

## 25. INCREASE IN BUSKERS FESTIVAL CORE FUNDING

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Corporate Plan Output: Festivals and Events	

The purpose of this report is to present a request by the Festival City Trust, for an increase of \$20,000 in the core funding for the World Buskers Festival. Due to the timing of this application and historical occurrences, officers have been advised to make submission through this committee for consideration.

### FESTIVAL CITY TRUST – LETTER OF SUBMISSION

The following letter has been received from Jodi Wright, Festival Director:

*“In order to get this submission to you I’ve written this application for additional CCC annual core funding on the fourth day of the 7th annual World Buskers Festival. Based on the attendance numbers of the first four days I estimate that by 30 January (last day of the festival) more than 110,000 people will have experienced some or all of the festival.*

*The World Buskers Festival has really become a Christchurch icon, supplying the central city with activity, world class entertainment, excitement and people. This year’s festival featured the largest line up of international and national street performers to ever perform in one New Zealand city at the same time.*

*From a very shaky beginning in 1994 we have pursued one objective- to create and produce a very unique, very fun and a very accessible major festival for the city of Christchurch.*

*Our efforts throughout the past few years have resulted in the establishment of the largest street performance festival in the Southern Hemisphere. A New Zealand one of a kind festival that has entertained and delighted hundreds of thousands and drawn the attention of local, national and international media including the New York Times, Conde Nast Traveller, Hemisphere Magazine (in flight for United Airlines) and an array of the other international publications and newspapers.*

*In keeping with the central city revitalisation process we would like to spend the next five years building the profile of the festival, adding more performance areas, increasing the roving performance line up and perhaps including Saturday shows in the city mall into our programme. To achieve this we need to have the resources that will enable the festival to hire event assistants, additional city mall security and continue to attract the world’s best street performers by being in a position to cover enough of their basic travel requirements to get them here.*

*The World Buskers Festival has received core funding in the amount of \$65,000 from the CCC since 1997 and even though we’ve doubled our attendance, increased our performance line up and tripled our marketing efforts (we produced and distributed more than 212,000 programmes, leaflets and posters) our annual income budget hasn’t increased in a way that will enable us to continue to produce the calibre of festival the city of Christchurch has come to know and love.*

*Our options to raise funds are pretty limited as corporate sponsorship is very difficult to obtain and selling off the acts to other NZ cities in order to increase our revenue could have adverse effects on the festival i.e. each year we receive many requests from other NZ event Companies to provide them with street performers/buskers. We've refrained from providing them with access to our performers and recently incorporated a clause in our contracts that doesn't allow act contracted to the World Buskers Festival to perform in Wellington or Auckland without our permission. We've done this because we understand both are eager to establish a similar festival in their city.*

*We are seeking a \$20,000 increase to the World Buskers Festival annual CCC core funding - raising the amount to \$85,000 - the same amount that the Festival of Romance and The Festival of Flowers receives per festival and still significantly less than the \$156,000 the Christchurch Arts Festival receives per festival.*

*Our commitment to making the festival one of the major NZ festivals is our goal. We look forward to producing many more in and on the streets of Christchurch."*

#### **OFFICER COMMENT**

This festival attracts a wonderful, diverse audience of Christchurch residents, which contributes significantly to enhancing the inner city and creating a more cohesive community. The request needs to be considered alongside the other submission for this budgetary output, which include Sidewalk Art Festival, Multi-Cultural Festival, Cello Festival and Contemporary Art Festival.

#### **Officer's**

**Recommendation:** For discussion.