

## 5. DEVELOPMENT OF A CITYWIDE PUBLIC TRANSPORT PRIORITY PLAN

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The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to adopt criteria for the identification and prioritisation of transport corridors for public transport priority measures treatment. Additionally, this report informs the Council of progress made towards the eventual adoption of a citywide public transport priority plan, as required by the Council's Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy. This report also presents for adoption a process plan that sets out how the Council will consult on and develop its proposals for public transport priority corridors, following adoption of the citywide plan.

### INTRODUCTION

The Metropolitan Christchurch Transport Statement (MCTS), the overarching transport policy document that gives the Council direction towards the achievement of the vision and goals set out in the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS), is explicit in the need to provide priority measures that make public transport an attractive and viable alternative to single occupant car travel. The manner in which the Council is to implement this vision is provided in the Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy (CPPTS), adopted by the Council and Environment Canterbury in July 2003. The CPPTS sets out targets to be achieved between now and June 2006, which are consistent with the timelines set out in the MCTS and RLTS. It can be considered as an implementation tool of the MCTS.

One such target in the CPPTS is the adoption by the Council by June 2004, of a citywide public transport priority plan, setting out plans for development, introduction and enforcement of bus priority measures; such that bus priority measures will be implemented on three transport corridors by June 2006.

### PROGRESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CITYWIDE PUBLIC TRANSPORT PRIORITY PLAN

Since adoption of the CPPTS in July 2003, staff have undertaken the following work towards the production of a citywide plan:

- Meeting officers of Auckland City Council, Wellington City Council and North Shore City Council to benefit from their knowledge, approach and experience in the development, introduction and enforcement of public transport priority schemes.
- Review of best practice overseas.
- A scoping exercise of the delays and issues within the Christchurch public passenger transport system, using the real-time information database of all bus trips.
- Development of a possible rationale for the identification and prioritisation of potential public transport priority locations, discussed in the criteria section later in this report.
- Investigation of the legislative background to the enforcement of public transport priority measures and options for the Council to pursue. This will be covered in a subsequent report and also in the Citywide Public Transport Priority Plan when presented to the Council for adoption.
- Preparation of a possible development process for the development of schemes beyond adoption of the citywide plan. This is also discussed later in this report.

This preliminary work requires feedback from Community Boards and the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee in order to move forward. A report on the contents of the citywide plan and the identification and prioritisation criteria was presented to each Community Board prior to the Committee meeting, and their feedback tabled at that meeting. In addition the Shirley/Papanui Community Board held a seminar on 19 May 2004 to discuss this topic and have indicated their support. The following sections discuss a recommended framework in which to develop the citywide plan.

## CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING NEED

It is necessary to develop criteria to identify locations for priority measures within the citywide plan. These criteria will also then enable a prioritised list of these locations to be produced and included in the plan. The following criteria are recommended based on best practice elsewhere in New Zealand and overseas, and which are well suited to Christchurch. They appear in order of importance, with trigger points above which intervention should be considered.

- **Unreliability**

This is widely acknowledged as the number one reason why people do not choose to take public transport and is simply a measure of the variability of the arrival time (and therefore journey time) of the bus to a given point. High priority should be given to corridors that have been identified as unreliable, relative to their schedules. Highest priority should be given to locations served by a number of bus routes, then passenger numbers. Intervention should be considered on corridors where arrivals at key destinations vary by three minutes or more from their schedules (our own market research has shown that this is the threshold at which passengers consider a bus to be 'late').

- **Delay**

This is also important as it is a factor in the relative journey times of public transport to cars and another reason why people choose not to take public transport. High priority should be given to locations that cause the most delay to services. Intervention should be considered at locations causing delay to services which result in their journey times between key origins and destinations exceeding 125% that of a car in the same time period (this is a specific target in the CPPTS).

