

Tauranga Bus Network Refresh: Part 2



Considering April 2023 Consultation Feedback

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Question 1: Route 5

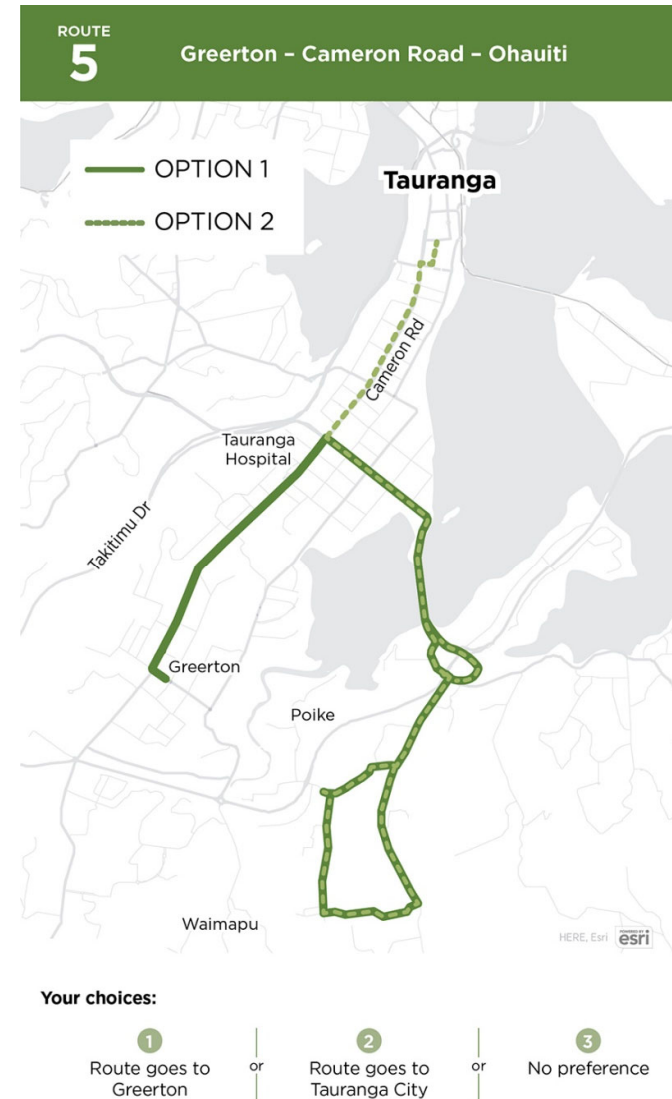
The community was asked whether they would prefer this route to terminate at Greerton or the CBD. The intention was to provide more options for Welcome Bay and Ohauiti residents, as the two routes (4 & 5) would meet along Hairini/15th Avenue, and the one would turn left onto Cameron Road and one would turn right.

The response was a very clear majority in favour of a direct route from Ohauiti to Tauranga CBD.

| | Option 1 – go to Greerton | Option 2 – go to CBD |
|--------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Participate | 34 | 96 |
| Zendesk | 2 | 6 |
| Total | 36 | 102 |

Comments from the public:

- “Gives options, but needs good, safe, well-marked transfer point with #4 service, with large shelter.”
- “I work in the CBD. No point in going to Greerton. Can't see the sense in doing that. Not unreasonable to expect to be able to stay on same bus from Ohauiti to CBD, like now. Changing busses midway is just a nonsense.”
- “Ohauiti needs a direct route. Need to create efficient interchange location at top of Ohauiti/WBay.”
- “[Go to Greerton] because that gets Ohauiti to the closest shopping centre and library the fastest. From there you can easily branch to Lakes or town.”
- “Because I work at the Hospital - I usually cycle and use the bus when I can't bike; luggage/extreme weather - the route should



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serve the hospital and Cameron road - turn left from 15th Ave onto Devonport Road, right on 18th Ave and right onto Cameron Rd."

