



Political parties planning outlook in retrospect

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Before the 2014 general election the following request was made to all the major parties:

"Being that it is an election year we would like to get MP's from each party to give us their view on professional planning, planning education and what they see as key planning issues in the future"

Only three parties responded and a summary of their responses is given below:

1. National Party

Cameron Cotter, Campaign Communications Manager for the National Party provided their response. It focused on the co-ordination of the Canterbury rebuild. Cotter highlighted the establishment of the Canterbury Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) Programme by Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) in 2013. This enables the sharing of information between public, private and research sectors.

A key part of the SDI is the Forward Works Viewer, which is a two-dimensional view of the rebuild and is available online. This enables sharing of horizontal and vertical construction for current and planned projects, plus maintenance and repair activities. From this information, network clashes, impacts and opportunities can be identified. Therefore planning can be undertaken to avoid impacts, such as closures and/or capacity reductions, resulting in better coordination of projects.

The SDI also features the 3D Enabled Cities Project so that the future city of Christchurch can be seen. It will include an interactive building register of those lost to the earthquakes, plus help in designing and planning new buildings.

2. Labour Party

Labour's response focuses on urban planning. Phil Twyford is Labour's spokesperson on transport, housing, Auckland issues, and cities.

Twyford states that there has been no progress over the last six years by the government on urban planning since the last Labour Government launched the Urban Design Protocol.

Labour plans to introduce a National Policy Statement on affordable housing, and a second one on the built environment.

They have also signalled their intention to be more involved in urban development, such as accommodating growth in Auckland and speeding up the rebuild of Christchurch. They intend to work with local government to "master plan large scale urban development, in brown and greenfields sites, with affordable housing, high urban design standards, supported by infrastructure and integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods."

It is Labour's plan to meet the challenge of affordable housing and building great cities. This is through central government working with local government, the private sector, and the community, combined with the application of the best of urban planning and design.

3. Green Party

The Green Party's response was from Julie Anne Genter. Their stance is that planning rules and transport policy are important for solving many of our most pressing challenges, especially climate change. Changes to our communities and transport infrastructure give opportunities to reduce energy use, air and water pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions, states Genter. She goes on further to state that new research has found that health and happiness can be increased due to people-orientated transport and vibrant, mixed-use developments. It is a win-win situation because smarter planning costs less than the status quo and also provides economic development opportunities.

Genter is a planner who says that she got into politics because she realised that, although she was interested in finding practical solutions to problems, ultimately politicians have the final say. She joined the Green Party because they "are a truly democratic party, with the most practical, evidence-based policies to create a fairer society, a cleaner environment and a smarter economy."

Over the past Parliament term the Greens have campaigned against asset sales, for safe walking and cycling to schools, for cleaning up our rivers, and for meaningful action on climate change for our climate tax cut. They have also campaigned for returning democracy to Canterbury and for a green rebuild of Christchurch.

Genter states that we have an opportunity to make improvements for everyone in New Zealand, while protecting our natural environment, and dealing with long-term challenges like climate change. Be sure to vote on or before 20 September as this is first step towards achieving increased informed democratic participation.