

Tuesday, April 22, 2025

Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035 Feedback form

Unique ID RPTP-0295

Contact details

Name: Ralph Adler

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

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?

Tell us more:

Yes, these five factors matter. However, they deserve prioritisation. Environmental sustainability, connected network, and value for money deserve the highest ranking. Unlike what is currently listed, I believe a connected network is defined by a reliable, comprehensive, and frequent service. If you get the factors of environmental sustainability, connected network, and value for money right, then word of mouth will enable the public trust.

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?

Tell us more:

We need to stop cars making needless trips that duplicate what a bus is best for. I have witnessed the accelerating growth of cars along the Northern Motorway. To remove the need for to make these trips to popular regional locations like Palmerston, Kairtane, Waitati and Waikouaiti, we need to increase the frequency of bus trips.

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:

I reluctantly support an increase in bus fares, mostly because they have not increase in a few years. It must be understood, however, that meeting the government's desire for greater private funding can be achieved in various ways. Since the cost of operating buses is almost entirely fixed, increasing passenger numbers is the best way to achieve the increase in private funding. Also, with more patrons, advertisers will be willing to pay more. When thinking of the fares to set, I trust the ORC is paying attention to other high fixed cost companies' revenue setting. Airlines and hotels are two very good examples of how the focus of these companies is on getting people on to planes and into rooms, and this usually means finding ways to reduce the price of plane tickets and hotel rooms. Furthermore, the pricing of these high fixed cost companies is not based on a cost driver like kms travelled or room nights. Inner city driving, with its stop-and-go nature, is tough on vehicles. Therefore, a per km rate is not helpful. Again, the primary focus should not be on prices but on increasing customer volume.

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:

Please see what I wrote above.

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

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

Yes

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.

Dogs should be allowed on buses. Just as is the case in Auckland, we should allow dogs to travel, with the requirement that they be on a lead and muzzled. It also might make sense to charge a \$2 passenger fee. This would be a way to raise private revenue, and I bet the market would go along with it.