

# Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy

## Introduction to Issues

February 2005



# Greater Christchurch - we're growing!

Every month 400 more people make Greater Christchurch their home. That's in addition to the 380,000 people who already live here. By 2021 430,000 people will live here.

For Christchurch City that's an extra 30,000 people (327,211 to 356,508) by 2021.

This means a likely 9% increase in Christchurch, which is small in relation to the likely impact in the adjoining districts of Banks Peninsula, Selwyn and Waimakariri. There'll be 22,000 more people - a huge 40% increase - joining the 52,000 people who currently live in these communities.

This population increase will change our lives.

It could mean:

- More employment and a greater variety of jobs and lifestyles
- Wider choice of housing types and locations
- More community facilities
- Greater opportunities for children
- Wider cultural diversity

But it could also bring:

- Increased traffic congestion and reduced access to facilities
- Development leading to a loss of open space and productive land
- Poorly planned communities without a sense of identity or community heart
- Pressure on water supply and threats to water quality
- Expensive upgrades of infrastructure (e.g. roading, wastewater) to cope with population growth

To get the future we desire for our families and ourselves, we must manage the impact development has on our quality of life.

That's why the **Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy** process is now underway.

**Greater Christchurch** is a collaborative initiative involving Christchurch City Council, the District Councils of Banks Peninsula, Selwyn and Waimakariri, Environment Canterbury (the Regional Council), Transit New Zealand and a range of government, community and business organisations.

While these groups are leading the project, **Greater Christchurch** affects everyone living in the area. This is about your future quality of life. That's why it's so important that everyone participate in the upcoming community consultation to create the future they want for themselves and their families.

The process starts with this issues information. Over the next few pages you'll find information about the growth issues facing Greater Christchurch. Questions you may want to start thinking about include:

- **Where should the extra population live?**
- **How should we resolve transport issues, like congestion?**
- **How important is protecting the natural environment, such as our water supply?**
- **What change is or is not acceptable to you?**
- **Should your councils collaboratively plan and manage future development?**

Read on to learn about the issues or visit our website [www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz](http://www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz) for more information.

## There's an issue or two you should know about...

The **Greater Christchurch** project aims to tackle more than just the issue of population growth. While deciding where an extra 52,000 people will live is a top priority, it's just one issue resulting from population growth. These other issues are poised to change our way of life unless we make certain choices now:

**Population growth creates demand for housing**  
37,000 dwellings required for 52,000 extra people

**The population is ageing**  
By 2021 20% will be aged 65 and over (14% today)

**Small towns are getting bigger**  
The populations of Waimakariri and Selwyn districts are expected to grow by 40% over the next 20 years

**Traffic congestion is growing**  
Traffic is forecast to grow by 40% by 2021

**Water quality and quantity are being threatened**  
Between 1998 and 2001 pollution was detected in 50% of shallow wells within Christchurch City

**Our sense of place may be eroded by poor development**  
Growth and development are opportunities and threats for the character of our communities

**Expensive infrastructure needs building/replacing**  
New development requires water supply, wastewater and roading and none of this is cheap to provide

**Councils and communities need to work together**  
These issues do not respect council boundaries – councils and communities must work together to achieve great results and to avoid poor outcomes

Keep this information handy and talk to other people about it. In a few months time some options for managing growth will be prepared and released for public discussion. You'll be given ample time to study the options and give your feedback on how we should manage future growth.



# Our sense of place

The Greater Christchurch area has been changing so fast over the past decade that many of the changes have happened before we've even noticed. So where are we living, what are we doing and how might that change over the next 20 years?

This is a snapshot of the districts within the Greater Christchurch area today and some projections based upon current trends.

## Total for Greater Christchurch

How many?	2001	2021	% change
Population	379,070	431,200	14%
Households	148,950	186,540	25%
New dwellings required		37,590	

## Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy Study Area



The study area includes all of Christchurch City and a portion of the adjoining districts of Waimakariri, Selwyn and Banks Peninsula.

## Selwyn District\*

How many?	2001	2021	% change
Population	16,397	25,222	55%
Households	5,620	10,462	85%
New dwellings required		4,842	
One person households	15%		

The relative affordability of land and houses outside Christchurch City means if current trends continue farmland around towns such as Rolleston and Lincoln will be replaced by housing. As the population grows the number of people commuting to work in Christchurch City may also grow - increasing traffic on main roads in and out of Christchurch.