- *"Because it is important to connect suburbs to the City and provide more access routes to the city."*
- *"I often only go as far as Greerton, but must also admit if I'm going to the city it is great to catch it in Hollister Lane and not exit until reaching the city."*
- *"Quicker into CBD where I work. No Change of bus."*
- *"There are already too many buses to go to city and I think people can transfer to other buses from Greerton to town."*
- *"Additional option for bus from Greerton to Hospital provides more flexibility."*
- *"Currently there is no way to travel directly from Ohauiti to the city. I don't see the need for this service to go to Greerton, but if it must, can it alternate 5A into city and 5B to Greerton?"*
- *"Ohauiti has no local amenities and the community relies on a direct bus service into town to access these. Also it would mean a direct route into work."*
- *"Direct CBD access to Ohauiti removing the need of transfers."*

Analysis:

The proposed route description removes the link between Ohauiti and Windermere/Greerton, and also removes the single leg trip option for school students needing to get to secondary schools on Cameron Road.

Some respondents questioned the use of Hairini/Turret Road, due to the congestion over the bridge. It is the most direct route, but also has the experiences congestion at peak times (noting there is a dedicated bus lane onto the Turret Road in the inbound direction).

Bus drivers raised concerns about the trip start/finish point at Changepoint Church – this can be resolved by moving the end point to Windermere (at Toi Ohomai).

Another concern is the loop around Rowsdale Dr/Hollister Ln. If outbound trips go from the CBD along Ohauiti Rd to Rowsdale/Hollister and finishes at Windermere, and the inbound trip goes from Windermere straight along Poike Rd back to Ohauiti Rd, then passengers from the Rowsdale/Hollister end of Ohauiti would potentially need to change buses at Windermere. Resolving this would require the inbound trip to travel the same route as the outbound trip, which would then miss out the Poike Road bus stops completely.

Staff have considered several options in response to the feedback:

Option 1: Introduce the route proposed, starting/finishing in Greerton.

Not providing a direct service to the CBD would go against the overwhelming direction provided by the community. Customers would have better access destinations on Cameron Road (south of 15th Ave), such as the Hospital and Greerton.

Option 2: Introduce the variant proposed, starting/finishing in the CBD.

This would provide a direct service to the CBD, which was the overwhelming direction provided by the community. This would require passengers to change services to access destinations on Cameron Road (south of 15th Ave), such as the Hospital and Greerton. It also does not provide a direct connection between the CBD and Toi Ohomai.

Option 3: Maintain the current Route 55.

Maintains current access to Windermere (Toi Ohomai), Greerton, Cameron Rd (schools), the Hospital and CBD. Slower journey into the CBD compared to Option 1.

Option 4: Run “direct” services to the CBD at peak times, and the current Route 55 off-peak

Like the current Route 70 (Matua), a more direct service to the CBD during peak times (via 15th Ave) would provide journey time savings for commuters. However, varying the route between the peak and off-peak could create confusion for customers if not communicated clearly. Ohauti would not have a connection to the Hospital, Tauranga Girls School and Greerton at peak times under this option.

Recommendation: Option 3

Staff recognise the overwhelming direction provided by the community that Ohauti should retain a direct service to the CBD. However, staff do not feel that the benefits of a more direct service to the CBD (via 15th Avenue) offset the loss of connectivity to Windermere (Toi Ohomai), Greerton and the Hospital. This is supported by both the current patronage data and the community feedback.

Question 2: Route 20

The community was asked whether they preferred the current route, or all trips travelling via Doncaster Dr to Pāpāmoa Plaza.

