

Porirua Bus Review

Summary of Submissions 2009

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Introduction

The Porirua review is part of a regular five year rolling programme for reviews to maintain customer satisfaction, meet changes in demand and improve accessibility.

Following the last review in 2003 a number of changes were implemented over the subsequent two years including increased service levels (Routes 59, 62/63/64, 66/67) and route restructuring (Routes 66/67 and Route 68 routed through Elsdon). A number of outstanding issues remained including a city centre route for all buses, links with new Aotea development, connections with Kenepuru Hospital and the potential for a flyer service to Wellington Airport

Key challenges for the current review include high operating costs, poor loadings on some routes and times of the day, demands for increased service levels but no additional funding available.

The review process is as follows:

1. Review outcomes of previous stakeholder consultation (refer below)
2. Develop alternative scenarios
3. Consulting on alternative options (21 March – 27 April)
4. Summarise submissions
5. Consider submissions, design bus routes, identify bus stop changes
6. Finalise changes in consultation with the bus operator, Porirua City Council and others
7. Timetable printing, bus stop consultation, contract negotiations
8. Implementation

This report provides a brief overview of the information provided in submissions. This report is not intended to provide a detailed analysis or explanation of submissions or trends.

1. Consultation overview

The consultation was titled “Better bus services for Porirua and Tawa” and was launched at the “Creekfest” festival in Porirua East on 21 March 2009 and run through to 27 April 2009.

A detailed brochure was distributed to 19,200 households across Porirua and Tawa. Brochures were also available online and at the Porirua Library. An open day was held at North City Shopping Centre on 7 April 2009.

Advertisements were placed in the local paper. Senior, ethnic and youth groups were contacted and asked to let their members know about the consultation. The following promotions were also undertaken:

- Brochure available at Porirua Library for general public
- Posters on buses, at bus stops and key community locations
- Press advertising
- Media release
- Broadcasts on the local Samoan community radio station.
- Website articles on Metlink and GWRC sites

A presentation was also given to the Porirua City Council City Services Committee on 26 March 2009.

1.1 The consultation brochure

The consultation brochure was a 12-page A3 booklet printed on thick paper/thin card. The brochure was divided into a number of geographical areas and set out two route options and proposed levels of services for each area.

The brochure used large maps to show the route options for each area and provided a brief overview of the proposed changes compared to current routes. The brochure also set out proposed changes to routes and bus stops in Porirua City Centre. The brochure focused on routes and provided no information on bus stops locations (except for the city centre).

A detailed questionnaire was located at the end of the brochure asking people to provide information on their households’ current bus use, some demographic information, what would encourage more bus usage and what they thought of the proposed options in regard to access, directness, simplicity and hours.

The survey had sixteen questions but for the most part only required ticked responses. This was a very detailed survey compared to those used in the past and there was some concern as to its length. This was addressed by having an external review of the brochure and an internal pilot.

People who returned a survey form went into a draw to win one of three Mana SmartCards each with \$100 already loaded. The draw was won by two people in Titahi Bay and one in Whitby.

1.2 Previous Stakeholder consultation

Stakeholder consultation was undertaken during 2007/08. Stakeholders consulted included: bus operator, Porirua City Council, Whitirea Polytechnic, Canopy connection, residents associations and district health board. Key recommendations from this consultation were:

- Extend all bus routes through the city centre (to Tutu Place)
- Provide bus service to the Aotea development
- Increase hours of operation in Titahi Bay and Whitby
- Consider combining Titahi Bay routes in the evening
- Further consider the potential for a Flyer service between Porirua and the airport.

The public consultation process has sought to address as many of these as possible. It is noted that nothing further is proposed for a flyer service, although this remains open as a potential commercial service. The new route 60 from Whitirea Polytechnic to Wellington via Tawa and Johnsonville goes some way towards providing such a service.

2. Overview of submissions received

As of 11 May 2009 a total of 663 valid submissions have been received including eight from organisations. This was a 3.5% return rate on the approximate 19,200 brochures distributed and compares favourably to 2003 when 413 submissions were received.

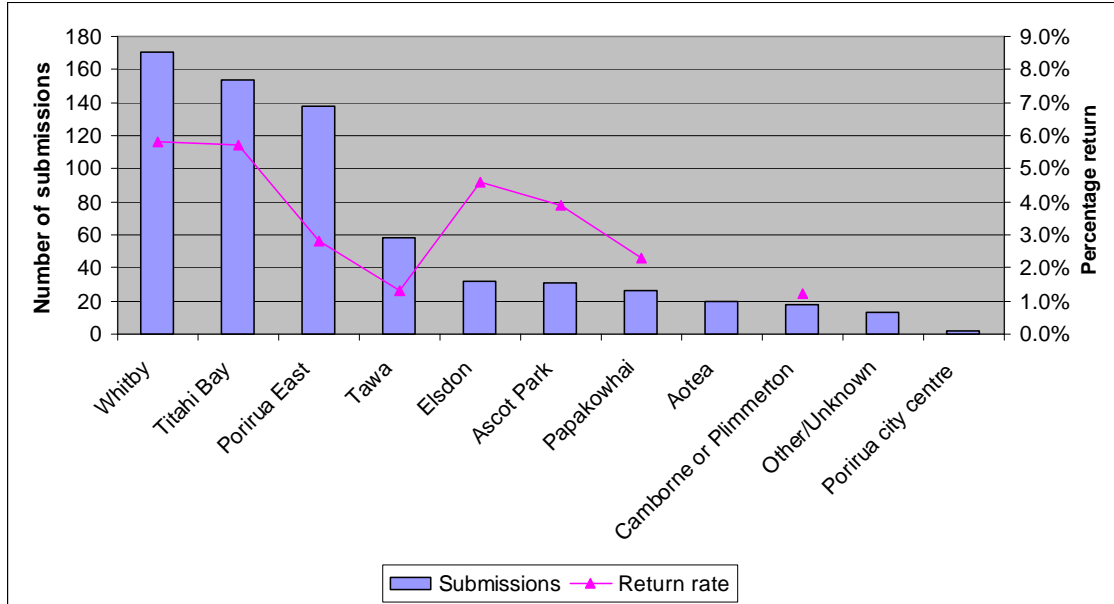


Figure 1: Submissions received by area of residence

2.1 What would encourage more use

As shown in Figure 2, the four most important attributes that would most encourage more bus usage were:

- More frequent services
- Cheaper fares
- Better connections between buses and trains
- Longer hours of operation

The need for better connection with trains was particularly noted and a number of submitters raised concerns about buses running early. A number of submissions also commented on accessibility issues include the age and inaccessibility of some buses, drivers not pulling up to curbs and more support needed for prams/strollers.

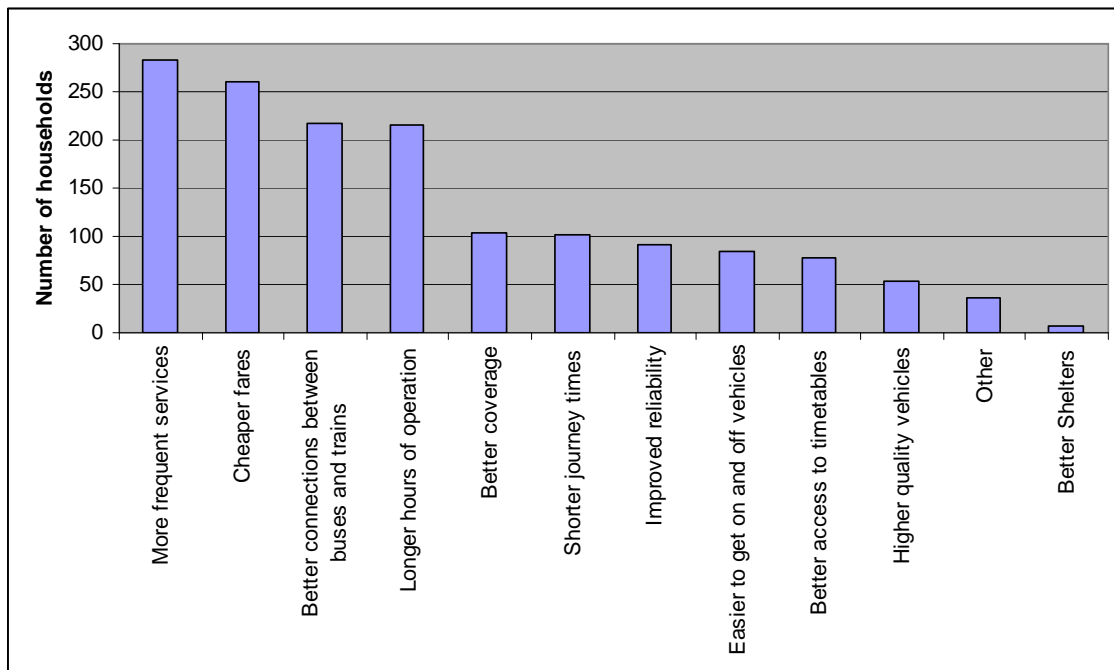


Figure 2: Attributes that households in Porirua and Tawa said would most encourage more bus usage

2.2 Existing bus users travel

The following figures show how households currently use buses in Porirua, including when people travel, how often and for what purposes. As anticipated, a large number of households travel daily and at peak time for work. However, there are almost as many households that travel in the daytime/weekends and for shopping purposes. This would seem to indicate a significant reliance on buses for mobility outside peak times and may reflect the large number of households reporting no access to a private vehicle (refer below).

Figure 6 indicates that 23% of households don't transfer with over half (53%) making a transfer to train primarily in Porirua but also elsewhere.

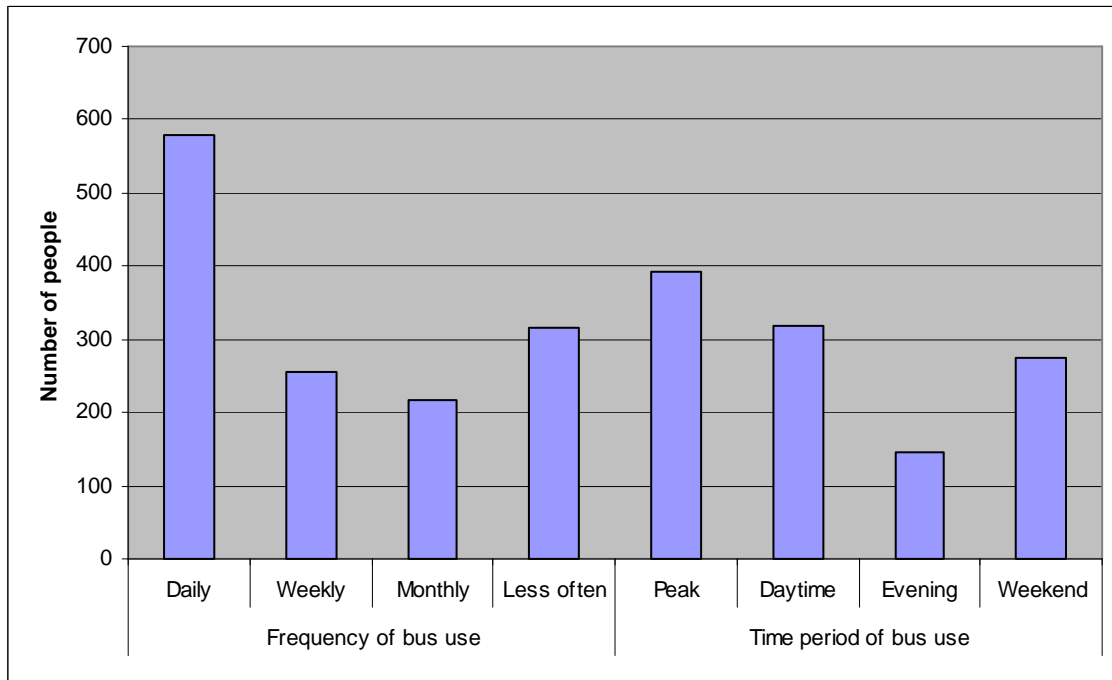


Figure 3: Frequency and time periods of bus usage as report by households in Porirua and Tawa

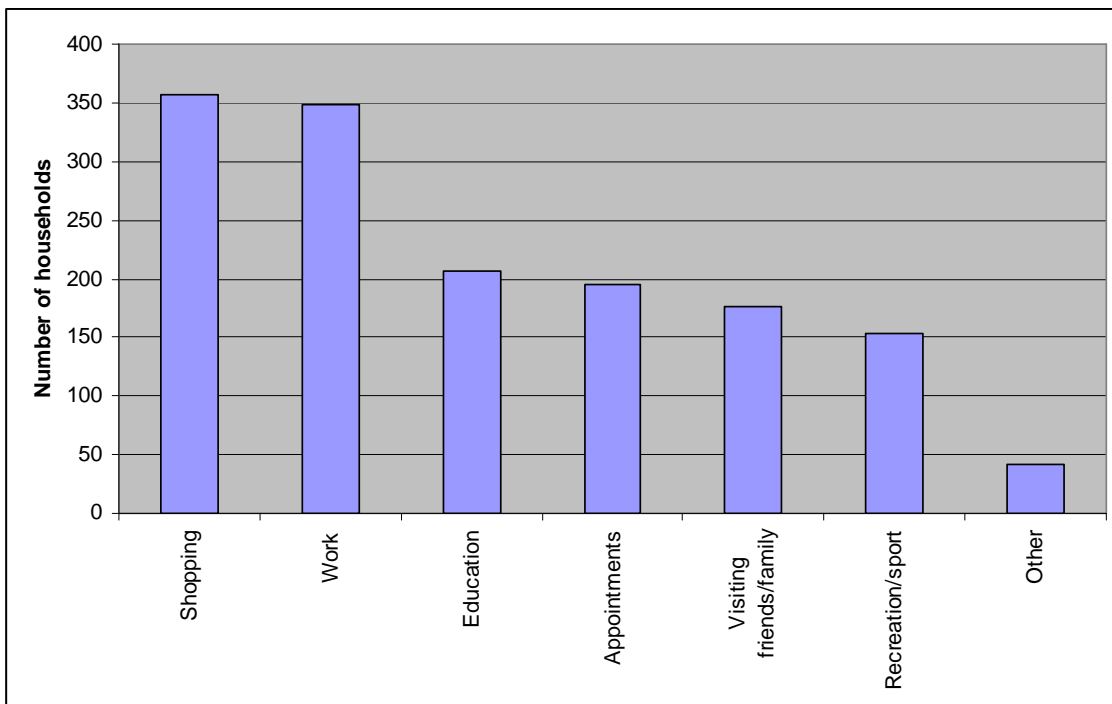


Figure 4: Main activities for bus usage as reported by households in Porirua and Tawa

