

Invercargill Bus Proposal

To: Invercargill City Council

From: Blind Citizens NZ Southland Branch

Date: 9th February 2017 Contact Victor West Phone
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Introduction: We compiled this document in response to a growing concern regarding the viability of the current city bus service. We incorporate our member's experiences and comments when using Invercargill's buses.

Issues: Since 2012 when the bus service was reduced from eight to four routes, members are reporting some difficulties with this bus coverage. Council has announced in their recent Annual Reports that there is a decrease in the number of passengers patronising our bus service. This may lead to Government limiting their financial contribution to our public transport service, reducing our bus service further. The current four bus routes service is the bare minimum Invercargill can sustain, meeting our cities' projective population growth and changed demographics needs. Invercargill has an aging population who will rely more on public transport in the future. We appreciate positive initiatives such as audio announcements in buses and braille signage at bus stops but as the bus service is restrictive, we seek improvements. Here are some examples:

1. Passengers can spend long periods on one bus getting from their pick-up point to their destination drop off. The maximum time for this can be forty minutes.
 - Example: A. A passenger picked up in Ward St catching the 12 pm Windsor Comet at 12 18 pm approx. travelling to the Glengarry Shopping Centre, this passenger may spend up to 10 minutes at Bus Smart Central and arrive at Glengarry shopping centre around 12 56 pm.
 - Example: B. A passenger boards the 12 noon Kew Connection on the corner of Elles Rd and Dipton St at 12.10pm, travelling to South City Shops. About eighteen

minutes later they disembark near the shops at Martin St stop. On their homeward journey, they catch the bus at the same Martin St bus stop and travel into town which takes approx. seven minutes. They have to wait at Bus Smart Central for approx. five to ten minutes, until the bus departs on its circuit. This passenger travels through South Invercargill (about 10 minutes) until they disembark at Elles Rd and Dipton St corner stop.

There are many cases where passengers' destinations whilst a short distance from their pick up stop, have to travel out-of-their-way due to the current routes. Trips take much longer than they should. Some passengers travel twice across town to get from home, to destination and back.

Our proposal enables passenger A, ten minute bus trip from their pick-up point to their destination, reducing their trip. Passenger B would not have to travel into town but straight to their destination. .

Our Routes Proposal: Each bus would travel its normal route then immediately reverse its route. The existing route could be called N Route and the reverse the R Route.

Proposed Alterations to Current Routes:

1. The Waikiwi Link and Windsor Comet could meet during both the outward and inward journeys. The Kew Connection and Heidelberg Star could meet in the same way.
2. The Windsor Comet could meet the Heidelberg Star during the R route on the corner of Inglewood and Tay Streets providing passengers with choice.
3. Bus routes could be extended including the north/west of Invercargill's CBD, which was part of the old Purple Circle Route. During the N route Heidelberg Star could travel via Deveron, Gala, Leven Streets then Spey Street to Bus Smart Central in Dee Street. The Kew Connection could travel the R route along Deveron, Gala, Leven Streets then Spey St to Bus Smart Central Dee St. Both Waikiwi Link and Windsor Comet could travel via Leven and Spey

streets to Bus Smart Central, enabling passengers' easier access by bus to The Warehouse, Farmers, etc. There would also be a bus service to our Museum where Invercargill's Information Centre and Long-distant Bus Services depart from.

4. To accommodate longer routes we suggest that buses would depart from bus Smart Central at 9am, 10am, etc. on the hour. Passengers would be able to remember the bus-timetable easier. Drivers would have longer to drive around their route.
 5. Further adaptations to the current routes would increase the coverage of the service. Some blind people complained, their nearest bus stop is not in a comfortable walking distance from home.
 - Example: C. A passenger lives in South Invercargill. They work in Forth St, Near the Ministry of Education building. They have to walk three blocks from home to their nearest bus-stop to catch the bus to and from work. On a wet day, this person gets wet before they embark the bus. The consequence is that they work in wet clothes all day. This person has stopped using the bus due to this problem.
- There needs to be further discussion on Bus Routes, identifying passengers' needs.

Review of Invercargill's Bus Service: There are a number of important concerns and suggestions we would like to discuss with management as soon as possible.

Conclusion: Disabled people like many others, need an accessible, affordable public transport service which busses can provide. Total Mobility Taxis (50% subsidy) partially meets our need but many disabled people depend on a low, fixed income with limited money to participate in society.

We look forward meeting with you and discussing our concerns and proposal, creating a robust bus service for Invercargill