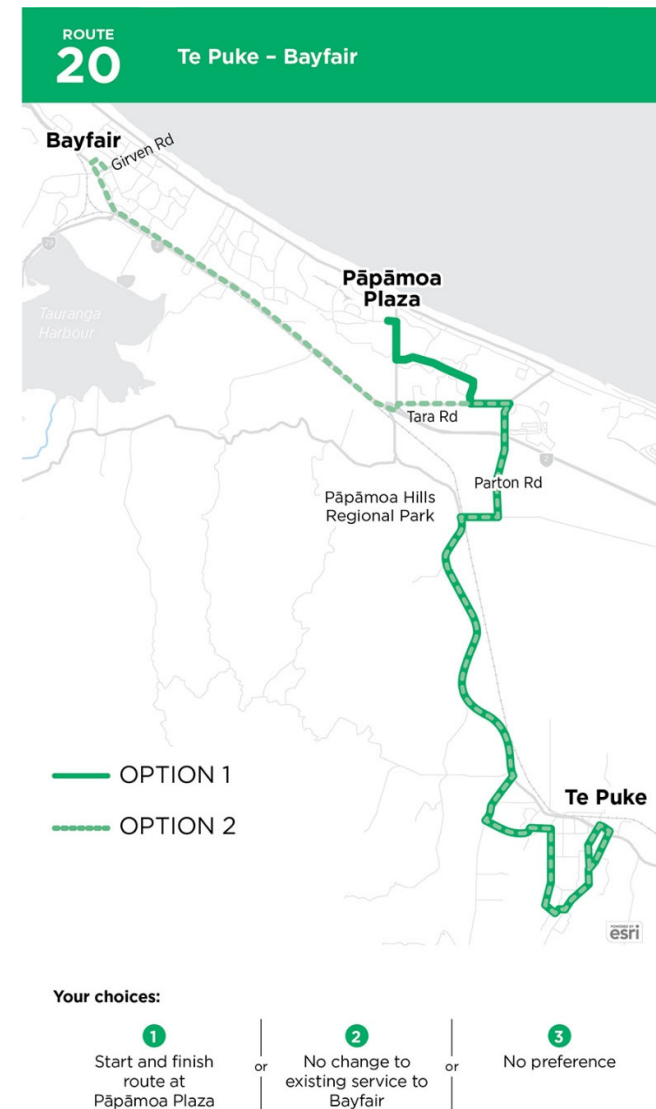
The response was a split, with a small majority in favour of the bus continuing to travel to Bayfair, as it currently does.

| | Option 1 – stop at Pāpāmoa Plaza | Option 2 – continue to Bayfair |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Participate | 42 | 47 |
| Zendesk | 2 | 4 |
| Total | 44 | 51 |

Many respondents preferred a different option - suggestions included express peak time services between Te Puke and Bayfair, with all off peak services travelling to Bayfair via Pāpāmoa Plaza; or all services travelling to both Pāpāmoa Plaza and Bayfair.

Comments from the public:

- *"It enables Te Puke residents to travel to Papamoa Plaza (not currently available), and then to transfer to the Mount or Tauranga from there."*
- *"More and more people are living in Te Puke, for myself to take a bus to my employer (Zespri - one of the biggest in the region) I would need to take three buses on a very indirect route to get there - needs to be a single bus to a central terminus."*
- *"Farm St is presently the main hub to get a bus to Tauranga City. Sometimes I also take my bike on the Te Puke bus and ride from Bayfair. This is because the 2W or 2B are usually very full and standing room only."*



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- *“Gives good option for Papamoa people to get to Te Puke and vice versa, and avoids problematic Bayfair area. There should also be peak-time express services between Te Puke and CBD and/or Mount.”*
- *“Have caught this from Bayfair and want it to remain starting at Bayfair”*
- *“Would prefer if bus stopped at Plaza, then onto Bayfair, would give options for either shopping centre without having to catch second bus.”*
- *“It seems like a hassle for people traveling from Te Puke to Bayfair to have to change to another bus at the Plaza.”*
- *“This would reduce the traffic issues and delays catching connecting services at Bayfair.”*
- *“[Bayfair has] better continuance and connectivity for The Puke passengers to either the City or Mt Maunganui than transferring at Papamoa Plaza.”*
- *“Connects Te Puke to Papamoa Plaza. Creates another option for travel for leisure purposes in weekends from Te Puke to Papamoa. The starting point at the Plaza caters to more people living in Papamoa. Removes duplicate service to Bayfair.”*
- *“Shortening the route seems pretty short sighted, you want to encourage people onto the bus, until you get a frequent (min 10 mins) service, transfers are always going to be a barrier.”*
- *“There’s still direct access from the cbd at either points.”*

Analysis:

Currently all services travel between Bayfair and Te Puke via Tara Road, with only the school time trips travelling via Doncaster Dr / Pāpāmoa Plaza / Grenada St.

Almost half of all respondents wanted to see the route continue to serve Bayfair, although some respondents were not aware that transfers to Route 2B/2W to get to the CBD were just as frequent at Papamoa Plaza.

