

From: ECan Youth Ropu
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Kia Ora!

Attached is the Youth Rōpū Annual Plan submission for 2022, let me know if you have any issues with the document.

Ngā mihi,
Ruby

YOUTH RŌPŪ

environment canterbury

Date 27th
March 2022

Submission on Environment Canterbury Annual Plan 2022

Submitter Details

This submission is from the: **Environment Canterbury Youth Rōpū**

We wish to appear before the committee to speak to our submission

Annual Plan Submission Strategy 2022

Following on from the 2021 Long Term Plan submission process, Environment Canterbury Youth Rōpū (EYR) feedback shaped the modifications to Environment Canterbury's online submission tool. This allowed the EYR to focus on promoting the use of engagement HQ across their youth networks alongside writing their own submission. In order to achieve this, the Youth Rōpū split into two working teams for engagement and submission of the Annual Plan.

The Engagement Team focused on encouraging the younger demographic to submit on the Annual Plan. This ensures councillors in ECAN have strong youth input in their decision making. To get the word out, the team created the #faresay campaign, to ensure that youth have a 'fair' say on the proposal. #faresay started off as a social media campaign, then expanded to include posters, made to condense and promote the submission form to young people in areas that are likely to reach them. Resource packs and infographic posters were made for schools to promote the #faresay campaign in high schools, ensuring the younger age bracket can have their #faresay for their future as well.

Resource packs also extended towards different student associations and clubs in UC through newsletters and social media posts in their respective accounts. TikTok was created and used to promote the campaign towards a wider audience. Finally, there are some online engagements through video calls to promote the social media campaign, such as with the UC CURE Research Cluster Group and with Rudolf Steiner School. In total, there are about 2000 social media 'interactions' from EYR's Social Media posts alone. This was successful in regards to the current pandemic situation.

At the time of writing, there has been a 30% increase in the proportion of 15-24 year olds submitting on this year's Annual Plan (35.8%) compared to the 2021 Long Term Plan (6%).

In addition to this, the internal submission team has collated the educated opinions of the EYR and created this submission. For this Annual Plan, the EYR decided to submit on the options for public transport pricing only. This was again in response to the Long Term Plan process, as we feel this issue is the most relevant to the EYR and the youth we are engaging with. Therefore, it will have the most passion behind it and impact on the council that sees the submission.

It is important to note that the following submission is written from the EYR members' opinions on the 2022 Annual Plan, not an opinion from any wider youth in Waitaha. In reference to the public transport pricing options, the EYR were split between Option 1 and Option 2. We have made the conscious decision to include and submit both options as it shows the diversity of opinions that we have in the group and the wider youth voice. Like any other group of people, our voice is not homogeneous and is influenced by various backgrounds, biases and prior knowledge. We believe that all forms of youth voice are valid and required in a representative submission process. The reasons behind the preferences of the two options are as follows.

Option 1:

Half of the EYR believe that the Targeted Fare-Free option is the best option for the following reasons:

With under 25 year olds not paying for bus transport, this not only encourages increased usage through an economic incentive, but allows for the younger generations to get more comfortable and accustomed with using bus transport. EYR members believe this will then promote a behavioural change in young people - where they are more inclined to use public transport over a personal car in future years. This habitual use of public transport creates a population which will continue to use buses, even as they reach over 25 years of age. Additionally, this option would have the greatest increase in bus users across all people in Ōtautahi over the next two years, which further increases members' support for this option as being the most ideal. EYR can also see that with increased usage of the bus network comes indirect benefits, including opportunities for increased frequency and efficiency of buses along transport networks, expansion of bus routes as well as providing a space for more eco-friendly companies to advertise at bus stops and on the backs of buses.

EYR members believe that it is better to get more people on the bus to then fund an improvement in service, rather than improving the service to get more people on the bus. The funding proposal through Option 1 will allow us to do this, and as patronage increases, EYR members greatly encourage more budget to go towards purchasing more electric buses. This will decrease the emissions from public transport in Ōtautahi close to zero. EYR members believe that a "shift from car-centric transport is desperately needed", and option 1 is the way to do it.

EYR members also believe that Option 1 meets the demands and ideals for future transport systems in this region, in that it provides an equitable service through an economic incentive to the groups of people who are under the most financial pressure. EYR members believe this creates "equity among all population groups". This is targeted at specific groups which come from different generations and areas of society, thereby positively impacting a wider range of people, as well as being able to promote transformational change in the climate change response of the whole region.

The obvious environmental benefit of this option is that it has the most significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is important in terms of lowering our contributions to climate change, and has particular importance in Christchurch, with the transportation sector being the largest contributor to our total greenhouse gas emissions. It is well known that this is a particularly pertinent issue for young people, as we will inherit the significant adverse impacts of climate change. Therefore, changing the bus fare structure through the implementation of Option 1 is an essential and pioneering step for New Zealand towards a future that young people want - a zero-carbon society that has systems that do not

degrade or exploit the environment but ultimately, have the state of the environment at the heart of our systems and future decision making.

Option 2:

Option 2, a \$2 Flat Fare, was the preferred option for the other half of the EYR members. This is because we believe it is the fairest for rate-payers who do not fall under any of the groups who are given free fares in Option 1. Option 2 encourages more of the population to use the bus by reducing the economic cost for everyone. Consequently, while it does not reduce as many vehicles used as Option 1, it is still more than what occurs currently. Therefore, it has a positive change by reducing emissions. Unlike Option 1, we believe Option 2 creates equality for the whole population. It impacts a wider demographic, including encouraging a greater percentage of adults to take the bus. According to Figure 1, adults (25 years - 64 years) make up 52% of the bus user population. Option 1 does not advantage them in an economic sense, whereas Option 2 incentivises all people to take the bus. A \$2 Flat Fare has been seen by EYR members as a “more well rounded option”. We believe it will be good to have a fare which does incentivise adults, as it will in turn influence a larger portion of the population and hopefully become a common societal activity in the present.

Figure 1. Statistics provided by ECan outline the percentage of bus users by age:

