

## **OUR COMMUNITY PLAN SUBMISSION**

- ☒ I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings to be held between Thursday 25 May and Wednesday 7 June 2006
- ☒ I am completing this submission on behalf of an organisation, representing 52 FTE's and an industry grouping of many thousands of people from 862 businesses
- ☒ My submission refers to the full version and numerous page numbers

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### **1. Context**

Christchurch & Canterbury Marketing (CCM) is the primary Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) for Christchurch City and the Canterbury Region.

Our Core activities are:

- Destinalional Marketing – principal driver
- Destinalional Management – facilitator & contributor
- Business Development – facilitator & contributor

In addition we run three primary business operations:

- Christchurch i-SITE Visitor Centre (i-SITE)
- Christchurch & Canterbury Convention Bureau (CCCB)
- Punting on the Avon (a visitor attraction)

By the very nature of our organisation we have numerous direct relationships across a broad band of stakeholders, both in the public and private sector (including a business partner membership of over 860 businesses representing many thousands of employees).

Accordingly our submission to the Draft Community Plan covers a number of areas. As well as commenting on the key issues affecting our ability to deliver on our "service agreement" with the City, we also wish to comment on areas affecting our industry sector, the community at large and the strategic direction and leadership as presented in the draft plan.

We congratulate you on the production of an excellent draft plan. The quality of thinking and the strategic framework in the plan are generally of a very high quality. Whilst some of our comments about the plan are critical, the intention is not to be overly negative but to assist Council in its endeavours.

We make the following comments as both a passionate company and representative of a passionate industry who love our City dearly and who strive to improve outcomes for all our communities.

## **2. Strategic Direction & Leadership**

The Draft Community Plan sets out very well the vision and strategic direction for Christchurch City. That said the activities and services are almost presented in isolation to this, resulting in an approach which asks respondents to prioritise services and projects without connecting these to the future well-being (vision & strategy) of the City. There is an opportunity for Council to explain and educate their role as a civic leader and driver of City progress and development. This is in no means contradictory to the need to consult and engage various communities but neither should Council try to please all.... "in order to make the omelette you gotta break a few egg shells!". Council needs to signal its wishes to proactively lead change rather than be simply responsive to continual "ongoing consultation with stakeholders" <sup>\*1</sup>(page 94 of the Draft Community Plan).

We are concerned that Council has become risk adverse, has adopted a start/stop approach to initiatives rather than a commitment to progressive change management. A consistency of approach and commitment to achieving goals in the face of adversity is required.

For example the Council's vision clearly states (page 9) that Christchurch will be ..... "a must-see for visitors". We can't see in the plan an "umbrella" which links strategies and projects towards this aim. Instead we find a series of disconnected projects that require comment on in isolation, without the necessary interlinking. The result is that the visionary strategic direction is lost.

## **3. Economic Development**

### **i) Community Outcomes – Refer page 115**

The plan states that in order to achieve social, cultural and environmental goals, a sound, even-growing economy is essential. Further comments are made about how economic prosperity enables access to health care, education etc and yet these are not shown as Community Outcomes. The only two listed are "Community" and "Prosperity". Just taking the activity of "Visitor Marketing" alone, the following may give some idea as to the impact on "Community Outcomes" which we believe should be recognised (through its service agreement with CCM).

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<sup>\*1</sup> All subsequent page references are to the Draft Community Plan

Community Outcome	How Council Contributes	How Much?
<b>Safety</b>	• Multi-cultural visitation promotes understanding & strong communities	✓✓✓
	• Visitors create a "vibrant" atmosphere and populate the Inner City reducing crime	✓✓✓
	• Information & "assistance" services	✓✓
<b>Community</b>	• Multi-cultural visitation promotes understanding & strong communities	✓✓✓
<b>Environment</b>	• Promotion of environmental practices, education, awareness and programmes	✓✓✓
	• Promotion & distribution to the public of environmental messages and practices	✓✓
<b>Governance</b>	• Through CCM & CDC who provide outcomes through service agreements	✓✓✓
<b>Prosperity</b>	As already stated	✓✓✓
	<u>Plus</u> • Direct economic benefit to many businesses and indirect benefit permeating throughout community	✓✓✓
	• Clustering & joint ventures which improve business viability & economic flow down to community	✓✓✓
<b>Health</b>	• Impacts of dispersed economic prosperity enable access to education on health related matters and health care itself	✓
<b>Recreation</b>	• Promotion of activities and information services (i-SITE)	✓✓✓
	• Promotion of cultural events and activities	✓✓✓
<b>Knowledge</b>	• Engagement with visitors and multi-cultural society	✓
	• Training & business development	✓✓✓
<b>City Development</b>	• Visitor industry drives Central City economic viability to create a strong heart	✓✓✓
	• Addressing destination management issues	✓✓✓
	• Recognition & promotion of heritage product and its preservation	✓

ii) Visitor Promotions – Refer page 119

- Throughout the plan reference is made to CCM providing "visitor promotions" services. The line item budget for F2006/07 shows \$1.823 million and has by inference implied this is the funding provided to CCM. CCM's budgeted funding is however around \$1.402 million for F2006/07 raising by 2% per annum over the period shown. This, whilst unintentional, is misleading as to Council's funding provided to CCM and causes us issues with our community.
- In addition a 2% funding increase per annum sees the organisation "regressing" in terms of its ability to deliver the services required in an increasingly competitive market.