If the buses all terminate at Pāpāmoa Plaza, students travelling to Toi Ohomai would be disadvantaged, they would need to transfer a second time at Bayfair to get to Windermere.

Some customers currently use Route 20 from Te Puke to Bayfair and then Route 5 to get to Mount Maunganui for work.

When looking at the data, 30% of all passengers travelling from Te Puke did not tag off, reducing our ability to fully understand current travel patterns. Data for complete trips (Jan-Apr 2023) shows around 20% of all passengers get off at Tara Road, likely to predominantly be school students travelling to Pāpāmoa College. The second highest destination is Bayfair, with 15% of all journeys ending at that point.

Looking at boardings from Bayfair, over 50% of passengers get off at stops in Te Puke. This indicates that there is both a need and demand for a single leg service between Bayfair and Te Puke.

Through this refresh, options to reduce the number of services starting and finishing at Bayfair (Farm Street) have been considered. Shortening this route to start and finish at Pāpāmoa Plaza does achieve this, however given that this is only two trips per hour (one inbound and one outbound), it does not present a significant reduction.

Staff have considered several options in response to the feedback:

Option 1: Terminate all trips at Pāpāmoa Plaza

Whilst the feedback was not unanimously against this option, feedback and data suggests that this option is likely to cause disruption to several customer groups.

Option 2: No change to the existing service

Whilst the feedback did not unanimously support this option, there was a marginal preference for no changes to be made to the current service.

Option 3: Run all services to Bayfair, routing all via Doncaster/Pāpāmoa Plaza/Grenada St.

This option would provide the highest level of connectivity but increase journey times at peak times.

Option 4: No change to the existing peak service. All off-peak services to continue to travel to Bayfair, but to be routed via Pāpāmoa Plaza.

This option would retain the faster peak connection to Bayfair for commuters and provide enhanced connectivity to Pāpāmoa Plaza off-peak.

Recommendation: Option 4

This provides the best balance between all factors. Whilst it will lead to slightly longer peak journey times to Bayfair in the off-peak, it will increase the number of destinations accessible from Te Puke.

Question 3: Route 21

The community was asked if this route should continue travelling the current route around Maranui Street or change to travel along more of Gloucester Road.

| | Option 1 – change to Gloucester Rd | Option 2 – stay on Maranui St |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Participate | 42 | 14 |
| Zendesk | 7 | 4 |
| Total | 49 | 18 |

Many of the respondents on Participate had no preference or were happy with either option. Of those that had a preference, there was a significant inclination towards Gloucester Road

Since the last network change in December 2018, Regional Council have received a number of requests for this service to cover more of Gloucester Road.

Recommendation: Gloucester Road

Change the route to travel via Gloucester Road as per the proposal.

ROUTE 21 **Mt Maunganui – Bayfair – Pāpāmoa Plaza**

Legend:

- OPTION 1
- - - Return trip via Grenada St
- OPTION 2

Your choices:

