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H

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14 April 2009

Christchurch City Council
P O Box 237
Christchurch

LTCCP Submission

NB: I wish to be heard ; please advise date & time of the hearing.

I have not long been resident in Christchurch, but in the last 3 months I have not heard a single good word about the council and its activities. Adjectives like 'criminal' are on the town's tongues.

So, this submission is made without any confidence that the LTCCP will be modified in light of any fact or opinion presented by those participating, but it is made nonetheless for the record.

My fundamental objection to the LTCCP is the planned increase in debt in tandem with inclement economic weather. The summary document whines about 'tremendous pressure on costs' [p.8] after having boasted that the council "will spend \$2.46 billion on a range of projects across the city." [p.6]

There are about four long-wave economic cycles which are converging at present. Neither NZ as a whole nor any city in NZ will have any chance of mediating the effects of those cycles by spending. Trying to do so is like swimming against the tide. Eventually, the tide will overwhelm you.

To stampede forward with a quadrupling of debt and to impose rates increases on the citizens is the most gross and irresponsible profligacy. *Having any debt during the next decade is irresponsible.* The council and council staff have an obligation to provide core services first, and should suspend any fancy projects and any expansion until at least 2019. In line with the cycles, rates decreases to compensate for the shrinking economy should be a high priority. A secondary priority should be the complete elimination of council debt by 2015. A third should be the reduction of council media, planning, policy and other non-productive staff by 75% within 2 years.

Promotion of growth as a cure-all, and attempts to 'grow' the city should be immediately ceased. Self contained communities such as existed prior to 1950 should be encouraged. The paradigm of driving to the mall and shopping is coming to an end; the only question is when. But to plan for expansion outwards, more roads, and the logically consequent increase in traffic is to think two generations behind the times. And what is this talk of intergenerational equity? Such things are symptomatic of philosophical confusion. The city founders would piss blood if they saw your plan to make later generations pay for something. Intergenerational equity is a noose around the necks of our children - Only degenerate, Muldoonist baby-boomers would entertain let alone promote the idea of usury as being equitable. And that's putting it politely.

A summary of what should be done , or not, follows;

- reduce all charges and rates by 1 percent, except; parking charges by 20%, building inspection charges by 60% and freeze them until 2020. Merely freezing the rates at this level will have a deflationary effect...and services should be incrementally reduced to cope with the reduction in revenue.
- reduce non-productive staff by 75% (emphasis here on managerial, policy, advisory, planning, and especially media: e.g. any role which would not have been essential for the city's functioning in 1950, with some few exceptions for updated infrastructure & technology)
- immediately stop new borrowing, and plan to operate debt free for the next 50 years.
- halve the Canterbury museum grant
- no more recreational facilities
- no more heavy handed demolition of existing facilities. (viz Edgeware pool) [on the other hand, half a mil could make a nice area for the car freaks to have their skids eh?]
- defer major capital projects til 2020
- scrap involvement in early learning
- No bailouts of property developers
- scrap involvement in contrived law enforcement issues such as 'boy racers'. Laws enough exist to deal with that. The ever-present whingers who claim "there should be a law against that" have done enough damage to this country and its civil liberties.
- No more new libraries; no more multimedia installations in the existing libraries.
- No funding for any additional library material that is not traditionally bound and paginated. Eg no tapes, CD's, movies, DVD's, etc.[only exception being foreign language instruction] a Library is for books. Let the public arrange their own multimedia infrastructure.
- No civil defence building (nor contribution towards it). A building does

not make for Civil Defence; it is the result of a cohesive community and some simple training which can be undertaken anywhere.

- No bailouts of businesses
- No more parks development. Maintain everything as it is until 2020.
- Scrap the western interceptor.
- Scrap the expansion of the convention centre (business tourism is likely to shrink in a depression; conference attendees can eat their canapés in the parks)
- Halve the budget for the town hall renovations.
- Finish the tram extension because it has already begun
- halve the roading budget for the next 10 years, with what's left focusing on maintenance.
- Council senior management should take a pay cut of 20%, or go.
- Move to open source/freeware computer systems over the next 7 years (if they're good enough for the *Mairie de Paris*, they're good enough for CCC)
- Council housing for low income earners, etc, - reduce rents by 2% - a small subsidy by ratepayers is acceptable. People who are disadvantaged or destitute do not deserve the kind of dirty tricks the CCC has played on them
- No bailouts (for the third time, so it is absolutely clear)
- No new property development outside the existing city dwellings. (i.e. draw a line on the map around the city as she is, and don't allow new houses, suburbs, developments, whatever.

Continuing growth in a time of contraction is insane. Unless you undertake a program of unprecedented austerity and responsibility, you risk becoming the cellular representation of rampant bureaucracy – Cancer. The next decade is one for restraint, maintenance, stasis; the result would be renewed confidence in local government followed by a new prosperity.

I encourage you all to pause and contemplate the effects of events unfolding in the next year or so before committing to any large capital projects. There is no great rush for your plan. Your own summary document talks about economic uncertainty, so why behave as if you are certain? Should you continue with your plans as they stand, the excision which will occur later will be all the more painful for the city.



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LTCCP Submission – Edgeware pool site

In consideration of the injustice done by the council and its staff to the St. Albans swim club and the St. Albans/Edgeware community, the land should be transferred ½ to the St. Albans residents association, ½ to the St. Albans swim club with open permission to use the land for whatsoever purpose they decide, and the sum of \$500,000 be provided to the aforementioned bodies by the council for decontamination of the land.

Such a settlement would restore community confidence in the council and is indeed far below the replacement cost of a pool, and not much more than the cost of repairs to the original pool, were it not wantonly destroyed.

I note that the CCC seems to dislike any community that can do things for itself, and any community that will pay for its own things. The future however is one of *more* tribalism, not less. Community interests must therefore take precedence to centralised government plans, even the Inevitable sort which are completely secret.

For anyone other than the community of St Albans to *directly* profit from the sale of the land, which we can assume will go ahead regardless of community opinion, is simply execrable; such iniquity should be forever held against those responsible and all their descendants.



Andrew Falcon