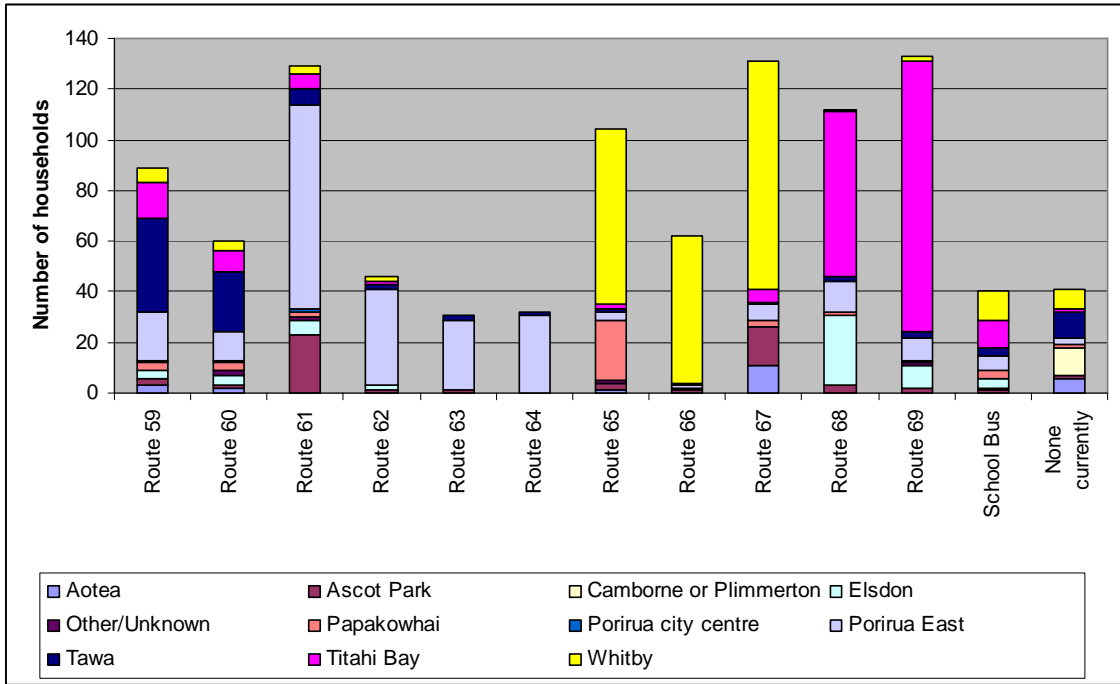


Figure 5: Bus routes that households said they currently use in Porirua and Tawa

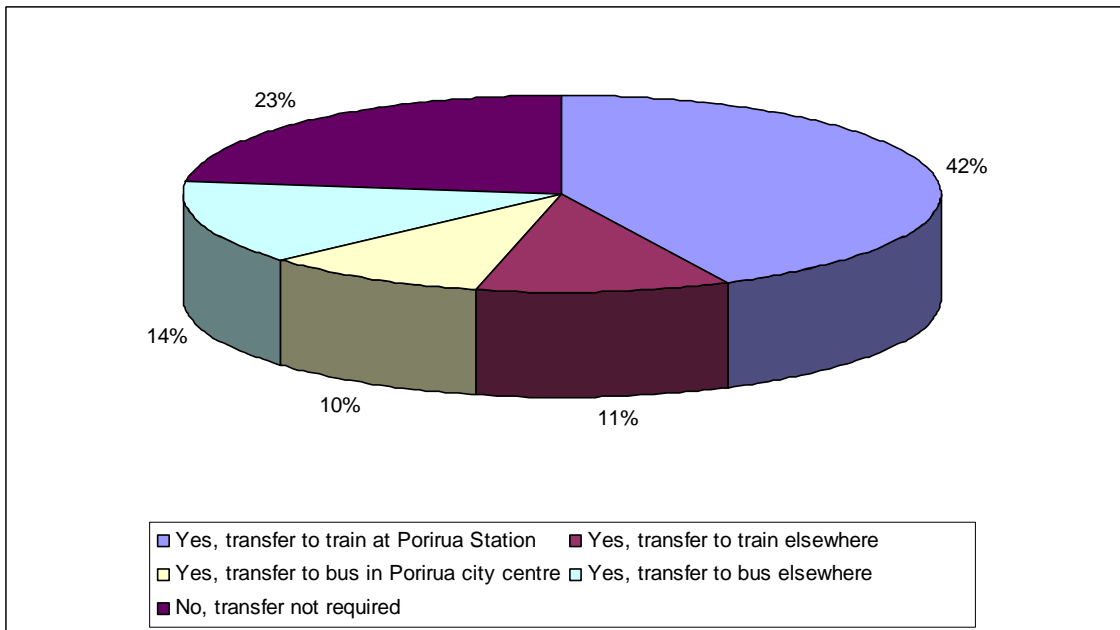


Figure 6: Transfers that households said they make in Porirua and Tawa

2.3 Non bus users travel

There were 40 submissions¹ (6% of all submissions) made by households who currently do not use the bus in Porirua or Tawa. These submissions were mostly from Camborne and Plimmerton (where there is currently no bus service), Tawa and Whitby.

These submissions are generally considered to reflect households that might use bus services if their needs were met. Households with no interest in using the bus are unlikely to submit, although some submissions said they would not use public transport and less money should be spent on public transport generally.

As shown in Figure 9, better coverage is the main attribute identified as being most important to non bus users in Porirua and Tawa. Coverage was not a high priority for existing bus users but otherwise priorities were similar to those of bus users.

As shown in Figure 8, most non bus using households would use the bus for travel to work purposes. Shopping is the second most important activity.

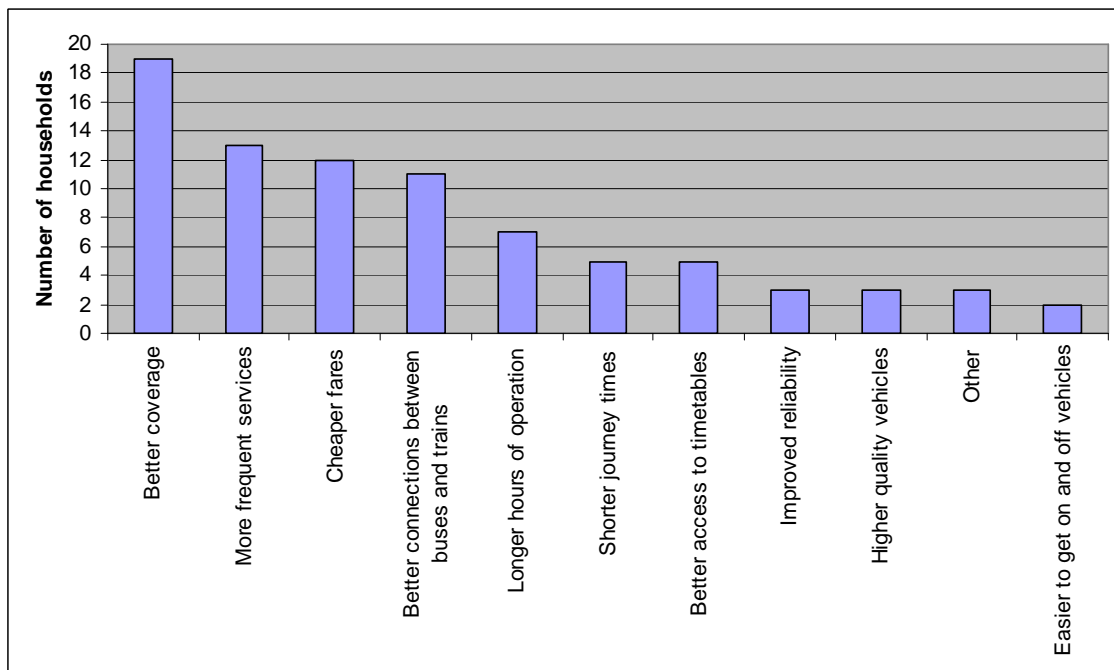


Figure 7: Attributes that non bus using households in Porirua and Tawa said would most encourage more bus usage

¹ These are household submissions that specifically stated they do not currently use the bus in Porirua or Tawa. A further 53 household submissions did not identify the routes they use but have not been included in this number as these may have been accidental omissions.

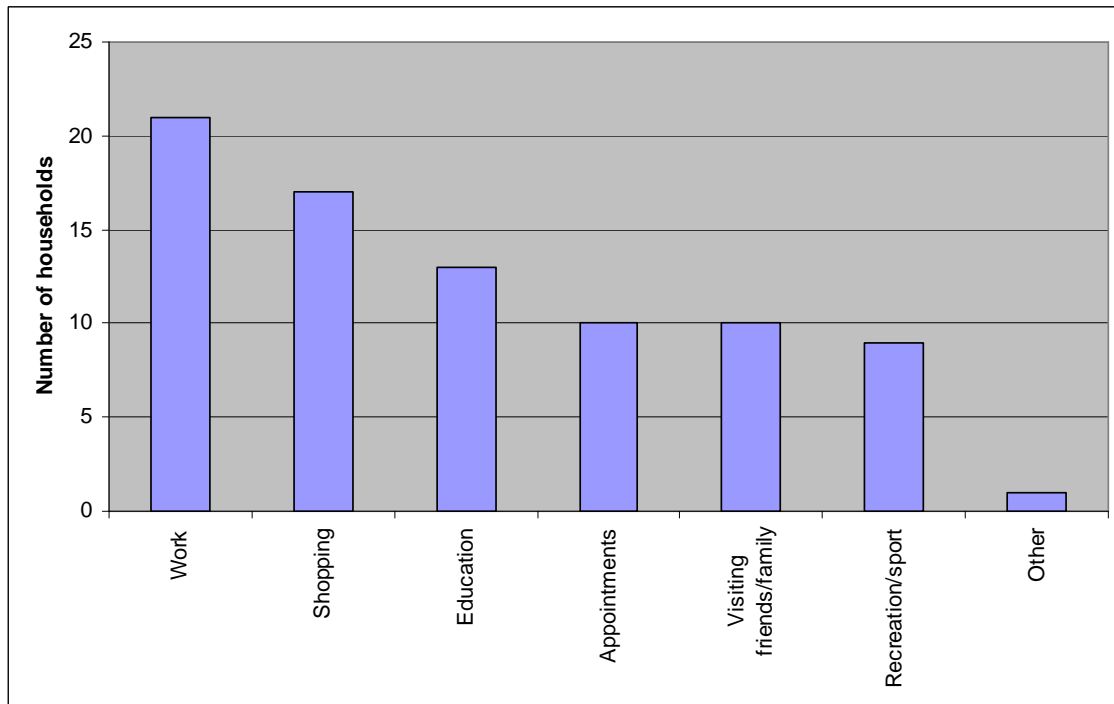


Figure 8: Main activities that non bus using households in Porirua and Tawa said they would use the bus for

2.4 Demographics

The age demographic of households is shown in Figure 9 and is very similar to that of the Census 2006, indicating a relatively good representative sample.

As shown in Figure 10, a large number of households (21%) have no access to a private car. This is higher than the census proportion (11%) which will partially be due to self-selection bias but is also considered an indication of the extent to which people rely on public transport in Porirua.

As shown in Figure 11, one quarter of households have indicated that at least one household member has a disability.

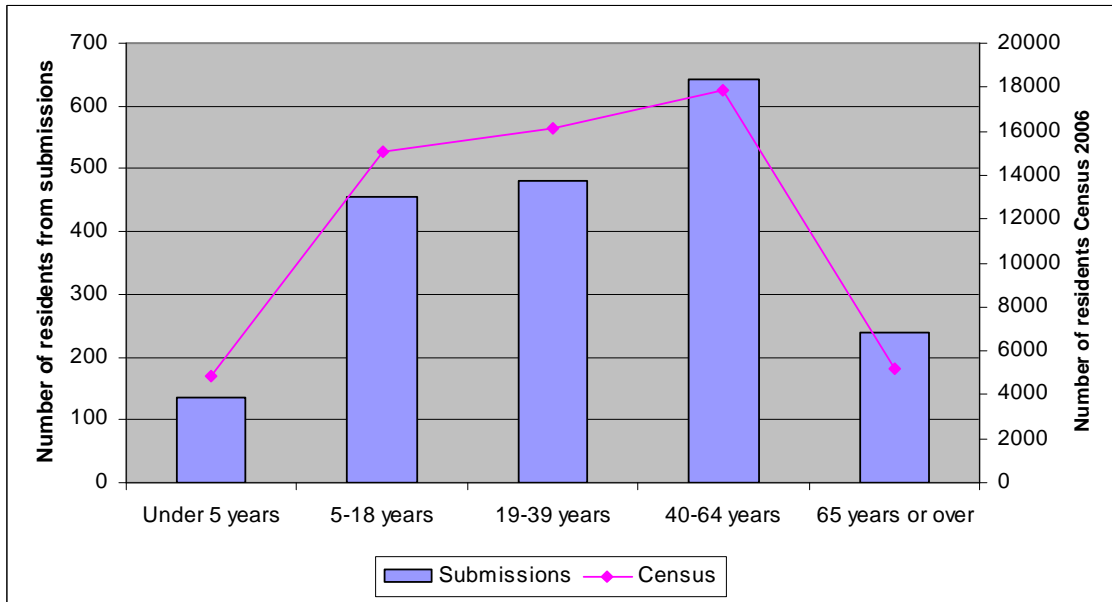


Figure 9: Ages reported in household submissions from Porirua and Tawa

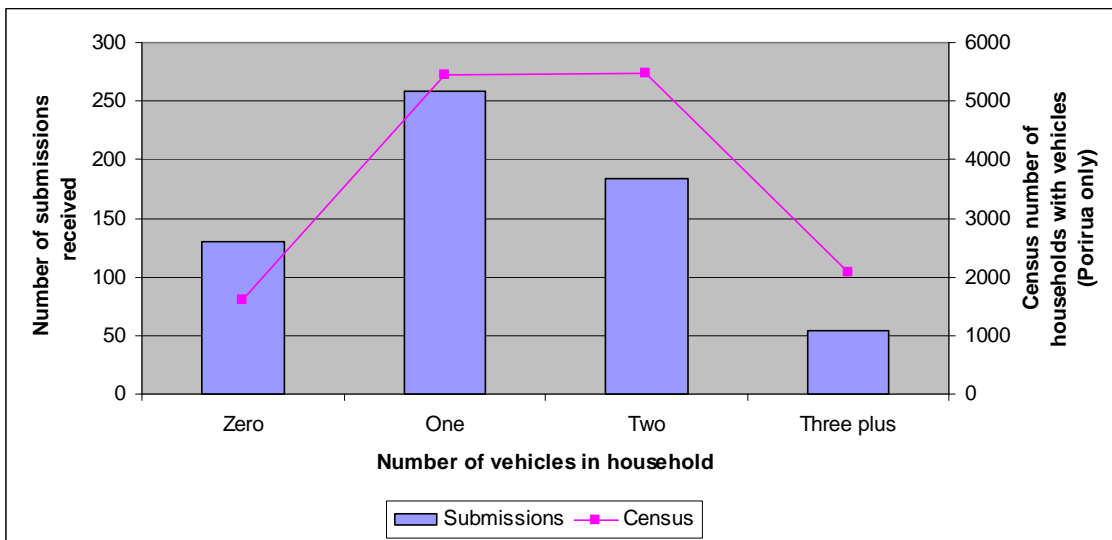


Figure 10: Number of cars per household as reported in household submissions from Porirua and Tawa