- **Benefit to Others**

High priority should be given to locations where there is good potential to improve levels of service to other road users. For example, this could be along a corridor without specific cycle facilities where the provision of an appropriate mixed use cycle/public transport lane would benefit a significant number of cyclists. Alternatively, it could be at a location with poor pedestrian facilities, where new bus signals enable a pedestrian crossing phase to be incorporated.

- **Other Factors**

As with any traffic management scheme, other factors such as the relative value of costs and benefits must also be taken into account in developing a prioritised list of sites. Issues such as the effects on road safety, practicality, impact on adjacent land uses, ongoing maintenance and operational liabilities as well as integration within the existing capital projects programme must also be considered in recommending priority locations.

## PROPOSED CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE CITYWIDE PUBLIC TRANSPORT PRIORITY PLAN

The proposed contents of the citywide public transport priority plan are outlined below:

1. **Background**

The purpose of this section will be to briefly set public transport priority within the context of the CPPTS, MCTS and RLTS, its importance to the overall public passenger transport system, the implications of a 'business as usual' or 'do minimum' approach and the objectives of providing priority for public transport.

2. **Public Transport in Christchurch**

A brief overview of the historical and present public transport system in Christchurch, explaining how the system has developed in time and how the current constraints to patronage growth have developed.

3. **Public Transport Priority Measures**

A description of common forms of public transport priority solutions to give public transport improved journey time and reliability and their applicability to certain situations.

#### **4. Identification and Prioritisation**

This section will describe the criteria used in the identification and prioritisation of corridors and discuss their relative priority. Most importantly, these will be citywide locations that present significant delays and unreliability and then best meet the other criteria.

#### **5. Corridor Recommendations**

This section will recommend the three corridors most in need of priority treatment, and also future corridors that should follow on from these. Each corridor will be described, discussing the constraints to people using public transport and indeed the constraints for other people using the road. Types of priority treatments that may apply to achieve the desired objectives for journey time and reliability will also be mentioned. Subject to the relatively minimal level of detail that will be known at that time, outline costs for priority measure types can be identified and compared with the potential value of benefits and indeed disbenefits to people.

#### **4. Enforcement of Public Transport Priority Measures**

This section will discuss the importance of effective enforcement, covering options for Council to consider and a recommended direction to follow to ensure priority measures are well enforced and achieve their expected level of benefit.

#### **5. Process Plan**

This section will outline the development process for corridors that are identified for priority treatment (this is discussed below), covering stages of consultation and decision making to ensure the Council complies with its statutory obligations.

#### **6. Monitoring and Review**

This section will set out an appropriate process for monitoring and reporting to ensure the level of benefits to people and the Council from implemented schemes are sustained or even enhanced where appropriate.

### **A PROCESS PLAN TO MEET COUNCIL'S STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS**

The Local Government Act 2002 places obligations on the Council to ensure their decision making processes appropriately consider the views and preferences of people likely to be effected or to have an interest in the decision. This is required at the stages of defining the problem and objectives, identifying all reasonably practicable options, assessing and developing the options, and when adopting a final option.

A process plan is provided in attachment 1 that sets out a development framework in which to comply with the Act.

#### **WHERE TO FROM HERE?**

It is recommended that the proposed contents of the citywide plan and the criteria to identify and prioritise locations for public transport priority measures are adopted by the Council. This will enable staff to develop the citywide plan against agreed guidance and can be brought back to Community Boards, this Committee and the Council for adoption.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This report seeks the Committee's recommendation to the Council to adopt the proposed contents of the citywide plan and the criteria to identify and prioritise locations for public transport priority measures.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council adopt the proposed contents of the Citywide Public Transport Priority Plan, and the criteria used to identify and prioritise transport corridors for priority measures treatments.
  2. That the Council adopt the process plan shown in attachment 1.
  3. That staff present the Citywide Public Transport Priority Plan to the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee at its July 2004 meeting, for consideration by the Council at its July 2004 meeting.

(Note: Councillor Helen Broughton abstained from voting on the above recommendation.)