

## 8. CITY-WIDE PUBLIC TRANSPORT PRIORITY PLAN

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The purpose of this report is to seek the Board's feedback on the draft City-wide Public Transport Priority Plan. This has been developed using criteria commented on by community boards, which were approved by the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee and adopted by the Council in May 2004.

### BACKGROUND

The draft City-wide Public Transport Priority Plan (copies will be provided to Board members prior to the meeting) has been prepared as a first step towards the development of public transport priority measures across the city; the aim of which being to provide a more convenient metro public transport system, with the efficiency and reliability necessary to encourage more people to make more bus trips in preference to car trips. As the Board will know from previous reports, this is a key objective of the Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy Update 2003, which was adopted by the Council and Environment Canterbury in July 2003, following consultation with each community board.

The purpose of the city-wide plan is to develop a list of corridors with identified unreliability and delay problems, and then place them in a priority order using the criteria already adopted by the Council.

It is **not** the purpose of the plan to identify options (or specific proposals) on each of the corridors. This will follow adoption of the plan, at which stage options will be developed in association with people likely to be affected or to have an interest in the particular areas.

### KEY POINTS IN THE PLAN

Board members will see from the circulated plan that the three corridors proposed for development and introduction first are:

- Belfast to/from the Bus Exchange, via Papanui Road
- Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) to/from the Bus Exchange, via Colombo Street
- Queenspark to/from the Bus Exchange, via New Brighton Road

The Board will be most interested in the PMH to/from Bus Exchange corridor and in particular the section between PMH and the Moorhouse Avenue railway overbridge, which falls within the Board's boundaries.

The following sections provide a summary of the justification for the proposed selection of this corridor, which it is proposed be developed and implemented towards June 2006.

### BACKGROUND TO THE SELECTION OF THE PMH TO/FROM EXCHANGE CORRIDOR

In terms of the criteria adopted by Council in May 2003, this corridor came second on the priority list. The qualification of this corridor against the criteria is discussed below.

#### Unreliability and Delay

Board members will see in the table on page 13 of the circulated plan that, in terms of unreliability and excess bus to car travel time (delay), this corridor ranks highly overall, but it is a question of how highly relative to other corridors. Looking first at the unreliability results in the table, it comes second and third of the eight corridors, and by excess travel time comes third and fourth. This suggests there is a tendency towards third place. Looking at similar high ranking corridors, however, clearly the higher ranking corridor is the Belfast/Exchange corridor, which ranks consistently highly at first or second. Another similarly high ranking corridor (Hornby/Exchange), ranks third and second by unreliability (a similar result to the PMH/Exchange corridor), but with worse rankings than the PMH corridor in terms of excess travel time. Accordingly, this ranks the PMH/Exchange corridor above the Hornby/Exchange corridor, putting it second on the priority list at this stage of the analysis.

#### Potential Benefits to Others

The potential for this corridor to benefit others was not ranked particularly highly because it was considered that the existing level of service for pedestrians and cyclists was already good compared to the other corridors considered. For this reason the corridor was relegated to third below the Hornby/Exchange, via Riccarton Road corridor on this criterion.

## **Other Factors**

Other relevant factors considered in selecting this corridor included the level of integration possible with the existing five year capital works programme and the effect on adjacent land uses. These are discussed below for this corridor.

It is noted that, at this stage of prioritising the proposed corridors, the Hornby/Exchange via Riccarton Road corridor was deferred to fourth priority, pending completion of a major traffic management scheme that will likely improve to some extent the performance of buses on the corridor. The effect of this on the priority order of corridors meant that the PMH/Exchange corridor returned to second on the list from third, with the Queenspark/Exchange corridor via New Brighton Road becoming the third corridor in order of priority.

### *Five year capital works programme*

In terms of programmed capital works, there are some schemes in the next five years that are associated with the PMH/Exchange corridor. These comprise street renewals at Angus Street (\$243,000 in 2005/06) and Faraday Street (\$58,000 in 2005/06). Due to the timing of these schemes, they could be co-ordinated well with any potential bus priority work.

