

Christchurch City Council  
53 Hereford Street,  
Christchurch Central City,  
Christchurch 8013

Kei te rangatira, tēnā koe,

We are writing on behalf of the Christchurch Youth Council (CYC) to submit to the Long-Term Plan. We have been surveying young people from all corners of Ōtautahi and all avenues of life to help the Christchurch City Council (CCC) better develop the Long-Term Plan. We have surveyed five key areas that we decided were imperative for you to hear the youth's voices. The areas are Climate change, Mental health, Riccarton bus lounge, Cycle lanes, and Central library hours. CYC gathered this information by going into the CBD and consulting and surveying young people and an online survey we had a total of 287 surveys.

The **Christchurch Youth Council / Rūnaka Taiohi o Ōtautahi (CYC)** is dedicated to **advocating for a strong youth voice** in Christchurch. We aim to provide young people with the avenue to have their say. We aim to create a community where the youth voice is as valued as **all others** in the community. Imagine every big conversation about Christchurch's future having a young person around the table: **that's our dream!**

**Our Kaupapa:**

- 1) Support and strengthen youth voices.
- 2) Encourage active citizenship
- 3) Create inclusive spaces for young people.
- 4) Foster and build networks and relationships.
- 5) Celebrate and uplift diversity amongst young people.

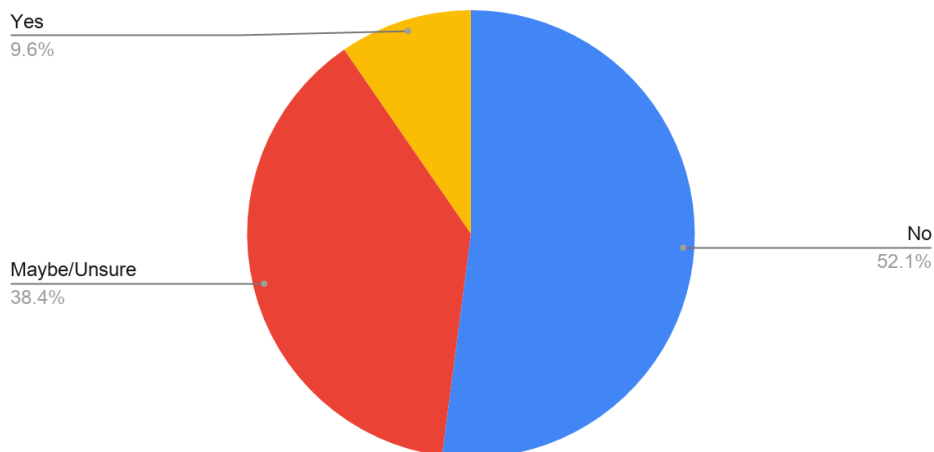
The Christchurch Youth Council would like to thank the engagement team for taking the time to meet with Te Pae Pikari (CCC standing committee) to present the budget tool, and areas that might be of specific interest to young people, this was valuable for CYC to be able to create a youth-friendly survey gathering feedback on key aspects of the plan which we thought were of particular interest to young people.

Please be aware that the content of this submission is based on the survey responses, discussions we had internally with our membership, and conclusions drawn from the Christchurch Youth Action Plan (YAP). We are not representative of all of the young people in Christchurch. Young people in Christchurch may disagree with the statements made throughout this submission. We would expect and value this as no two people have the same voice or opinion.

## Climate Change

We asked the youth of Christchurch two questions about climate change: “do you think the council is doing enough to combat climate change? (1)” and “do you support more youth in climate-making decisions? (2)”. From surveying, we concluded that young people do not think the CCC is doing enough to combat climate change, and after reading your draft climate change strategy we understand why youth feel this way. The word “youth” which was only mentioned twice within the draft, and that is not good enough. We will be the generation most affected by climate change, and we believe that young people should have more opportunities to have a say in this process. 82% of youth agree that we should have more input on the city's climate change actions. Within the climate change strategy that is part of the long-term plan, we identify principles that young people and CYC could be included as collaborative, seeking opportunities, being equitable and inclusive, providing climate education in schools, and promoting youth voices and leadership. With these principles and CYC’s Memorandum of Understanding in mind, we would recommend that you appoint some CYC members or other youth representatives to support the development of the climate change strategy. We also believe that the council should consult with other youth groups such as school strikes for climate, UCSA, Ecan, and many other young environmentalist groups. These groups also have a significant connection with youth within our region, and it is critical we acknowledge this and take advantage of these underutilized groups. This will also fulfill a part of the Christchurch Youth Action Plan 6.1 *Consideration* as it will be connected with existing youth groups and allow for strengthened communications. It would be nothing but an honor to function alongside the City Council to pursue a better Christchurch.

