



Submission on the Metro Strategy Review 2010

from:

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Sustainable Otago Christchurch (SOC) is an incorporated membership society, formed in 2005. SOC has the vision of Christchurch people "practicing, living and demonstrating sustainability in all that they do."

SOC's registered charitable aim, which recognises Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi as a foundation, is to actively contribute within Otago Christchurch to opportunities and means for achievement of long term, strong sustainability. In trying to make a difference, and head in that direction, SOC members seek to:

- ensure that all people have their basic needs satisfied,
- so that they can live in dignity, in healthy communities,
- while having the minimum adverse impact on natural systems,
- both now and in the future.

1: Do you think we should be encouraging people to make more of their trips on public transport in the future?

Yes. Bearing in mind the rapidly approaching peak in the availability of cheap oil, and the need to address the impact on our climate from the use of fossil fuels, we will soon be forced to move away from the current reliance on private cars for most of our transport needs. It is vital that we counter the stigma that using public transport often faces and encourage people to make use of a transport medium that uses fossil fuels more efficiently.

Q2: Do you think we should be investing more or less money in public transport in the future?

Invest more money in public transport in the future. It takes time to build a public transport infrastructure and we need to start now to ensure that the public transport capabilities are in place once private, fossil-fuelled transport becomes prohibitively expensive.

Q3: What would you like public transport in Greater Christchurch to look like in the future?

SOC would like to see greater use of low-carbon and more fuel efficient means of public transport. For example electric-powered light rail on the trunk routes and electric or diesel-electric buses for feeder services. Before light rail can be rolled out in the short term we would like to see commuter transport resumed on the existing rail lines to Lyttelton, Rangiora and Rolleston. The population of these towns should now be sufficient to make a rail commuter service viable, especially with increasing petrol prices. We would like to see the Metro-wide passenger density increase so that service frequency can be increased and fare increases contained.

Q4: Please list the five improvements from the current Metro Strategy (listed on page 2 of the brochure) that you believe are the MOST important:

#33 – Continue to investigate other public transport modes for the future.
[With the aim of reducing the use of fossil fuels for public transport.]

#37 – Ensure protection of future high demand corridors for public transport. [To facilitate the rollout of light rail (or similar) mass transport.]

#38 – Continue developing requirements for including public transport access into all new residential and commercial development areas. [Suburban streets that are too narrow for the safe passage of buses are unacceptable. The integration of safe and comfortable access to public transport into large, new retail developments should be the responsibility of the developer.]

#1 – Implement bus priority measures on all high demand passenger transport corridors. [To ensure that public transport is as fast, or faster, than travelling by private car.]

#20 – Provide cycle facilities (covered, secure and safe) at strategic points along bus routes. [As a cheap, healthy and viable feeder service. Cheaper and easier to provide than 'park and ride'.]

Q5: Please list the five improvements from the current Metro Strategy (listed on page 2 of the brochure) that you believe are the LEAST important:

#3 – Lobby Central Government to introduce a law that requires other road users to give way to buses when they are pulling out of bus stops. [Threat of prosecution is not a good way to get people to improve behaviour.]

#16 – Provide better passenger information at the central city Bus Exchange with personnel in the lounges to help passengers. [Unnecessary for locals, but someone to help tourists on selected services could be worthwhile.]

#30 – Review vehicle consistency in internal layout and facilities (e.g. leg room, positioning of bells, onboard information). [Non-essential.]

#34 – Trial and implement a 'dial a ride' service. [Unless this can be used to save fuel it should only be used as a means to wean people off cars. They ought to get used to planning their travel. Transport is energy intensive and its cost to the environment should be recognised.]

#36 – Extend Metrostar and implement an additional cross-suburban service to provide better coverage. [The Orbiter was a fantastic innovation, but the usefulness of other services not going through the Bus Exchange is debatable. There needs to be a confirmed demand for any new cross-suburban service.]

Q6: Are there any improvements from the current Metro Strategy (listed on page 2 of the brochure) which you think should be CHANGED in the new Metro Strategy? If so, please describe the changes:

#36 – Extend Metrostar and implement an additional cross-suburban service to provide better coverage **where a clear need exists**. [Cross-suburban services make sense only if they are going to get significant use.]

#19 – Develop suburban interchanges with **covered, secure and safe** cycle facilities. [So that the bicycle becomes a viable feeder option.]

#34 – Trial and implement a 'dial a ride' service **where this can lead to a reduction in fuel consumption**. [Dial a ride makes sense where it means that empty buses don't run.]

Q7: Are there any improvements from the current Metro Strategy (listed on page 2 of the brochure) which you think should be REMOVED from the new Metro Strategy? If so, please describe the changes:

None.

Q8: Are there any further improvements which you think need to be ADDED to the new Metro Strategy which are not currently included, especially for Selwyn and Waimakariri. If so, please describe:

Investigate resumption of commuter rail transport from Lyttelton, Rangiora and Rolleston. We should make use of this efficient existing transport resource to service commuters as was done decades ago and was only stopped because of aging rolling stock.