

Sustainable Quality of Life Outcomes

Introduction

Helping to make sure Christchurch continues to be a great place to live over the next year, and in the years to come, is at the heart of this, the 2004 version of the Christchurch City Council's Draft Plan.

The Plan gives details of the services which the Council intends to provide and the projects it plans to implement in the 12 months from 1 July 2003. It also gives an outline of the Council's general intentions for the following four years.

While many of the submissions which we will receive will focus on specific projects or programmes, it is important not to overlook the strategic aspect of the Plan which is about the delivery to the people of Christchurch of sustainable quality-of-life outcomes.

The outcomes which the Council is seeking to achieve are detailed in the Strategic Section of the Plan and can be summarised as follows:

- Community Cohesion and Well Being
- Economic Development, and
- Environmental Sustainability

This Draft Plan seeks to build on past Plans by helping to ensure that there is significant progress towards the achievement of these outcomes. Some services and projects have been reprioritised, and some new services and projects have been introduced. These changes are designed to lock in further progress towards the desired outcomes.

Put another way, the Council is keen to ensure that Christchurch continues to be a great place to live over the next 12 months and that this improvement continues so that, in five and 20 years, it is an even better place to live.

Economic Development

One of the three outcomes that the Council is seeking to achieve is "sustainable economic development in order to generate employment and income and enhance the quality of life of all residents".

A new initiative which will make a significant contribution to this outcome is the proposal to invest \$24 million in an engine test cell facility for the Christchurch Engine Centre. This is a rare investment opportunity which will allow the Christchurch Engine Centre (which is owned by Pratt & Whitley and Air New Zealand) to expand its engineering operations. This investment will enable Pratt & Whitley to expand the engineering operations and thereby secure a number of very large maintenance contracts. The economic impacts on the city are significant. They can be summarised as follows:

- The retention of 300 jobs at the Engine Centre
- An estimated \$30.8M annual contribution to the Canterbury economy
- An estimated \$16M contribution to the Canterbury economy during the construction phase
- The creation of a substantial number of new jobs over the next 10 years
- Enhancing the city's high technology reputation and the promotion of the city as a centre for engineering and avionics
- The generation of a positive rate of return on the investment. This investment will not be rate funded but will be financed by borrowing to fund the acquisition of shares and loans in a subsidiary of a Council controlled company - Christchurch City Facilities Ltd

In addition to the Christchurch Engine Centre investment, the Council is also proposing some further new economic development initiatives with the objective of increasing the number of sustainable employment opportunities.

These new initiatives are:

- **Film South** (\$100,000 a year)

There is currently unprecedented interest in New Zealand and Canterbury as a production location for major feature filming as a result of the Lord of the Rings trilogy. The November Council meeting recognised this and voted \$100,000 for Film South activities for the balance of 2002/03. This proposal locks this support in for subsequent years.

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- **Canterbury Regional Economic Development Strategy (CREDS) and Long Term Community Council Plan (LTCCP)** (\$50,000 in 2003/04 and 2004/05)

The CREDS document was published in late 2000 and is in need of a thorough revision and update. Concurrent with that need is the obligation for local government to consult and prepare an LTCCP document. The Canterbury Development Corporation (CDC) has been identified as the lead agency for the preparation of the Economic Development strategy component of the LTCCP process. The \$50,000 in 2003/04 and also in 2004/05 will ensure that the CDC is resourced to carry out this task.

- **Industry Clusters - Development and Management** (\$100,000 a year for the next five years)

Industry clusters are about moving an increasing number of small to medium-sized enterprises through to export market development. The CDC has identified 6-10 industry groupings which have varying degrees of potential for clustering based facilitation interventions. Wellington City through its Economic Development Agency (WREDA) currently provides funding support for 12 clusters. CDC is seeking an amount of \$100,000 per annum for this important work.

- **Creative Industries Expo** (\$75,000 in 2003/04)

The development of a major Creative Industries Expo for 2004/05 is seen as a very real opportunity for the city to highlight the products of the creative industries sectors. This will raise the profile of the sector and provide a platform for significant marketing opportunities.

The above initiatives are grouped under the Economic Development outcome with a range of activity which continues from other years. A number will also contribute indirectly to the Community Cohesion and Well-being Outcome.

Environmental Sustainability

A recent survey has indicated that 76% of residents support the waster pays principle as an effective way to reduce waste, but 67% disapprove of direct payment for refuse bags. It is against this background that the Council is proposing a staged introduction of waster pays for refuse bags.

Homeowners have been getting 52 bags a year and in last year's 2003 Plan the Council indicated it would stop supplying them in 2003/04. The Draft Plan has now provided for the supply of 26 rates-funded bags in 2003/04. The Council also asked its Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee investigate and report back on:

- A staged introduction of 'waster pays' for refuse bags over two or three years
- The introduction of a rates funded wheelie bin for all households later in 2004, initially for the collection of greenwaste only and later to also include household putrescible waste, and
- additional ways of dealing with household organic waste (such as enhanced home composting methodologies)

The Council also resolved to undertake a special consultative procedure from October 2003 on the issue of household waste removal which clearly sets out the costs and benefits of each option.