## Waimakariri District\*

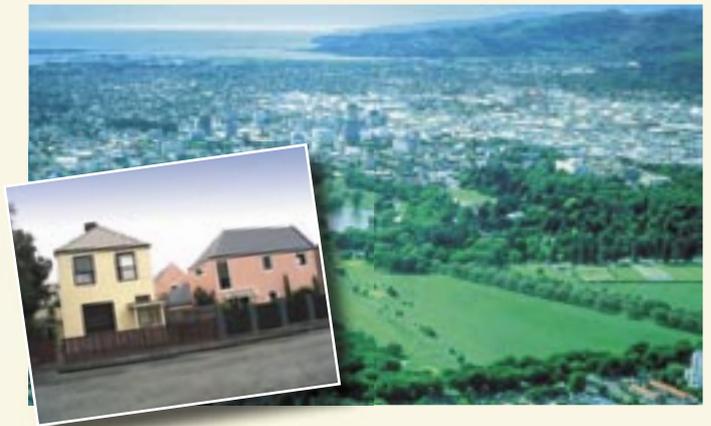
How many?	2001	2021	% change
Population	30,215	43,448	43%
Households	11,400	17,876	55%
New dwellings required		6,476	
One person households	19%		

The rapid growth of Waimakariri District, and expansion of Rangiora, Kaiapoi and Woodend looks set to continue. With many residents travelling to work, study and shop in Christchurch City it will be a real challenge to ensure the district develops its own functioning social and economic heart. With only two bridges across the Waimakariri River traffic congestion will increase pressure for alternative transport options.

## Christchurch City

How many?	2001	2021	% change
Population	327,211	356,508	9%
Households	129,700	155,534	20%
New dwellings required		25,834	
One person households	26%		

Christchurch City has experienced rapid housing expansion to the north and southwest in recent years. New development in these outer suburbs is increasing traffic congestion on key roads in and out of the city. Following the spread of housing outwards, businesses are leaving the inner city and suburban malls are expanding creating mini city hubs around the suburbs. An ageing population is also creating more single person households fuelling the demand for dwellings ahead of population growth.



## Banks Peninsula District\*

How many?	2001	2021	% change
Population	5,247	6,022	15%
Households	2,230	2,668	20%
New dwellings required		438	
One person households	25%		

Banks Peninsula residents mostly work in the service and sales sectors, with many employed in tourism or working in Christchurch. Most development is occurring around Lyttelton Harbour (within commuting distance of Christchurch City) and Akaroa Harbour (leisure and tourism related). Can this area's open expanses, coastlines and volcanic landscapes be preserved as development occurs?

\*Figures are for Greater Christchurch area of Districts only

# Land uses

## Where will we live?

Fifty thousand more people are expected to live in the area over the next 15 to 25 years. That means another 30,000 people living in Christchurch City – but where? Will they live in inner city apartments, or in new suburbs around Halswell or other developing areas?

To fit all of the additional 30,000 people within the present boundaries of Christchurch we may have to build up (with more multi-storey apartment blocks) and reduce the size of our sections (putting 2 or more townhouses on the remaining quarter-acre sections). Another alternative is that we expand into rural areas.

The other 22,000 extra people are predicted to live in Selwyn, Banks Peninsula and Waimakariri districts. Will these new residents live in the towns, such as Rangiora or Lincoln, or will we see more farmland divided into lifestyle blocks?

Creating subdivisions incurs significant costs for infrastructure such as water supply, stormwater, sewerage, roads and footpaths. How do we ensure infrastructure is in the right place, with the right capacities and at an affordable cost?

While the population is increasing, the average household size is decreasing, which means we will require even more dwellings. Will changing lifestyles also change the type of houses we want to live in, the location and demand for services such as shops, schools and recreational facilities?

Residential and lifestyle developments have begun to spread into areas of highly productive farmland and market gardens, like Marshland and Clarkville. Will all the land currently zoned for housing be built upon by 2021 or should we change how and where we build? In Greater Christchurch we have space for our growing population, but with each choice comes consequences. One thing is certain – we must make a choice.



## Where will we work and shop?

Over time employment and shopping have become more dispersed. Employment in traditional industries, such as manufacturing, is declining, as employment in service industries such as information technology and tourism continue to grow.

As employment changes, transport patterns change. If future industrial activities are located further from the city centre, will we also move out to be closer to our places of work or spend more time and money to travel to them? How can we find appropriate locations for future employment areas?

Suburban malls have expanded greatly in recent years so that Christchurch now has more shops per head of population than any other centre in New Zealand or Australia. Do we need more large malls in the suburbs, and what is the future for the central city? How should we balance mall development, Central City and township growth?

