

Timaru District Council

Submission on the draft Regional Public Transport Plan

To Environment Canterbury

Introduction

1. The Timaru District Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft Regional Public Transport Plan
2. This submission is made by the Timaru District Council, 2 King George Place, Timaru. The contact person is Andrew Dixon, Land Transport Manager. Andrew can be contacted at Timaru District Council, phone (03) 687 7200 or PO Box 522, Timaru 7940.
3. This submission has been considered and endorsed by the Timaru District Council.
4. Timaru District Council does not wish to speak to this submission.

Submission

5. The Council supports the draft Regional Public Transport Plan in principle, including the five stated priorities
 - i. Improving the environment – moving to zero emission vehicles where practicable
 - ii. Accessibility
 - iii. Innovation
 - iv. Safety
 - v. Affordability
6. Community transport services – the Council supports the continuation of assistance to community vehicle trusts, and acknowledges that greater regional council support for these services is likely to be required in the future, particularly in the more rural parts of the region. These transport trusts are a vital link to for rural area's to essential services in urban areas and allow people to remain in these rural areas. The trusts have been very successful and the continued support by Environment Canterbury is essential.
7. Total Mobility Services – the Council supports continued regional council funding of 50% of the cost of a total mobility trip with no change to a maximum subsidy of \$35 per trip.
8. Timaru Pilot Project – the Council supports the pilot project in Timaru, and will continue to be an active partner is ensuring that this project is a success. Council believes this initiative

has the potential to establish an innovative service that better meets the needs of Timaru district residents.

9. Zero Emission Vehicles - the Council supports the staged move towards zero emission vehicles where practicable but notes that this should not hinder the financial sustainability of the service.
10. Funding Model - while the Council acknowledges the aspirational goal of public transport fares contributing 50% of the cost of services, we note that it is unlikely to be achieved in Timaru in the foreseeable future. This 50% fare box target is more suited to metro cities such as Christchurch where there are sufficient passenger numbers to achieve this target. The Timaru service is targeted at providing access to transport to those that are transport disadvantaged not having access to a private vehicle or the ability to use active transport. These people are generally the young or elderly who have the least ability to pay.
11. We urge Environment Canterbury to continue lobbying central government for enhanced funding support for public transport, particularly in smaller districts. Initiatives such as the Timaru pilot project are demonstration that the Canterbury region is working towards creating sustainable public transport options for its communities.
12. We also urge Environment Canterbury to continue lobbying central government for continued support for subsidised public transport through the super gold card scheme providing our elderly with affordable transport options.