# Zone 0 – free buses in Central Christchurch

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| Up until the February 2011 earthquake, Christchurch had a free bus service in the central city. The yellow hybrid buses were much loved. There have been constant calls to re-introduce the so-called Shuttle. Over the years, several Council agenda items have dealt with the issue, but we aren’t any closer having the topic resolved. The stumbling block is a lack of funds and the question of who is responsible for providing the service.I’ve developed an alternative proposal – make all existing buses free within the central city area, but only to those who hold the bus network’s payment card (i.e. the Metrocard). Why would I suggest that? It would cost close to nothing and would give people a much better level of service than the Shuttle ever provided. But it’s a little more complex for the end user than the Shuttle, as people need to understand the routes and get themselves a Metrocard. But the complexity is the trick, as it would turn “free-riders” into paying customers; something that the Shuttle never did.Zone 0 (zero) is an interesting case study as it covers public transport planning, explores customer psychology, and reveals how much inertia there is in our bureaucracy. |