## Where will we play?

Changes in our population and lifestyles will change what we want to do for leisure and where we relax and play. For example, if we build more townhouses with smaller gardens, more people may want access to community parks and gardens.

Where will these parks be located - close to home as small, local community parks within easy walking distance or out around the region as large regional parks designed for a variety of activities? Purchasing and providing land for open spaces will also become more expensive as councils compete with developers to purchase land. How much can we afford to pay to enjoy public gardens and open space?

As our population ages, the type of exercise and recreation we do will also change. Individual sporting activities, such as walking, cycling and extreme sports are all on the increase, while some team sports are in decline. Will we still need large sports grounds and stadiums in the future, or will walking tracks and cycleways satisfy communities?

How do we decide what facilities we need and where they should be located? With the choices we make for where we live, we need to make choices for where we play.



## Did you know...

**We're growing bigger each day:** Over the past decade, the population in Greater Christchurch has grown by 1.2% per year. That equates to 13 more people calling Greater Christchurch their home each day. Think of it this way - each day in Greater Christchurch four new households are set up.

**We're born to shop:** In addition to many existing malls expanding (even doubling their size), large format retailing, such as the Belfast Supa Centre and Tower Junction, has grown from almost nothing in 1995 to 18% of the retail market by 2003. Large areas of industrial land, such as at Ferrymead and along Blenheim Road, are now used for retail.

**We're building bigger houses for fewer people to live in:** New houses typically include three or four bedrooms and two bathrooms, even though on average most houses in Greater Christchurch have only two to three people living in them. One in four houses have just one occupant.

**We're becoming more culturally diverse:** 167 different ethnic groups live in Greater Christchurch.

# Transport

## How will we get there?

Traffic congestion in and around Greater Christchurch continues to grow, threatening the environment, and using more resources at an increasing cost. The Greater Christchurch area has the highest rate of car ownership in New Zealand and the number of trucks and commercial vehicles on roads is also increasing.

As the population grows, our towns expand and more people live further away from their places of work, shops and schools, more time is being spent in vehicles driving. If traffic volumes reach the projected 40-50% increase by 2021 how will this impact on traffic congestion? The dramatic recent rise in bus patronage is helping but will it be enough, or do we need more improvements in public transport?

The number of people cycling to work is unchanged from year to year, while the number of school and tertiary students cycling continues to decline. Will this mean it takes longer to get around Greater Christchurch, at greater cost and producing more pollution?

Two choices impact upon our transport options - where we live and how we choose to get from one place to another. If we choose to live close to work, shops, schools then we will have more choices for getting to these locations. If we choose to live further away from services then our choices become more limited and our use of vehicles will increase. What transport choices do we want for our future?

## How will we pay for transport and address the pollution it generates?

The cost of transport is rising for us as a community and as individual car owners. Are we prepared, as vehicle owners, to pay more to keep our vehicles on the road and, as a community, pay more to build and maintain the roads?

The cost of crashes is also on the rise and contributing to the increasing cost of healthcare, as traffic accident patients require lengthy hospital stays, medicines and help to get well.

Our current transport choices pose real threats to our environment, with carbon dioxide emissions having increased by 43% in the last 10 years despite improvements in engine technology and runoff from roads making its way into our streams, lakes and estuaries.

## How can we protect transport connections?

Key transport routes in and out of Christchurch, such as across the Waimakariri River to the north and along Main South Road and Blenheim Road to the southwest are already congested.

This is bad news not just for residents of, for example, Kaiapoi and Rolleston who work in the city, but it also delays and increases costs for businesses such as farmers and manufacturers trying to get goods to economically important destinations such as Christchurch International Airport, the Christchurch Saleyards and the Port of Lyttelton. Can we afford to build more roads if they won't solve traffic congestion?

If we choose to continue using our cars to get around and don't plan or build our communities to provide for other transport options, the key transport routes will become even more congested. What options are there for freight getting in and around Greater Christchurch? Do we improve the rail system for getting freight in and out or for getting passengers to and from areas such as Rangiora and Rolleston? Are these options affordable in the long-term and realistic for our transport needs?

## Did you know...

**We're driving our cars more and more:** While the population is expected to grow by 14% by 2021, traffic growth is expected to grow by 40-50% over the same period. Most of this additional traffic will be on arterial roads, adding to the 24km of road already congested. By 2021 over 78km of roads will be congested. We won't be going anywhere in a hurry unless we change current trends.

