

Make Submission

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Please review the options in the Consultation Document and indicate which option you support:

Option 4 – none of the above. (Please provide comment/ideas for an alternative solution)

Comments

Please provide any comments.

I strongly disagree with discontinuing six routes. I think the outright discontinuation of six routes is a short-sighted disservice to the affected suburbs, whereas reducing frequencies in these routes and reviewing frequencies on other parts of the network can achieve the necessary efficiencies. For example, does the 100, 125, and 130 really need to run every 15 minutes at peak time with near-empty buses? Does the 95 really need to be a separate service, or can the Blue Line alternate between Rangiora and Pegasus instead of Rangiora and Belfast? Perhaps the six underperforming routes could be halved, and run hourly instead of not run at all? Surely the first step to cutting services should be reducing frequency rather than abandoning entire services and suburbs?

In a broader, longer-term view, the reason those six routes are underperforming is the need for a connection to get into the city. The pre-quake model of "one bus into the city, and maybe a second bus to the destination" made sense to people, whereas the current hub-and-spokes model requiring upwards of 3 buses to get somewhere is simply too much. Hub and spokes didn't work for the airlines, didn't work for Airbus and their A380, so is it really a surprise that it's not working for Christchurch? From the network plan it is obvious that the high frequency, coloured lines mimic suburban trains found in bigger cities such as Auckland or Sydney, but colouring in a bus doesn't make it run like a train, or ride like a train; bus->train->bus makes sense to people, but bus->bus->bus doesn't. Not to mention

the confusion caused by some routes having a number and others only having a colour/letter, or the waste of money/resources painting a whole bunch of buses into these colours.

Christchurch is simply not big enough or populous enough for suburban mini-hubs to thrive, and to have a successful bus network we need to return to the pre-quake model of one hub only (the bus exchange); and only by making bus travel make sense to people will the network capture the patronage it desperately needs to serve the city sustainably. This current trend of cutting the network to boost the commerciality ratio is not sustainable, and will only lead to further loss of patronage requiring further cuts, until public transport is abandoned. I would strongly encourage ECan and the GCPTJC to review whether hub and spokes is the right model for Christchurch (I would suspect that it's not) and to create sensible public transport for our future.