

Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

Submission on Rangiora Town Centre Strategy

To: Waimakariri District Council

Submitter: Canterbury District Health Board

Attn: Kirsty Peel
Community and Public Health
C/- Canterbury District Health Board
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Proposal: The Waimakariri District Council is consulting on a draft Rangiora Town Centre Strategy Blueprint to 2030+.

SUBMISSION ON THE RANGIORA TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY

Details of submitter

1. Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB).
2. The submitter is responsible for promoting the reduction of adverse environmental effects on the health of people and communities and to improve, promote and protect their health pursuant to the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and the Health Act 1956. These statutory obligations are the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and, in the Canterbury District, are carried out under contract by Community and Public Health under Crown funding agreements on behalf of the Canterbury District Health Board.
3. The Ministry of Health requires the submitter to reduce potential health risks by such means as submissions to ensure the public health significance of potential adverse effects are adequately considered during policy development.

Details of submission

4. We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Rangiora Town Centre Strategy. The future health of our populations is not just reliant on hospitals, but on a responsive environment where all sectors work collaboratively.
5. While health care services are an important determinant of health, health is also influenced by a wide range of factors beyond the health sector. These influences can be described as the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and are impacted by environmental, social and behavioural factors. They are often referred to as the 'social determinants of health'¹.
6. The most effective way to maximise people's wellbeing is to take these factors into account as early as possible during decision making and strategy development. Initiatives to improve health outcomes and overall quality of life must involve organisations and groups beyond the health sector, such as local government if they are to have a reasonable impact².

¹ Public Health Advisory Committee. 2004. *The Health of People and Communities. A Way Forward: Public Policy and the Economic Determinants of Health*. Public Health Advisory Committee: Wellington.

² McGinnis JM, Williams-Russo P, Knickman JR. 2002. *The case for more active policy attention to health promotion*. *Health Affairs*, 21(2): 78 - 93.

General Comments

Have we missed any key challenges or opportunities?

7. The CDHB is supportive of the overall Strategy and agrees with the issues outlined in the description of a good town centre. We would like to suggest that issues of sustainability / climate change and an ageing population could be better incorporated into the strategy to improve it further.
8. Increasing the sustainability of our towns is an important response to mitigating climate change and we support Waimakariri's involvement in this area already with the development of the Waimakariri Corporate Sustainability Strategy 2019. Improving the vitality of the Rangiora Town Centre may encourage local shopping, the further development of local businesses to support local employment, and more local community gathering spaces. This will all serve to reduce travelling to other centres thereby reducing carbon emissions.
9. Well-designed pedestrian and cycle routes and connections will encourage active transport modes (for work as well as non-work trips). Physical activity prevents obesity, reduces levels of cardiovascular risk factors, and improves health in many other ways too. Even so, in developed countries only two in three adults achieve the minimum recommended 150 minutes of moderate activity every week. A longitudinal study of 200 000 adults in Taiwan reports that smaller amounts of exercise are also worthwhile. People who managed around half the recommended amount of physical activity had a substantially lower incidence of hypertension, dyslipidaemia, and diabetes over six years of follow-up than people who took no exercise at all.³
10. Environments that support active transport and local consumption have both environmental sustainability and health co-benefits and therefore the CDHB encourages the Council to explicitly consider these and other possible sustainability issues within the Rangiora Town Centre Strategy.
11. We are aware that Waimakariri District Council has recently launched an Age – Friendly Waimakariri Plan and Process. The Rangiora Town Centre Strategy could be better linked to this strategy via the explicit inclusion of commentary about the

³ <https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/54/4/238>

importance of the Rangiora Town Centre being a welcoming place to accommodate an aging population. This may include mentioning issues such as making public spaces accessible with good condition footpaths, accessible parking, additional seating etc that encourages active movement in older populations. Healthy ageing is largely determined by the ability to maintain both mental and physical capacity and evidence is growing to support interventions based on physical exercise.⁴ An environment that makes walking possible and easy is critical.

Do you support the Strategy's vision and Town Centre concepts?

12. The CDHB supports the vision as set out in the Draft Rangiora Town Centre Strategy. The vision has significant alignment with the Healthy Streets approach and we recommend reviewing the vision and implementation projects against the Healthy Streets Indicators to ensure a healthy environment is delivered within the Rangiora Town Centre.⁵

What do you think of the Master Concept and 10 Major Projects? Which are most important and do you think we've missed any?

13. The CDHB supports the Master Concept but we notice there is no mention of mana whenua. Using an agency like Matapopere in the design phases would be good practice.

14. Projects 2 and 4 are important as they will increase walkability of the area and create the opportunity for people to use active transport modes from future new residential areas in the East. The CDHB also encourages the development of cycle infrastructure which links to residential areas.

15. The CDHB encourages the use of active transport (not just alternative and future modes) and public transport networks within Project 9 for their health and sustainability co-benefits as outlined above.

16. The CDHB supports Project 10 – encouraging living in centre – and in particular wishes to highlight the importance of including smaller and more affordable homes (1 -2 bedroom) within such developments to better meet the needs of older people

⁴ <https://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/368/bmj.m402.full.pdf>

⁵ <https://healthystreetscom.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/guide-to-the-healthy-streets-indicators.pdf>

and people living alone (which is a growing group within the population). We recommend that these developments are encouraged to utilise universal design principles, such as included in the Lifemark rating system, to ensure they are useable and safe for people of all ages and stages.

Is there anything else you'd like to see included in the Strategy?

17. The CDHB would like to emphasise the importance of trees within a town centre to reduce heat sinks, improve drainage infrastructure and improve wellbeing, amongst other benefits. The linked resource provides a useful summary of the value of trees in an urban setting.⁶
18. The importance of building community and social connection could be further emphasised in the Strategy. A well designed Town Centre with gathering and bumping spaces provides an opportunity for people to meet together and make new connections which is an important contributor to positive mental wellbeing. This may involve urban design / landscaping decisions and/or the development of community spaces within the town centre to encourage social connection.
19. The CDHB suggests that the Waimakariri Access Group and young people are included as collaborators in the implementation of the projects outlined in the Strategy.

Conclusion

20. The CDHB does not wish to be heard in support of this submission.
21. Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the Draft Rangiora Town Centre Strategy.

Person making the submission



Dr Anna Stevenson
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Date: 6/03/2020

⁶ http://www.walkable.org/download/22_benefits.pdf

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