**We love our cars:** Greater Christchurch has the highest rate of car ownership in New Zealand and we love driving. In the 2001 Census, 77% of us said we travelled to work in cars, 4% were passengers in cars with only 4% travelling by bus, 7% by cycle and 5% walking.

**We're crashing our cars:** Greater Christchurch has a high crash rate, with 3 out of every 1000 residents – that's 1,200 people - involved in a crash (often serious) each year. The cost of treating the injured, repairing the vehicles and fixing up the roads and property damaged costs us \$200 million each year – what a waste!



# Community Identity

## How do we protect what makes communities special to us?

Our city, towns and the countryside of Greater Christchurch are changing. In the city, redevelopment is replacing older, single dwellings with townhouses and apartments. Towns, such as Rolleston and Woodend, are expanding and farmland is being converted into lifestyle blocks and smallholdings. The coastlines and more prominent open hills of Lyttelton Harbour are coming under pressure from development. The look and feel of our communities is changing with this increased urbanisation. How will our sense of place, the emotional bind that many of us have to where we live, be challenged by many of these changes?

Some city neighbourhoods are changing their look, character and demographics as old villas come down and apartments go up. While these changes aren't necessarily good or bad, without careful management the value of the community to its inhabitants may change for the worse.

The use of the countryside in Waimakariri, Selwyn and Banks Peninsula districts is changing the social fabric of rural communities. People moving to the countryside can bring different values and urban expectations of amenities with them. Can this influx into the country of residents referred to as "townies" and their expectations be managed without losing the character of our rural communities?

There are many aspects of our neighbourhoods and communities that make our homes special to us. How is that character and charm being changed with development? Should we worry about old character homes being demolished to make way for blocks of two and three storey apartments? Does having a dairy, café or pub near your house make it seem more like the community you wish to live in? Are the subdivisions being built today the ideal neighbourhoods of tomorrow? What choices need to be made to make the area as good if not better than today?

## How do we adapt to an ageing population?

The Greater Christchurch population is getting older and living longer. With fewer young people and more, older people there will be major changes in housing and lifestyles. Will older people still want to live in the suburbs, move to the inner city to be near services and facilities or retire to the country to be part of smaller communities?

There may be fewer people wanting large, family homes but more people wanting smaller, low-maintenance homes. Do we have homes, retirement villages and rest homes suitable for an ageing population, conveniently located close to facilities such as health centres and hospitals? Can we afford to build such homes, or will it be up to our senior citizens to provide for themselves?

## How can we meet our communities' needs for services and amenities?

Our communities are demanding more sophisticated, better-located community facilities, such as libraries and swimming pools. Will people want indoor pools open year round and libraries with cafés easily accessed by car, bus or on foot?

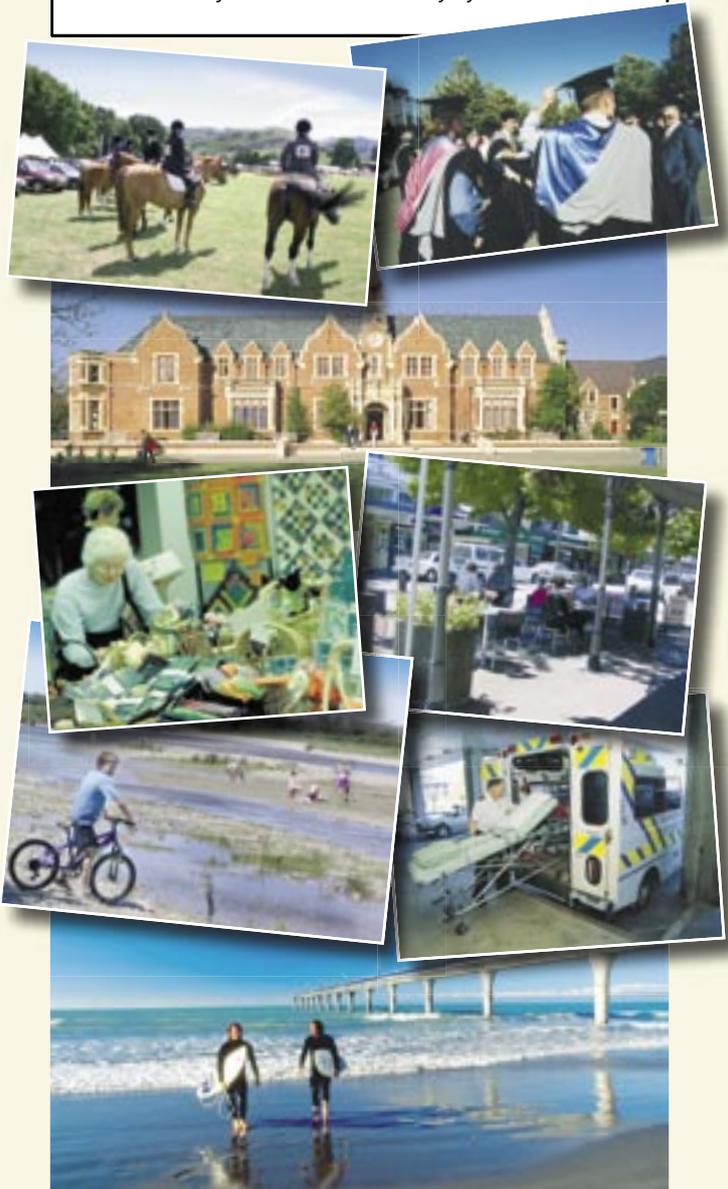
As facilities become more high-tech and specialised they become more expensive to build and maintain. With more people wanting facilities different in design and location to those available today, what will happen to existing facilities and can we afford new facilities? Should facilities be close to schools to provide for students, as well as the local communities? What will be the impact of where we live and work on the type, size and location of community facilities?

