**DRAFT ENM Submission to PNCC LTP May 2021**

The current 10-year plan makes sobering reading. As the independent auditor’s report points out, the proposed plan is inconsistent with Council’s financial strategy. Debt level will by far exceed the self-imposed 200% limit of revenue by year 4 of the plan. We acknowledge that the plan has been written in the midst of reforms and changing rules and that there will be a new 10-year plan in three years that might be able to address the challenges. While we have very low interest now, the proposed debt levels will be even more painful, should interests go up again. And as council themselves point out, there is a high probability that no lender will be prepared to lend at the proposed levels.

From our perspective, the time has come for the City to attend to its core business as top priority. There are no surprises here as submitters have for decades been concerned about water and infrastructure including maintenance.

**Must do for compliance and resilience reasons:**

* Wastewater treatment plant – it has to be the best possible outcome for the river.
* Replacing infrastructure – it is better to be slightly ahead of the curve than face major failures.
* Strengthening earthquake prone buildings – we have known this for years and continued to live in a state of denial. We need these buildings and their history – demolishing and replacing them will come at an equal or even higher cost.
* Transport – we will need to look very carefully at what is a “must have” versus a “nice to have”. Road safety is a must, the shift towards more active transport will hopefully take pressure off our roads over time. A lot of the proposed changes are due to economic growth, in particular the transport sector with increasing truck volumes. The question is to what extent the industry needs to contribute to the cost.
* Social housing is a must in our minds and we count on Council to carefully think about designs and longevity of the new housing stock.

Beautification and placemaking can come at a high cost. We need to evaluate this discretionary work in the context of the overall priorities. We should look very carefully at how an empowered and enabled community might be engaged more in this space and could help with beautification at less capital cost.

# GOAL 1 : An innovative and growing city

## City Growth (pages 18-23)

Acknowledging that there will be increased demand for housing and building generally we would like to see better use of design and by-laws, in order to optimize land use, collect rainwater, reduce storm water runoff, retention of existing trees, topsoil and natural features. These considerations would contribute to reduction of our carbon footprint. We would also like to see minimization of hard surfaces in all Council and private property.

## Transport (pages 24-29)

We support initiatives to better inform our community on ways to reduce our carbon footprint. We support linking of transport systems i.e., bus connecting to each arrival and departure of Capital Connection trains.

We support particular vehicles being encouraged to use specific routes.

We believe that we should model the cost/benefit of free public transport to encourage usage and reduce ongoing investment and maintenance in the road network over time.

# Goal 2: A Creative and exciting city

## Active communities (pages 30-39)

Investment in The Square in Programme 1686 is unnecessary, but we do support improvements to Rangitikei Street and Broadway if they include softened landscapes and permeable surfaces.

Programme 2006 Play equipment is not necessary.

Programme 990 – the Southern Grandstand, is a nice to have but with current pressures it should be of low priority.

We support the rest of the programmes for investment as set out on page 37.

Active communities include the many people of all ages who recreate on cycles and on foot along our pathways. There needs to be pathways through new subdivisions to link to existing pathways. Clearly marking and maintaining planting and quality of pathways is important as people coming to the city, we are told, ask about opportunities to enjoy the natural environment.

## Arts and Heritage (pages 30-39)

We support strengthening of the public buildings as itemized. These buildings and sites are the last vestiges of what was valued by those who went before us. They represent our character. We have lost too many good buildings and landmarks.

## City shaping

Placemaking – We support the protection of all City land that is held as a Reserve or as Council land because as the population increases and intensifies we will need more placemaking spaces, the exact use of which is as yet unknown. Selling such land assets is opportunity lost and disrespectful to our predecessors who saw fit to protect areas for our future recreational benefit.

# Goal 3: A connected and safe community

## Connected Communities (pages 40-46)

We support the Councils provision of Community facilities

We support the Council’s continued support of Community Development on the basis that our volunteer base is much larger than in most cities with 1200 registered charities and ever-increasing need. These activities require paid coordination but give great value to the city in supporting those in need, building community gardens, cleaning streams and planting walkways (to mention a few) and connecting people to their communities.

We support the Social Housing programme and look forward to seeing innovative environment-friendly design and systems included in future programmes ie, solar heating, rain and grey water collection.

Te Manawa fulfills a complex role within the city and we strongly support its independence to interpret how it should work with and challenge us all to broaden our perspectives.

The library and its outreach likewise including the youth-space, are invaluable in knitting our community together. Both of these needs full support to fulfill their respective roles.

# Goal 4: An Eco City

## Climate Change (pages 48-61)

We encourage Council to use its legislative powers to move urban development and infrastructure improvements to a sustainable model. Leadership is needed and examples of best practice demonstrated. An Eco Centre could be the center of innovation in this regard.

The Palmy Climate Calculator is not proving popular among many of our members.

We appreciate that Council intends to “ foster sustainable practices and behaviours so the city residents and organisations become more sustainable “. People want to hear stories about actions that reduce carbon emissions. They seem keen to work together to solve particular problems. We like that the Council is open to ideas for how we can better consult in this area. We trust that our meetings with Council on the various aspects that Climate Change encompasses will continue.

The issue of young people having climate anxiety and a sense of hopelessness is of concern in this city where education is a major occupation. We would like to see young people being encouraged to become more personally knowledgeable and active in finding local solutions for the reduction of carbon.

We believe that the 30% reduction target for CO2 emissions is weak. We are a flat city with good access and a young population. We can do better to encourage active transport and with the co-operation of Horizons, to make public transport the “ go to” option . Good work has been done to improve the bus routes and this needs to be further developed.

**Environmental Sustainability (pages 48-61)**

We are pleased that Council has provision in the budget for funding of an Enviro Hub. We believe that an ECO City is a hollow term unless there are examples of what that might include for the people who live in it. It is our plan to leverage this funding for further applications for support. We look forward to working further with Council and the community on this proposal.

We support the actions set out in page 9 of the Environmental Sustainability Plan.

We would like to see Collaboration in campaigns to showcase and promote sustainable practices in housing, gardening, energy efficiency, 3-waters efficiency, permaculture design, waste free living, new technologies and environmental education, to mention a few. There would need to be funding of $10 – 20 thousand per year over the course of the education programmes that can be leveraged as co-funding for community lead campaigns and skills development. Tangible goals to achieve sustainability would be agreed for each campaign in consultation with Council.

We are pleased to see the Council addressing the issue of procurement. We would like to see natural and New Zealand products such as timber for building and wool carpets and upholstery used in Council buildings when refurbishment is needed and in newbuilds. This initiative needs to be broadcast through the Councils Communications.

We like that workplace travel is being reviewed within Council. Credit for active transport is already being given by some local businesses.

**Biodiversity**

We encourage Council to continue its investment in Green Corridors throughout the city to enhance biodiversity and offset the ecological impact of new housing developments as well as obvious aesthetic and recreational benefits.

**Manawatu River (pages 48-61)**

We strongly support the ongoing implementation of the Manawatu River Framework. The current trend to see more people out in nature rather than participating in competitive sports, is a good indicator that this investment will contribute to the city being a desirable place to live.

Our Manawatu River Source to Sea group is keen to include in its initiatives a series of geological sites of significance in the development of the Te Apiti Gorge Masterplan. The inclusion of these sites with appropriate signage and access (or protection as appropriate) will provide the option to work towards a Manawatu (UNESCO) Geopark at a later stage, thus adding a point of interest for tourists to our region.

**Resource Recovery (pages 48-61)**

Palmy’s Plastic Pollution Challenge, a collaboration between Council and community, is showing the benefits of working together more. Based on very early results, we believe that we should be able to increase resource recovery and decrease waste to landfill as we continue the collaboration and extend it into other areas such as organic and food waste.

**Waters (pages 48-61)**

Wastewater – we very much see the need to implement a solution that will take care of the river’s needs. To quote the Manawatu River Leaders’ Accord motto: If the river is well, the land and the people will be nourished. We have made a separate submission on this topic.

Supply – drinking water of a good quality is an absolute must.

Stormwater – we understand that we need to make strategic investments to mitigate likely climate change impacts

**Proposal to Increase Investment in Infrastructure renewals and proactive maintenance**

We believe that this is core business of Council and, in order to reduce the risk of service failure, can be funded by cutting programme 2006 and the non-essential parts of programme 1686 to accommodate this essential work. (possible saving of approx. 15 million)

Goal 5: A driven and enabling council

We would like to see a Council that makes wise decisions beyond the traditional 3-year election cycle.

Based on our observations from the grassroots, there is an opportunity to work with the community more in achieving mutually beneficial outcomes such as placemaking, resource recovery, enhancing biodiversity, etc.