

Make Submission

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Transport and Urban Development Support/Oppose

See page 13 of the Consultation Document.

Please select one of the following: I generally agree with the activity proposed for Transport and Urban Development.

Transport and Urban Development Comments

Please provide any comments

Kia ora koutou,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Long-Term Plan 2018-2028.

I wish I had the time to provide feedback on all areas of the document, but unfortunately that's not the case (my fault!). So I'm afraid I'm just going to address something that affects me and my community directly.

The good ol' 145 Westmorland-Eastgate bus route—in this case, the Westmorland end.

I know ECan/Metro staff do an extraordinary job running Christchurch's bus service on tight budgets and complex requirements. And as such, I appreciate that it is necessary to review the bus service and its costs from time-to-time—though I wish it could receive a much higher level of funding, as a good public transport system pays off in many direct and indirect ways.

The 145 may not currently carry enough passengers to justify its continued existence. But there is no other bus service within a comfortable walking distance of the suburb of Westmorland, a densely-populated, still-growing suburb.

Without the 145, the nearest bus stop (Orbiter at Hoon Hay/Cashmere Rds) will be **2.6km** away from the streets at the top of Westmorland. NZTA's "Guidelines for public transport infrastructure and facilities: Consultation draft" states that bus users are generally comfortable walking only **400m** maximum to reach a bus stop [p25].

A complete removal of a bus service to this area will not meet the aim of improving "social connectedness and wellbeing in communities" or enabling "social cohesion, connecting businesses and connecting people" (p 13 of the consultation).

But changes are, of course, needed. A bus service receiving little use is probably not the right bus service.

However, rather than discontinuing service to Westmorland entirely, I propose that:

- 1 the service travel to Westmorland less frequently AND/OR
- 2 the route servicing Westmorland changes.

At the moment, buses travel to and from Westmorland every half hour during non-peak weekday hours. This could be quite easily changed to once every hour, or even once every two hours, with little inconvenience to current users. This would increase the number of passengers per trip—though of course I understand there are practical issues to consider re: staff allocation etc.

The route could also change. The post-earthquake environment called for the hubs and spokes-style network, but now the central city is becoming a destination in itself again, and not just a transfer point (though it is a very good transfer point).

A direct route to the city could help enormously. I realise you'll have more data, but anecdotally, no one I know who uses that bus goes further than the Colombo Street/Milton Street intersection. They either transfer to the Orbiter, or transfer or walk the remaining distance to get into the city. Certainly, I know it would help those in my household, who would all use the bus if it could get them directly to the central city.

There might be many ways to do that, but I suggest two:

- 1 keeping the existing route from Westmorland to Colombo Street, and then redirecting it up Colombo to the Bus Interchange
- 2 extending the Blue Line once every hour or two to go as far as Westmorland.

In the case of either, the bus could even reduce its loop somewhat on Westmorland Hill, turning only at the Penruddock Rise/Highcrest Heights roundabout.

There is precedent for route extensions. Prior to the Purple Line, the bus from Sumner would travel to Roydvale Ave on some trips, and extended all the way to the Airport on others.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit feedback on the Plan. I realise there will be a lot of very difficult decisions to make, but I hope a compromise can be found which will still provide some level of bus service to the Westmorland area. There are plenty of people who do rely on it - it's just unfortunate it's not at a higher number with the current arrangements.