

# Sustainable Canterbury

## submission on the CERA draft Recovery Strategy

30 October 2011

0. Sustainable Canterbury has spent the past year (post-earthquake) formally constituting and developing positions towards environmentally and socially sustainable local economy. We began as the Water Forum in Christchurch East during July 2009, to understand resource and other pressures facing Environment Canterbury council. Ref. <http://waterforum.us>  
We expanded our brief to include the full range of “climate change” issues and effects, which tie in to Canterbury’s earthquake recovery where adaptation and mitigation measures are due. Ref. <http://mauiroawaitaha.wordpress.com/>

Our submission primarily addresses the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) draft Recovery Strategy section 7.2, ‘The Recovery Plans and programmes’: the Building Community Resilience Programme; the Built Heritage Recovery Plan; the Central City Plan (CBD Recovery Plan); the Economic Recovery Plan; and the

### “Land, Building and Infrastructure Recovery Plan

What? This plan identifies where, when and how rebuilding can occur; timeframes for making decisions about whether land can be remediated, and a process and timeframe for land remediation; a methodology for reviewing existing national, regional and local strategies and plans; programmes and sequencing of areas for rebuilding and development; a spatial plan for housing and strategic infrastructure and community facilities to maintain the short-term wellbeing of communities, long-term recovery and growth aspirations; a framework for identifying investment priorities and opportunities for horizontal, strategic and community infrastructure; and identification and prioritisation of ‘early-win’ projects.” pp.28-29.

Sustainable Canterbury outlines our thoughts on Canterbury’s economic recovery thus:

1. Sustainable Canterbury recommends a commuter rail focus for the greater Christchurch rebuild, that will integrate central Canterbury for visitors and residents alike and boost sustainable consumer traffic activity regionally. Dual-tracking of the main trunk line should precede development of a commuter rail system from Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Rolleston and Lyttelton - so as not to inconvenience current and future rail freight transport - into Papanui, Addington, Hornby, Moorhouse Avenue and Waltham stations (minimum). This measure to enhance the existing rail corridor and its use. Carriage design must accommodate the numerous bicycles, prams, wheelchairs and scooters etc that are needed in the city centre to help realise: a. efficient movement in the uncluttered “slow core” of the proposed new Central City Plan; and b. economic recovery, etc. by custom (e.g. easy health service access from outside Christchurch). A renewable bio-diesel industry also needs to be established locally, to drive these trains - prior to electrification when light can be introduced into this commuter rail network for expanding it further. Commuter rail connections to Ashburton, Amberley and beyond can later be considered, also.

2. Transport mode interchange hubs / stations are needed with decision ‘1’, to connect with buses and any new passenger light rail infrastructure (that should be further consulted on).

Obvious hub locations might be Papanui, Addington, Hornby, Waltham, and Moorhouse Ave (latter as proposed by the NZ Institute of Architects). All stations will need easy ride-on ramps for cyclists etc to access the rail transport and reduce traffic on roads. Roading expansion in future would then be less expensive as driven by freight needs more than commuters. The diversity of locations where people work will be better accommodated this way, with less focus and dependence upon the central city and its infrastructure. Fast bus-lanes should and safe cycleways be completed immediately, to connect the public rail transport network outlined.

3. A full feasibility study of what the best integrated public transport system would be for central Christchurch needs to take place, as budgeted in the draft Central City Plan. A main outcome from this study should be practical means for balancing public transport infrastructure development equally across all of Christchurch city, east to west and north to south. The need is actually greatest in the east, which must be prioritised for efficient transport solutions.

4. Should light rail emerge from that study – where all other options have been equally considered – the route we are favouring so far is not the overly-expensive CBD-Ilam line in the draft Plan, but that researched by Richard Worrall (yet with modification) using diesel +electric engines, heading off from the main northern rail line at Papanui, to travel Papanui Road past St Georges Hospital, Merivale, Victoria Street, Town Hall / Convention Centre (subject to rebuilding), CBD slow core, Christchurch Hospital and Hagley Park, to Addington station hub and southwards. The Addington-to-city-centre leg of this efficient commuter rail plan is probably the appropriate line to start with. But commuter light rail may yet be excluded from Christchurch city – in favour of more economical technologies – depending on what comes out of thorough investigation '3'.

5. An inexpensive private motorcar ride-sharing IT support system to be implemented ASAP, such as Avego “Real-Time Ridesharing” in Kinsale & Dublin, Ireland, Washington & San Jose, USA, & Dalian, P. R. China, or GetThere “Bus, Rail & Carsharing in Ireland” e.g. This would help mitigate the lack of a transport plan for recently consented new housing developments in Christchurch north.

