

# City Talkback

August 2009

The Talkback section of the Council's website is where Council staff respond to questions raised on Cue Television's City Talkback show. Replies from senior Council staff will be available here.



## Rates

*Phil asked why people had to pay two sets of rates: City Council and Regional Council rates.*

Director of Finance Dean Johnston said: "Each council is responsible for its own rating systems and ratepayers as they are different. It may be possible via shared services to enable councils to collect each other's rates to save visiting all the councils."

## Americarna

*Tina wanted information about the Americarna event to be held in Invercargill next year.*

Website Administrator John Leask advised people to visit the [official website](#) for details about the New Zealand event celebrating American cars. He said more information would be available on the Council website well before the cars - up to 800 of them, ranging from classics to hot rods - arrived in late March.

## Roading and Footpaths

(all replies on this topic by Roading Manger Tom Greenwood)

*Alan asked for an update on resealing at Grant Road in Otatara.*

Mr Greenwood said there had been a chip seal failure on Grant Road because it was done very late in the season. Letters had been sent to residents on Grant Road explaining that the Council was aware of the problem and that the work would be redone in spring.

*Lynn asked why there was not enough parking in Kelvin Street outside PD Patton.*

Mr Greenwood said it is a safety issue. Before any intersection there has to be an area clear of parking. Because there were three lanes in that part of the street (a right turn, straight through lane and a left lane turning into Leet Street) it was a safety requirement that the area was left free to aid visibility.

*Esther wanted to know how often roads were inspected. She had noticed some big pot holes in Tweed Street.*

Mr Greenwood said roads were inspected regularly. However, the winter months were a particularly bad time because it showed up all the defects. "Potholes occur when there has been a lot of excess rain and vehicles drive over puddles that may have cracks in the road. It is also not a good time of the year to do repairs because the bitumen does not stick when it is cold and wet. We really do need some good weather to get stuck into it," he said. "However, we ask Invercargill residents to contact the Council about potholes or damage to the city's streets by phoning 211 1777 or by using this website link: [online request for service form](#) "

*Mary wanted to know when the information tiles in the city centre (installed when the city centre was upgraded several years ago) were going to be cleaned. They had faded and were hard to see.*

Mr Greenwood said these ceramic tiles were part of the Heritage Trail and featured special aspects of the city such as a memorial to J.T. Thomson, the city's Chief Surveyor who designed the wide street style that Invercargill is well known for. "Council has set aside some funding this year to have these tiles cleaned using specialist cleaners," Mr Greenwood said. "We do have the pavements scrubbed with water regularly but about every two years we do need a specialist chemical cleaner to bring them back to standard."

*Nancy had recently been to Queenstown and liked that the main street is closed to vehicles (Queenstown Mall). She thought the same thing could be done in Invercargill.*

Mr Greenwood said Invercargill people tended to drive everywhere and liked to park right outside the shop they wished to visit. "There is also some concern that the business people in the city centre would lose customers with shoppers favouring the shops with destination parking (situated outside of the city centre) and not visiting the specialist boutique shops in the CBD," he said. "We've got to be careful and get the right balance."

*Helen said the path outside her property in Jackson Street flooded regularly.*  
Council staff would look into it and have it fixed, Mr Greenwood said.

*Valmai said there were a lot of potholes on the main road from Waikiwi to Lorneville.*

Mr Greenwood said as it was a State Highway maintenance was the responsibility of the New Zealand Transport Authority. However, he believed the NZTA was scheduled to do repair work to that highway once the weather improved.

*Bruce would like to see Queens Drive improved, especially as it was such a busy thoroughfare, with extra lanes added at the St Andrew Street, Gala Street and Yarrow Street intersections.*

Plans were being drawn up to make improvements to the area, Mr Greenwood said. "What we would like to do is create two lanes the whole way along Queens Drive and we are also looking into the need for traffic signals at St Andrew Street. This is not just to aid the motorists but also the pedestrians trying to get across a busy road to visit Queens Park."