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Sent: Friday, 2 March 2018 1:16 PM
To: Mailroom Mailbox
Subject: LTP SUBMISSION

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Kia ora

My name is Tom Bryant, I live in Diamond Harbour and most days work in the central city. For the last three years I have commuted using public transport, I catch the ferry from Diamond Harbour, then either the 28 bus or 535 through the Lyttleton tunnel and then bike from the Gondola bus stop in Heathcote, my return trip is a reverse of this. I understand the need for ECan to operate in a fiscally responsible manner and applaud them for proactively addressing this issue and have no concerns over the price rises being contemplated.

There are however a number of potentially unintended consequences, of primary concern to myself and a number of my fellow passengers is our ability (or soon to be lack of ability) to commute with our bikes through the tunnel. On most mornings the 6.30 ferry has three or four bikes, all of these bikes get off at the first stop after the tunnel and then bike throughout Christchurch. On occasion the bike racks on both the 535 and 28 are full which pushes these bikes to the next 28 bus, which in turn pushes the next round of bikes on the ferry to a later bus etc. etc. Reducing the number of buses obviously reduces the ability for buses, as they are currently set up, to carry bikes through the tunnel.

I see a number of possible solutions to this issue

- Having larger capacity bike racks on the buses
- Providing a 'bike bus' at peak times. This would, I believe, attract a greater number of bikers as I know of a number who do not utilise the current service due to the inability to guarantee an arrival time at work because of current bike space restraints
- Giving the driver the ability to allow bikes into the bus when the current luggage / wheelchair spaces are not in use (this could be restricted to a last stop / first stop condition, by this I mean it only applies if you are getting on at the last stop before the tunnel and get off at the first stop after the tunnel)

Of all of these solutions the easiest and most cost effective to implement is the last one. In discussion with drivers I am aware they have voiced concern over the safety aspect of isles blocked by bikes. Whilst a valid point I see a number of mitigations that would reduce this perceived risk such as restraint straps or hanging hooks for bikes.

When I get off of my bike my job is the Group Health and Safety Manager for Ngāi Tahu Tourism, I would be more than happy to discuss possible solutions with your H&S team and or bus engineers if you feel this would be of use.

In short I agree with the rationale proposed by ECan to increase prices and reduce routes that are not viable, I simply ask that consideration is made to enable more bikes to be carried on the services that remain, something I would be happy to discuss and provide input into if this would be of assistance.

Kind Regards

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