

LONG-TERM PLAN UPDATE

To: Finance and Policy Committee

Meeting Date: Monday 15 December 2025

From: Rhiannon Suter, Manager – Strategy, Policy and Engagement

Approved: Patricia Christie - Group Manager - Finance and Assurance

Approved Date: Friday 5 December 2025

Open Agenda: Yes

Purpose and Summary

This report provides the committee the opportunity to recommend to Council direction for the 2027 – 2037 Long-term Plan process.

Recommendations

That the Finance and Policy Committee:

1. Receives the report “Long-term Plan Update”.

Recommend to Council:

2. **Agrees / Disagrees** to review the vision “Our City with Heart – He Ngākau Aroha.”
3. Notes the intention of the Executive leadership to maintain the mission “Waihōpai – Leave in Good Order.”
4. **Agrees / Disagrees** the following updated decision-making principles:
 - a. Invercargill and Bluff focus with a Southland consciousness.
 - b. Active listening, honesty and respect for and with each other *and our community*.
 - c. Shared ownership – *Work with passion and commitment* to share the challenge and solution.
 - d. We will be prepared to innovate and take informed risks to deliver financially sustainable ambitious outcomes.
 - e. We will stay involved alongside our community through implementation.
 - f. Collaboration – *tātou ā tatou*.
5. **Confirms** the draft Strategic Decision-making Framework noting there will be further opportunities to refine this later in the process.

6. **Agrees / Disagrees** the following updated strategic challenges and opportunities:
- a. Meeting the changing needs of our rangatahi as part of our wider *community*, which is growing older and more diverse.
 - b. Delivering financially sustainable and affordable investment in the core infrastructure the city needs to thrive, innovate and grow
 - c. Building resilience as we navigate through increasingly complex environmental challenges including climate change, land contamination and earthquake risks.
 - d. Investing in partnerships and new ways of working to achieve more together.
 - e. Ensuring Council leadership and delivery is credible and effective, building community trust and engagement *and effectively navigating regulatory change*.
7. **Agrees / Disagrees** the following updated community outcomes:
- a. Nobody is Left Behind – Our youth, older people, different neighbourhoods and communities basic needs are met *through cost effective investment*, and they feel valued and proud to live here.
 - b. A vibrant, safe city which meets our people's diverse cultural needs.
 - c. A future focused economy delivered through innovation and partnership and supported by appropriate infrastructure.
 - d. A healthy, resilient environment supporting a healthy, resilient community.
8. **Agrees / Disagrees** the appended 2026 Long-term Plan Workshop Schedule.

Background

Council has begun its strategic planning for the triennium, to inform its preparation of the 2027 – 2037 Long-term Plan. This report provides drafts of key Long-term Plan strategic inputs for Council to review. These have been developed with the direction from the Mayor for this Long-term Plan in line with requirements of Section 41A (2) of the Local Government Act. The areas of focus for this Long-term Plan are to consolidate on the work of the previous Long-term Plans, and lay the groundwork for innovative partnership-based evolution of the plan which will deliver financially sustainable outcomes for the community. The delivery of the core capital programme will be also be a key area of focus. The drafting reflects the issues raised and identified by Councillors through their strategic planning discussions. Setting this direction now enables staff to prepare information and material to inform Council decision making in a timely and effective manner. All items remain draft and can be amended until adoption of the Long-term Plan in June 2027.

Issues

Vision

The current Long-term Plan vision is Our City with Heart – He Ngākau Aroha. It was developed for the 2021 Long-term Plan to reflect the importance of the city centre renewal which has been the core strategic Council for the last six years.

This has been supported by the Roadmap to Renewal branding which has visually communicated Council's plans for key community assets including Te Unua - Museum of Southland.

This strategic focus has been in large part successfully delivered with city streets investment and a range of activations supporting a newly vibrant city centre in place. 92% of ICL is tenanted, \$14 million uplift in GDP is estimated through 2030 as a result of city centre investment¹ and 80% of people are more likely to speak positively of the city centre as a result of the investment².

Approximately 70% of the total Roadmap will have been delivered by the end of 2025.

Council may wish to consider whether a new vision would more accurately reflect the focus of Council for the upcoming Long-term Plan or whether for continuity they prefer to remain with the current vision which has good awareness. Current themes of focus for the vision include to consolidate on the work of the previous Long-term Plans, and lay the groundwork for innovative partnership-based evolution of the plan which will deliver financially sustainable outcomes for the community.

Mission

In past Long-term Plans the organisation's mission statement is set by its executive as they consider how best to deliver the vision of governance.