### Do you think the council is doing enough to combat climate change?(1)

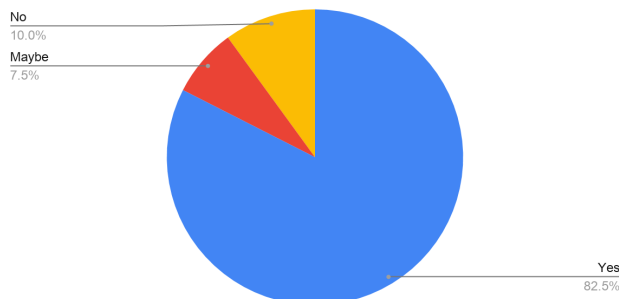


## Mental Health

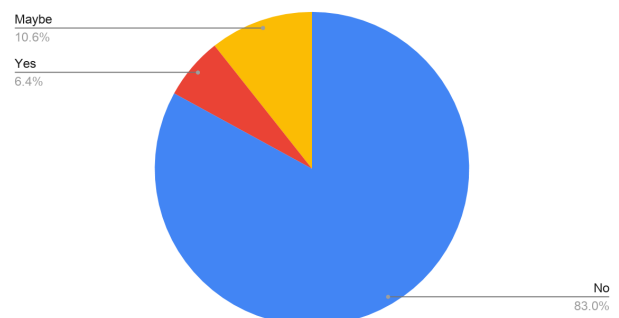
Mental health is an issue that we identified in Ōtautahi; therefore, within our survey, we asked two questions: “Do you think the government is doing enough to combat mental health? (3)” and “What could be done to support young people’s mental health? (4)” From the survey results, it is evident that the local and central governments are not doing enough. The young people who completed our survey mentioned one or more of the three most important key areas: funding, normalization, and education. The funding comments were about how there was often a cost barrier for attending counseling alongside not enough counselors, which is also an issue that was identified in the youth action plan (2.1.1). This issue needs to be addressed when youth are in crisis, and there are no adequate resources to help our youth; we see concerns. Hence, it is crucial to have funding to combat mental health within the long-term plan. Normalization is another issue for youth. The stigma young people face can be represented through anything from bullying, exclusion, stereotyping, and many other forms of discrimination. Youth want mental health to be more normalized, which will result in more openness, more discussion, and change for the better.

One point to address this stigma is having mental health events and campaigns much like the #okmovement, which focuses on how it is ok to not be ok. With events and an online campaign focusing on education, and mental health basics, we would see incredible success in normalizing mental health amongst young people and a further step of increasing funding for more free counseling we could tackle mental health. We would recommend that the council looks into funding education or events about mental health as this is a crisis and it needs addressing.

Do you support more youth being involved in decision-making in climate policy?(2)