The purpose of these initiatives is to reduce the amount of waste sent to the landfill by encouraging citizens to carefully consider minimising their contribution to the waste stream.

Community Cohesion and Well-being

Although the new initiatives which will help ensure further progress towards this outcome are quite varied, they have equal importance to those mentioned above. They include:

- **New Grants**

New grants to the Combined Citizens Advice Bureaux (\$60,000), the Anglican Care

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Family and Community Division (\$15,000 a year for the next three years), Family Help Trust (\$30,000), K2 Trust Christchurch (\$15,000), Refugee Resettlement Support (\$10,000 a year for the next three years), Te Whatu Manawa Maoritanga O Rehua Marae Trust (\$22,000 - year one of a five-year commitment to service a Council loan), the Peace Foundation Disarmament and Security Centre (\$15,000), the Therapeutic Arts Trust (\$25,000 - year one of a three year commitment) and Christchurch Operatic (Showbiz Christchurch - \$25,000)

- **Consultation Initiative** (\$80,000)

The Council is proposing to make an \$80,000 provision which will help to improve the Council's current consultation processes. More specifically this will resource the further development and promotion of the Have Your Say website. It will also ensure that the preliminary consultation guide and tool kits are trialed and evaluated to meet staff and elected-member needs. The development of a Consultation Charter and consultation forums are further specifics which will flow from this funding.

- **Electronic Civic Engagement** (\$50,000 for two years)

Coupled with the consultation initiative above are some electronic projects based around e-technology, and communications and community consultation. This funding will enable the development of eNewsletters, the Have Your Say website, an online discussion forum and a youth website.

- **Responsible Gambling Bill Enforcement** (\$30,000 a year)

Once enacted, the Responsible Gambling Bill will generate a considerable amount of additional work in the form of assessing compliance with Council policy, and assessing all applications for gaming machines and for the location of new gambling venues.

- **Canterbury Museum Revitalisation Project Grant** (\$288,000 for the next five years)

The Canterbury Museum revitalisation project has previously been supported by the Council with a commitment of \$8M over seven years. This additional contribution is the balance of the funding required for a major internal restructuring of the museum layout and incorporation of the Robert McDougall building within the museum display area. This contribution will also demonstrate local commitment to this project in order to help attract central government support for the enhancement of this important community facility.

Budget Savings

Last year's Draft Plan referred to projected rate increases and the need to review and identify savings. Christchurch has a proportionately high number of residents on low or fixed incomes and the Council understands it needs to improve and maintain its financial discipline, identify and eliminate poor-quality spending and discover where savings can be made.

It is pleasing to report that since the last Draft Plan was prepared a combination of budget scrutiny reviews, internal business-improvement reviews and work by the Council's Standing Committees and Business Units has ensured that significant progress has been made towards reducing forecast rating levels. As a result of this work the draft budget rate increases for the next four years are nearly all below the forecasts produced last year. A comparison is noted below:

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Revised Budget & Projections	3.09%	4.34%	3.11%	2.93%	5.33%
Original Projections *	4.73%	6.80%	4.72%	3.81%	5.30%

* As per the Draft 2003 Financial Plan

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These budgetary changes illustrate the Council's action to contribute to the Financial Stewardship Strategic Goal -- "Continue to improve efficiency in the delivery of Council activities and programmes and measuring the value created through efficiency gains". (See page 13)

Further savings during the forthcoming year will be reflected in later Plans.

New Legislative Requirements

The new Local Government Act (2002) and the new Local Government (Rating) Act (2002) require a number of policies and statements to be included in the Draft Plan. The Policies and Statements are:

- Funding Impact Statement
- Revenue and Financing Policy
- Rates Setting and Rating Policies
- Liability Management Policy
- Investment Policy
- Policy on Partnerships with the Private Sector, and
- Policy on Significance

These Policies and Statements are part of the 2004 Draft Plan and, as with the rest of the Plan, you are encouraged to read them and let us know what you think of them by making a submission.

- Have we got things right?
- How could we improve?
- Any expression of support are welcome.

Please note that, in accordance with the new Local Government Act, the Policy on Significance must be adopted by the Council by 1 July 2003 and the submissions on this policy will be considered by the Council on Thursday 26 June 2003. All other Draft Plan submissions will be considered at the Council meeting on 16 July 2003.

Conclusion

We have outlined in this summary just a few of the key new initiatives. Within the Plan is the detail of the complete programme for the Council for 2003/04 and the years that follow covering the spectrum of Council activities which all contribute to our strategic objectives.

The Council remains committed to making progress towards its strategic outcomes of community cohesion and well-being, economic development and environmental sustainability. Together these three outcomes will help improve the quality of life for all residents of the city.

Christchurch is a great place to live - let's make it even better. To do this we need your input. Have Your Say and make a submission on this Draft Plan.



Garry Moore
Mayor



Alistair James
Chairman, Strategy &
Finance Committee



Mike Richardson
City Manager