## Did you know...

**We're moving to the country (but taking the town with us):** Between 1991 and 2001, the total population of Waimakariri District grew by over 32%, and Selwyn District grew by 28%. This huge influx of people has changed some farming service towns into commuter suburbs and transformed some farmland into lifestyle blocks.

**We're living longer:** In 2001, 20% of us were under the age of 15 and 14% were over 65 years of age. By 2021, those figures will swap with 15% under the age of 15, but 1 in 5 people in Greater Christchurch aged 65 and over.

**We expect more from community facilities:** The days of neighbourhood swimming pools and libraries may be numbered. Community expectations are leading to larger, sophisticated facilities being developed in more central locations, for example QE11 Pool and the South Christchurch Library, replacing smaller local facilities easily reached on foot or by cycle.



# Natural Environment

## How can we protect our natural environment?

Development is making the natural environment vulnerable to irreversible damage. As development intensifies, open space and natural habitat is lost. As habitats are reduced in size and separated from other habitats, the plant and wildlife eco-systems fail and begin a cycle of destruction and decay.

Many ecological sites in Greater Christchurch are small, fragmented and very vulnerable. Some of these areas have no regulatory protection – that means their survival is dependent upon people making the effort because they want to, not because the law requires them to. The Estuary, Riccarton Bush, the Travis Wetlands and areas around Banks Peninsula, such as Mt. Herbert, provide a home for many species that would otherwise migrate or die out. How will our clean, green image in urban and rural areas be affected by development and what impact will this have on tourism?

Do we want to protect the banks of the streams and rivers, provide healthy wetlands, coastlines, hills and plains? If the decision is yes, then choices must be made to limit or prevent development in these areas.



## How will we protect the quality and quantity of our water supply?

Greater Christchurch currently enjoys one of the best supplies of high quality untreated drinking water in New Zealand and the world. That's because to the west and north of Christchurch City is a groundwater recharge area for the series of aquifers under Christchurch City – underground water fed from the Waimakariri River.

This water has been clean and plentiful – so far. Drinking pristine water from our taps is a luxury most other places in the world do not have. How do we sustain this quality of water for the future?

Development and increasing demand for water for more intensive farming, a growing number of households and general development is threatening water quality and quantity. Protecting the aquifers and the river that feeds them from pollution and over demand will be a top priority if we want to be able to continue drinking untreated water from the tap. Do you think the water you drink is worth protecting?

## How will we protect our community against natural disasters?

The Greater Christchurch area is prone to such natural hazards as flooding, earthquake and tsunami. We know some areas are more at risk than others, so should we discourage development in such areas?

In Greater Christchurch there are parts of the area that are better suited for development than others. In the eastern part of Greater Christchurch, if you were to draw a line north and south through Cathedral Square the area to the east down to the sea has soils made up of marine sediments, estuary and some floodplain deposits.

These are areas prone to liquefaction (the shaking of ground during an earthquake that can cause the ground to liquefy). Should we avoid developing at risk areas when planning for future growth or rely on engineering solutions to these risks?

Flooding is a regular occurrence in Greater Christchurch. There are stopbanks built along the Waimakariri and Ashley/Rakahuri Rivers to confine floodwaters within the main riverbed but if floodwaters escape then the Waimakariri River would flow south through Christchurch and north through Kaiapoi. In low lying coastal areas there is also the threat of coastal flooding and, as a result of climate change, sea level rise. Should we aim to minimise the impacts of potential flooding from rivers and the sea when planning development?