Do you think the government is doing enough to combat mental

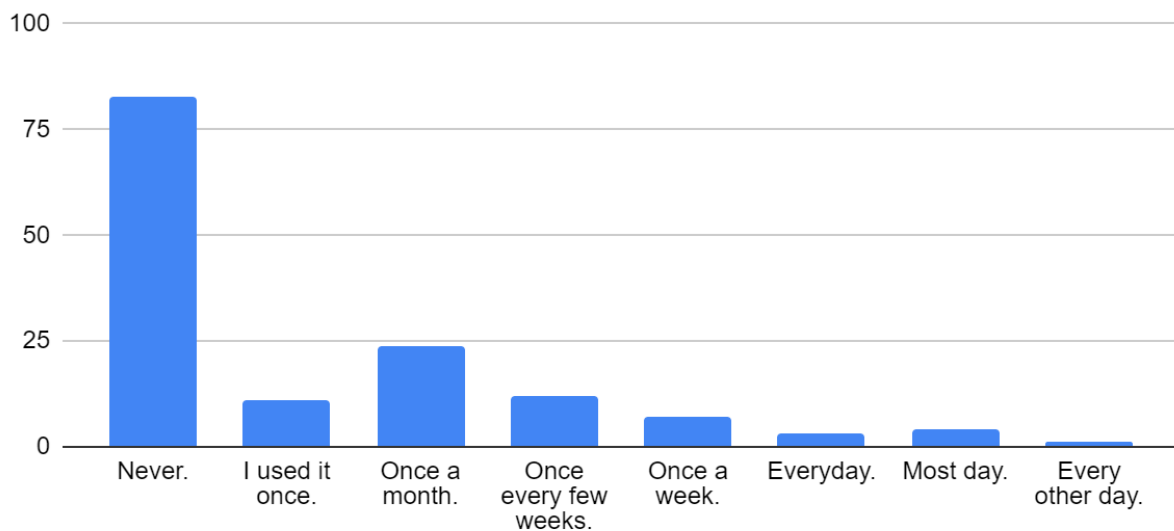


## Riccarton Bus Lounge

Within the long-term plan, the Riccarton bus lounge is being closed and we wanted to hear youths’ voices about this. Hence we posed a question in our survey “How often do you use the Riccarton bus lounge?” Most people said they never used it, we would like to acknowledge our statistical bias here, we were surveying in the CBD where over the weekend, and may not have captured local Riccarton bus users, or Riccarton school-aged young people. We would assume this affects some young people

significantly however most will not be directly affected by the closure. Some young women aged 12 to 16 said between the ages of 12 and 16 said they had concerns about their safety with the bus lounge closing. We would also like to note that 28% of young people said that safety was a concern when using public transport. Because of this, we recommend that council and Environment Canterbury further consult with young people to ensure bussing is safe for them.

## Count of How often in a month do you use the Riccarton bus lounge?

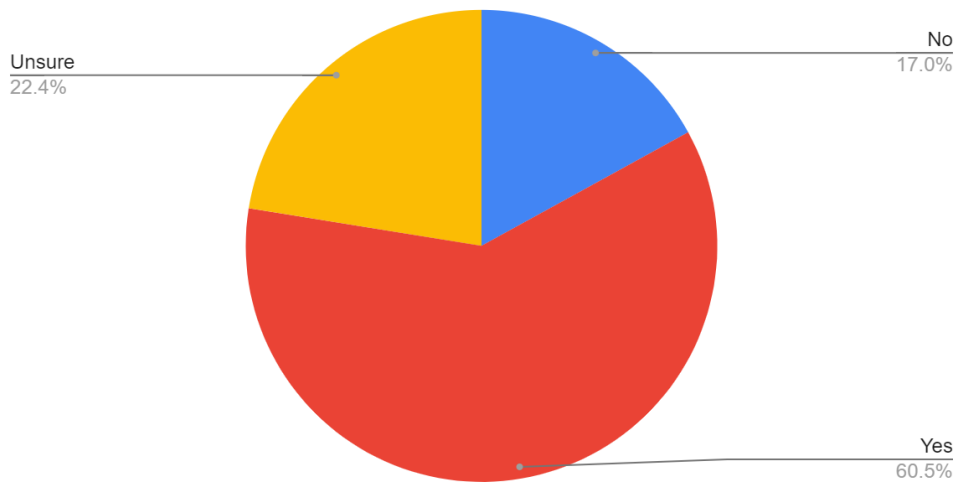


Count of How often in a month do you use the Riccarton bus lounge?

## Cycle Lanes

Cycle lanes were a thing we wanted to survey young people in Christchurch. Most young people support building more cycleways as they make it safer and encourage more people to cycle. The council's development of more cycleways is also successful within the youth action plan (1.4.3). One idea to further improve this is to do something similar to Gotcha Whakatane, in which they give out prizes to youth cycling along main routes and the prizes get better if people are wearing helmets and following the road rules. An initiative like this would further promote cycling to school, work, polytech, and university alongside increasing youths' confidence to use their bikes!

