
Council Workshop NOTES

Date: Tuesday 19 May 2026
Time: 9.32 am
Venue: Camellia Chambers, Level 2, Civic Offices,
53 Hereford Street, Christchurch

Present

Chairperson	Mayor Phil Mauger
Deputy Chairperson	Deputy Mayor Victoria Henstock
Members	Councillor Kelly Barber
	Councillor Melanie Coker
	Councillor Pauline Cotter
	Councillor Celeste Donovan
	Councillor Tyrone Fields
	Councillor Tyla Harrison-Hunt
	Councillor Nathaniel Herz Jardine
	Councillor Yani Johanson
	Councillor Aaron Keown
	Councillor Jake McLellan
	Councillor Andrei Moore
	Councillor Mark Peters
	Councillor Tim Scandrett

Principal Advisor

Bede Carran
Interim Chief Executive
Tel: 941 8999
bede.carran@ccc.govt.nz

Meeting Advisor

Ruth Close
Democratic Services Advisor
Tel: 941 5561
ruth.close@ccc.govt.nz

Website: www.ccc.govt.nz

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The agenda was dealt with in the following order.

1. Apologies Ngā Whakapāha

Apologies from Councillor Cartwright and Councillor MacDonald were received.

7. Items Closed to the Public Ngā Take mō te wāhanga o te hui e rāhui ana ki te hunga tūmatanui

The session went into public excluded to consider the confidential items advertised at the end of the public agenda.

The public were re-admitted to the workshop at 10.34 am.

Councillor Harrison-Hunt returned to the workshop at 10.37 am during consideration of Item 2.

Deputy Mayor Henstock and Councillor Keown returned to the workshop at 10.38 am during consideration of Item 2.

Councillor Barber returned to the workshop at 10.39 am during consideration of Item 2.

Councillor Moore left the workshop at 11.01 am and returned at 11.03 am during consideration of Item 2.

Councillor Cotter left the workshop at 11.04 am and returned at 11.07 am during consideration of Item 2.

2. National direction on natural hazards for resource consenting

Paul Lowe, Manager Resource Consents; Nathan Harris, Team Leader Resource Consents; and Sarah Oliver, Team Leader City Planning joined the table to present Item 2 (refer to agenda report and the attached presentation) and to answer questions from elected members.

Key presentation points:


- New national direction applies to new subdivision, use and development where resource consent is required, through the National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards 2025 and section 106A of the Resource Management Act for land-use consents. The direction seeks to reduce the creation or increase of significant natural hazard risk to people, land and buildings and to support adaptation to changing conditions. It does not address existing buildings and homes.
- Decision-making must use the best available information and proceed regardless of uncertainty. Natural hazard risk is assessed based on likelihood and consequence, including risks to life and safety and damage to land and buildings, and must take account of climate change over at least a 100-year timeframe and existing or planned mitigation. Very high risk must be avoided, while high and medium risk must be avoided or mitigated in proportion to the level of risk, including where risk may be transferred to other sites.
- Section 106A enables consideration of significant natural hazard risk where current information is not yet reflected in the District Plan and allows conditions to be imposed or consent to be declined where significant risk cannot be appropriately managed. For most natural hazards, existing District Plan provisions already manage risk effectively, meaning limited change to current practice. Coastal hazards, particularly coastal inundation, are less comprehensively addressed and are expected to have the greatest impact on consenting, based on assumptions of up to 1.2 metres of sea level rise over 100 years plus vertical land movement, with higher relative sea level rise in some parts of the district.

- Plan Change 12 is proposed to improve the management of coastal hazard risk by providing greater certainty for communities, addressing cumulative effects of individual consenting decisions, and integrating long-term infrastructure serviceability into land-use decision-making. There are three potential approaches:
 - Option 1 includes the status quo, retaining a largely case-by-case approach under section 106A.
 - Option 2 would identify place-based precincts with defined risk thresholds and triggers.
 - Option 3 is a more directive approach that spatially identifies medium and high-risk areas, limits reliance on mitigation, and places greater constraints on new development and hazard-sensitive activities.
- Staff identified the tension between enabling development with mitigation and the likelihood of future infrastructure vulnerability that would affect that development. Staff propose developing Option 2.

Key discussion points:

- How medium and high risk areas can be identified and differentiated and the potential effect of that on willingness to build in those areas.
- The types of housing that may be considered for mitigation.
- Temporary consents and the conditions that could trigger the need for removal of buildings, including conditions not associated with the site itself, such as access or vulnerable/compromised infrastructure.
- Whether retrospective removal of buildings may be required.
- Protection along river corridors.
- That some areas will have multiple hazards, such as rainfall combined with inundation, that will increase risk.
- The timeline for Plan Change 12—Option 2 will take most of this year to develop and staff may be in a position to brief elected members on a draft plan change in October.

Attachments

- A National direction on natural hazards for resource consenting [⇨](#) – Presentation 

3. Governance Update - Q3 2025/2026 (January - March 2026)

The Governance Update was postponed to a later workshop date due to time constraints.

The workshop adjourned at 11.24 am and reconvened at 11.45 am.

Councillors Johanson and Barber returned to the workshop at 11.46 am during consideration of Item 4. Councillor Harrison-Hunt returned to the workshop at 11.51 am during consideration of Item 4. Councillor Cotter left the workshop at 12.06 pm during consideration of Item 4.

4. Cathedral Square project update

John Higgins, General Manager Strategy, Planning and Regulatory; Mark Stevenson, Head of Planning and Consents; and Hannah Pirie, Senior Project Manager joined the table to present Item 4 (refer to agenda report and the attached presentation) and to answer questions from elected members.

