

## 7. CENTRAL CITY REVITALISATION CONSULTATION PROCESS SUMMARY REPORT

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The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the consultation process to date on the development of our Central City Strategy.

### CONSULTATION PROCESS

As part of the process in the development of a Central City Strategy consultation was undertaken in the form of survey questionnaires and public meetings. The main objectives were to get the public's views on the main issues surrounding the Central City and to gather suggestions or creative ideas in revitalising the Central City. Surveys were run in the Council's household newsletter City Scene during the months of August and September 2000 while the Discussion Document "Focus on the Heart" was distributed during the months of October and November 2000.

Over 570 submissions were received for the City Scene Survey while there were over 900 submissions for the Discussion Document "Focus on the Heart". The Christchurch Youth Council also developed a questionnaire based on the Discussion Document that was more youth friendly and generated over 330 submissions. Over 30 public meetings were also held from September to December 2000 with different resident associations, neighbourhood groups, organisations, business groups, and the general public.

Feedback gathered from the consultation was generally very positive and supportive of Central City revitalisation, (88 per cent of respondents gave positive support for the Council's intentions). There was also strong support for a focus on the eastern part of the city (68 percent). Issues of greatest importance from submissions include transport and getting around, improving living opportunities and quality outcomes, Cathedral Square, green streets and natural environment improvements. Included in the submissions were some very creative suggestions, many of which have been incorporated into the recommendations coming to Council over the coming months.

### PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

#### City Scene Survey

The Council's publication City Scene is widely distributed to over 100,000 households in Christchurch every month. There were 3 general questions included in the August and September issues of City Scene which aimed to identify the problems and issues surrounding the Central City and to get people's ideas on how to improve our Central City. The questions targeted:

1. What we want for our Central City?
2. What would encourage people to live in the Central City?
3. What groups are not catered for in the Central City?

A total of 572 submissions were received, considered to be a high response rate given the nature and lack of provocation to respond to the survey. Some issues raised in the City Scene feedback involved:

#### General Issues:

- Parking – easier, cheaper, free
- Urban Development – support for business initiatives including commercial development and appropriate housing, etc.
- Transport/Access – better public transport, pedestrian areas, traffic, etc
- Cathedral Square – more colour, design, facilities and activities
- Safety – improve night time safety, more police presence on foot, etc
- Retail – improve variety of shops, more markets/supermarkets, affordable rents, etc
- Natural Environment – more colour, open spaces, etc
- Cleanliness – cleaner streets & footpaths, air pollution
- Recreation/Entertainment/Activities – more facilities and activities

The issues raised regarding the question on what would encourage people to live in the central city included:

- Housing Options – cheaper affordable homes, quality housing
- Safety – fewer gangs, less violence, etc
- Natural Environment – less pollution, more green open spaces, cleaner streets & footpaths, less noise
- Access – parking, less traffic
- Facilities – groceries/supermarkets, fruit shops, recreation facilities

Of the groups not catered for in the central city, the elderly group had the highest response rate followed by young people and/or teenagers.

### **Discussion Document Feedback**

About 9,000 copies of the Discussion Document “Focus on the Heart” were distributed in October and November 2000 to the public outlining the above-mentioned issues and stimulating people to think about the changes they would like to see for the Central City. They were also urged to indicate other issues they felt strongly about which were not mentioned in the Discussion Document. A total of 932 submissions were received on the Discussion Document and over 30 public and stakeholder meetings were held. Generally, the feedback was very positive.

Analyses of submissions were conducted and results suggest the following; (The complete results contained in Appendix A of the separately circulated document):

- general support for the project as a high priority for the Council
- support for a focus east of Colombo St
- to make the central city more appealing a series of issues will need to be addressed including improving the natural environment, safety and security, transport and access, cleanliness and recreation to name a few
- issues of greatest importance suggest that transport and parking, improving living conditions and the environment, Cathedral Square, safety, heritage retention, retail and business and the ideas on a river promenade were identified as important
- in terms of green and more “liveable” streets there was quite strong support with feedback suggesting that Colombo St, Manchester Street, Moorhouse Avenue and the one-way streets deserve priority attention
- in terms of making our central city more accessible there were mixed views on whether our central city is accessible currently with some specific suggestions to create more/better and free parking, improving pedestrian crossing points and wider footpaths, and significant support for improving public transport (shuttle, tram), and fewer cars
- our central city is not as safe as it should be with a series of issues we will need to address including such elements as reducing the impacts of “gangs/skinheads”, improving police presence, providing better lighting standards, and reducing crime and “hoons”.

It should be emphasised that these results only tabulate a limited number of quantitative responses received. There have also been a series of public meetings with some excellent suggestions put forward about projects and priorities which are discussed below.

### **Public Meetings**

Over 30 meetings were held across the City from September to December 2000 regarding the revitalisation of our Central City. These meetings aimed to stimulate people in identifying key issues and priorities and in coming up with new and creative ideas on how to improve our Central City. The meetings involved residents’ associations, neighbourhood groups, wards, and different stakeholders. A complete listing of groups consulted is contained in Appendix B of the separately circulated document.

Community feedback notes from several meetings have been compiled which suggest some of the following:

- general support for the project
- strong support for the development east of Colombo but a consistent concern on gentrification (leading to the loss of affordable housing)
- strong desire from residents to be involved in the planning of their neighbourhood strategies
- consistent enthusiasm for the greening of streets in the Central City
- developing a point of difference from the suburban malls seen as critical
- shuttle services received consistent praise with a strong desire to see it extended
- strong desire for short-term free parking and free parking during weekends
- river promenade was greeted with enthusiasm at all the meetings
- our Central City is not perceived to be as safe amongst many residents particularly at night

A detailed compilation of notes on community feedback prepared by the consultants Common Ground Design & Communications is contained in Appendix C.

### **Youth Submissions**

The Christchurch Youth Council produced a youth-friendly questionnaire based on the Discussion Document and a total of 333 submissions were received from youth aged 15-25 during the Christchurch A & P Show on November 2000 and the World Aids Day Supercharge Concert on December 2000. Analysis of submissions was conducted and the general indications are outlined below. A copy of the detailed report prepared by the Christchurch City Council Youth Advocacy Office is contained in Appendix D.

Overall, youth gave the following feedback:

- general satisfaction about the shops in the Central City, with the majority making comments about the good variety of shops
- support for free shuttle, convenience of buses and bus routes especially the midnight express bus
- most significant area identified to be improved is the Cathedral Square and other areas of entertainment, events and festivals by providing more colour and more free local and school band concerts
- in terms of great new ideas for the Central City a majority are in favour of more entertainment by way of events, “underage” night clubs, dance parties, raves and amusement parks for young people
- most often stated suggestion was to provide more and better skate parks closer to the Central City than Washington Skate Park.

Overall public consultation suggests there is strong support and interest in making our Central City a more exciting and vibrant place. Many of the suggestions received have and will be incorporated in the reports coming to Council over the next few months including the report entitled Central City Strategy– Stage 1. This report sets a direction and framework for project development for both the Council and the proposed Central City Board (or appropriate agency), and outlines some short-term priority projects which are recommended to be completed over the next few years.

### **Chairman’s**

**Recommendation:** That the information be received.