

Greater Ōtautahi Submission Guide

Christchurch City Council's Draft Future Transport strategy 2024–54

About Us

Greater Ōtautahi is a non-partisan group of Ōtautahi Christchurch residents who want to help create a better city. We have rapidly gained 50 members and are growing fast. We advocate primarily for housing choice, transport choice, access to amenities, safe streets and a vibrant city. Through this vision, we see a future Ōtautahi that is liveable and equitable for generations to come.

We can be contacted at greaterotautahi@gmail.com or through our [Facebook page](#).

Submission Guide

The submission page is here - <https://letstalk.ccc.govt.nz/FutureTransport>

Please use our answers below as a guide, don't straight copy and paste. Don't feel you need to answer all questions, it should only take 5 minutes, if that's all you have time for!

Q1 - Draft vision - do you support the draft vision for Ōtautahi Christchurch Future Transport? Why / why not?

Somewhat. It highlights the importance of the transport system to the city's overall prosperity, vibrance, and resilience, with focus on safe movement of people. It should also reference both sustainability and efficiency (economic), as well as regional connections, since these form part of the plan alongside the aforementioned within-district transport.

Q2 - Strategic challenges - do you agree with the strategic challenges identified in Ōtautahi Christchurch Future Transport?

Somewhat

An equitable translation to a low-emissions transport system

Agree

A more resilient transport network

Agree

Managing growth well as our population increases and our city becomes more intensively developed

Partially agree. We disagree with the premise of this Strategic Challenge, in that it frames densification as more burdensome on the transport network than low-density urban sprawl, which is notoriously difficult to cater for, as car dependency breeds congestion and infrastructure deficit.

Secondly, it is not the job of the transport network to 'manage' growth, but to enable it - by making cars and car infrastructure (which are inherently space-inefficient) genuinely optional by providing better alternatives in areas strategically planned to allow for urban activities, e.g. residential, commercial, mixed use etc).

Therefore, recommend replacing "managing growth" with "enabling growth".

Reducing deaths and serious injuries on the transport network

Good goal, but this should also include non-DSI health-related measures as well. It's not just car users, nor just road users who are affected by the transport network. Things like non-GHG air pollutant exposure ([462 premature deaths caused by poor air quality in Christchurch in 2023 alone](#)), as well as the positive health benefits from exercise resulting from active transport are dominant factors in economic cost-benefit analyses of the NZ transport system and mode-optimisation, and shouldn't be neglected in council strategic planning.

Q3 - Goals - Do you agree with the goals prioritised in Ōtautahi Christchurch Future Transport?

Somewhat

1 - Well-managed transport assets

Seems good; however, the text should mention maintenance of bus lanes and rapid/mass transport (incl. buses) priority infrastructure.

Road surface renewal - The stated goals to renew 5% of road surface annually is a huge financial commitment to ongoing spend, which might be unsustainable in a changing climate with higher rainfall and hotter summers. This goal also constrains lifecycle analysis of road treatment options to avoid treatments that might reduce maintenance requirements by improving surface longevity and resilience to climate effects, e.g. concrete on high-traffic/weight road sections. We recommend that this goal is reviewed, or left at an operational level rather than a strategic objective in its own right.

Footpaths - One of our most important transport assets is our footpaths. However, some parts of Christchurch are poorly served by pedestrian access. Some new developments do not even have footpaths included as part of the initial build! We would like to see a rethink of how [developer contributions](#) are collected and used, ideally with funds ring-fenced to ensure core transport infrastructure gets built even before the houses do, with no risk of the funds being diverted to other projects in the city. This is important to avoid the city council falling into the fiscally unsustainable trap of funding routine maintenance through growth.

2 - A more resilient transport network

We think the focus on resilience is great, but it needs to be expanded to include more than just natural hazards. Price shocks to fuel and electricity may be serious challenges in the near future that would emphasise the importance of public and active transport options. This means designing a transport network with a diverse range of energy sources, with a primary focus on renewable options like electricity and pedal-power.

This should also link better with Goal 1, in that provision is made for improved longevity of key roads, rather than quick-and-dirty patch jobs, even as new roads are undermined by rainfall events.

3 - A safer transport network

Separated cycleways are critical safety infrastructure. We think the city council could look to Wellington, where interim [safer cycle infrastructure has been rolled out](#) at a fairly low cost using techniques such as slapstick separators. With central government no longer willing to fund cycleways, it is important for the council to find a cost-effective way to continue this important mahi without overburdening ratepayers, or waiting for a policy change that may never come from central government.

As above, safety should include more than DSI health measures, such as non-GHG air pollutant exposure, and exercise effects. In addition, this goal should reference better

public transport infrastructure and services, with a focus on mode-shift to improve overall transport system safety.

4 - An efficient transport network

Redirecting freight off trucks and onto trains is a no-brainer for improving the efficiency of our freight transport network.

This goal should also reference active and mass transit (incl. buses) - solutions to enable efficient movement of people across the network, reducing the burden on the road network to improve its ability to carry necessary vehicles (e.g. freight, emergency services, trade, etc.). In addition, since regional freight routes are prioritised (and the Vision should therefore include regional connections), some provision should be made for investigating and improving regional travel options for people.

5 - Genuine transport choices for everyone

Significantly improve our public transport system

Great strategy; however, this should also include (alongside Public Transport Futures and Mass-Rapid Transit) the next step after PT Futures.

Continue to build a safer, more connected, and attractive network for walking, cycling, and other micromobility

This is great, but we want to see more, and faster! We want to see our cycle network continue to expand, but we think the current approach to this from council is not aggressive enough. Council are deferring local cycle connection routes in favour of the larger [major cycle route](#) projects. We think we need both, and it makes no sense to gate the local connection projects behind the major route projects. We would like to see all streets redesigned to be more welcoming for cyclists and pedestrians whenever renewal work needs to be done.

Support residents and schools to try new ways of travelling

Seems good, though we hope much more money goes into attracting people to “new ways of travelling” by building it right, than money spent on short-term advertising!

Enable the transition to low-emissions vehicles

This is important for air quality and greenhouse gas emissions, but council should limit investment in what can be provided by the private sector, especially as the current government has signalled they will be investing in this space.

The “monitoring developments in technology, infrastructure, and services” strategy is a bit pie-in-the-sky. Please don’t invest money into these technologies (hydrogen (sorry Phil), delivery drones, wheeled robots, autonomous vehicles, etc.) until they are well-proven somewhere that can afford to waste the money.

In contrast, shared mobility schemes (car-share) should be looked at now. Mevo is one example that is operating in Auckland and Wellington, and it’s a successful model overseas, enabling the flexibility of having a car for occasional trips without the large financial burden of owning one. Very complimentary to Christchurch’s local urban character (with PT and active travel networks) amid its rural setting. Some trips being off-network shouldn’t be the reason everyone needs to own (and therefore use more) a car.

6 - A vibrant and liveable city

Great! Street trees, better public and active transport infrastructure, and better parking management.

However, transport is just one piece of the puzzle for creating a vibrant city. It is critical to increase the number of people living in the central city. Those people would benefit hugely from infrastructure such as sheltered bicycle lockups or a central city orbital Shuttle service. Establishing micromobility hubs for rideshare bikes and scooters in the central city would make a huge difference in making the city more accessible. We would also like to see the council consider charging for *all* car parking in the central city. Cars absolutely have a place in our city transport network, but we believe car users should be exposed to the cost of bringing their car into town. We would also like to see parking charges waived for people with mobility parking permits to keep the city accessible for those that have no alternative to the private car.

Q4 - Anything else - Is there anything else we need to know before deciding whether or not to approve these plans?