understood that although they get private sponsorship they equally need City Council events sponsorship. Without these two parts of funding these festivals will cease to exist and the city will be very much the worse without them.

The loss of these events will effect not just the festivals themselves, but also all the sites, such as the Arts Centre which are hired in order to run these festivals, as well as the employment, both paid and voluntary, of the hundreds and hundreds of people that have worked to support these events. Once these festivals, which have been of the highest quality and recognised internationally, are no more it will be very hard for the city to re-resurrect their place in our city. Other cities will eagerly take them over.

This is a very grave error of judgement on the part of those advising the city on the festival calendar.

10. Trees

The 'umbrella' of what is otherwise a flat city needs to have the height and majesty of tall, mature trees. We call ourselves the 'Garden City' but quite frankly I am of the opinion that we really no longer deserve this city description. More and more as I travel I see other cities which have far greater conscious and respect over retaining the 'green' of their cities.

Recently on a visit to Sydney I went to the upper North Shore area of Sydney, including the suburbs of Wahroonga, Beecroft and Turramurra, which over a significant area gave these areas the 'green' of the parks and the trees and the gardens, which left our city in its shadow.

With the continuing loss of properties being subdivided into small town house lots with concrete patio gardens, with 'pom pom' trees and tubs, there is simply no area to plant trees that in time will have stature. What was allowed to happen in Royd Street, Fendalton, was a total disgrace for the city. Mighty trees of 100 hundred years old were felled and a large house smashed over with apparently the city impotent to do anything about this loss because the trees were not on a preservation list.

The City Council has been talking about a preservation list for many years and has chosen to do nothing about it, in the meantime these great trees get cut down. Within a few short years our sky line will be empty of these trees which took decades to reach maturity.