

Friday, May 2, 2025

Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035 Feedback form

Unique ID

RPTP-0531

Contact details

Name:

Elsbeth Moody

Do you wish to speak to your submission at a public hearing?

Yes

Topic 1: Are we focusing on the right things in the plan?

Do you agree that these focus areas capture Otago's public transport priorities?

Yes

Tell us more:

I agree with all of these objectives, with the ultimate goal being environmental sustainability and the myriad positive outcomes that go along with that. It seems to me that the other objectives are all necessary to deliver a service that provides that environmental sustainability, and if we fall woefully short on the other goals we won't get the uptake we need.

Topic 2: Should we support community transport services in smaller towns and rural areas?

Our proposal: we are considering the establishment of a subsidised community transport programme providing support for transport services in Otago's smaller towns and rural areas.

What do you think about this proposal?

Do you agree with ORC having a role in supporting community transport services?

Yes

Topic 3: Should we increase our passenger fares?

Our proposal: we are considering increasing the base fare for adult Bee Card passengers from \$2 to \$2.50. This would effectively increase bus fares for all passengers using Bee Cards by 25%.

What do you think about this proposal?

Should Council increase the adult Bee Card fare?

Yes

Tell us more:

Obviously I would prefer the fare to stay low to encourage higher use of the services, but I think an increase to \$2.50 would be manageable for most people.

Topic 4: Should we charge more for longer trips?

Our proposal: we are considering introducing a zone fare system to our bus networks in Dunedin and Queenstown. Under this system, passengers travelling further distances across multiple zones will pay a higher fare than those travelling short distances within one zone.

What do you think about this proposal?

Should Council charge more for longer trips?

No

Tell us more:

Using my buses, the 1 and 1C routes, as examples, I can tell you that these buses are much more full than most of the other buses I see moving through the hub. Blueskin Bay, including Warrington where I live, is a growing suburb of Dunedin with a burgeoning number of residents who deserve an adequate bus service and would use it if it met their needs. What I have seen in recent years is a number of dedicated public transport users who desperately want to keep using this service so it doesn't get canned altogether, but are worn out by the long days, the constant problems and having to explain to our employers painfully frequently why we're late to work again. Our timetable has fewer buses running than almost any other - I catch the morning bus in Warrington at 7.35am, if it gets there on time, which is almost never. The evening bus doesn't take us back into Warrington, so I walk 2km from Evansdale most evenings. If the bus leaves town on time, and I can't even remember the last time that happened, I get home at a little after 7pm. It's usually more like 7.30. I don't know many people willing to spend 12 hours away from home every day to keep a car off the road for the benefit of everyone else, and it will feel grossly unfair if we end up paying a premium to do so. People will just stop taking the bus.

Topic 5: Should we keep our free fares for children (5-12 years)?

Our proposal:

- A. Retain free fares (100% discount) for children (5-12 years), **AND**
- B. Standardise our concession discount for youth (13-18 years) to 40% across both the Dunedin and Queenstown networks. For example, if the adult fare is \$2, youth pay \$1.20, or if the adult fare is \$2.50, youth pay \$1.50.

What do you think about this proposal?

Should Council retain free fares (100% discount) for children (5-12 years)?

Yes

Tell us more:

Yes, I'd love to see more parents and children catching the bus together rather than driving, and free fares for this age group would encourage that.

Should Council standardise our concession discount for youth (13-18 years) to 40% across both the Dunedin and Queenstown networks?

Yes

Tell us more:

Yes, by all means make it cheap enough to build up good public transport-using habits early. I would, however, like some sort of recognition on my bus route that these are public bus services, paid for at least in part by ratepayers and full-fare-paying adults. The 1C bus for Warrington, where I live, only runs in during the school term even though many of the users are working people and only drops passengers back into Warrington on the afternoon run, not the evening one used by most working people.

Any other comments?

Let us know if you have any other comments or ideas on the topics discussed in the Draft Regional Public Transport Plan.

I know of many people in my area who would love to keep cars off the road, out of traffic and out of parking spaces in town by using the bus. There are many hospital workers in our area who start at 7.30 - there's no bus that will get them there at that time. There are many people whose employers won't tolerate constant lateness and so can't use the Palmerston and Warrington buses as they are so frequently late (or, on occasion, don't make it to town at all). And another major issue is that there seems to be an idea that these buses are for schoolchildren, completely sidelining all of the ratepaying adults who use these buses to get to work. The 1C Warrington bus picks people up in Warrington in the morning, usually a pretty even mix of adults and schoolkids, but the 6.00pm service that takes workers home from town doesn't drop them back there in the evening, hence my 2km walk home on a skinny, winding country road with no lighting, fast traffic and barely any footpath. I know quite a few people who would take the bus if it dropped workers back home again at the end of the night. If the service is only designed to meet the needs of a few of its users, that then becomes self-fulfilling with fewer of the rest of us sticking it out and continuing to use it.