

Living Streets Aotearoa



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Submission from Living Streets Canterbury

Greater Christchurch Metro Strategy Review

Organisation: Living Streets Canterbury

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Living Streets Canterbury advocates for pedestrians and aims to get more people walking more often for health, environmental, and social reasons. We see public transport is a vital part of a walking friendly environment.

We congratulate Environment Canterbury on the excellent initiatives that have been implemented as part of the last Metro Strategy. We refer here to initiatives such as, bike racks on twelve bus routes, increasing the frequency of buses at peak periods, 99% of buses having low floors to increase accessibility for less able customers, and the free travel options for gold card users.

Living Streets Canterbury would like Environment Canterbury to ensure that public transport is integrated early into new communities and planning for redevelopments such as Christchurch Airport. The former ensures people have transport choices when they move into their new homes, before they are in the habit of using their private vehicle for every trip. Integrating good public transport services and infrastructure into redevelopments such as Christchurch airport provide transport choices for visitors and locals.

Questions refer to Metro Strategy Review document

Question 1 Yes, Living Streets Canterbury supports encouraging people to make more trips on public transport. This would cut traffic congestion and encourage people to walk or cycle between the bus and their intended destination.

Question 2 Yes, Living Streets Canterbury supports investing *more* money in public transport. At this stage it is likely providing sustainable and healthy transport options may have to be “subsidised” (as hidden transport costs such health and congestion benefits are not factored in to the true costs of the different transport modes). to encourage people into using more active forms of transport and away from bringing private vehicles into the City. It would appear beneficial to invest in facilities that encourage mixed modes (walk-bus, cycle-bus, or park and ride).

Question 3 **What would a future for public transport look like for Greater Christchurch (Selwyn, Waimakariri, & Christchurch)?**

Living Streets Canterbury would like to see all areas of Greater Christchurch with :

- frequent services where public transport has priority
- a system well integrated with local pedestrian networks
- secure cycle lock ups
- park and ride facilities
- safe places for users to wait for the bus or ferry
- storage facilities (e.g. lockers) available so pedestrians (including
- tourists) can leave surplus gear in the Central City while attending to different aspects of their business

In future we would also like to see the use of rail and light rail particularly for connecting more distant destinations such as Rolleston, Kaiapoi, or Rangiora to the Central city.

Question 4 **The five most important improvements from the current Metro Strategy:**

- 1. Implement bus priority measures on all high demand passenger transport corridors.*
- 2. Increase system reliability so 95% of trips arrive within 5 minutes of their scheduled arrival time.*
- 3. Lobby Central Government to introduce a law that requires other road users to give way to buses when they are pulling out of bus stops.*
- 4. Promote the Metro system to raise awareness and encourage greater patronage.*
- 5. Provide Real Time Information at 30% of Metro bus stops.*
- 16. Develop Metro bus stop standards and upgrade bus stops so they consistently comply.*
- 35. Continue to identify issues and solutions for people with special needs to ensure the system better meets those needs.*

Question 5 **The five least important improvements from the current Metro Strategy:**

- 16. Provide better passenger information at the central city Bus Exchange with personnel in the lounges to help passengers.*

23 -Be able to load Metrocards on the internet [not all residents have access to this technology]. [more facilities to load your card through machines using eftpos may be more useful, e.g. located at the bus exchange downstairs out of Information Station hours]

30 - Review vehicle consistency in internal layout and facilities (eg. leg room, positioning of bells, onboard information)

34 -Trial and implement a ‘dial and ride’ service

All these initiatives above are nice to have but not as high priority as the other improvements listed.

