

5. PASSENGER TRANSPORT

INTRODUCTION

This item updates Committee members on recent changes to passenger transport services in the city, and outlines work priorities over the next few months.

SERVICE REVIEWS

The Regional Council has recently completed service reviews of the Sumner/Mt. Pleasant, Burnside, Bryndwr, Bishopdale and Lyttelton (Sunday) bus services. This represents approximately 14% of the CANRIDE[®] system in Greater Christchurch in terms of patronage and total number of trips.

A number of service improvements have been recommended (see Table below). These have come about as a result of the community consultation process undertaken throughout last year, and through the need to be achieving specific system-wide improvements consistent with the objectives and targets outlined in the CRC/CCC Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy released last year.

IMPROVEMENTS LINKED TO OUTCOMES AND/OR POLICIES IN THE TEN YEAR PROGRAMMES, CHRISTCHURCH PUBLIC PASSENGER TRANSPORT STRATEGY AND CANTERBURY REGIONAL PASSENGER TRANSPORT PLAN (1994)	Sumner (3)	Mt. Pleasant (3)	Burnside (9)	Bryndwr (17)	Bishopdale (15)	Lyttelton (28) Sunday
Reduced commuter public transport travel time on key corridors from 200% currently to 150% of car travel time. (Straightening of routes and extension of inner terminus to allow improved central city coverage).	✓	✓	✓			
Increased frequency – Within one year, CANRIDE [®] passenger transport service frequency increases by 7% (from 1997/98 baseline).	✓ (30%)	✓ (144%)		✓ (25%)		✓ (77%)
A growth in patronage across CANRIDE [®] passenger transport services of at least 5% (from 1997/98 baseline).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New buses - Introduction of on average, 20 new super low floor buses per year. (* = combined for the Sumner/Mt. Pleasant service)	✓ (8*)	✓ (8*)	✓ (2)	✓ (2)	✓ (1)	

The main improvements to the service routes are:

- Improved access to key destinations, specifically malls and areas of employment (note that the Sumner service will be travelling via Eastgate Mall).
- Improved access to a wide range of central city destinations and key locations (e.g. Christchurch Polytechnic, Hoyts 8, Christchurch Hospital) by routing buses beyond the Square.

These improvements have been approved by Council, and will be tendered out to bus companies in late March. All changes are to be effective from Monday 6 September, 1999.

RING ROUTE STAGE 1 – PAPANUI TO CASHMERE VIA UNIVERSITY AND RICCARTON

The Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy “Our Future – Our Choice” identified the development of a ring route as a top priority enhancement for the CANRIDE® system. The need was particularly strongly expressed by non-bus users who work, shop and study at suburban locations and have their travel needs poorly met by the current radial system.

In June 1998, consultants PPK were appointed to investigate options for, and viability of, cross suburban bus services in Christchurch. They were specifically asked to investigate options for services that would be attractive to non-bus users. A recommended route option was reported to council in August, with a recommendation to carry out public consultation. A final report was received in October 1998.

The recommended route was selected on the basis of having the highest exposure to work and non-work trips. The route is to run from Northlands Mall to Cashmere via Burnside High, the University of Canterbury, Church Corner, Riccarton and Barrington Mall.

An attractive minimum frequency (and hours of operation) was considered essential from the outset to attract and keep potential users, particularly non-bus users. A high frequency was also identified as a means of facilitating transfer between the cross suburban route and existing radial routes, contributing to increased demand for travel on the existing routes. A minimum frequency of 15 minutes has been set for weekdays, with a half hour frequency in the evenings and on weekends. A flat daytime frequency during weekdays has been set as the route has the potential to attract as many off peak trips as peak trips. The service will require 7 buses to maintain this frequency. It is proposed the service begin in July 1999.

A number of alternative tenders were received for the ring route, including tenders for using hybrid electric buses instead of conventional diesel. Because of the tender evaluation process used, the regional council was required to first establish a “willingness to pay” for the additional features offered by hybrid buses.

This process involved assessing 14 different factors under the headings of environmental factors, bus user factors, image and branding issues, and risk and uncertainty. Discussion of these issues was brought back to council for decision, and a resultant willingness to pay of \$118,400 was established.

As it turned out this was still an insufficient premium to pay in this specific instance, and the tender was won by Leopard Coachlines using conventional diesel buses with Euro II engines.

It should be noted that the valuation of benefits that was carried out relates specifically to the ring route. While we would expect positive valuations to apply also in future tender rounds, we would not necessarily expect to simply transfer the willingness to pay for the ring route across to other routes in the city. There will be some differences in value that will need to be worked through. Nevertheless, the council has given a clear positive message about the use of hybrid electric buses, and officers have been exploring other options (such as trials) to introduce these buses into the CANride system.

UPCOMING SERVICE REVIEWS

A number of other urban bus services contracts expire in the next 12 months, and service reviews are currently being undertaken for the following bus contracts:

<u>SERVICE</u>	<u>DAYS OF OPERATION</u>	<u>CONTRACT EXPIRES</u>
Christchurch School Services	Monday to Friday	December 1999

(excludes Hornby Schools and Aranui Schools)

Canterbury University (22)	Monday to Friday	November 1999
New Brighton/Southshore (5)	Monday to Sunday	March 2000
Mall Link (6) (trial service)	Monday to Friday	March 2000
New Brighton/Parklands (10)	Monday to Sunday	March 2000
Dallington (11)	Monday to Saturday	March 2000
North Beach (19)	Monday to Sunday	March 2000
Lyttelton (28)	Monday to Saturday	March 2000
Diamond Harbour Ferry	Monday to Sunday	March 2000
Shorelink (trial service)	Monday to Friday	March 2000
Mairehau/Shirley (16)	Monday to Sunday	June 2000
St. Albans (18)	Monday to Friday	June 2000
Bromley (23)	Monday to Saturday	June 2000
Kainga/Brooklands	Monday to Friday	June 2000

As part of the primary consultation process, schools, residents groups and the general public are being consulted on any improvements to the above services. An on-bus survey and further consultation with stakeholders is planned for March and April. Services expiring in March and June 2000 combined total approximately 37% of the CANRIDE[®] system patronage and 33% of total trip numbers within greater Christchurch.

REVIEW OF THE CANTERBURY REGIONAL PASSENGER TRANSPORT PLAN

The Passenger Transport Plan is the vehicle through which specific policy relating to CANRIDE[®] services is specified. Review of the plan is currently a high priority since there is a need to rewrite the plan within the framework of the Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy and other recent considerations.

A number of issues are being addressed as part of the review as follows:

Network:

- Redefine basic route structure and hierarchy
- Review service provision standards (eg, frequency, route coverage)
- Review policy on the provision of school services
- Review and develop policies on community access

System identification and legibility

- Determine policy on “branding” of the system
- Review advertising policy

Fares, ticketing and funding:

- Review fares policy (including concessionary fares)
- Review ticketing policies in the light of need for greater speed and simplicity

Contracts:

- Review contract conditions to improve operator incentives
- Upgrade vehicle quality provisions (emissions and noise in particular)

A final plan is expected to be adopted by the end of the year.

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**Chairman's
Recommendation:** For discussion.