It's many years since a major earthquake affected the Greater Christchurch area, but experts predict the big one's coming. Should we take this into account in planning the nature and location of future facilities, roads, services and housing areas?

## Did you know...

**Our water's really good:** There are only two places in the world where you can enjoy drinking untreated water straight from the tap – one is Evian in France and the other is Christchurch. Try the water in Dunedin or Auckland and then consider whether we're doing enough to protect our water supply.

**We're consuming a lot of water:** 56 million cubic metres of water are pumped from the Christchurch – West Melton aquifer annually for domestic water use. The greatest use of water goes for activities such as watering gardens and washing cars. Washing a car with a hose uses the same amount of water consumed by a family over one week, so why are we wasting so much of our pure, clean water?

**Our greatest threats are from flooding and earthquakes:** The Waimakariri River threatens more people and property than any other New Zealand river. Within Christchurch the Heathcote River has overflowed its banks and flooded houses twice in the past decade. A significant earthquake could be even more destructive.

**Our eco-system is special:** Greater Christchurch is the natural home for around 400 native plants including 31 species on the nationally threatened plant list. Some of our local natives are the Spotted Skink, Pied Cormorant, Wrybill, Tuna (eel) and Red Admiral Butterfly.

# Greater Christchurch - Get Involved

Greater Christchurch needs your involvement to be successful. Your opinions and ideas about how future growth should be managed are critical if as a community we are going to get the future that we want for our families and ourselves.

Over the next 12 months there'll be at least three opportunities for you to have a say. Here's what's planned:

## Stage 1 - Issues Awareness

This booklet begins the process by sharing information about growth trends and issues. Questions you're encouraged to start thinking about include:

- *Where should the extra population live?*
- *How should we resolve transport issues, like congestion?*
- *How important is protecting the natural environment, such as our water supply?*
- *What change is or is not acceptable to you?*
- *Should your councils collaboratively plan and manage future development?*

Talk about these issues with family and friends. It's your future – everyone living in Greater Christchurch has a stake – so think about the issues and be prepared to participate in the community consultations occurring this year.

## Stage 2 - Options Consultation

In April / May 2005 you'll be invited to have your say on some options being proposed to address these growth issues.

Consultation booklets and other material will be available on our website, at Council service centres, libraries and other outlets. Public meetings will be held during this stage. Check our website for dates, times and locations of meetings and events.

## Stage 3 - Draft Strategy Consultation

Your feedback to the proposed options will help shape a draft strategy to manage growth, that will go out for community consultation in August / September 2005.

Consultation booklets will be available on our website, at Council service centres, libraries and other outlets. Public meetings will be held during this stage. Check our website for dates, times and locations of meetings and events.

## Stage 4 - Adopting the Development Strategy

The participating Councils will adopt a final strategy once feedback is analysed and processed. This strategy will also be used as input into participating councils' Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCP). Implementation is likely to begin by July 2006.

## Welcome from Bob Parker

### Chairperson of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy Forum



On behalf of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy Forum it is my pleasure to announce that the project to tackle the important issues outlined in this brochure is now underway. As well as the partnership between the councils and Transit New Zealand, a cross-section of representatives from other organisations ranging from education to business are meeting together regularly to develop this Strategy. This group is called the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy Forum.

While the Forum has been set up to lead the project, community participation is essential for us to get the future we want. Please take the time to read this brochure, visit the website for more information and start talking with family, friends and neighbours about how these issues could change your life, and how you want to see them resolved.

As Chairperson of the Forum I welcome the opportunity to work together with our communities on a Strategy to ensure the area we live in today will be a great place for our families in 20 or 30 years time.

*Bob Parker, Mayor, Banks Peninsula District  
Chairperson - Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy Forum*

## Want to know more?

For more information about the issues discussed in this booklet and the Greater Christchurch project visit our website at [www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz](http://www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz)

Alternatively, contact the Greater Christchurch team on

phone: **0800 URB DEV (0800 872 338)**

post: **Greater Christchurch, PO Box 237 Christchurch**

or email: **info@greaterchristchurch.org.nz**

for more information or to share your ideas.

## Want to be kept informed?

Everyone's invited to join our mailing / contact list to receive information about the project. Telephone, email or write to us with your contact details and we'll keep you informed, and send you material about the Greater Christchurch project.