- The cost of proposed services for F2007/08 and beyond do not appear to have taken into account the replacement of the South Island Promotion Fund (SIPF) monies (\$250K). These funds have been provided to CCM by CCHL for the past nine years and enable us to undertake international activity.

CCHL have advised that as of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007 this contribution will cease and have referred us to CCC. In a memo to CCHL from CCC dated 19<sup>th</sup> May 1998, it clearly states that the intention of CCHL's involvement is "seed funding only at this stage with the project reverting to the CCC when fully developed and up and running". We are fortunate that this strategic initiative has been funded through a total nine year commitment by CCHL, but now require confirmation, as intended, of its continuation by CCC from F2007/08 onwards.

This fund enables CCM to engage in joint venture activity internationally, attend key trade training initiatives such as the Kiwilink programmes run by Tourism New Zealand, produce & distribute collateral such as the joint venture South Island Motivational Brochure and undertake the Regional Visitor Monitoring Survey (joint venture with the Ministry of Tourism, Tourism New Zealand and other major regional tourism organisations).

Not only does this funding need to be replaced, it has never been increased during this period and has therefore lost considerable real value over the time putting pressure on CCM to deliver on its required outcomes. Should this funding not be available in the future, CCM would have to renegotiate its service agreement with CCC and lay off staff. The impact of this is very serious indeed to the activities and outcomes of economic strength (*refer page 27*).

### iii) Council's Future Plans – Refer page 116

Under the Council's objectives of "attracting international & domestic visitors to Christchurch" it lists two action points. This is very "light" with regard to the services CCM provides and is quite misleading. We would suggest this be better expressed by something along the following lines:

*What is the Council's objective?* To promote Christchurch nationally and internationally as a visitor & convention destination and support visitors through information & booking services

*What is Council doing already?*

- Destinalional marketing to leisure visitors
- Destinalional marketing to business visitors
- Providing information and booking services to visitors
- Providing industry leadership and a coordinated focus for the region
- Engaging with the industry on destinalional management issues

iv) Strategies – Refer page 116

The list of “Strategies” should include:

- Christchurch & Canterbury Marketing’s strategy (because that strategy is what delivers the outcomes of “visitor promotions”)
- Christchurch Events Strategy

v) Drivers – Refer page 116

The “Drivers” should be expanded upon and include:

- Whilst tourism businesses market their products they cannot market the destination to get customers to pay money to travel here in the first place to avail of these products
- Visitors become customers of many and varied businesses which permeates all aspects of the community – economic & social benefits
- Destinations have to drive their own destination marketing activities through tourism organisations which are reliant on support from Councils

vi) Measures & Targets – Refer page 117

Two of the list of measures and targets have been recorded inaccurately.

They should reflect the following:

Measures & Targets	Current Performance	06/07 & Beyond
<b>Growth in international visitor numbers</b>	Visitor numbers to Christchurch exceeded National growth percentage by 102% Christchurch growth +8.1% National growth +4.0%	Achieve National growth rate at all times Exceed year-end National growth percentage by 10% (i.e. If National growth is +4% we aim for minimum +4.4%)
<b>Increase in international visitor’s length of stay and their spend</b>	Achieved National average	Correctly stated in plan
<b>RTO market share not less than 15% of National total</b>	Achieved 15.8% (this is a market share gain of 0.8% not 0.8% above National average)	Aim to achieve 15.4% (these percentages rise over the next few years to reach 16%. These figures have previously been supplied)

vii) City Promotions and International Relations – Refer pages 115 & 119

Under “City Promotions” it states the “council produces and distributes promotional material”. As you are aware CCM is resourced to conduct its visitor marketing “outside Canterbury”. It is therefore important that some entity is responsible for:

- Local resident marketing as ambassadors to drive visiting friends & relatives (VFR)
- Local resident marketing as to what Christchurch has to offer for them in their leisure/recreational time
- Education of the value of the tourism industry to the wider community  
It is unclear from the Community Plan whether this role is part of “City Promotions” or not. If not then clarity on who is resourced to deliver

these outcomes would be appreciated. It is also obvious that the community outcomes from these activities go far beyond "community" and "prosperity" (as previously stated).

#### **4. Banks Peninsula Merger - Refer pages 6 & 119**

Council have stated that "Banks Peninsula residents are assured that all levels of service currently enjoyed will be retained".