Question 6. Changes to Improvements:

2. Increase system reliability so 95% of trips arrive within 5 minutes of their scheduled arrival time.

We suggest increasing the target to 99%. If people are to rely on buses for getting to meetings and or to work, they must be able to rely on their buses arriving on time. For people trying to get to the airport, this reliability is even more important – aim for 100%! Getting reliable service should not be put onto bus drivers. Pressure on bus drivers can mean bus drivers driving too fast and poor behaviour with passengers. Reliable service is about the existence and functionality of bus priority processes and infrastructure and about the way tenders for services are assessed (the cheapest may not be the best Tenders and services need to be based on realistic times and conditions. Bus timetables for example should show the likelihood of longer times during rush hours etc. We do not want this goal to be at the expense of good service. It is neither realistic. Nor safe to put bus drivers under pressure to keep to time when circumstances outside their control mean it is not possible. When routes are capable of achieving 95% of trips lift the goal to 99%.

4. Promote the Metro system to raise awareness and encourage greater patronage.

This improvement needs to move beyond raising awareness (i.e. the first step towards changing behaviour) to getting people to try out the bus system through campaigns aimed at fostering *actual* behaviour change. Initiatives that could be trialled include bus orienteering events, a free bus transport day or bus to work day, or a free loaded metro card for first time users.

5. Provide real time information at 30% of Metro bus stops...

We suggest this target might be increased to a minimum of 40% of Metro Bus Stops.

7. Promote individual services and destinations to raise community awareness of the Metro System.

We suggest the same as in 4 above – perhaps more than marketing is needed here.

8. Investigate and install on board audio and visual display info systems ...

Clarify. If for advertising this is unimportant. If for informing visually impaired people of the bus's whereabouts, or news and weather (such as on the Wellington Airport Bus Service), then it is a good idea ...

38. Continue developing requirements for including public transport access into all new residential and commercial development areas. Strengthen this to make it mandatory for all developments

Question 7 Improvements that should be removed:

We do not think any of the suggested improvements should be removed.

Question 8 Any further improvement to be added:

It would be good to see work implementing the recommendations for public transport in the 2009 Jan Gehl Report around decreasing the amount of bus traffic along Colombo Street and creating a bus ring around Manchester, Lichfield, and Armagh Streets and Cambridge Terrace and more linkages between walking, cycling, and public transport (something that both Environment Canterbury and the CCC will also have to be involved with). The busyness of Colombo Street essentially severs the City Mall.

Living Streets Canterbury suggests it would be good to have some storage facilities (e.g. lockers) available so bus users can leave surplus gear in the Central City while they attend to their business around town. For those using public transport, it can be difficult to carry everything needed while they are in the City. Supplying lockers means people can leave gear in locked facilities in the Central City so not having to carry it everywhere. The Hamilton Transport Centre has great locker storage facilities.

Living Streets Canterbury would like to see some positive movement towards using existing rail facilities to connect destinations such as Rolleston, Kaiapoi, and Rangiora to the Central city particularly at peak times. We would also like to see work continuing on the possibility of developing a light rail system or a bus only network the later is utilised in Adelaide.

We request Environment Canterbury looks at installing “Real Time” signage at Christchurch Airport, including in the baggage handling area and where people exit the building.

There is currently no signage in the baggage handling area directing people to where from and when the bus leaves. One exits the baggage handling area or the domestic terminal and sometimes see a bus in the distance, but with no idea of whether it is about to leave.

We propose that Environment Canterbury discuss with Christchurch City Council (CCC) the provision of seating for bus passengers within the Airport complex (Wellington has a good model\ or as a minimum sheltered seating (clearly marked no smoking and not adjacent to smoking areas).

We would like Environment Canterbury to promote to CCC installing no smoking signage at bus waiting areas.

We would like Environment Canterbury to promote to CCC bus stops outside both the domestic and international terminals.

Please can you advise us what are facilities are currently planned with the renovations underway of the airport facilities.


Question 9 Not applicable.

Concluding comments

With issues associated with peak oil and climate change in the wings, continuing to build an effective public transport system is a very important aspect of building community resilience – by increasing public health, and social interaction, and by decreasing the community’s reliance on private motor vehicles. However while it is sometimes easiest to focus on

infrastructure, it is also important to consider how to change public behaviour. Finding some more creative ways to get people to try out the bus system and to learn how to use it should be an important part of this strategy.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chrys Horn". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chrys Horn