Council's mission over the next ten years is to leave the city in good order for the next generation. One of the translations for the Māori name of our city – Waihōpai – is to leave in good order. This translation can be read as you look out over our beautiful mōtu from the viewing station at the top of Motupōhue Bluff Hill.

Current areas of focus for the executive to support this mission include building a performance focused organisation, delivering digital technology upgrades and improving communications and connectedness across the organisation and the community.

The Executive view is that, dependent on Council's final decision on vision, the mission remains fit for purpose.

Strategic Decision-making Principles and Framework

The current decision-making principles read as follows – Suggested amendments are in italics:

Working together for our future.
Mahi tahi tātou mō tō tatou anamata.

We know that collaboration *is* an increasingly important part of the way Council operated.

As part of our process for making decisions on our strategic projects *and other key funding decisions*, we developed the following principles which we will continue to be guided by:

- Invercargill *and Bluff* focus with a Southland consciousness.

¹ NZIER, Invercargill CBD regeneration, May 2023

² Great South, Southland CBD Rejuvenation Beyond 2025 Report, 2023

- Active listening, honesty and respect for and with each other and our community.
- Shared ownership – Work with passion and commitment to share the challenge and solution.
- We will be prepared to innovate and take informed risks to deliver financially sustainable ambitious outcomes.
- We will stay involved alongside our community through implementation.
- Collaboration – tātou ā tatou.

The draft structure of the Strategic Decision-making Framework is attached for confirmation, noting that there will be an opportunity to refine this further later in the process.

The Strategic Decision-Making Framework includes the main factors and weighting to be applied in supporting Council's decisions on items of significant new investment.

Strategic Challenges and Opportunities

The strategic challenges and/or opportunities provide an opportunity for Council to outline for the community and officers the key issues they believe are or need to be the focus for the city for the next ten years.

Our plan currently does not address a growth strategy in line with National Government direction for the region. This is addressed in the second proposed strategic challenge/opportunity below.

The current strategic challenges statements are below, again with proposed changes in italics:

Our plan addresses five strategic challenges *and opportunities* for the city:

- Meeting the changing needs of our rangatahi as part of our wider community, which is growing older and more diverse.
- Delivering financially sustainable and affordable investment in the core infrastructure the city needs to thrive, innovate and grow
- Building resilience as we navigate through increasingly complex environmental challenges including climate change, land contamination and earthquake risks.
- Investing in partnerships and new ways of working to achieve more together.
- Ensuring Council leadership and delivery is credible and effective, building community trust and engagement and effectively navigating regulatory change.

Community Outcomes

Council is required to outline the community outcomes it aims to achieve through the Long-term Plan. The following evolution of the community outcomes are proposed:

- One community with nobody left behind – Our youth, older people, different neighbourhoods and communities basic needs are met through cost effective investment, and they feel valued and proud to live here.
- A vibrant, safe city which meets our people's diverse cultural needs.
- A future focused economy delivered through innovation and partnership and supported by appropriate infrastructure.
- A healthy, resilient environment supporting a healthy, resilient community.

Workshop Schedule

In delivery of Council's Long-term Plan workshops the following factors will be balanced to ensure the most productive discussions between Councillors and Mana whenua representatives and a range of different stakeholders. There is intention to hold meetings out in community facilities where relevant and possible and to enable time for participation of groups beyond Council. Additional workshops can be added as required. Note all venues are subject to change based on availability and technology requirements.

Next Steps

All items in this report remain draft until adoption of the Long-term Plan in 2027. Staff will use this direction to inform their preparation of Long-term Plan items.

Attachments

1. Draft Strategic Decision-making Framework (A6228652)
2. Draft Workshop Schedule (below).

Date	Topic	Possible Location
10 March 2026	Capital programme	Waihopai Alliance?
24 March 2026	City Economic Development – Investment and partnership opportunities for growth (With Chamber of Commerce and Great South)	Chamber of Commerce
TBC April 2026	Social need and wellbeing – stakeholder workshop – Youth, transport, community partnership and project opportunities	Murihiku Marae
23 April 2026	Resilience inc food security (with EMS)	EMS Control Centre
12 May 2026	Strategic projects	Rugby Park
26 May 2026	Elderly Housing Future Options	Tōtara, Level 1 ICL
July/ August TBC	Activity workshops	Tōtara, Level 1 ICL
26 August 2026	Financial and Infrastructure Strategies Rating Policy Other policies as required	Tōtara, Level 1 ICL
27 October 2026	External funding requests	Council Chamber
24 November 2026	Budgets	Tōtara, Level 1 ICL