

Submission to DCC 9-year Plan: 2025 – 2034

This opportunity to submit to the Draft DCC 9-year plan is most appreciated.

In a few months I will be 80 years of age. I have seen many wonderful changes in our city including new immigrants who have brought with them foods and vibrancy that we all benefit from. However it is disappointing to note that modern life has brought about many changes that have not improved our wellbeing and connection with each other.

Many thanks are due to the Council for the major repairs and picturesque development of George Street which has produced a calm, quiet enjoyable place to shop and eat. Considerable plantings and community enhancement have taken place throughout the city area which improve our wellbeing.

Council chose to keep ownership of Aurora – this was valuable long-term thinking, after a difficult decision for Council, but much appreciated. However, an aim to progress zero-carbon remains essential and must not be dropped no matter the pace of progress. Zero-carbon must progress with planning for the next 9-years by reducing expenditure on whatever investments are envisaged as 'future-redundant' or 'stranded assets', in our changing world.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DUNEDIN CITY 9-YEAR PLAN:

1. Include additional investment options for accelerating the reduction of carbon emissions.
2. Prioritise local inner-city cycling, walking and bus network, including planning to begin the south-western cycleway and upgrade of tunnels through to Mosgiel.
3. Exclude expenditure for mowing maintenance of grass berms – plant out instead.

1. Transport - Reducing Emissions

With the retirement of rail and frequent bus services over the years, I support the goal of improving public transport, together with the further development of safe cycle and walkways. This appears to be the most valuable action Council and ORC could take. Removing private vehicles from roads makes easier movement for buses, reduces road repairs, emissions, and conveniently allows more space for cycling and walking recreation and exercise, while connecting people in different ways. (Public transport is a public service like a library or swimming pool, rather than a business of profit).

2. Berms - Reducing Emissions

Surely we must move past the need to have tidy mown berms. (A historical hangover from the desire for tidiness and display of status). (Ref: History of lawns, See in particular: 'Fertilizers and Chemicals', 'Environmental Concerns', Water Conservation and 'Environmental Impact'). <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawn> . Berms are an opportunity to strengthen biodiversity, provide the calming effect of trees, native bush, wild flowers (and food, supporting food security and increasing carbon-sink). Be creative in engaging communities through education and calls for assistance in their area - locals will likely help in planting out and take pride in the results.

3. Food Security - Reducing Emissions

Funding for the likes of Our Food Network (OFN) and all other food support groups is essential to the long-term education of our citizens and greater production of our own food which was my life's norm until the early 1980s. This not only sets a secure foundation against any economic, physical or climatic shocks, but also reduces transport emissions, while financially strengthening individuals and communities.

FINAL COMMENTS:

Our Changing Mindsets: As Councillors will appreciate already, any investment must be wisely spent, with likely future circumstances in mind, as they will affect every one of us. Different forms of easily available transport and food security will be essential to enable a reasonably healthy functioning future city. Therefore, it will be appreciated that over-investment in such areas as tourism is unwise, being a vulnerable and risky method of economy, carrying risks of global shocks – economic, climate feedback, pandemics and indisputable rising costs of energy.

Regardless, it is prudent to prepare our way now so that future conditions will not overcome us leaving us devoid of the necessary costly resources to provide future resilience and sufficiency for communities. This must be avoided at all costs. Building resilience and sustainability is crucial for our children.

Kia ora to Council and staff for your continued mahi.

Nga mihinui.