1
 Change route to go via Gloucester Road

or

2
 No change to existing service via Maranui Street

or

3
 No preference

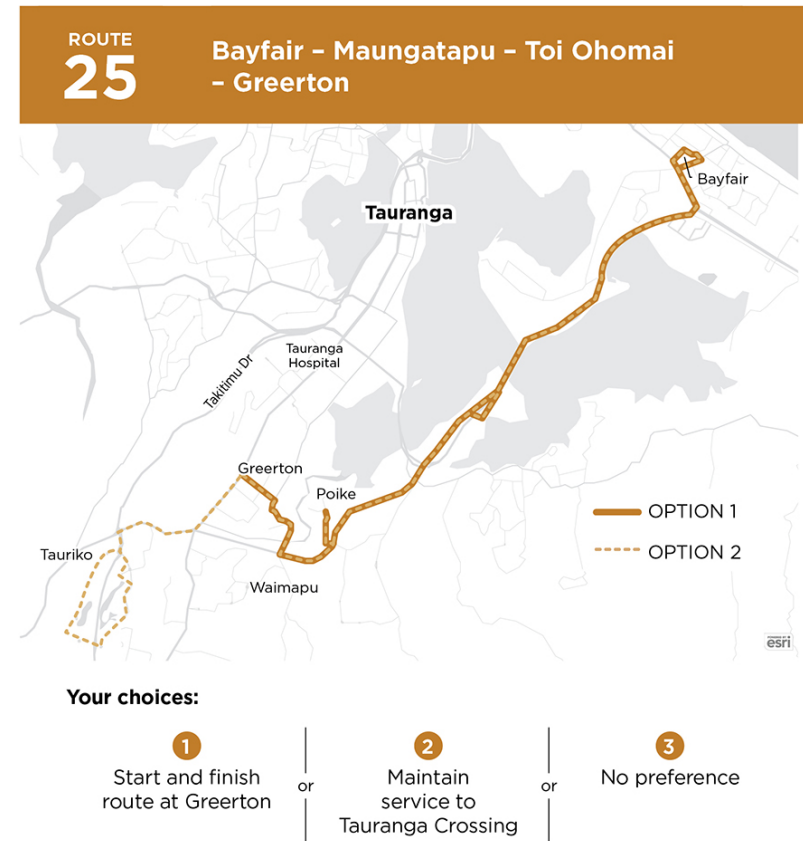
Question 4: Route 25

The community was asked if the proposed route, which is a replacement for the current CT route, should terminate in Greerton or continue on to Tauranga Crossing as it currently does. Terminating in Greerton would require passengers to change onto Route 1 to get to Tauranga Crossing.

| | Option 1 – stop at Greerton | Option 2 – continue to Tauranga Crossing |
|-------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Participate | 24 | 75 |
| Zendesk | 1 | 5 |
| Total | 25 | 80 |

Comments from the public:

- “Students going to Toi Ohomai from Lakes/Pyes Pā [currently] take one bus. It works well now.”
- “Long route. Can get the bus from Greerton to Tauranga Crossing.”
- “Removes duplicate service.”
- “This route passes very popular bus destinations and is very convenient.”
- “Sometimes I like to visit The Crossing and it’s good to have this option for non-drivers.”
- “Students travelling to Windermere Polytechnic from Lakes currently catch this bus. My daughter does. It’s needed!”
- “Good route for shoppers in order to have a non-stop connection between the two major shopping centres.”
- “Buses between two major shopping areas outside the CBD are important for both workers & shoppers.”
- “More destinations. Tauranga Crossing is a big destination.”
- “It’s obvious in that it saves taking my car out.”



Staff have considered the following options

Option 1: Keep the proposed route, terminating at Greerton.

This introduces a transfer for those passengers wanting to travel between Greerton and Tauranga Crossing. This was only preferred by 24% of respondents.

Option 2: Maintain the current CT route

This was preferred by 76% of respondents. It should be noted that traffic congestion at Barks Corner can create reliability issues during peak periods.

Recommendation: Option 2

There was significant support from respondents to maintain the connection to Tauranga Crossing.

Question 5: Evening services

Whilst not intended to be introduced as part of this refresh, staff were interested in capturing the public demand for later services.

There was a substantial amount of positive feedback, with many respondents referencing shift workers, the hospital and hospitality workers having access to bus services that suit shift times.

Some respondents raised concerns in relation to lighting at bus stops, and safety of both drivers and passengers.

Comments from the public:

- *"From the CBD I cannot get home after dinner, after a movie, after work, after evening yoga or whatever brings me into town. Would LOVE to use public transport but it won't bring me home after 7:00pm!"*
- *"I don't think it should be too late unless driver safety can be assured."*
- *"At least later for the summer months, sucks having a curfew due to the buses because I don't drive."*
- *"Options for those who need to travel by bus for work."*