We are very concerned that the cost of proposed services for visitor promotions in Banks Peninsula for F2006/07 is shown as \$36K. CCM welcomes the opportunity to incorporate Banks Peninsula into the fold but in order to maintain services at current levels (marketing activities and the running of the Akaroa Visitor Centre – which operates at a loss) we will require in excess of \$120K (not \$36K) in order to do this. Whilst we have been assured monies will be made available these are not currently reflected in the Community Plan for F2006/07 and beyond and look forward to the appropriate amendments being made during this process.

#### **5. Events & Festivals - Refer page 9 & 130**

Council's vision includes Christchurch as "a must-see for visitors" and further states "visitors are drawn to the kaleidoscopes of festivals, events, sport and recreation which make the most of this environment".

This vision must be applauded however the reality is we have slipped behind in visitor/economic driving events (community events have continued to be delivered very well although we question whether the balance is right). An events strategy is currently being developed which I believe is before Council later in the year. Any event strategy which is a basis for attracting visitors to Christchurch in the shoulder and low seasons needs to schedule & develop events accordingly. Available resources to market events is equally important. We would ask that you keep this vision in mind when reviewing the strategy.

Feedback received from Council after last years submission, stated that the event strategy about to be undertaken would feed into the 2006-16 LTCCP. However the strategy is shown not to be implemented until three years away. Also we note only sporting events have an economic objective and measurement. This is of grave concern to CCM and our industry. We look forward to appropriate outcomes relating to visitor attracting events and trust that in future years events will become part of the economic development strategy for Council.

Preliminary stakeholder engagement with the draft Event Strategy specifically excluded "conference" events, whilst at the same time referring to the Christchurch & Canterbury Convention Bureau (CCCB) as being the deliverer of these. This is incorrect as CCCB does not create, develop nor provide

funding for conference events. This is clearly an identified gap which requires addressing by Council.

## **6. Greater Christchurch Visitor Strategy**

There is very little reference to the Greater Christchurch Visitor Strategy throughout the plan. Considering the economic impact (\$2 Billion) to the economy and the critical part tourism plays in job creation (12% employment in Christchurch City and 50% in Akaroa) along with planning for the infrastructural needs to ensure sustainable growth, there appears very little flow through/integration and translation across the plan.

Also it is unclear what provisions have been made for implementation and resourcing of potential outcomes i.e. when the outcomes of the Strategy are fully known implementation needs to be planned and resourced with some immediacy.

## **7. Streets & Transport – Refer page 150**

It would seem imperative that “The Greater Christchurch Visitor Strategy” be an important strategy in achieving Council’s objectives in this area and therefore should be added to the list.

## **8. Significant Forecasting Assumptions – Population – Refer page 195**

This makes no mention of the current nor the forecasted growth of the visitor “footprint”/impact on the city’s infrastructure. Lincoln University research commissioned by the Council, which was the catalyst for “The Greater Christchurch Visitor Strategy”, clearly shows this is imperative and I believe is widely acknowledged throughout Council. Because there is no mention of it in this section we are concerned that the forecasted growth of visitors has not permeated throughout the draft Community Plan and this should, in our opinion, be rectified as a priority.

## **9. Capital Works Programme – Refer pages 71-87**

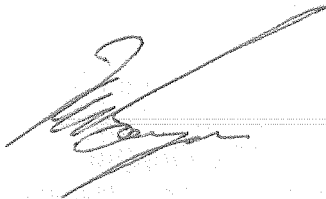
We find it difficult to prioritise these individual projects without a clear explanation of how the list of essential and discretionary projects relate to the achievement of the City Vision, Strategic Direction and Community Outcomes. They sit in this section to be “emotively” commented on in isolation and we therefore are unable to assess and decide appropriate priorities. Some leadership is required rather than “ongoing community consultation”.

## **10. City Development – Refer page 93**

- Council's objective states "to strengthen the City centre as a vibrant place to live, work and do business". Considering the importance of the visitor industry to the central City development, it would seem logical that "to visit" (which includes locals & visitors) would be added.
- Strategies supporting these objectives should also include:
  - Greater Christchurch Visitor Strategy
  - Christchurch Events Strategywith appropriate resources in place to deliver on the outcomes.
- Inner City development (linking all strategies) is of paramount importance for the health of our City and has to be very high on the Council's agenda. Without a strong heart, the body and limbs of Christchurch will suffer badly in the future.

It is quite frankly inexcusable that "Central City Revitalisation Project" has been allowed to go into the plan as a "discretionary project – non priority". The city needs to show leadership and drive this initiative strongly.

CCM, on behalf of our own company and the wider sector we represent, greatly appreciate the opportunity to voice our collective views and contribute to this Community Plan.



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CHRISTCHURCH & CANTERBURY MARKETING