



# The Campaign For Better Transport

*Submission of the Campaign for Better Transport on  
the Auckland Regional Public Transport Plan  
4/11/2012*

## **Introduction**

The Campaign for Better Transport (CBT) is an incorporated society consisting of approximately 50 financial members. We advocate for the betterment of public transport and other modes of transport that offer choice in society.

We are a purely voluntary organisation and are politically independent.

## **Submission Points**

### **General**

The CBT supports the Auckland Regional Public Transport Plan (the Plan), especially the focus on developing and integrated public transport network.

We recognise that obtaining funding is a challenge for public transport, particularly from central Government. However, we note that over a billion dollars of PT infrastructure investment over the next three years is included in the Plan which strongly supported. The CBT also believes that the new PTOM regime should offer better value from passenger transport operators.

### **Key Directions - Public Transport Network**

The CBT supports the establishment of a public transport network as described in the Plan.

Through routing of services (e.g. Mt Albert to Glenn Innes, Takapuna to Onehunga) should enable far less "out of service" running for bus services, and consequently better value for contracted services.

With the move to fewer but more frequent bus routes, it will be crucial to offer passengers the ability to easily transfer between services, without facing a financial penalty for doing so.

Bus interchange points will need to be carefully considered as part of the Plan. Transfers between services need to be comfortable and achievable in all weather – rain or shine.

We envisage the need for a number of dedicated key bus interchanges being necessary to support this, and we assume that this has been budgeted for as part of the planned \$553m infrastructure budget for the next three years. The CBT is interested to know the detailed plans for future bus routes and interchanges in the Auckland region and looks forward to further engagement on this.

### **Fares and Ticketing Policy**

The CBT supports the proposal for a zone based fare system. Having fewer fare zones and boundaries than the current fare stage system will reduce the number of points on the network where users are arbitrarily charged for two stages, in spite of travelling relatively small distances.

The boundaries of any zone based system will always be arbitrary; however there are a couple of anomalies apparent with the indicative fare zone boundaries in figure 6-1:



# The Campaign For Better Transport

- Although well outside the 10km radius from the CBD, Albany is arbitrarily placed within 2 zones of the CBD. We suggest that for reasons of fairness, a fare zone boundary be introduced somewhere between Takapuna and Constellation drive.
- Similarly, Manurewa is well outside the 20Km radius, yet is still placed in 3 zones of the CBD. Again, for reasons of fairness that a fare zone boundary be introduced along a line between Manukau and Auckland Airport.

We assume that the indicative fare zone boundaries have been drafted as they are so that local travel within the North and South areas of Auckland is not made expensive for people that may have to cross these fare boundaries.

The CBT suggests that the effect of these boundaries could be offset by more finely graduated pricing for travel across two zones. For example zone pricing may be set at:

- Travel 1 zone: \$x
- Travel 2 zones: \$x + 1
- Travel 3 zones: \$x + 3
- Travel 4 zones: \$x + 4

In addition "floating" fare zone boundaries can also help smooth out anomalies. Town centres that lie on fare zone boundaries may fall into this category.

The CBT supports higher cash fare prices to encourage the use of AT Hop which enables faster boarding times than cash.

The CBT notes that the current inner city fare for trips bounded by Quay St, K Rd, Victoria Park and Symonds St does not appear to be part of the proposed fare zone boundaries. We seek clarification on whether the inner city fare will continue.

On the possible removal of rights for Super GoldCard holders to travel during the pm peak, the CBT would like more information about the amount of travel made by super annuitants during the peak time. Anecdotally it may be that the numbers are not significant and may not reduce the amount that central Government has to contribute to support free travel for seniors.

## **Group Travel and Off-peak Pricing**

The CBT recognises that central Government has arbitrarily decreed a fare box recovery ratio of 50%. While the temptation may be for Auckland Transport to increase ticket prices for all public transport users, the CBT urges Auckland Transport to take an overall view of fare box revenue across the entire public transport network, during peak and off-peak times.

Compared to overseas cities, public transport fares are relatively high in Auckland and we believe that this is a major reason for the comparatively low popularity of public transport in Auckland.

Given that there is generally a surplus of capacity on the PT network at weekends and at off-peak times; offering attractive off-peak group pricing seems an obvious way of improving the fare box recovery ratio.

Additionally it also encourages more people to try public transport and potentially use it in the longer term.

The current ticket products for group travel at off peak are not available to all potential users, and are expensive if travel on multiple modes is desired. The Family Rail Pass costs \$24. If additional



# The Campaign For Better Transport

travel is desired on the bus network, then an additional BusAbout Pass must be purchased for an \$26.

Because family passes are not available at all stations, many families are discriminated against. For instance a family of 5 wanting to travel from the new Manukau Station to Britomart return will have to pay  $(\$6.80 \times 2) + (\$4 \times 3) = \$25.60 \times 2 = \$51.20$  return.

This is simply beyond the reach of most families, and undoubtedly most would choose to use their car for weekend travel while trains and buses run empty.

Auckland Transport needs to introduce attractive group off-peak pricing before the introduction of electric rolling stock next year if it wants to attract people to public transport and meet patronage growth targets.

As a comparison, Sydney offers the Family Funday Sunday where, for \$2.50 per person, your family can enjoy a fun day out with unlimited travel on Sydney's buses, trains, light rail and ferries every Sunday.

An alternative option Auckland Transport may like to consider is allowing children under 16 to travel free with an AT Hop card holder on weekends.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the ARPTP. **We wish to attend an oral hearing in support of our submission.**

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