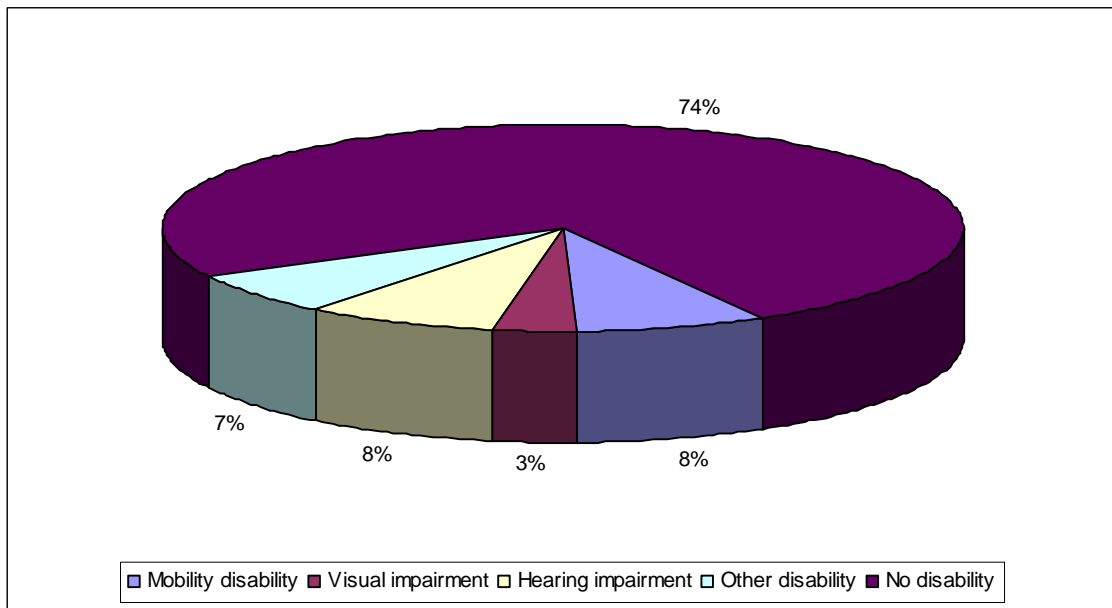


Figure 11: Number of households in Porirua and Tawa reporting a disability

3. Organisational submissions

A number of submissions were received from organisations.

3.1 Mana Coach Services drivers (submission 524)

The main points raised in this submission are as follows:

- City centre: Concern over removal of Ferry Place, Mega Centre and Pak n Save bus stops. Traffic congestion needs to be addresses, especially congestion arising from the Viard College pedestrian crossing
- Elsdon: The preference is for Option A but the loop would need to operate in an anti-clockwise direction to make use of the existing bus shelters.
- Papakowhai: Concern over increased use of Paremata station due to safety concerns at the SH1 roundabout and a belief there will be low demand for station use.
- Porirua East: Concern over some parts of Route 63 safety wise. Suggestions on alternatives have been given. Castor/Driver Crescent loop should be retained for community benefit.
- Camborne Plimmerton: Seen as duplicating rail.
- Titahi Bay: Preferred option is Option A but would like to retain top of Pikarere Street (although not as layover point) and Kura Street service. Suggested alternatives to some parts of the route.

3.2 Glenside Residents Association (submission 508)

The main points raised in this submission are as follows:

- Happy with routes 59 and 60 as they area although have requested that bus stops numbers be programmed into the ticketing system to avoid being over charged.
- Bus drivers need to remember to stop along the rural part of Middleton Road.

3.3 Housing New Zealand (submission 520)

The main points raised in this submission are as follows:

- Prefer Option A for Porirua East as this will retain Route 64 to Caster Crescent. This area has a lot of Housing NZ low income households that rely on public transport. In addition they have a new development proposed in this area, mainly for elderly. This development is based on proximity to the bus route.
- There is also concern over people's personal safety and higher levels of truancy if this route is removed. It is a route that is considered to give people access to main basic facilities.

3.4 Porirua City Council (submission 497)

The main points raised in this submission are as follows:

- General theme of submission is to not reduce coverage of services. Some of the proposals are considered to decrease accessibility to bus stops especially for elderly and disable. Particular areas of concern are Pikarere Street, Takapuwahia, Hampshire Street, Castor and Driver Crescents, Apple Terrace in and Ayton Drive.
- Necessary budgetary provisions for infrastructure changes will need to have been made by Greater Wellington
- Central city route: Does not support removal of the Ferry Place bus stops and the Walton Leigh stop would need further investigation (as will require retaining structure)
- A request is made for a direct express service from Porirua/Kapiti to Wellington Hospital and Airport
- Elsdon: Do not support removal of Takapuwahia / Te Hiko Street; would prefer combination of both options as this would increase accessibility and reduce walking distances.
- Porirua East: Concern over both options removing Hampshire Street. Do not support removal of Route 64 to Castor/Driver Crescent nor Apple Terrace unless there is very low patronage. Diverting the routes via McKillop / Windley is not considered safe. Overall, support Option A with some exceptions.
- Tawa: Request for school bus to Wellington schools

- Titahi Bay: Do not support removal of top of Pikarere Street. It is noted that a turning bay was built at the top of Pikarere Street for new services following the 2003 review.
- Whitby: Do not support removal of Ayton Drive unless low patronage, but support extension of the route to the new development around Navigation Drive
- Muri Station: This area was not covered in the consultation brochure but recent information has been released about potential remove of this state. Porirua City Council stated they do not accept removal of Muri Station but if it is removed a bus service should be provide to service the northern part of Pukerua Bay.
- Other services: Support options with later hours of operation. Also comment on need for integrated ticketing, real time information and bus lanes.

3.5 Summerset Retirement Village (submission 285)

The main points raised in this submission are as follows:

- This was submission made on behalf of the 100 residents, people with disabilities.
- Support Option B due to the longer hours of operation and support changes to bus stops in the city as will provide better consistency
- Request made for a bus stop near the retirement village and more frequent services

3.6 Titahi Bay Residents Association (submission 509)

The main points raised in this submission are as follows:

- Concern over one way loops in Titahi Bay which will limit access. Suggestion for one way loop during peak and both ways for non peak services.
- Request made for a direct route between Titahi Bay and Whitby
- Requested that timings on service to Johnsonville be adjusted
- Need to retain service to top of Pikarere Street. Some route variations were suggested for Route 69.
- Request for good quality vehicles, easy access buses, good infrastructure at bus stops and Porirua Station. Suggestions given for improving Porirua Station.

4. Porirua city centre

People were requested to provide a reason for supporting or not supporting the proposed changes. As indicated in Figure 12, over two thirds of submissions supported the proposed changes to the Porirua city centre bus routes and stops.

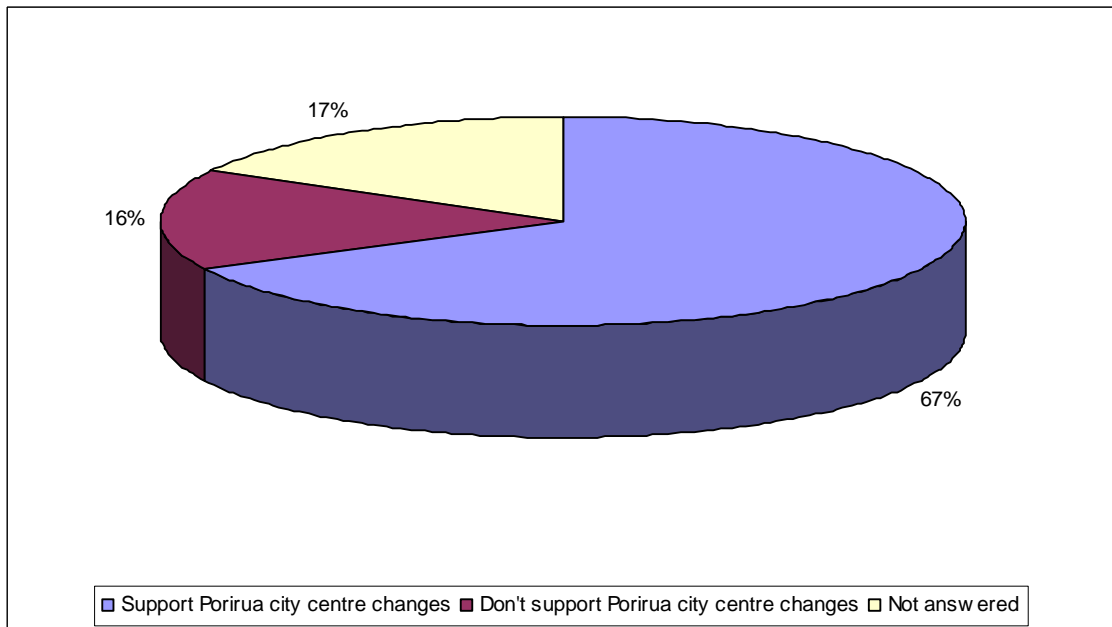


Figure 12: Number of submissions supporting changes to the Porirua City Centre bus routes and stops

The majority of comments in favour of the city centre spine indicate the proposed five 'bus stop pairs' along the city centre corridor will reduce confusion and simplify the process of catching buses. Respondents believe the proposed stops are in more convenient locations and are better spaced out which will improve the efficiency and service through the city centre. 18 respondents commented on the improved access to the Mega Centre and ease of travelling between the two shopping areas. One particular comment possibly sums up the views of many, "The proposed changes give Porirua more of a heart and makes bus travel to a hub much more appealing".

Fewer numbers of the negative responses were received, the majority simply stated they either don't support the changes or they believe the bus shelters are fine where they are. Some concern was expressed about the stop on Norrie St being too close to the roundabout which could pose a problem for traffic. A number of respondents were opposed to the removal of the Ferry Place stop stating it was highly used and has a safe pedestrian crossing handy.

There is some mixed feeling toward using the Mungavin entry to the city centre. Respondents were in favour of a more direct route to the train station, however some expressed concern about traffic congestion at the two roundabouts which could lead to delays. There was also some concern about congestion that would arise at Walter Leigh Avenue due to the new bus stops, especially in the afternoon peak. Also of concern to some was safety of the Walter Leigh Avenue underpass.

Comments favouring the proposed changes:

- Bus stops are more conveniently located to local amenities and better spaced out (42 comments)
- Simplifies the process of catching a bus anywhere within or out of the city centre / easier to know where to catch a bus (38 comments)
- Great ideas / It's more logical / will improve the service (30 comments)
- More efficient, easier and faster travel (29 comments)
- More direct route to the train station is a benefit (20 comments)
- More options to the Mega Centre and ease of travelling between the shopping areas (18 comments)
- More convenient to get to and from the library (10 comments)
- Reduces confusion (9 comments)
- A more centralised and streamlined approach should improve traffic flow (4 comments)

Comments against the proposed changes:

- Bus stops are fine where they are or "No" don't support changes (21 comments)
- Ferry Place stop needs to be retained – It is a highly used stop with a pedestrian crossing (14 comments)
- Don't take the Cobham Court stop away (6 comments)
- The Norrie St stop is too close to the roundabout, could be a hazard (5 comments)
- Too much congestion at Mungavin Bridge and Kenepuru intersections at peak times (4 comments)
- So many changes cost too much for the taxpayer (4 comments)

One comment suggested an inner city circular bus would be better.

5. Area summaries

5.1 Aotea

Submissions supported the proposed route through Aotea although the need for buses to travel to Paremata Station was questioned by some (it is noted these buses would not travel through Aotea). A request was made for bus stops to be placed near the roundabout and near the main side streets.