### *Effect on adjacent land uses*

As outlined in the city-wide plan, primarily the concerns in this respect will be on the potential loss of on-street parking. Until options are developed to resolve the unreliability and delay issues identified on corridors, it is difficult to comment on the local and specific effects of bus priority schemes on adjacent land uses to any level of detail. The actual effects will depend on the type of measure required and the availability of, or potential for, nearby alternatives.

Each of the corridors has similar ranges of adjacent land uses, including residential and commercial purposes, in the central city and in the suburbs. It would be fair to say that whichever corridors are first developed, there will be concerns over potential effects such as loss of on-street parking. The important issue in such cases is to establish the actual level and type of use of on-street parking supply and to reconcile this with local landowners' and users' needs within design options which also achieve public transport objectives.

## **Summary**

Within the overall context of unreliability, delay and bus frequency, as well as potential for improvements to cycling and walking, and other factors such as integration with the five year capital works programme and effect on adjacent land use, this corridor is the second highest priority for treatment.

The corridor is strategic in terms of its overall importance to the metro public transport system. It is served by three through-routes which are extremely dependant upon reliability. Cashmere Road is also served by the Orbiter and it is possible, with time, that the Orbiter may also serve Colombo Street between Cashmere Road and Tennyson Street, subject to the outcome of local consultation being undertaken by Environment Canterbury (the selection of this corridor stands on its existing level of service to buses and is not dependant upon future Orbiter routing).

Any improvements to reliability and journey time would benefit not only local people boarding and alighting along Cashmere Road and Colombo Street, but have other far-reaching benefits, including improved operating efficiency of the bus exchange (i.e. buses would arrive and leave when they are supposed to) and benefits to passengers on the through-routes and other routes as far afield as Bishopdale, Christchurch Airport and Lyttelton.

There are no committed schemes that would warrant deferment of this corridor to a later time (refer to the issues surrounding proposed deferment of the Hornby/Exchange corridor on page 16 of the plan). Indeed, \$300,000 worth of capital works is programmed for the 2005/06 financial year which could be co-ordinated well with a potential construction timeline of any bus priority measures proposed in that area.

Whilst there is no great potential to improve the levels of service to pedestrians or cyclists along the corridor, this is a reflection of the existing good levels of service to these road users. If finally selected, one of the objectives of any bus priority scheme on the corridor would be to maintain or improve this level of service.

## **OTHER KEY CITY-WIDE PLAN ISSUES**

The draft city-wide plan also covers the important issue of enforcement. This is important to maintain the benefits of any bus priority scheme, as well as to ensure the safety of other road users.

Enforcement is primarily a key requirement for bus lanes and, should these be developed through the consultation and option development process at the next stage, then it is important that they be enforced appropriately.

The draft plan recommends a direction that allows staff to undertake planning for Council enforcement officers to be employed in the enforcement of bus priority measures. This will involve working with Central Government and the Police to obtain the necessary warrants and delegations of authority for the Council to enforce bus lane moving vehicle violations (currently the Council can only enforce stationary vehicle offences, such as parking in a bus lane).

## **CONCLUSION**

This report provides an overview of the draft City-wide Public Transport Priority Plan and explains the reasons why the PMH to/from the Bus Exchange via Colombo Street corridor is proposed as one of the first three corridors to be developed for bus priority treatment.

This conclusion has been reached using recently Council-adopted criteria.

### **Staff**

**Recommendation:** That the Board provide its feedback to the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee on the draft City-wide Public Transport Priority Plan.

### **Chairperson's**

**Comment:** At its 4 May 2004 meeting, the Board decided to express its support for the proposed criteria and content of the City-wide Public Transport Priority Plan, providing that:

1. Local business and residents' needs are highlighted and dealt with higher in the priority order than currently given.
2. The Board is given an opportunity to comment on any proposed routes in its area.

### **Chairperson's**

**Recommendation:** For discussion.