

5. TOURISM GROWTH AND CHALLENGES FOR PLANNING IN CHRISTCHURCH

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The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an update on the expected growth in tourism in Christchurch;
- Identify the need for improved strategic planning to address that growth; and
- Recommend that a seminar be scheduled to discuss recent findings on expected growth in Canterbury tourism and associated planning implications.

A Visitor Coordination Strategy Group comprising staff from CCC, Canterbury Development Corporation (CDC), Christchurch and Canterbury Marketing (CCM) and assisted by Professor David Simmons (and staff) from Lincoln University was established in 2002 to explore tourism forecasts and potential impacts in Christchurch and Canterbury.

Over the past few months, funded by a Foundation for Research Science and Technology Grant (FORST), Professor Simmons and his team have produced a series of reports including:

- Christchurch and Canterbury Visitor Profile and Forecasts
- Visitors to Christchurch: Characteristics and Decision-Making
- Visitors' and Locals' Views of Environmental Management in Christchurch
- Community Perceptions of Tourism in Christchurch and Akaroa
- Maori Tourism: Concepts, Characteristics and Definitions
- The Values Associated with Maori-Centred Tourism in Canterbury
- Economic Impact of Tourism in Christchurch and Akaroa
- Tourism, Waste and Water in Akaroa

Some of the key findings for Christchurch include:

- For 2001 there were about 735,000 international visitors to Canterbury (3.3 million bed nights) and 2.3 million domestic visitors (7 million bed nights).
- Ninety-seven per cent of the international visitors nights were spent in Christchurch, with significant day trips to local Canterbury attractions, implying significant infrastructure and planning impacts.
- Forecast growth in international visitor numbers of slightly over 50% and domestic visitors of 17% by 2008 – this volume of growth will demand a proactive approach in terms of planning (accommodation, transport, etc).
- Tourism is a large part of our economy and currently contributes 12% of all jobs to Christchurch, with spending at approximately \$1.1 billion per year (with additional flow on effects of \$800 million).
- Design, amenity, infrastructure quality, and natural landscapes are important to visitors.
- There are potentially significant impacts and benefits to the central city and other high tourist areas.
- Tourism strategies should be integrated into planning cycles of local government.
- Maori centred tourism and associated cultural values are important.
- Impacts on natural resources (eg water use) can be significant.

Assuming tourism does grow at such a pace, there are a number planning implications for this Council and neighbouring councils including infrastructure services such as accommodation and transportation/traffic planning, and maintaining and enhancing tourist experiences and expectations. There is also a need for work to better understand what attractions and activities tourists will expect, and what we can deliver.

The key challenge for Christchurch and Canterbury is to integrate tourism planning into our forward planning across a number of areas.

Finally the findings from this recent work can and should be utilised in the Council's recent initiative with adjoining councils on the Metropolitan Urban Development Strategy (see separate report).

Staff recommend that a seminar be held on the subject to further consider the implications of significant expected growth in tourism.

Staff

- Recommendation:**
1. That a Council seminar be held regarding expected growth in tourism, and associated tourism planning issues and challenges.
 2. That the seminar include members of the Canterbury Development Corporation, Christchurch and Canterbury Marketing, and Professor David Simmons from Lincoln University to present the recent research findings on Canterbury tourism studies.

Chair's

Recommendation: That the above recommendation be adopted.