

From: Environment Canterbury
Sent: Sunday, 3 April 2022 9:59 pm
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

Sarah

Last name

McKay

Email address

Suburb

New Brighton, Christchurch

Phone number

Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?

No, I'm submitting as an individual

Which age category are you in?

40-64 years old

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

Yes

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.

As a rate payer and a community worker I support measures that help reduce transport inequity in Ōtautahi, Christchurch. Some people in our community experience transport poverty. This is an important issue as equitable access to transport is about everyone being able to participate in our community. So people can access social opportunities such as seeing family and friends; access health and social services; access employment and educational opportunities and take part in everyday community activities. Free fares for Total Mobility and Community Services card holders, students and under 25 year olds would help to reduce transport poverty and improve transport fairness. In my role as a community worker I gathered feedback from some of our community members about free bus fares. This was from a group of Community Service card holders/ people on low incomes who were at a community lunch and/or seeking help from a foodbank. And feedback from a range of people who work in the community sector. Everyone I spoke with supported free bus fares for people on low incomes such as Community Service card holders and students. Feedback from people working in the community/ health sector included: "In my work I see people struggling more now than ever with the cost of everyday living, especially with rising prices on things like rent and groceries. I've noticed less people are now able to come to community activities which require even a small cost, like the cost of getting there. Free bus fares would make a real difference for people who rely on public transport to get around." Community Worker. "Transport costs are an economic barrier for some people to engage in our cities. Free bus fares will help support connections to both work and social opportunities that are necessary for everyone to be able to participate in our communities." Social Worker. "Everythings going up and we've just seen families trying to find money for things like school uniforms, stationery, let alone things like school lunches. Community Service Card holders, if they could go for free it would be that extra, which for low income families means a lot." Community Worker. "Free bus fares make sense on many levels. It helps people to connect with others therefore contributing to an improvement in their mental health and to the social capital of the city. It also contributes to reducing carbon emissions and to decreasing the effects on climate change and it reduces cars in the city which encourages more cyclists because it is safer for cyclists and pedestrians." Health worker, The main feedback from Community Service card holders and people on low incomes was that budgets are really stretched at the moment and free bus fares is a practical way to help people that can really make a difference. Feedback from community members included: "It costs to run a car and with petrol and rising costs like food and rent. It's got to come from somewhere. You're behind the eightball before you start. Even the price of

bus fares can make a difference, that's 3 loaves of bread and some margarine which can be a meal for some families. Every bit helps." "Transport costs can take away from what people can earn. It would help people to be able to afford to get to work." "To own a car now is a luxury for some people, either you run it and don't get the warrant or registration, or you can't afford the petrol." "I cant afford a car, not with rent, rents are ridiculous. Free bus fares would help and I like the bus, buses are safe." "I don't know why they wont fund public transport more. It's efficient and safe and there will be less cars on the road." "My son just started intermediate, it costs for the school uniform and a chrome book and to get what he needs. Costs for families are really high. All these costs and if you're on a benefit it can be hard to find those bits to put away. But if you can, you don't need so much from WINZ. There's the agencies that help, but you want to do it yourself, theres the pride in that." A key theme from the feedback was that we know that there are no magic bullets for many of the challenges facing our communities, but practical things like Free Bus Fares for people on a low income can add together to make a real difference for people. Trialling free bus fares for under 25s, students and Total Mobility and Community Services card holders will help us to consider the costs and benefits of the trial for the community, on this every important issue.

Is borrowing and repaying through general rates the right approach for this regionally significant event?

Yes

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

Yes

Where did you hear about the consultation?

Meeting or event