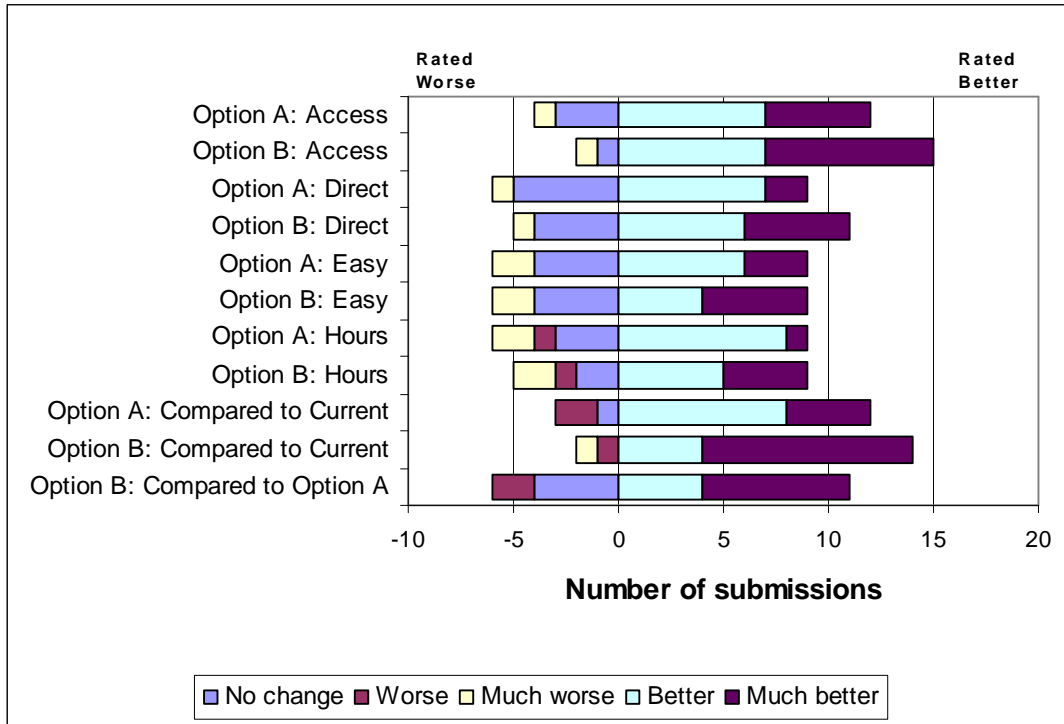


Figure 13: Option ratings for submissions from people living in Aotea

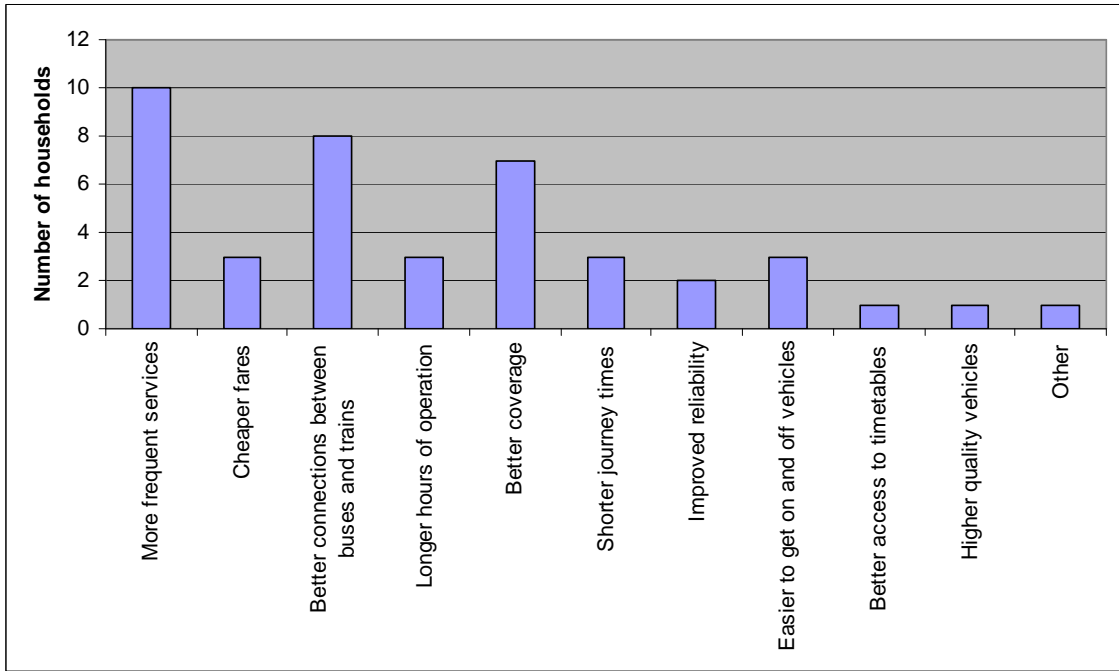


Figure 14: Most important attributes reported by people living in Aotea

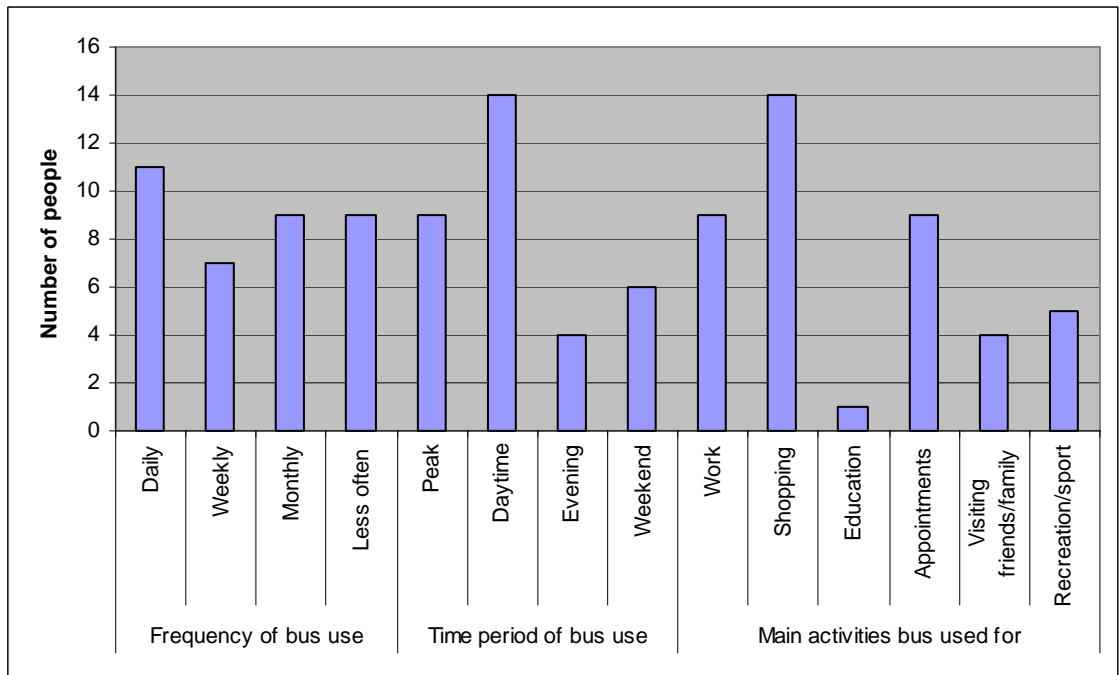


Figure 15: Frequency, time periods and main activities for bus usage reported by people living in Aotea

5.2 Ascot Park and Waitangirua

As shown in the figure, more submissions rated both options as better across all attributes although Option B had stronger support. It would appear the longer hours provided in Option B was one of the key factors in this support.

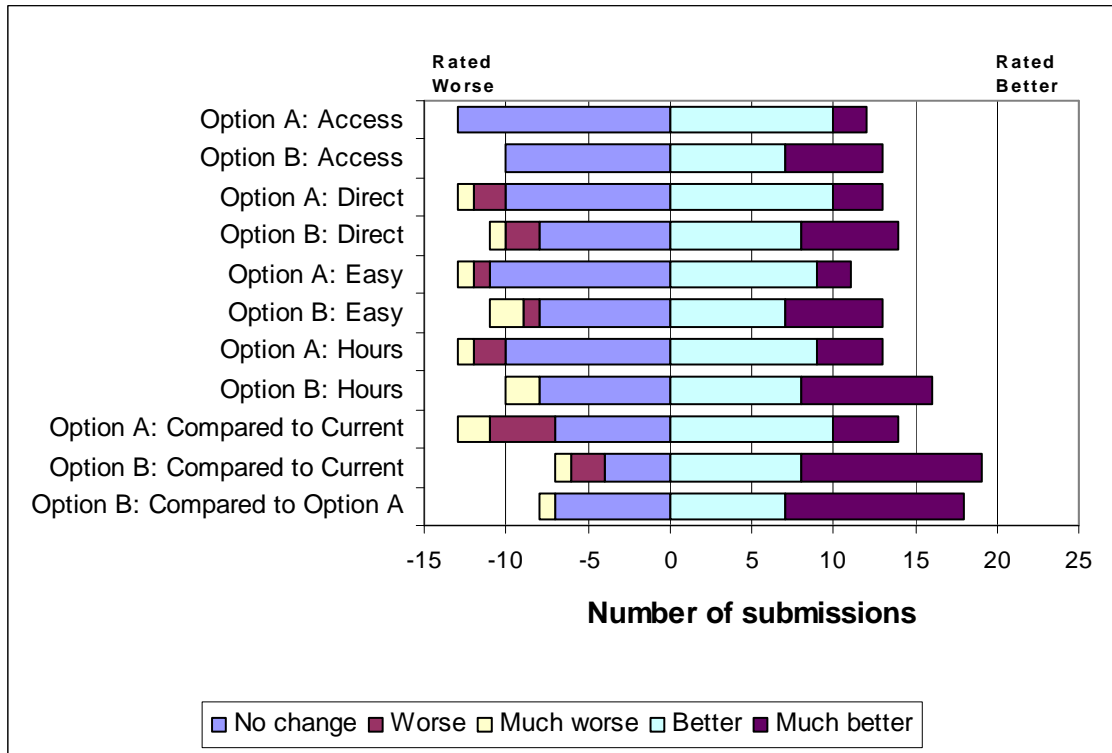


Figure 16: Option ratings for submissions from people living in Ascot Park

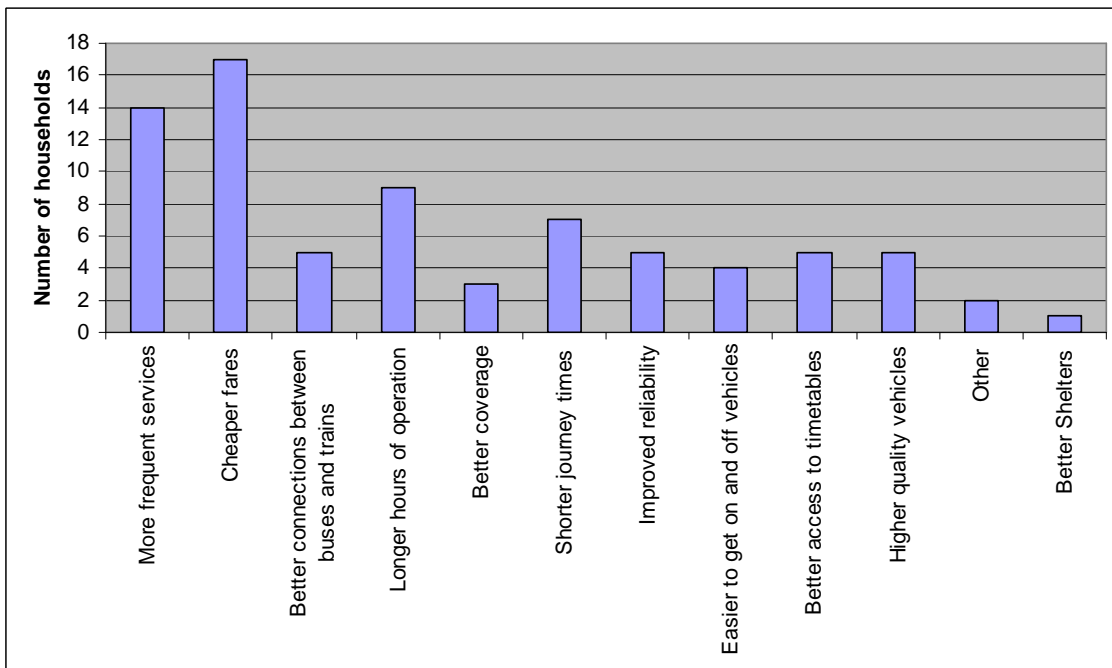


Figure 17: Most important attributes reported by people living in Ascot Park

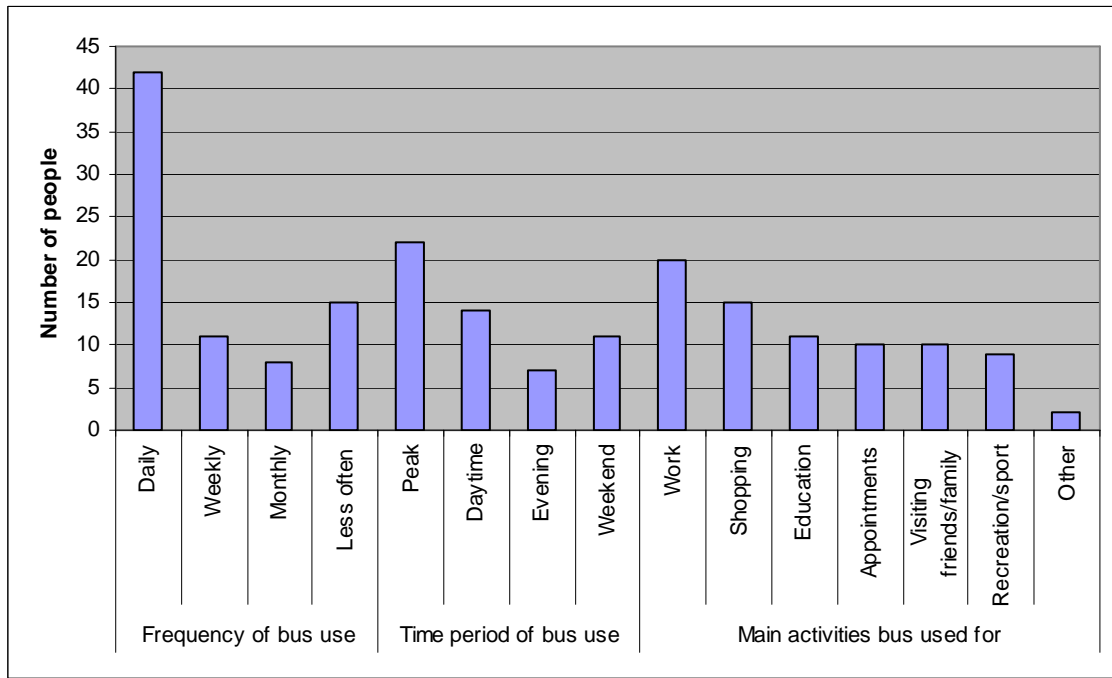


Figure 18: Frequency, time periods and main activities for bus usage reported by people living in Ascot Park

5.3 Camborne and Plimmerton

There was support for the proposed new route although some submissions commented that this would be duplicating rail and that most people can walk to the station. There were some suggestions for changes to the proposed route, including that it follows the existing school route. One submission suggested that the school bus to Plimmerton should come earlier and that adults should be allowed on school buses with their prepaid cards.

