

From: Environment Canterbury
Sent: Thursday, 24 March 2022 11:37 am
To: Have your Say
Subject: Submission on draft Annual Plan 2022/23

Anonymous User just submitted 'Draft Annual Plan 2022/23 submission' with the responses below.

First name

Jack

Last name

Scott

Email address

Suburb

Sockburn, Christchurch

Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?

No, I'm submitting as an individual

Which age category are you in?

15– 24 years old

Do you wish to speak to your submission at a Council hearing?

No

Which bus fare structure option would you like to see trialled?

Option 1 (preferred): Fare-free for under 25s, students, Total Mobility and Community Services card holders

Tell us more about why you support the selected bus fare option.

Kia Ora, I've been living in Christchurch for 4 years, both as a student and as a professional. I'm a regular at several locally owned, small businesses and community events and have made many friends here. I love this city, and want to see it thrive. And as an environmentalist and a supporter of socioeconomic equity, I believe that a strong public transport system is a key answer to several of our problems. The fact is, at present 53% of our city's CO2 emissions come from transport. But the problems don't end there. Having so much flat land at our disposal is a blessing AND a curse. We can expand easily, but this has created a demand to travel great distances for work, social events, hobbies, and so on. The demand on our roads is becoming unsustainable. Heavy traffic brings with it; increased travel time and costs, exponentially worsening road erosion due to heavy traffic, and a constant demand for more and more lanes all over our city. These final 2 issues place a heavy burden on our roadworks (which also produces more and more carbon emissions through use of machinery and production of asphalt). Demanding more and more time, energy, and capital. Rather than bandaging this wound every couple of years, I suggest a different approach; blunting the blade that wounds us in the first place. A more robust, destigmatized public transport system not only benefits those who would use it. It also drastically reduces the traffic burden on our roads, making personal transport more efficient in both energy and time. This is also a matter of socio-economic equity. As the cost of living rises, especially in fuel costs, many families across our beautiful garden city are forced to make difficult and uncomfortable choices. A worker's 5 minute drive to work becomes a 35 minute walk. Robbing them of time with their children and increasing their risk of being exposed to crimes like mugging or assault- an issue that disproportionately impacts women, ESPECIALLY solo mothers. Who are simultaneously at higher risk of danger, and more likely to be struggling financially. Speaking of children, I know several families who have made the decision to pull their kids out of after-school activities such as team-sports. These activities being one of the core aspects of New Zealand's culture today, due to the difficulty and cost of navigating Christchurch by car. As a whole, cities like ours, built on sprawling suburbs and open areas, present themselves as hostile and impossible to navigate to many of our most at-risk citizens. I do not believe this is the intention of anyone on the council or in our city. This is not who we are. We pride ourselves as the "garden city." Full to bursting with natural life. We plant trees and bushes everywhere we can. Bird and insect populations flourish. No visit to Christchurch is complete without a visit to our Botanical Gardens and the many beautiful parks within and natural reserves around our city. There are few cities in the world where it should feel so easy to get outside, and smell the fresh air. And yet, it is not easy. Where you'd hope to take beautiful walks through peaceful suburbs, and nod "good morning" to your neighbours as you pass. You instead find yourself locked alone, in a steel can, in the middle of a 4 lane street, where your only acknowledgement of your neighbor is the pest that cut you off in a merging lane. Our over-reliance on personal vehicles is hurting our environment, it is costing us ridiculous amounts, both in terms of personal costs and taxpayer money, through roadworks and maintenance, and it is hurting our personal and social lives by restricting travel and isolating us from our communities. And so, we must rebuild our infrastructure to better reflect our values. If we're going to

invest all this time, resources and stress into solving this problem, why not invest it in systems that won't simply fall apart again 5 years later? It starts with making buses more accessible. As the demand increases, it becomes worth the investment to make them more efficient and reliable. As traffic on our roads diminishes, we can repurpose some of those lanes to make broader cycleways and walkways. Create bridges and alleys to make them more accessible. In the long run there is even the possibility of closing some roads to cars entirely, allowing for more foot-traffic. Safe walking routes that allow for more social interaction and light exercise, both proven to significantly increase quality of life. The future of our city can be bright. A garden city that we can all genuinely enjoy and experience every day. But to achieve that goal, we cannot simply talk about it. We must act on it. We must work purposefully and diligently towards that brighter future. And our buses are a fantastic place to start.

Would you support a levy to accelerate action in response to climate change?

Yes

What current or future projects or activities would you like to see funded by such a levy?

Regenerative agriculture, more efficient public transport.

Where did you hear about the consultation?

Social media (Facebook, Instagram)
