

Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust
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Little River 7546

Christchurch City Council
53 Hereford Street
Christchurch

8 April 2023

Kia Ora

Submission on Christchurch City Council 2023-24 Draft Annual Plan

Thank you for the opportunity submit on the Council's 2023-24 Draft Annual Plan. We value the opportunity to provide feedback.

We note with appreciation that Biodiversity funding (\$400k) as set out in the Long Term Plan has been retained, and the retention of funding to Pest Free Banks Peninsula (\$65k) and operational and capital funding for the Rod Donald Trust (\$100k and \$1.35k respectively) as set out in the Long Term Plan. We strongly support all of these budgets remaining at least at current levels.

We note the Council's 2019 declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency, and the Council's Strategic Directions, which include "Meeting the challenge of climate change through every means possible" as one of its key strategic priorities. We also note the commitments and goals in the Council's Climate Resilience Strategy. We are therefore surprised to see that climate change is little mentioned in the Annual Plan. It appears that the only funding specifically tagged to climate change in the Plan is closed landfill maintenance, capital subsidies from Waka Kotahi enabling some additional cycleway and bus stop improvements, and a small (\$350k) Environmental/Climate Change Partnership fund. Council's articulated strategic focus on climate change referred to above needs to be matched with appropriate funding to deliver real actions and outcomes. We request Council to focus on the programmes to implement the Climate Resilience Strategy, which need to be fully identified and funded for accelerated delivery. We request that opportunities to better fund these programmes be explored in this Annual Plan process, and in the development of the next Long Term Plan.

Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula presents many opportunities for native planting and ecological restoration. We encourage the Council to identify these opportunities, including opportunities to partner with others, and to support ecological restoration initiatives. These initiatives should focus on planting native trees rather than carbon sequestration with exotics such as pines. We request that Council adequately funds the timely delivery of all actions under its Biodiversity Strategy. We also request that the Council support the future development of any Targeted Rate for Biodiversity which may be proposed by the Regional Council .

We are pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute to the Destination Management Plan for Banks Peninsula currently being developed by ChristchurchNZ. The separate plan for Banks Peninsula recognises that the issues facing the Peninsula, and the opportunities it presents, are very different than those in the City. It is important that this plan, both in its development and implementation, respects the unique character, landscape, environment and natural amenity of Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula. Outdoor recreation, including walking and cycling, is one of the Peninsula's significant attractions to local, regional, national and international visitors. These activities should be promoted in a way which is

sustainable and respects the natural environment and the social licence of the community. The concept of regenerative tourism should be a guiding principle in the development and implementation of the Destination Management Plan, and in the funding of actions under that Plan. Developing and promoting outdoor recreation opportunities and a regenerative approach to tourism should both be given a high priority.

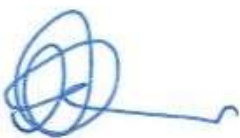
We request that Council recognises the benefits of outdoor recreation and the significant opportunities for outdoor recreation presented by Banks Peninsula, and adequately funds the timely delivery of all actions under its Public Open Space Strategy, actively considering where there are opportunities for partnership which could expedite or enhance delivery.

The Little River Rail Trail is an important component of providing recreational access to the Peninsula and adjacent lakesides. The Trust looks forward to working closely with the Council and other agencies in management and promotion of this valuable asset. We support ongoing funding by the Council for maintenance and enhancement of the Rail Trail and the Christchurch and Little River ends.

One particular project which is significant to the Trust, and a key priority for us, is the Head to Head Walkway. This project has been on Council's books for over 13 years, and we note the funding which has been made available and the progress which has been made to date. There is \$1.9M in the Long Term Plan for the Walkway, which we appreciate. The project has, however, been subject to delays and deferral over the years as a result of resourcing issues, a focus on upgrades rather than new opportunities, changes to budgets and available funding, and other events outside of Council's control such as the earthquakes. We are aware of the proposal in the Annual Plan to defer some funding for this project in the 2023-24 financial year, but we are equally mindful of the Council resolution unanimously passed at the Council's Annual Plan meeting on 23 February 2023: "Notes that 1.9M remains in the Head to Head Pathway Budget across the Long Term Plan, and staff will work with the Rod Donald Trust and the local Councillor to accelerate the delivery of the programme". We naturally oppose any deferral of funding or resourcing for this project. However, we are of the understanding that the above resolution anticipates allowing funding to be brought forward to accelerate delivery if required, and seek both assurance that this is the case, and explicit Council support for this position. The Rod Donald Trust has offered to partner in this project, subject to appropriate partnership arrangements and resourcing being confirmed. We reiterate this offer. We stand ready to engage and partner, and request that Council works with us to achieve partnership arrangements which will accelerate delivery of the Walkway as soon as possible.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit on this Plan. We would value the opportunity to speak to this submission at an appropriate meeting.

Ngā Mihi



Andrew Turner
Trust Manager