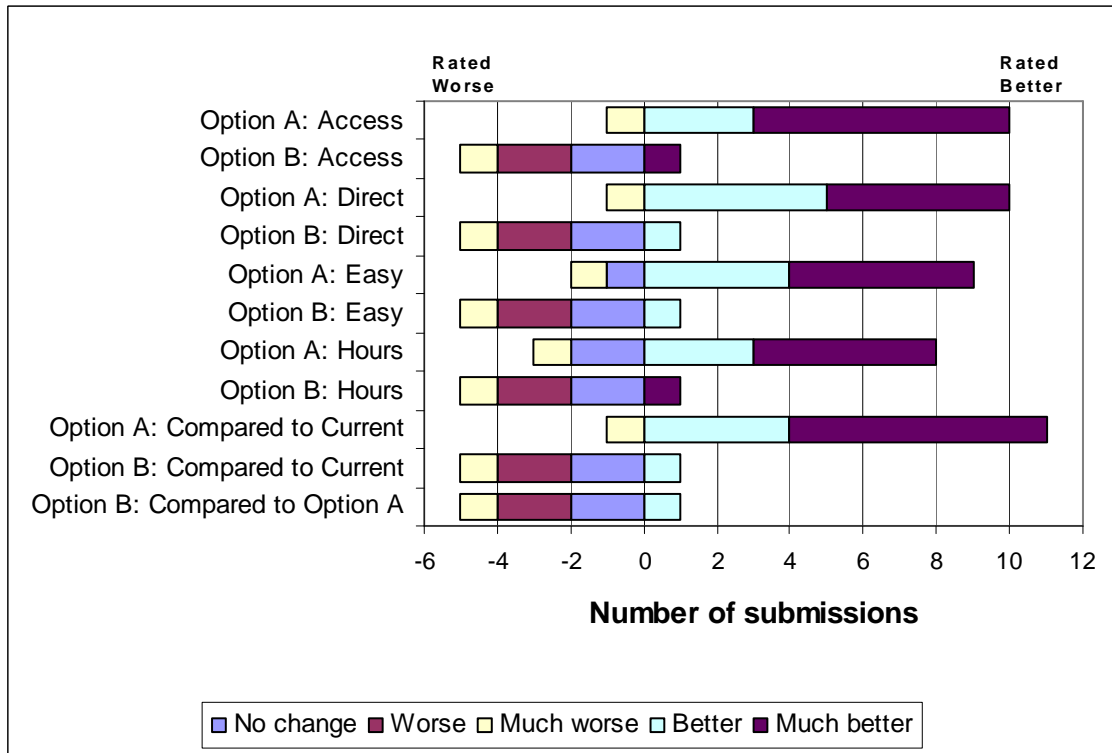


Figure 19: Option ratings for submissions from people living in Camborne and Plimmerton

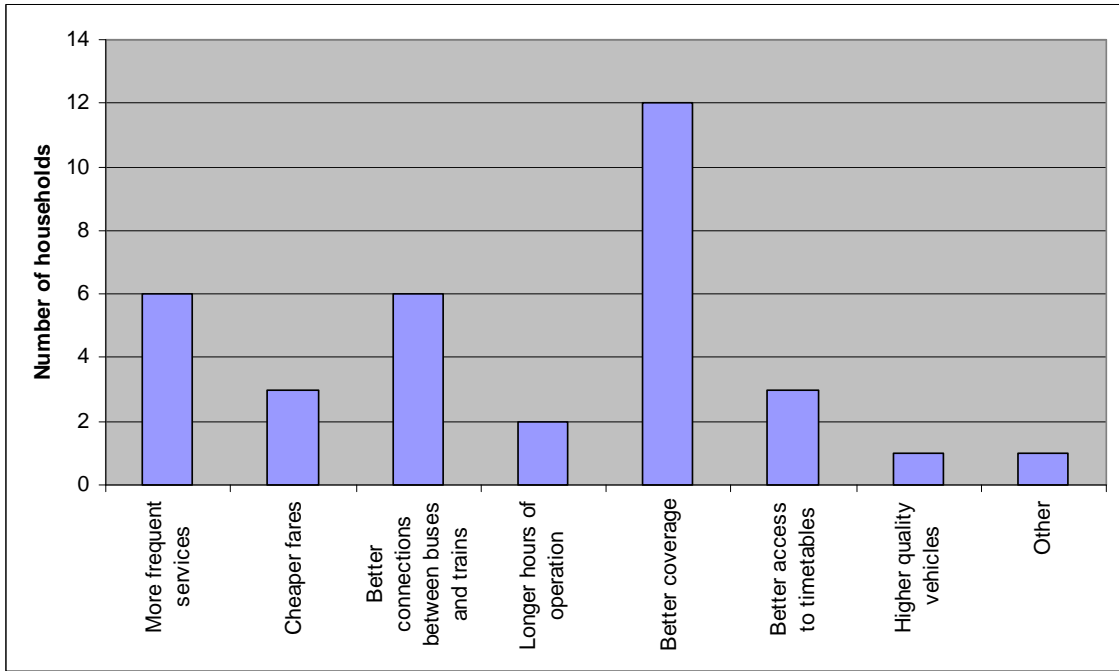


Figure 20: Most important attributes reported by people living in Camborne and Plimmerton

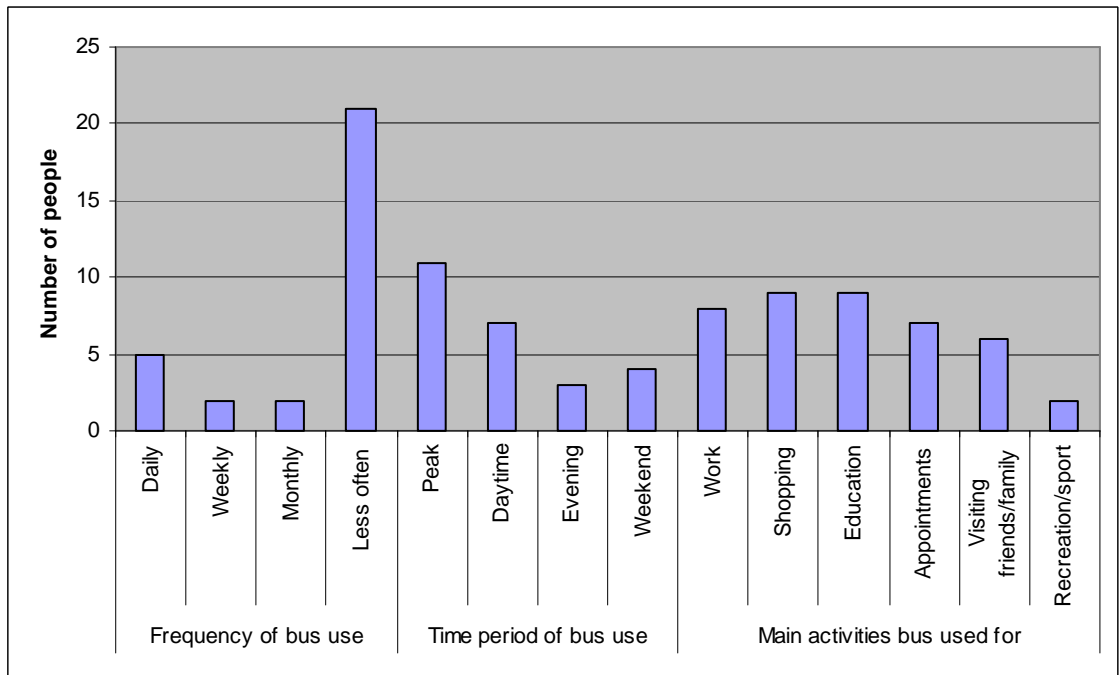


Figure 21: Frequency, time periods and main activities for bus usage reported by people living in Camborne and Plimmerton

5.4 Elsdon

A lot of positive comments were made about the longer hours proposed although many were concerned about the loss of service along Te Hiko Street which would reduce access to health and other facilities in this location. The one-way loop in Option A was also seen as providing poor access as a return trip from Te Hiko Street was not possible and the proposed route direction would miss all the shelters which were located on the other side of the road. A number of submissions suggested a combination of both route options.

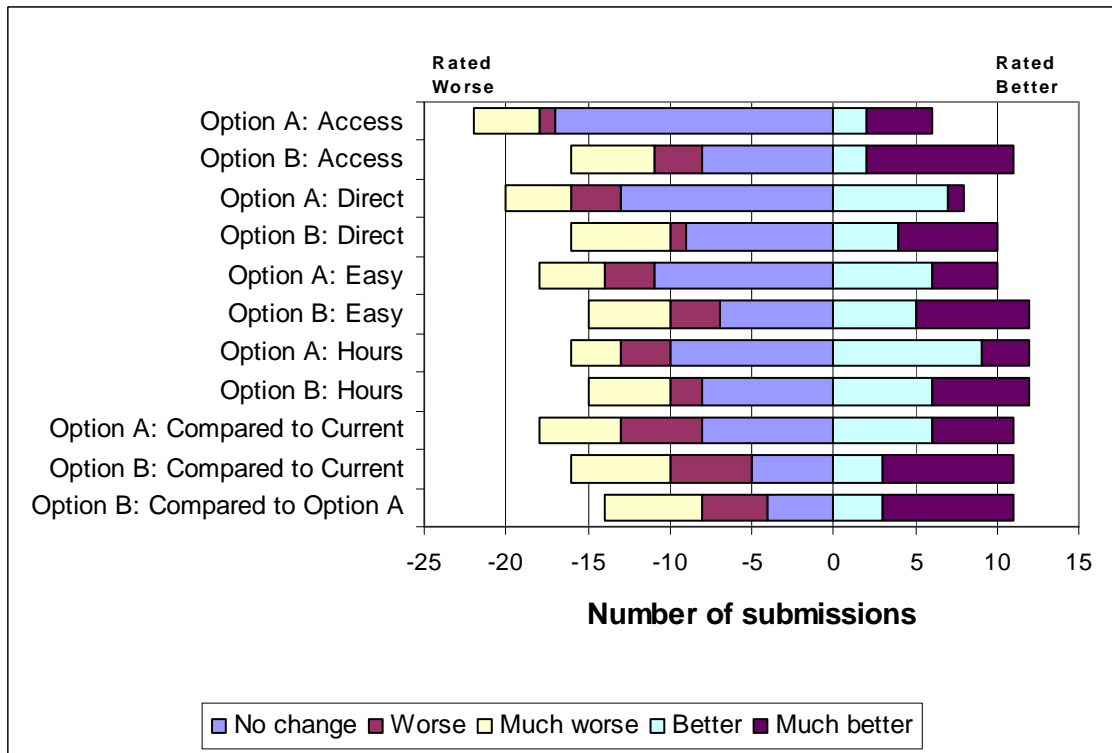


Figure 22: Option ratings for submissions from people living in Elsdon

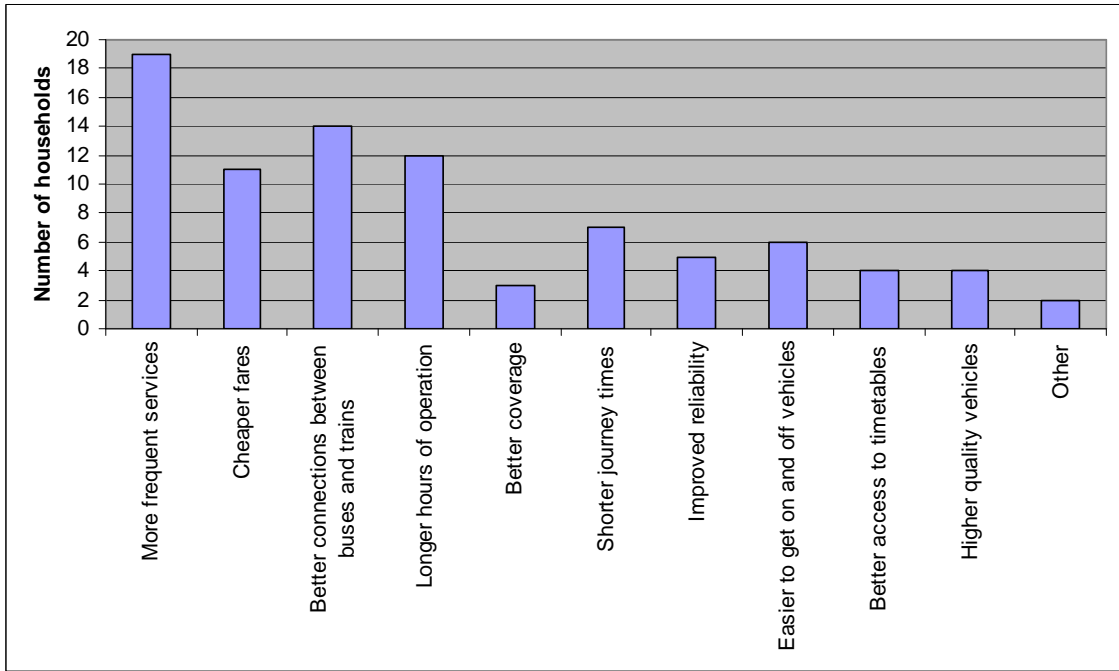


Figure 23: Most important attributes reported by people living in Elsdon

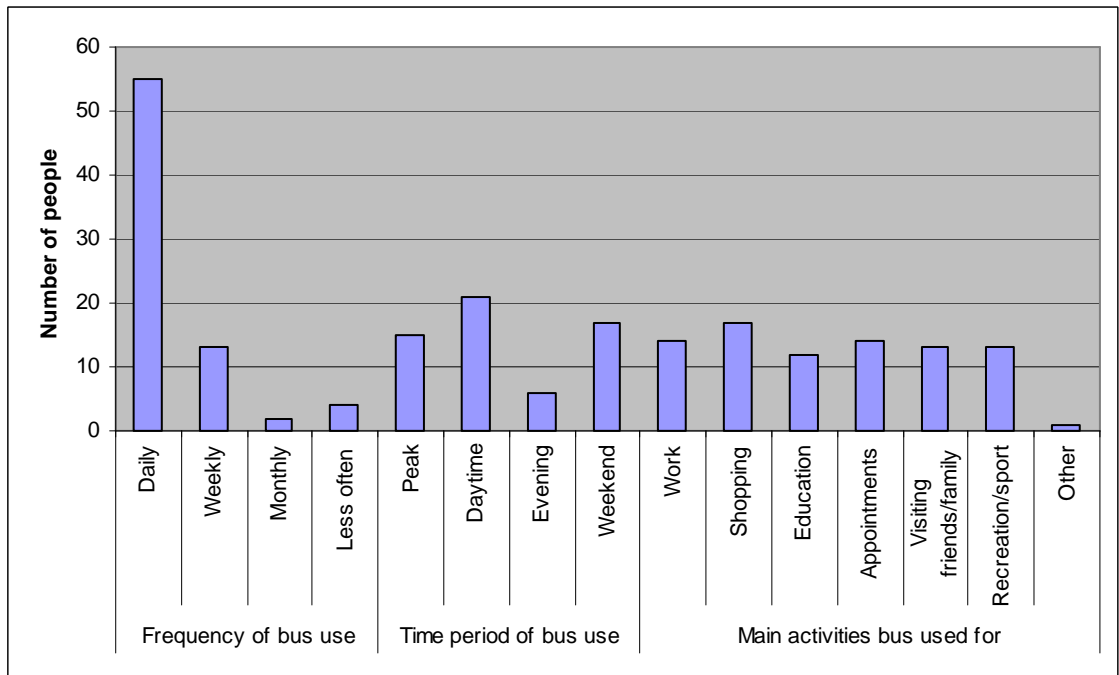


Figure 24: Frequency, time periods and main activities for bus usage reported by people living in Elsdon

5.5 Papakowhai

There was a lot of support for current services. Some comments said an hourly frequency would be too long to wait although others said they understood the need to reduce service especially if it meant longer hours of operation. One comment asked for better connections with northbound trains and another wanted transfers to be improved.