- *"Waste of money, would be cheaper to provide free taxis."*
- *"I sometimes work late. The last bus [from Tauranga] CBD to Ohauiti is currently 7.45pm. A later bus would be amazing."*
- *"Because most of night events finish in Mount finish around 1ish on weekends."*
- *"10pm during week, and 11 or 12 Thurs, Fri, Sat to allow people to go into the city centres."*
- *"As a young single female, I would feel better knowing I have options to get home safe later in the afternoon."*
- *"Because some people finish work late, so it will make it easier for them to get home sooner."*
- *"I live in Te Puna and the last bus is at 5pm."*
- *"Allows options to dine in Tauranga CBD."*
- *"Decrease people drinking and driving."*
- *"No preference, wouldn't feel safe travelling at those times on my own."*
- *"Because many people work late shifts."*
- *"Because you can go to the later things like movies etc, and not have to rush to get to the last bus, and you don't want to be stuck in town, when having to come to Welcome Bay, as a Taxi is expensive to come back in."*
- *"Allows better access to dining/hospitality options at Mount."*
- *"Staff at hospital finish evening shifts at 10:30pm."*
- *"If nothing else it will be a factor to reduce drink driving!! Gives people options to socialise in different areas without the exorbitant taxi fares to get home (\$50 Mount to Tauranga South for example!)"*
- *"Great for staff working in the hospitality trade & also for the economy of our city."*
- *"Covers shift workers."*

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- *“In a city this size, although convenient for a few, it would be minimally used beyond 10pm, unless maybe on weekends.”*
- *“It would be amazing to have buses to allow night workers get home to the "major" locations - Mount, Bayfair, Papamoa Plaza, Greerton - but understand passenger numbers may not make this feasible. Trial midnight.”*

Analysis:

Any additional of late-night services will need to consider driver and passenger safety, both on the bus and at bus stops. There appears to be a huge amount of support for later services, specifically for shift and hospitality workers, as well as those wishing to socialise later into the evening.

If late night services are restricted to Friday and Saturdays, they will benefit those going out socially, but not shift workers. For this reason, the target market for night services needs careful consideration. Restricting operation to certain days also creates operational challenges, specifically around driver rostering.

Routes 1 and 2 were the most popular choices for extended operating hours, followed by Route 4, 5 and 21.

Recommendation: Public Transport Committee to consider instructing staff to further explore the feasibility of night services.

Other Issues Considered

Whilst specific questions were not asked around the issues below, feedback was received on several items which may require addressing as part on the refresh proposal.

Pillans Pt to Otumoetai College/Intermediate

A number of students attending these schools who live in the Pillans Point area currently these students use Route 60 or 72. The proposal removes these services and does not offer a direct alternative.

Under the refresh proposal, students travelling from Pillans Point or the Eastern half of Ngatai Road would either need to change buses at Brookfield or walk some distance to access Route 7.

Otumoetai Intermediate has confirmed that approximately 30 students currently catch Route 60 outside the school, although it's not clear which direction they travel in. Numbers from Otumoetai College are unknown.

It is important to resolve this gap in service. Staff have considered the following options.

Option 1: Provide a dedicated school service from Pillans Point to Otumoetai College/Intermediate via Ngatai Road.

Whilst it would resolve the gap in service under the proposed network, this solution would drive a cost increase.

Option 2: Have a variation on Route 8 at school times, to travel via Ngatai/Windsor Road instead of via Otumoetai Road.

School travel from these locations is against the tidal commuter flow, therefore varying the route is not likely to inconvenience many non-school customers. This solution also presents a more efficient use of resources.

The route variance at school times will need to be clearly communicated to avoid confusion.

Recommendation: Option 2

Matua

The suburb of Matua is currently well furnished with buses, with up to five urban services travelling around it each hour during peak times. Considering the number of buses, patronage from Matua is comparably low.

Matua currently receives an all-day service from Route 71, which travels to the CBD via Otumoetai and Waihi Road, as well as the part day Route 70 service, traveling to the CBD via Chapel Street.

Under the refresh proposal, the operating hours of the current Route 70 would be significantly reduced to a couple of services in the peak. This reduces opportunity to travel via the quickest route to the CBD, as well as to the closest large supermarket at Bureta.

Some respondents did express a desire to maintain the connection to Bureta.

Analysis:

The data indicates that Route 70 is not well patronised, with only two full inbound trips (62% school students) in the mornings and very little usage on any outbound morning trips. In the afternoons, most of the outbound trips to Matua operate with an average of 2-3 passengers, and most of the inbound trips to the CBD run empty.

Staff have considered the following options:

Option 1: Stick to the proposed route changes.

This provides access to Brookfield Shops rather than Bureta, and provides some peak time direct trips via Chapel St.