6. We support added cycle and walk way per the Central City Plan, but recommend enough off-street car-parking and fast bus-routes to secure the public transport corridors for the future; that is, we support the prior city transport planning done under ECan aegis.

7. There does need to be some rapid transit between CBD, Riccarton (including Riccarton Bush), University of Canterbury and Lincoln. If the city is to develop its knowledge and cultural quotient, there must be stronger connections between the places of learning, business, music, art, museums and natural environment. This will be important if the universities are to be internationally regarded and attractive places for students to come to. And around these are the CRIs and Polytechs which together provide a lot of the intellectual grunt in the city and must be strengthened if a vibrant, knowledge-based city is to develop and prosper. Fast bus-routes for improved use of existing bus services should be created initially, and we must resolve any further inefficiencies around this.

Universities are potentially the power house of innovation and social/cultural stimulus. The city needs to embrace its centres of higher learning and a strong physical/transport link of some sort should be part of the plan. This applies to both Canterbury and Lincoln. Retreat from the present CBD to somewhere west, over the next century or so, depends, as with

Rolleston previously, on a land bank purchased by government to remove it from the speculators' grasp.

Along with embracing the universities and CRIs a very strong demand needs to be registered with government that if CRIs are to be amalgamated, that the Christchurch region must not lose any more head offices, as happened recently with merger of Crop and Food with Hort Research (HO went to Auckland). If govt really believes in retaining critical mass, career paths and investment in the south, then this needs to be embedded in CERA/govt policy. Indeed more govt agencies should be relocated to the south to balance the never-ending and growing subsidies to northern centres. Government supported TV production, from which derives other film industry activity, should be re-established in the south. There needs to be a challenge to the notion that all our eggs should be directed to the Auckland basket as THE international city of NZ. This has never been accepted/adopted by the rest of nz. Auckland has enough momentum to determine and pay for its own destiny. The "super south" needs a fair redistribution of long term investment/commitment, not a short term hand-out, however large that might be. Our destiny is linked to rest of South Island and we should be pulling together in this – reconnecting passenger train services and supporting Invercargill and Dunedin as much as Canterbury – moving the centre of gravity south.

8. Sustainable Canterbury asks that authorities preserve some of the city ruins. Obsessive tidying of the city is further destruction of our heritage – which has now a new (EQ) layer. This is all to do with sustainability – having a vision for the future that stands on its history in some tangible way; retaining novelty, flair and boldness so we stand out from other places.

9. Sustainable Canterbury places full support behind the city-to-sea, community-mooted Avon-Otakaro Park, for a range of reasons: this red zone land has proven too soft, aqueous and poor to build on again - future homes cannot safely go there, so intending investors need to be protected ; sea-level rise is ruling out these low-lying areas for redevelopment - future risk avoidance adaptation ; biodiversity, aesthetic and recreational values can be greatly enhanced by allowing margins and cores of this area to revert to original swampland habitat.

10. Sustainable Canterbury seeks preservation of productive, versatile soils and the Christchurch green belt by encouraging settlement south-west on harder, drier ground. Recent CERA housing development decisions that do not deliver this protection should be reversed, and good public transport infrastructure planning must be allowed to guide re-development of greater Christchurch - with growth nodes along rapid-transit corridors. Local food production is key to long-term community resilience and land zoning and subdivision must allow for it.

11. Changed land use must be strategically facilitated, to preserve grower profitability, ground fertility, biodiversity and natural resources, into the future. The numerous values available from reforestation need to be recognised. Sustainable, renewable fuels can and should be grown alongside food - in greater, carbon-neutral quantities - for regional energy independence. Carbon-capture is the profitable, innovative direction Canterbury can start to show a lead in here.

12. Affordable sections are a necessity to help displaced residents achieve replacement value on their home insurance policies. CERA must facilitate ready supply of affordable land, with wise new urban locations, or at least minimise obstacles to communities organising sustainable and affordable new housing developments themselves.

13. We strongly oppose mixed-ownership models of community infrastructure development, and wish to see community management of infrastructure retained entire.

14. Concerns have been raised about the effectiveness of the appointed CERA Community Forum. We urge its replacement with direct community democracy - an improvement on elected decision-making representatives as second choice - if utility of the CERA Community Forum model cannot be proved very soon.

Thank you for the opportunity to present a submission on the draft Recovery Strategy.

CERA is very welcome to send a representative to the workshop we have organised, to better understand these sustainability matters, tomorrow evening: <http://mauiroawaitaha.wordpress.com/2011/10/26/scmw-october-meeting-land-zoning-eqnz-chch/>

Regards,

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Refs. <http://cera.govt.nz/recovery-strategy> + <http://www.avego.com> + <http://getthere.ie> + <http://www.avonotakaronetwork.co.nz> + <http://mauiroawaitaha.wordpress.com>