

7. ENVIRONMENT CANTERBURY'S DRAFT METRO STRATEGY 2006-12

General Manager responsible:	General Manager Regulation & Democracy Services
Officer responsible:	Secretariat Unit Manager
Author:	Prebashi Naidoo, DDI 941-6728

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an opportunity to give feedback on Environment Canterbury's Draft Metro Strategy 2006-12 (copy attached).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. In 1997 the residents of Christchurch, the Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury agreed that providing a world-class public transport system was a good way to address increasing traffic congestion in the city. A Public Transport Strategy was adopted that committed the councils to improve all aspects of the system, including the following:
 - The introduction of the Orbiter
 - Cross-city connections with Metrostar
 - 150 new low floor buses on the road
 - Services more frequent (over 50% increase)
 - Central city bus exchange
 - 500 new shelters and seats
 - Metrocard, first in New Zealand
 - Improved information at bus stops and online including Real-Time information
 - Initial bus priority measures.
3. These improvements led to a 90% increase in passenger trips – a result ahead of all expectations. Patronage has risen to its highest level in over 20 years.
4. Despite these improvements, the growth in traffic congestion is still eroding the quality of residents' lives in Christchurch. In the 800 submissions received, some key community demands emerged, including:
 - Improved frequency
 - A bigger central city Bus Exchange
 - Suburban interchanges
 - More reliable services
 - More information and marketing of services.
5. Submissions close on 4 October 2006.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

6. There are no financial or legal considerations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Board provide feedback to Environment Canterbury regarding its draft Metro Strategy 2006-12, in particular as to whether the proposed improvements are over-ambitious or not ambitious enough; and whether they will deliver a world-class public transport system into the future.