Option 2: Consider alternating all day, with one trip via Chapel St and one trip via Bellevue (Ngatai/Windsor).

This would provide maximum coverage, but could create confusion for customers.

Recommendation: Option 1

The patronage data does not support the need for an all-day service to be maintained via Chapel Street.

Pyes Pā

The proposal was to introduce Route 23, traveling between Tauranga Hospital and Tauranga Crossing via Gate Pā, Greerton, Pyes Pā Road, Kennedy Road and Lakes Boulevard. In the reverse direction it would travel around the Inverness/Condor/Cheyne loop.

An unintended consequence would result in customers from the Inverness/Condor/Cheyne loop area being able to get to Greerton and the hospital, but not being able to get home again. Similarly, residents on some stretches of Pyes Pā Road would be able to get to Tauranga Crossing, but not back.

The proposal also removed Pyes Pā's direct service to the CBD, requiring customers to transfer onto the proposed Route 1 in Greerton.

The proposed route was not well received by the community and created a degree of confusion. A number of comments were made around the loss of a direct connection to the CBD.

There was coverage in the media about buses not serving stops directly outside Grace Hospital. It should be noted that Baybus services have not used these stops since 2018. There was not significant mention of Grace Hospital in feedback received through the consultation.

Considering the feedback received, staff propose the option below.

Extend the proposed Route 3 to Pyes Pā, serving the same roads as the current Route 1

Staff will consider whether every Route 3 trip should be extended to Pyes Pā, and also rationalise the proposed Route 23 so that it travels directly along Pyes Pā Road.

Staff will also contact Grace Hospital to understand the feasibility of buses travelling into the hospital site.

Route 23

Most travel on the current Route 59 is between the CBD and Tauranga Hospital. As this section of Cameron Road is being covered by the new Route 1, it was proposed to shorten this route so that it started and finished at Tauranga Hospital.

The intention of Route 23 was to provide a single bus journey between Pyes Pā and Tauranga Hospital, without the need to change buses in Greerton.

Some respondents suggested that Route 23 should continue to travel the length of Cameron Road into the CBD.

The data suggests that stops on Clarke St (Historic Village), Coopers Rd and Watling St each average 1-2 boardings / alightings per day. Whilst the CBD is a popular origin for these trips, 50% originate from locations south of the hospital.

Staff considered several options.

Option 1: Stay with the proposed route, requiring a transfer to get from the Coopers Rd/Watling St area to the CBD.

Note that elsewhere in this document it is recommended to remove the Inverness/Condor/Cheyne loop from Route 23 so that it travels directly along Pyes Pā Road.

Option 2: Extend the proposed route through to the CBD.

This provides a single leg journey for passengers from Coopers Rd/Watling St. However, there is an overlap with Route 1 for most of the run, which customers can use to access the hospital.

Recommendation: Option 1

Route 22

Some respondents wrote in about Route 22, which travels via Range Rd and Pāpāmoa Beach Rd. It was suggested that the route would be faster and more direct if it travelled along Grenada St to Sandhurst Rd. This alternative route is more central and would likely be convenient for more people.

Looking at six months of data from July-Dec 2022, a total of 20,392 people boarded Route 22. 478 people boarded route 22 on the stops along Pāpāmoa Beach Rd & Range Rd (2.3%). 295 of those were on Pāpāmoa Beach Rd (fronting #216) and 100 boardings were on Range Road.

Recommendation: Alter Route 22 to travel between Sandhurst Dr and Evans Rd on Grenada St

The more central nature of the route should enable it to serve a larger catchment of residents. It should be noted that feedback was not requested in relation to this change.



Bayfair – Mt Maunganui

Removing the current Route 5 will remove the current frequent connection between Bayfair and Mount Maunganui.

Some respondents were concerned about travelling to large employers on the Mount (such as Zespri) as well as other businesses along Maunganui Road.

Currently, Route 21 travels between Bayfair and Mt Maunganui via Concord Ave, Oceanbeach Rd, Tweed St, Hart St, Marine Pde, Adams Ave, Maunganui Rd.

Bus stops along this part of the route are not well patronised, with only 101 boardings in six months heading towards the Mount. Boardings in the

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other direction (heading from the Mount towards Bayfair) are higher – 679 in six months.

