



Christchurch City Council - Annual Plan Submission 2025 / 26

The Christchurch Central Business Association (CCBA) is highly concerned with the following five key issues in the Christchurch City Council's Draft Long-Term Plan 2025/26.

Opposition to Wasteful Spending

The CCBA strongly advocates for prudent financial management to ensure ratepayer funds are utilised effectively. We are deeply concerned about expenditures that do not yield tangible benefits for the community and the local economy. It is imperative that all spending undergo a rigorous assessment to confirm its necessity and potential return on investment. Councillors and council staff must treat public money with the same care and responsibility as they would their own, cutting unnecessary expenditures and focusing on core services.

Opposition to Shopper Buses and Similar Projects

We specifically oppose initiatives such as the proposed shopper buses, which we believe fall under the category of "glamour projects" lacking measurable advantages. With the new city blueprint following the earthquake, the retail precinct is now concise rather than spread over 2km, making the shopper bus no longer relevant. Resources allocated to such projects should instead be invested in core services and infrastructure that directly benefit businesses and residents. Rather than introducing new and costly transport initiatives, the Council should maximise the use of existing infrastructure, such as the tram, which is already in place and can be better utilised to support central city transport needs.

Call for a Comprehensive Budget Review

The CCBA calls for a thorough review of the Council's budget to identify areas where efficiencies can be found. This includes scrutinising existing projects and services to determine their effectiveness and alignment with the city's strategic objectives. By eliminating or restructuring underperforming initiatives, the Council can reallocate funds to more impactful areas without necessitating rate increases.

Rates Must Be Kept in Line with CPI

The CCBA strongly urges the Council to ensure that any rate increases remain aligned with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Businesses and households are already facing increasing financial pressures, and further rate hikes beyond inflation are unsustainable. The Council must exercise fiscal discipline to avoid imposing undue burdens on ratepayers.

Asset Review and Debt Reduction

Like every responsible household and business, the Council must review its assets and identify those that are no longer relevant or necessary. Surplus assets should be sold to

pay down debt rather than relying on continued borrowing and ratepayer funding. Prudent asset management is essential for long-term financial sustainability.

Conclusion

We urge the Christchurch City Council to prioritise responsible spending, focus on projects with tangible benefits, and conduct a comprehensive budget review to enhance financial efficiency. Rates must be kept in line with CPI, and surplus or obsolete assets should be sold to reduce debt. Councillors and staff must adopt a mindset of financial responsibility, treating public funds as they would their own. Additionally, the Council should maximise the use of existing infrastructure, such as the tram, rather than pursuing costly new initiatives like the shopper bus. These steps are crucial to fostering a sustainable and prosperous environment for businesses and the wider community.