### Count of Do you feel that the city would be improved if it had more, higher-quality cycleways?



## Library Services and Hours

Another thing that concerned us with the long-term plan was the changing Tūranga library hours so we asked the question “The City Council is proposing to reduce the Tūranga library's hours to close on weekdays at 7 pm, would this impact your use of the library?” Most youth we surveyed were not going to be affected by the change in hours although 25% that will be affected. We feel that the proposed hour reduction will affect young people more than other demographics. The library is used by young people to complete schoolwork, use the internet for things like job applications, researching and learning, and socializing, this will particularly affect young people and families who have little or no access at home. These reductions will also affect community groups such as ourselves who use the libraries for public events. Most events for young people occur in the evenings or weekends, as to not clash with work or school.

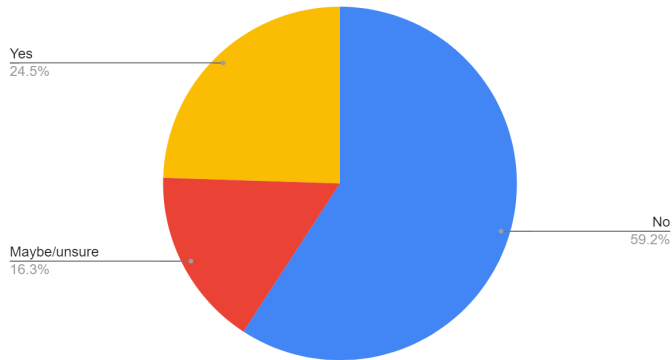
To assist the people that will be affected one solution that was mentioned was the possibility of working with Universities and poly techs to make their libraries public and free. This idea would also work with the youth action plan (3.4.3) as it will help build a sense of community amongst youth by further bringing a mixture of people. This would occur as we would see tertiary students mix with other young people and further encourage exchanges of ideas and further build a sense of community.

We would also like to recommend that community groups might be able to use the library for events outside of regular hours. If the library is under-utilised at these times, we would like to recommend free event bookings for youth and community organizations at these times to increase users.

We feel that it is not equitable to reduce these hours and services, which will affect a significant number

of young people and whānau, we, therefore, are opposed to this proposal.

Will you be effected by the Tūranga library's hours



## Strengthening Community Funding

This section is the thoughts of the CYC Executive Committee only, as we did not externally consult about this issue. We found this a difficult concept to pass on to young people in survey format, however we feel that as young people in the community space it is important to put forth our organisation's perspective.

The LTP proposes reducing the Strengthening Communities Funding from \$7.65M in 2021/22 to \$7.30M by 2028/29.

We very much disagree with cuts to Strengthening Communities grants. This fund has a long history of supporting the community and the youth sector in really significant ways, communities tend to lean on these services particularly in times of strife like the Earthquakes, Terror Attack and Covid Pandemic. We therefore propose that CCC prioritise these grassroots on the ground organisations, and increase the strengthening communities fund.

Strengthening Communities grants provide the public services through these difficult periods. The organisations who receive the funding are key to the community, build resilience, support whānau and provide youth development. One of CCC's community outcomes is Resilient Communities, we feel that the organisations which receive grants from this fund are vital in CCC's ability to maintain or develop: Strong sense of community, active participation in civic life, safe and healthy communities, celebration of our identity through arts, culture, heritage, sport and recreation and valuing the voices of all cultures and ages (including children).

(<https://ccc.govt.nz/the-council/how-the-council-works/20182028-vision/community-outcomes/>)

## Summary

- We recommend you appoint some CYC members or other youth representatives to support the development of the climate change strategy
- We recommend CCC looks into funding education or events about mental health as this is a crisis and it needs addressing.
- We recommend CCC work with Environment Canterbury to further consult with young people to ensure bussing is safe for them
- We support cycleway development and recommend further positive promotion of use.
- We do not support reduction of library services and hours, and recommend you create initiatives to encourage library use in these “low turnout” times
- We recommend that you work with alternative libraries / community spaces to provide alternatives if reductions are followed through with
- We disagree with reduction to the strengthening communities fund, and recommend you prioritise promoting resilient and strong community and increase this fund

## Conclusion

We would like to thank you for this opportunity to submit to the long-term plan and look forward to seeing you at the oral submission to answer any and all questions you have.

Ngā Mihi,

Bryant McIntyre  
Christchurch Youth Council Executive Member

Jayden Meads  
Christchurch Youth Council Chairperson