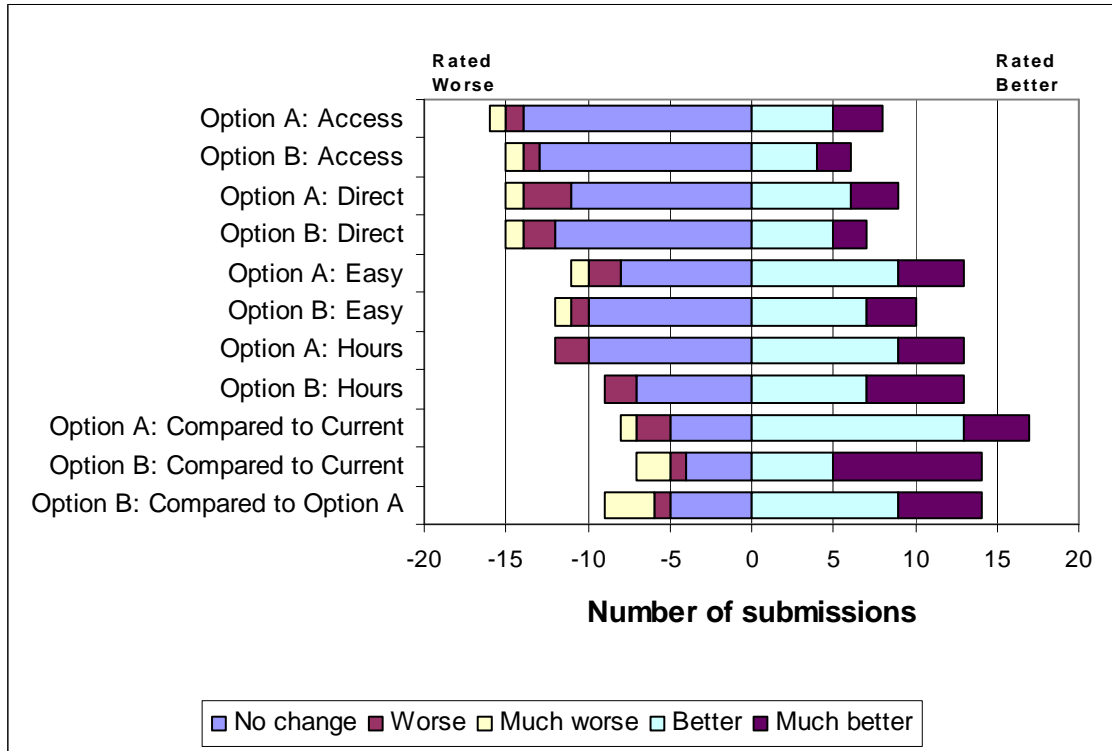


Figure 25: Option ratings for submissions from people living in Papakowhai

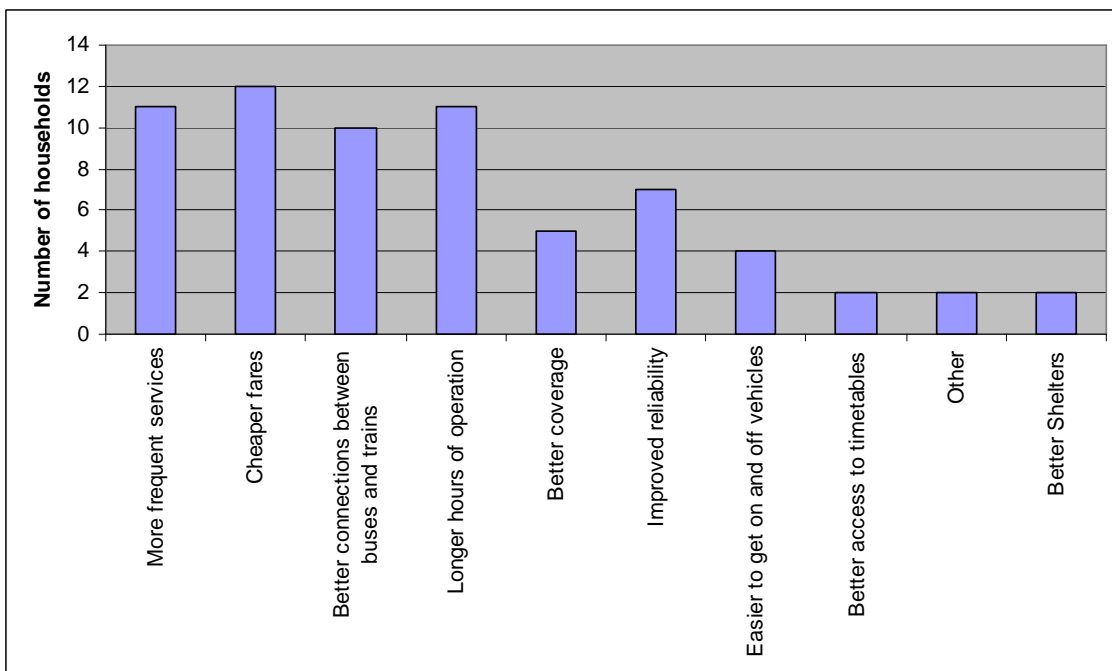


Figure 26: Most important attributes reported by people living in Papakowhai

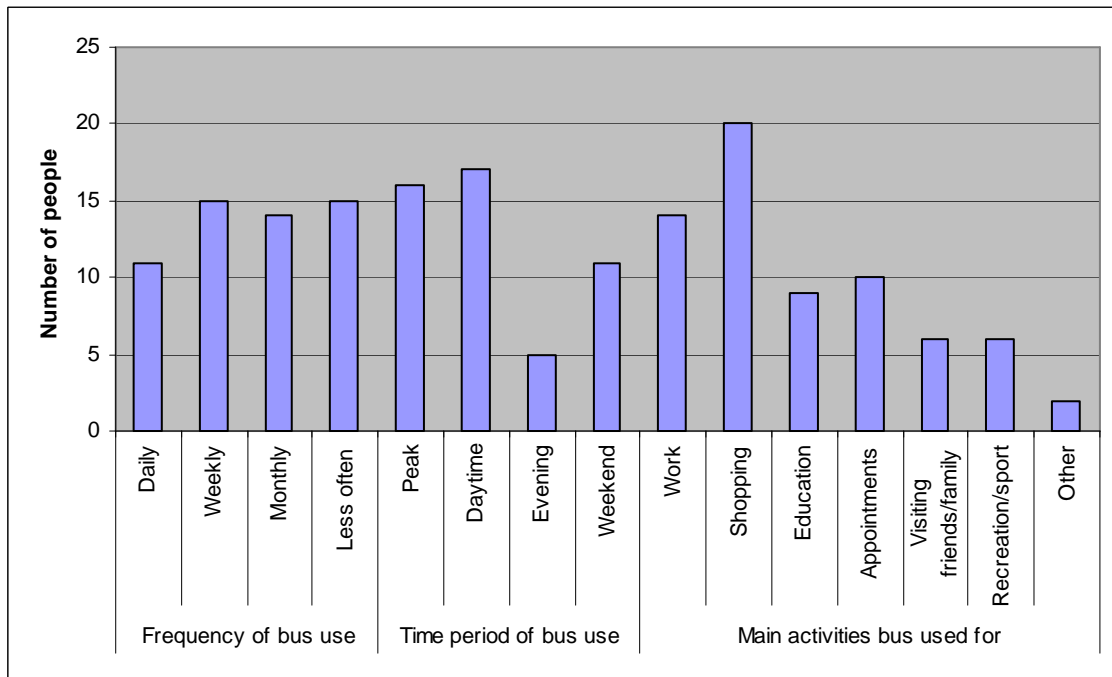


Figure 27: Frequency, time periods and main activities for bus usage reported by people living in Papakowhai

5.6 Porirua East

A number of comments were opposed to the removal of Route 64 around Caster and Driver Crescents. Housing NZ submitted that a number of new units have gone in on the basis of the current routes and that these should therefore be retained. A number of comments asked for better customer service from bus drivers. A number of submissions, including the Mana Coach Service bus driver's submission, commented on traffic safety issues if buses were routed along McKillop and Windely Street.

