

Long Term Plan 101 in 2021: Why it matters to you and top(?) tips for making a submission

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Why make a submission?

- The LTP basically determines expenditure priorities (and revenue sources) for the next 3 years at least, and a general direction for 10 years
- It is difficult to depart from it in annual plans – **this door will not be open for another 3 years!**
- There are bound to be things that your organisation agrees with in the document, but other people might make submissions in opposition to those things. **You need to say what you support** or run the risk that council will be persuaded to go a different way.
- There may be things that your organisation really cares about and wants strengthened or given greater priority in the LTP – **this is an opportunity**
- You have been given the right to have a say – use it (or lose it)

Strategically - Really important

- Council wants you to participate
- You are a Responsible Community Member
- Important part of a **longer term relationship building** process
- Ideally you will have been “engaged” already through your networks and relationships with councils.
- This is a formal “consultation” step to **reinforce** your views.
- Outside the process? Your **chance to be noticed** for next time
- This is a great opportunity to introduce/remind the Council that your organisation exists and ***what you do helps Council achieve its job***

Three key documents, Three things to remember

- The Consultation Document
 - This is actually what is being consulted on
 - Glossy and easy to read (or meant to be)
- The Draft Long Term Plan
 - This is what it is really about
 - Not an easy read usually, detailed, nuts and bolts
 - Lots of background “activity” plans
- Mechanisms for having your say
 - Online feedback forms
 - Written submission forms
- This is about what you want to happen for your community
- This is about where the \$\$\$\$ will be spent
- This is about where the \$\$\$\$ that are to be spent will come from

Having Your Say = Written Submission

Submitting/feedback as individual or for an organisation – be clear!

Each council will be slightly different and you do not have to answer every question, but basically:

- We generally agree with (the activity proposed) for the Long-Term Plan.
- We generally disagree with the activity proposed for the Long-Term Plan.
- We are unsure whether or not we agree
- Specific comments to explain your position

Do you wish to be heard/meet with Councillors to discuss this feedback on the proposed Long-Term Plan:

- Yes or No

Other information – “Age”, “where did you hear about it” etc. **Is it appropriate?**

Use an attachment

- Short comment spaces are unlikely to meet your needs so it is probable you will **refer to an attachment**
- When writing your submission (as an attachment) keep the structure of the headings consistent with the headings of the LTP consultation form and document to make it easier for the people reading and summarising your submission
- Control how your submission is summarised by bullet-pointing the key messages at the top of each such section in your submission, that way it can be cut and pasted by council staff into their summary rather than rely on their interpretation

Remember to be helpful

- Council **staff or concillors** may not know who you are:
 - Remind them of the objects of your organisation and its nature (eg charitable trust)
 - What geographical area do you cover (perhaps a map)
 - Very briefly highlight a couple of activities that illustrate your achievements **THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES** – hand out an attachment and show slides at oral meeting/presentation, but **do not overdo** that
 - Level of community support – how can you demonstrate that you have it?
 - Demonstrate ability to work with others (eg DoC, Ngai Tahu, councils, NGOS)
- Be very clear on what you want and why, **AND HOW IT HELPS COUNCIL ACHIEVE ITS GOALS** (not yours) do not make it difficult for council to work it out (make sure you know councils goals)

Indicate you wish to meet concillors – **AND SHOW UP!!!** This is **ESSENTIAL!**

Remember your audience – stay focussed

Council are the good guys - not the place to challenge their self image, they have all the power in this process, so *stay focussed*

Council have already engaged with you and the rest of the community, they have already decided what will be in the bulk of the plan, but have some key areas where they are interested in your opinion – these have been identified for you in their feedback form, *stay focussed*

For example, if freshwater or a sport stadium is a major item and where much money is already targeted to be spent, the council is unlikely to relitigate or make *major* changes at this stage.

But you can comment on anything and you can suggest things they should be doing, and if not already in the plan somewhere it may make progress the next time.

Presenting Orally

- Liaise with the committee clerk well in advance to:
 - settle time and who will be presenting, how long they have
 - whether presenting with others or not,
 - powerpoint projection equipment available,
 - how many hard copies (always allow for copies for the media and perhaps for public)
 - Which councillors will be present for your submission (check your records for past involvement with them – any particular hooks for them?)

Actual Presentation

- keep to time, practise beforehand
- arrive early, confirm how much time you have and get any powerpoints etc set up with the committee clerk before it is your turn to speak
- Dress professionally – or at least tidily – do not give any distractions.
- Provide e-versions and hard copy of written and oral submissions

You *might* be asked questions by the councillors

- Know your topic/issue and make sure you have someone who can answer questions (and be prepared to hand the question to them to answer)
- Know where you fit in the world
 - Have your position aligned, but distinct from others close to your interests
 - Do not leave the impression you are competing with another organisation to do the same job that they are going – eg WET had an MOU with TAK about who did what
- Answer succinctly – they really are not that interested in detail

Resources

- Organise early
 - may only have two weeks
 - May need delegated authority to make submission
 - Use a small team
- Pool resources with other submitters, but individualise submission
- EnviroHub workshops
- Lincoln University planning programme for students wanting work experience!
 - Remember they are students, volunteers, not experts!