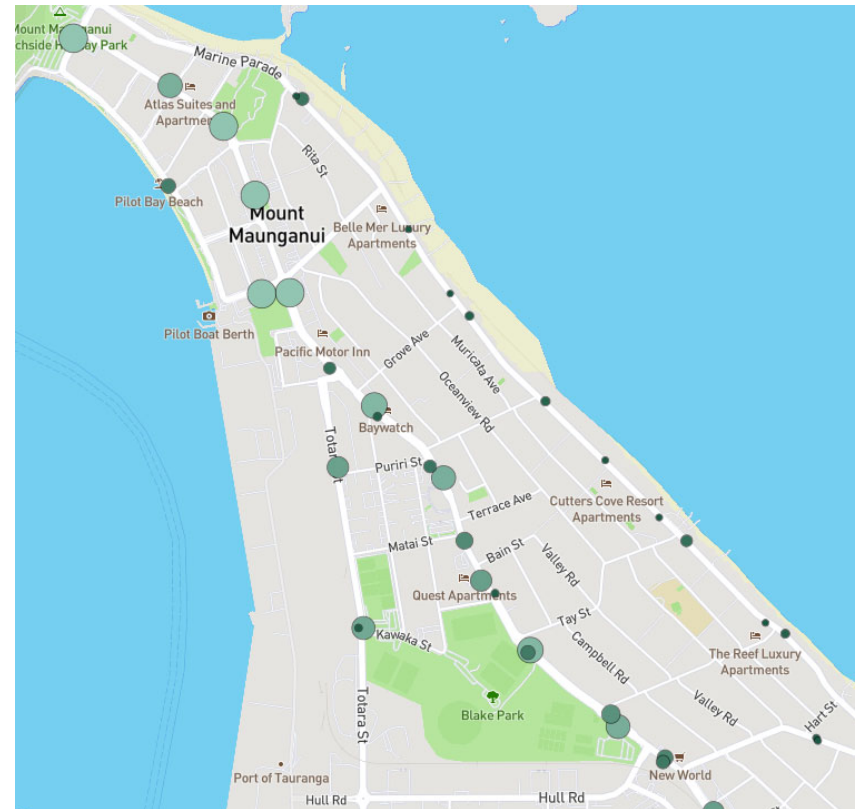
Analysis:

Boarding data on current Route 21 shows very low usage along Oceanbeach Road and Marine Parade. There are also operational challenges with the bus stops on Marine Parade, particularly in the Southbound direction, with drivers being unable to clearly sight passengers. The road can also become very congested during the holiday season.

The table below shows the average daily boardings from March 2023 for stops along Marine Parade.

| Stop Name | Average Daily Boardings |
|---|-------------------------|
| Marine Parade - Banks Avenue | 0 |
| Marine Parade - Clyde Street | 0 |
| Marine Parade - Fronting 136 | 0 |
| Marine Parade - Grove Avenue | 0 |
| Marine Parade - Opposite 134 | 0 |
| Marine Parade - Opposite Clyde Street | 1 |
| Marine Parade - Opposite Grove Avenue | 1 |
| Marine Parade - Opposite Sutherland Avenue | 1 |
| Marine Parade - Opposite Tay Street | 2 |
| Marine Parade - Pacific Avenue | 3 |
| Marine Parade - Pacific Avenue (northbound) | 0 |
| Marine Parade - Sutherland Avenue | 0 |
| Marine Parade - Tay Street | 0 |
| TOTAL | 9 |

The map below shows boardings on the Mount, with the circle sizes representing boardings in March 2023. The prevalence of boarding on Maunganui Road (vs Marine Parade) can be seen.



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Staff have considered the following options

Option 1: Alter the route of Route 21 so that it travels via Links Avenue and Maunganui Road

The frequency would also be increased to provide a more frequent service (currently hourly), particularly at peak times. This option would see the removal of all buses from Marine Parade.

Option 2: Maintain the current route via Marine Parade

This provides a less direct trip for commuters from Papamoa and Te Puke wanting to locations along Maunganui Road.

Recommendation: Option 1 (as below)



It should be noted that feedback was not requested in relation to this change.

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Updated Network Map