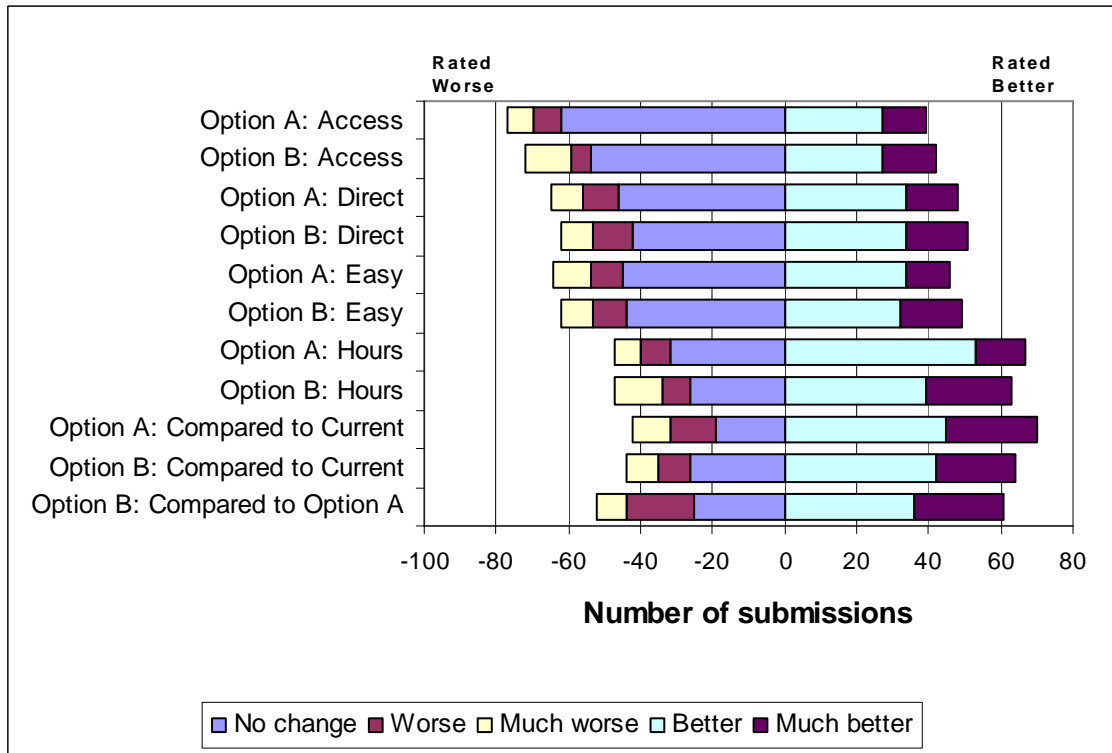


Figure 28: Option ratings for submissions from people living in Porirua East

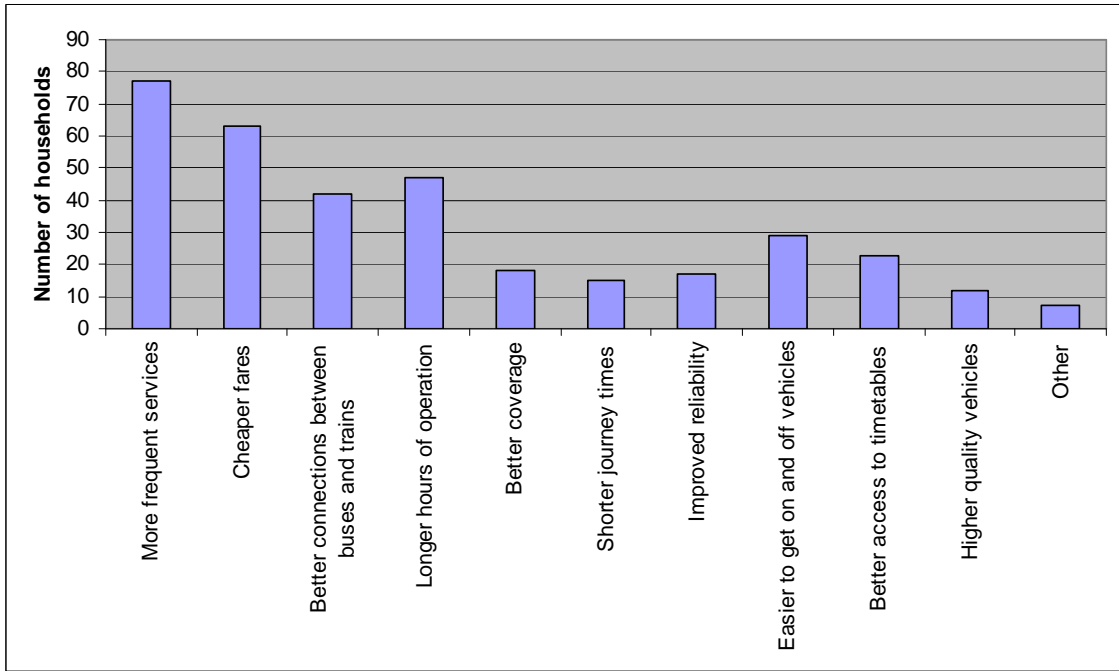


Figure 29: Most important attributes reported by people living in Porirua East

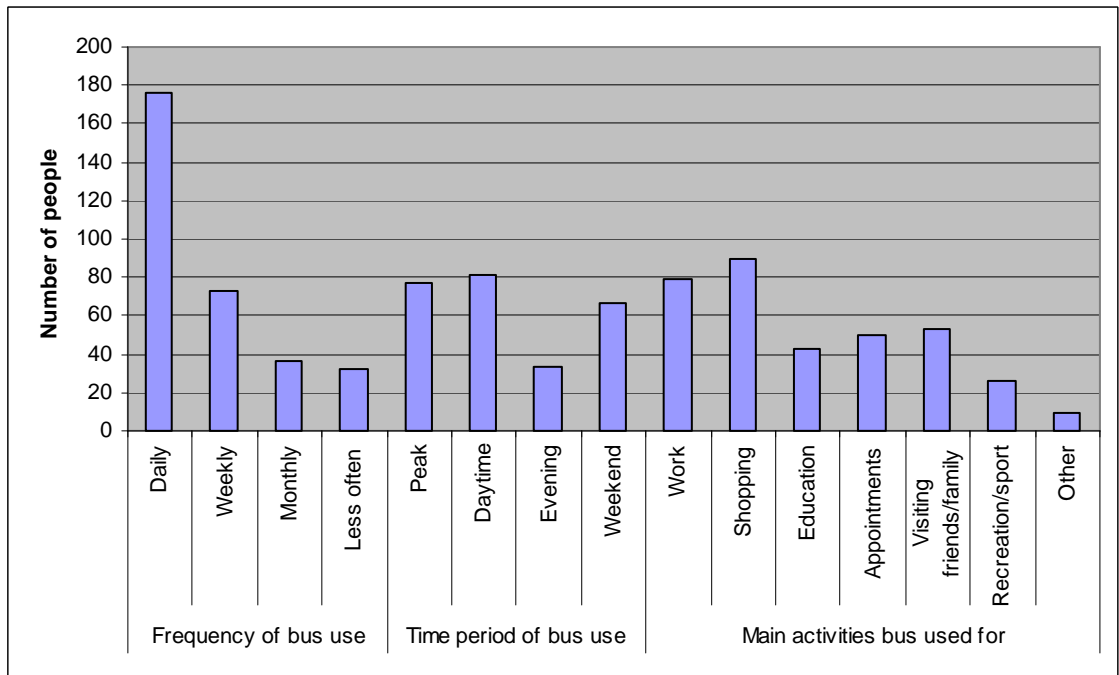


Figure 30: Frequency, time periods and main activities for bus usage reported by people living in Porirua East

5.7 Tawa

The consultation brochure did not propose changes to bus services in Tawa although a number of submissions were still received. There was a request for buses to run on time and fit in with class times at Whitirea Polytechnic. There was also a suggestion that bus stops be directly across the road from one another.

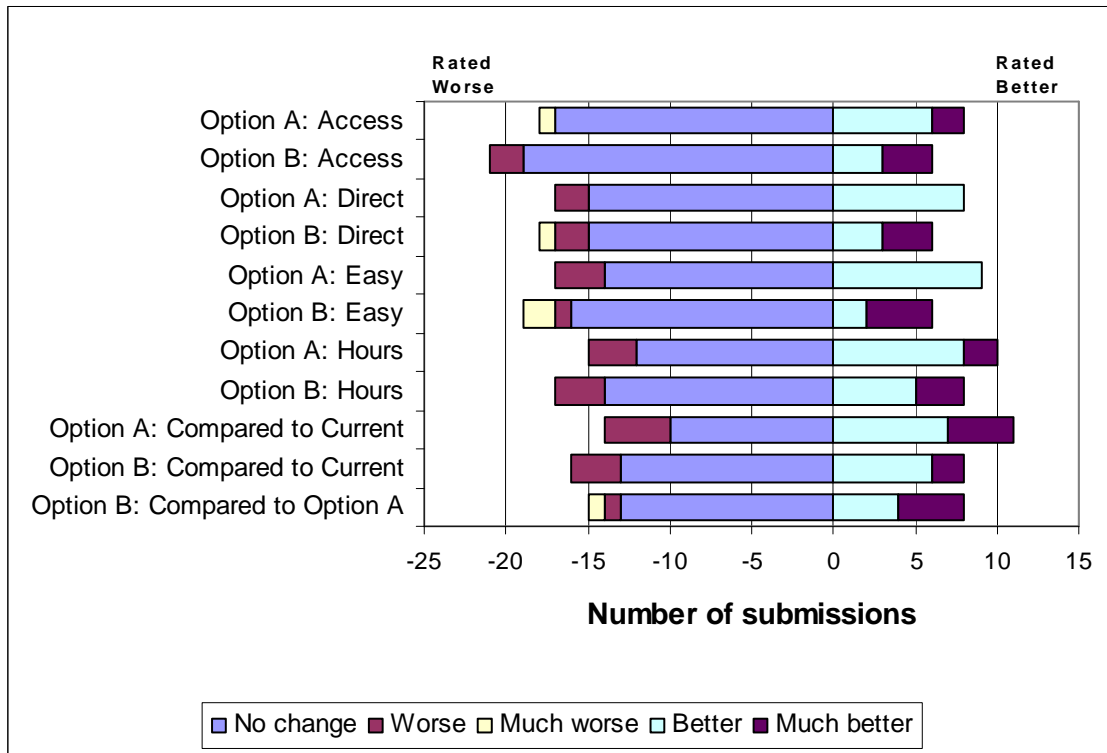


Figure 31: Option ratings for submissions from people living in Tawa

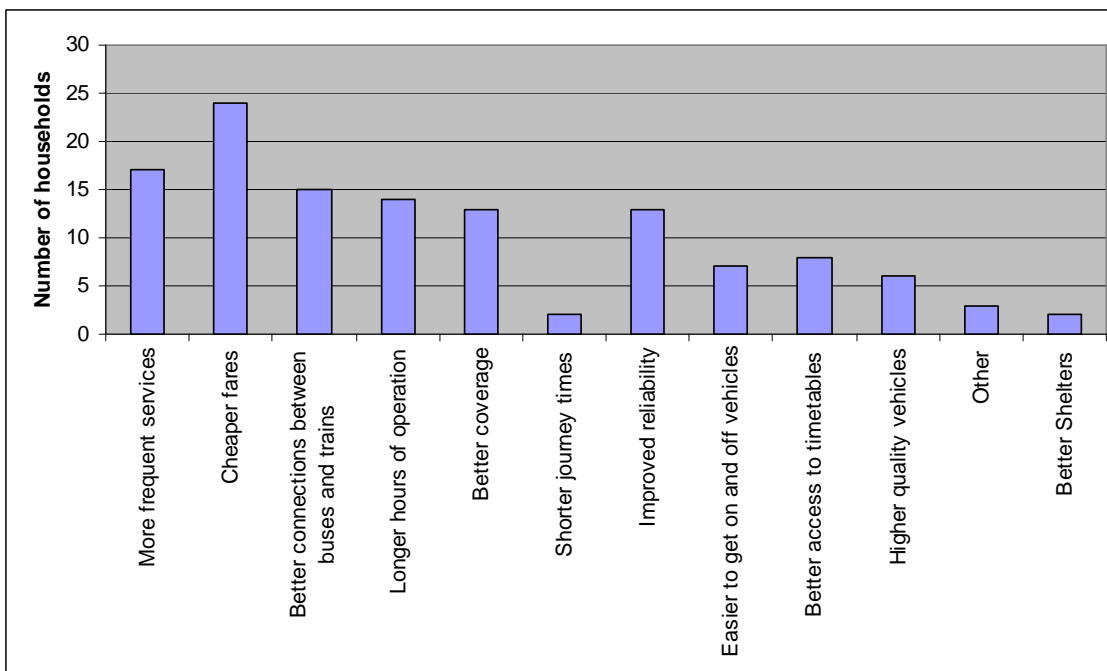


Figure 32: Most important attributes reported by people living in Tawa

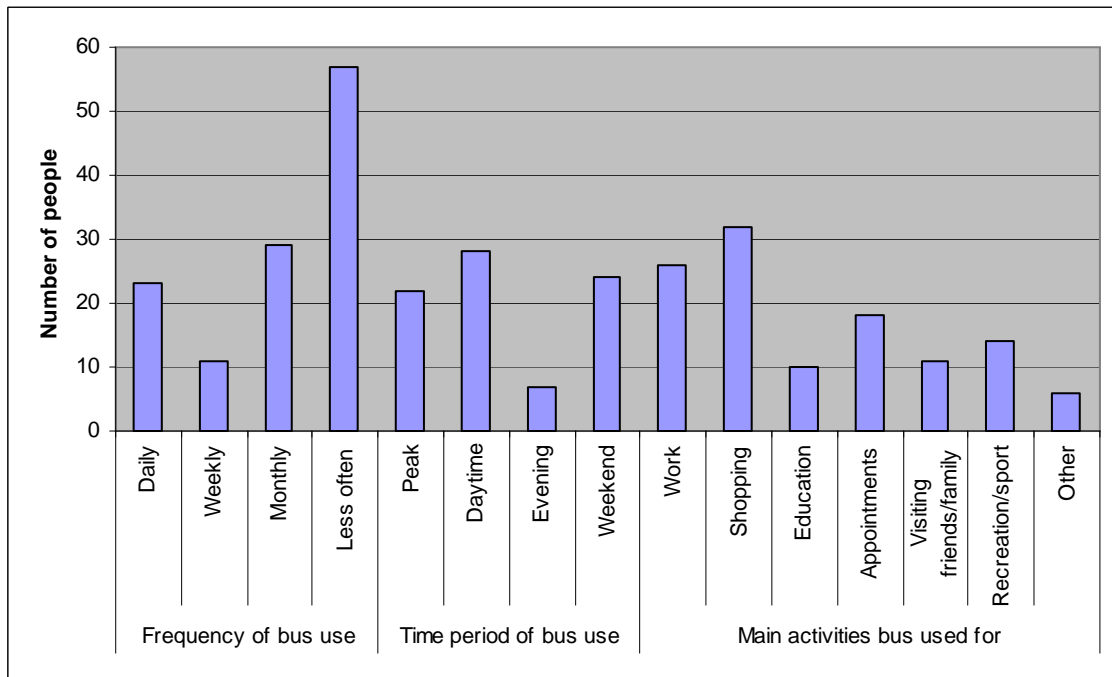


Figure 33: Frequency, time periods and main activities for bus usage reported by people living in Tawa

5.8 Titahi Bay

The Main Road service in Option B was supported with some submissions saying peak time only was acceptable although others requested an evening service too. A large number of submissions commented that services should be retained along Kura Street as there are a large number of elderly people in this area, including the Russell Kemp Home.

A number of submissions were opposed to reducing service to the top end of Pikarere Street, including submissions from Porirua City Council and the Mana Coach Services bus drivers. The later evening and better weekend services were supported and submissions were generally supportive of combing the late evening, and to a lesser extent, weekend services. One submission suggested that the half hourly service should be retained until 9:00pm while another did not want later services if it meant longer routes. There was some concern over the amount of time it current takes to travel to Porirua Station.

A number of submissions were concerned about the one-way loops in Option A noting these would limit access and lead to longer journey times. This is indicated in the submissions overall with greater support for Option B, which does not have the one-way loops.

There were a number of comments about the need for buses to run on time and connect with trains.