Key presentation points:

- Cathedral Square is a key civic space and a programme of improvements is underway, with some stages already delivered. Earlier approaches are being reconsidered to achieve improved public realm outcomes.
- Design intentions have been workshopped internally using all work to date with external stakeholders. They position Cathedral Square as the civic heart of the city, emphasising connection across past, present, and future; accessibility; flexibility for events and activities; sustainability and resilience; and support for economic activity and tourism.
- An Expression of Interest process identified five shortlisted suppliers who will participate in an interactive Request for Proposal (RFP) process to develop concept designs. These designs will be workshopped with elected members, with the Council making decisions on the preferred concept and future direction of the square.
- Budget provision exists, subject to confirmation through the Long Term Plan following approval of a design concept, with next steps including release of the RFP, evaluation, supplier selection, and ongoing engagement with key stakeholders.

Key discussion points:

- The timeline and nature of input for elected members and their interest in playing an active role in this.
- Past and future engagement, including if there is a focus on youth.
- Future car parking options.
- Activation of the Square as part of the project.

Attachments

- A Cathedral Square Update – Presentation 

Councillor Cotter returned to the workshop for the commencement of Item 5.

Councillor Keown left the workshop at 12.22 pm and returned at 12.29 pm during consideration of Item 5.

5. Footpaths Programme Process and Update

Stephen Wright, Head of Transport and Waste Management; and Jacob Bradbury, Manager Planning and Delivery Transport joined the table to present Item 5 (refer to agenda report and the attached presentation) and to answer questions from elected members.

Key presentation points:

- The Council previously approved 12 sites for delivery and four sites for further scoping. All delivery sites are in design, with one site progressing to Community Board decision in May 2026 and the remainder expected to be delivered from early 2027.
- Delivery constraints include site-specific consultation requirements, potential property acquisition or changes to road layout, impacts on private trees and vegetation, and cost estimates that exceed original allowances at several locations. Options to manage these pressures include adjusting scope or standards, staging delivery, or drawing funding from future years. Staff are also developing standard footpath designs to support faster implementation and lower delivery costs where site conditions allow.
- Four additional sites are in scoping, with outline designs and costings underway and engagement occurring with key external stakeholders. Information from this work will support Community Board advocacy through the next Long Term Plan where sites are not selected for delivery through the programme.

- The programme has \$19.8 million allocated across the FY26–FY34 period. All funding for FY26–FY27 has been allocated, with \$6.4 million available for prioritisation in FY28–FY30. More than 30 new candidate sites have been identified and are being assessed using existing prioritisation criteria, with rankings expected to change as assessments and cost estimates are refined.

Key discussion points:

- Quick wins and using maintenance contractors for simple footpaths, and using Parks contractors where joint solutions with that team are possible.
- Contrasting views on the importance of some projects on the list and how changes could be considered.
- What obstacles/delays to delivery are down to policy or legal (Local Government Act) requirements.
- Whether community board preferences can be included when staff provide advice back to the Council.

Attachments

- A New Footpaths Programme – Presentation [↗](#) 

The workshop adjourned at 12.34 pm and reconvened at 1.30 pm.

Councillor Fields returned to the workshop at 1.31 pm during consideration of Item 6.

Deputy Mayor Henstock and Councillors Barber and McLellan returned to the workshop at 1.32 pm during consideration of Item 6.

Councillor Harrison-Hunt returned to the workshop at 1.39 pm during consideration of Item 6.

Councillor Harrison-Hunt returned to the workshop at 2.07 pm and returned at 2.09 pm during consideration of Item 6.

Councillor Keown left the workshop at 2.27 pm and returned at 2.29 pm during consideration of Item 6.

Councillor Harrison-Hunt left the workshop at 2.30 pm during consideration of Item 6 and did not return.

6. Environment Canterbury Briefing - Public Transport Improvement Programme and Network Review Public Engagement

Environment Canterbury officers Stuart Gibbon, General Manager Public Transport; Stephanie Symns, Senior Community Engagement Advisor; and Mark Gregory, Principal Transport Planner joined the table to present Item 6 (refer to agenda report and presentation) and to answer questions from elected members.

In attendance were Environment Canterbury Councillors Genevieve Robinson and Joe Davies (by audiovisual link) and Giles Southwell, Director of Corporate and Public Transport Services.

Key presentation points:

- Public Transport Futures is the agreed, partner-endorsed programme for improving public transport services and remains central to the region's transport and land-use framework, with strong alignment to the Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan and the Regional Public Transport Plan 2025–35. Accelerated population growth, intensification and post-COVID patronage recovery are placing increasing pressure on the network, with several core routes at or near capacity and declining service reliability. Officers noted Christchurch was the fastest growing city in New Zealand last year, growing by 7600 or 1.1% of the population. It also featured as

having the worst congestion and journey times in the country in TomTom analysis (of 500 cities worldwide).

- Community feedback collected between 2022 and 2025 consistently identifies frequency, reliability, capacity, directness and coverage gaps as priority issues across the region. A coordinated public engagement programme is underway from 13 May to 24 June 2026 to inform a network review and a ten-year improvement programme for services (2027–37).
- The next phase focuses on completing the network review by June 2026, developing detailed investment cases for 2027–30, and preparing funding options for inclusion in future Long Term Plan and National Land Transport Programme decisions, within a constrained funding and policy environment.

Key discussion points:

- The breadth of engagement being planned, including youth, community organisations and gathering places, and businesses.
- Approaches to identifying deficiencies and expanding capacity.
- Multi-modal transport and connections between PT routes and micromobility options.

Workshop concluded at 2.33 pm.