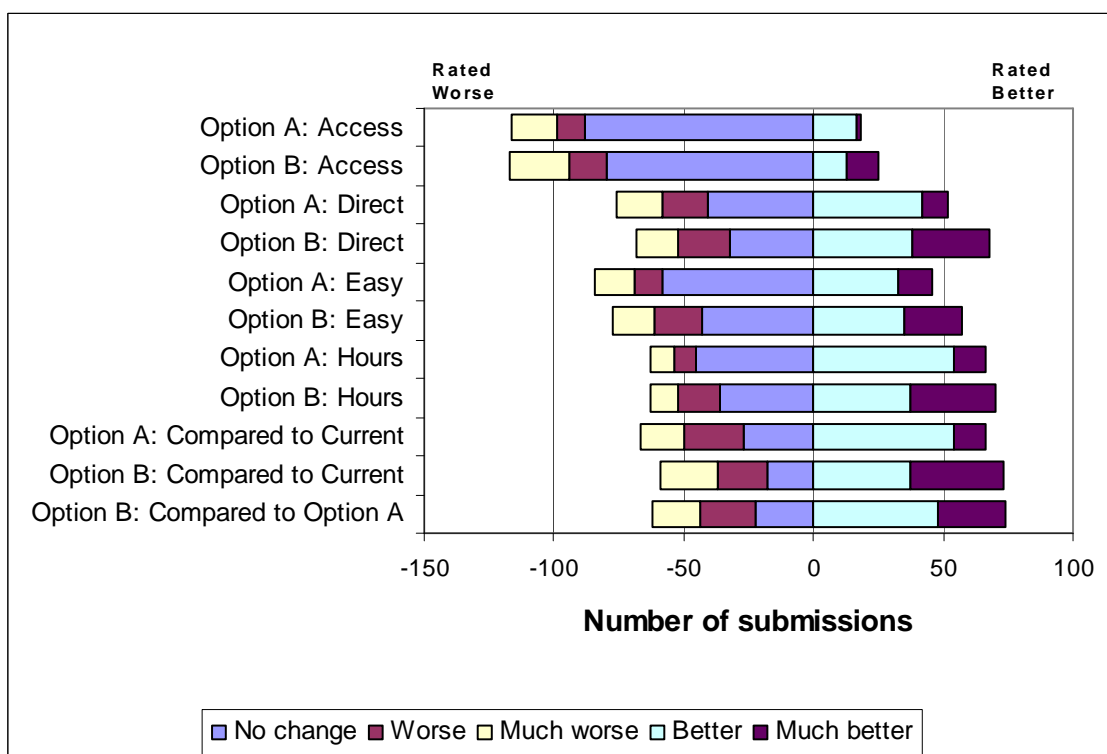


Figure 34: Option ratings for submissions from people living in Titahi Bay

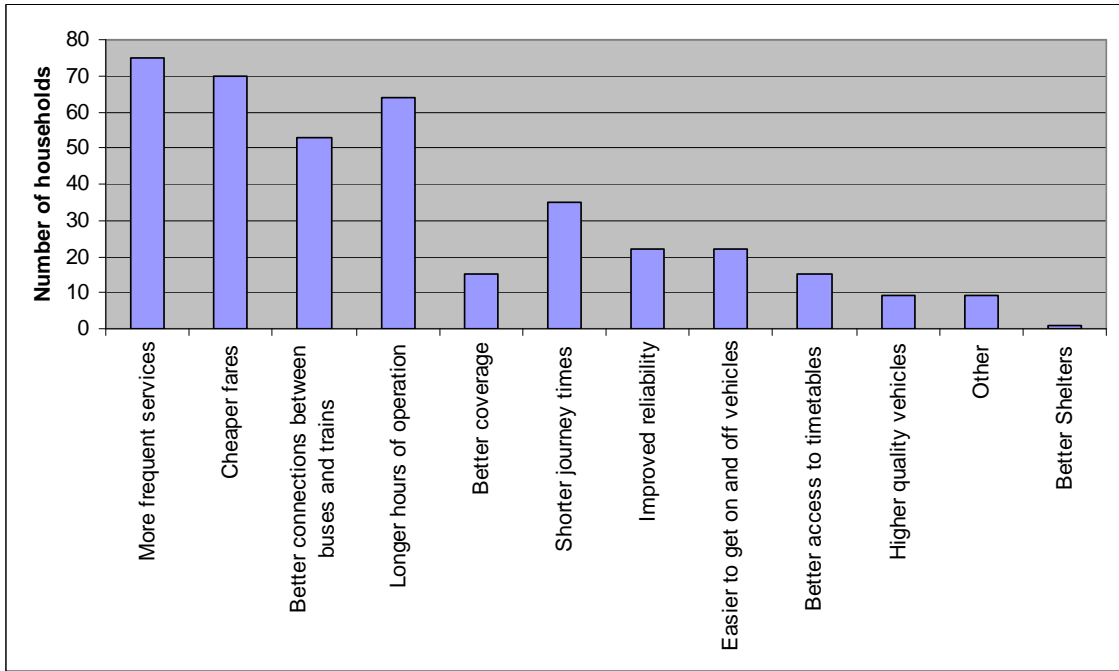


Figure 35: Most important attributes reported by people living in Titahi Bay

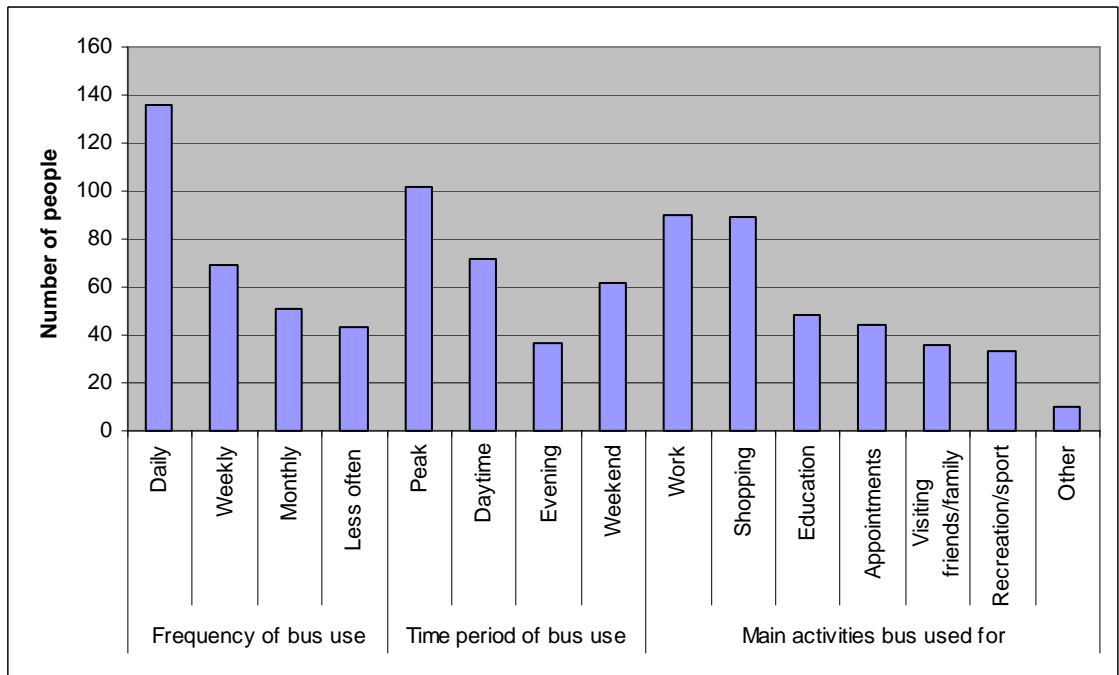


Figure 36: Frequency, time periods and main activities for bus usage reported by people living in Titahi Bay

5.9 Whitby

A number of comments questioned the need for every second bus to go to Paremata Station, although other comments supported this due to faster access to trains. The Mana Coach Services driver's submission raised concern about traffic safety and delays at the SH1 roundabout.

A number of submissions supported using the Mungavin Bridge off-ramp and using the same route through Porirua city centre for all buses. However, a number also disliked this option due to congestion at the roundabout and perceived loss of access to the Pak n Save supermarket.

There was support for later services although a number of submissions were concerned with the transfer required in Option A. Reasons for concern included reduced accessibility, safety issues especially for children and weather conditions. A number of submissions said current services should be left as is, this was especially apparent for the access to bus services attribute.

Some submissions were concerned about the removal of service to Crows Nest as it would mean a very long walk to the bus. It was commented that a number of school children use route, particularly during weekends, and their independence would be limited by a reduction in service.

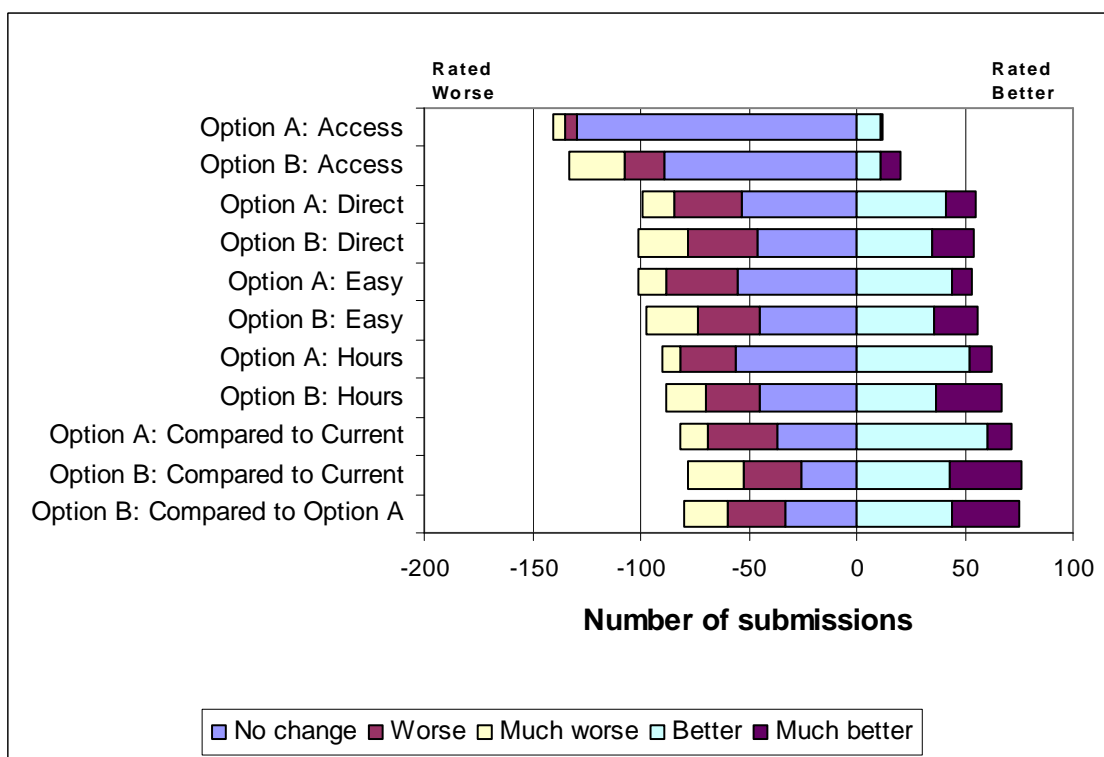


Figure 37: Option ratings for submissions from people living in Whitby

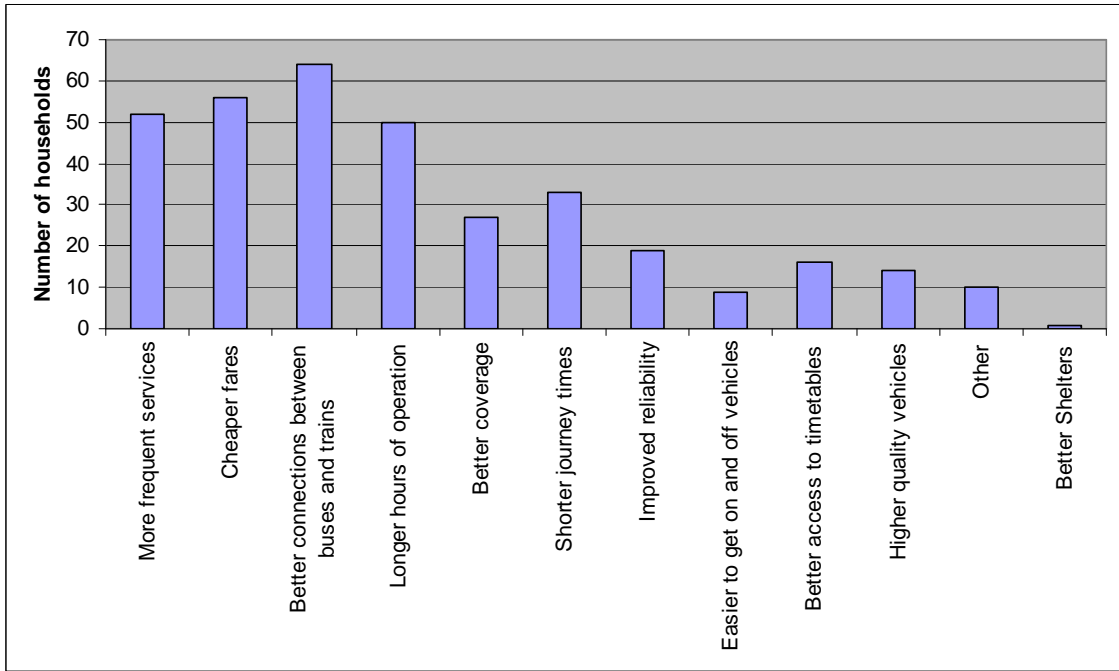


Figure 38: Most important attributes reported by people living in Whitby

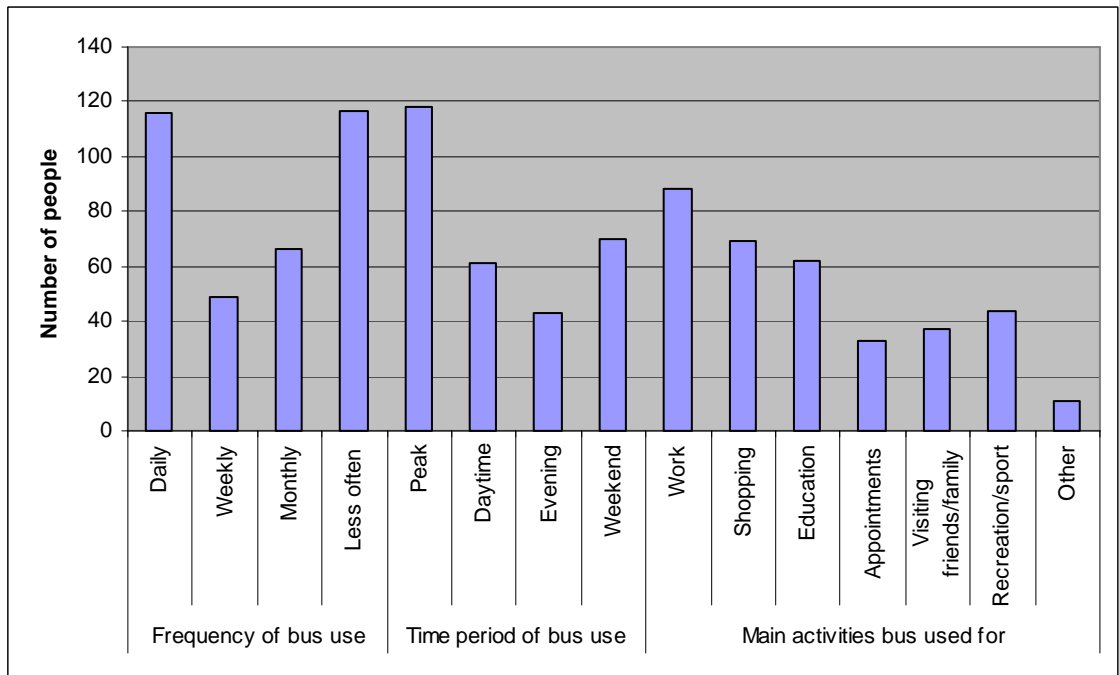


Figure 39: Frequency, time periods and main activities for bus usage reported by people living in Whitby

6. Conclusion

This report provides a brief summary of submissions made during consultation on two options for changes to bus routes in Porirua and Tawa. This report is not intended to provide a detailed analysis or explanation of submissions or trends.

There was a lot of support for increased hours and also for the proposed changes to the city centre bus route and stops. A number of submissions identified particular concern about reducing service to the top of Pikarere Street.

All the submissions will provide input into the design of bus routes and bus stop changes. These changes will be developed in consultation with the bus operator and Porirua City Council. The public will be informed of the proposed changes well before they are made.