

Thursday, April 10, 2025

Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035 Feedback form

Unique ID

RPTP-0221

Contact details

Name:

Sierra Alef-Defoe

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?

No

Tell us more:

I would like to see "Equitable access to transport" as a top priority, followed by environmental sustainability and a connected & integrated network.

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

Are there other initiatives or programmes that you think Council should be considering?

Yes

Tell us more:

Upper Clutha needs public transport. For most people living in the outlying towns like Hawea and Luggate, there is no viable alternative to driving into Wanaka.

This is like if Queenstown didn't have public transport to Lake Hayes Estate, Shotover Country, and Jack's Point.

The lack of public transport is especially limiting for people who are too young or too old to drive, or who have medical conditions or disabilities that make them unable to drive.

Our region is only growing. QLDC projects the Wanaka ward's population to double by 2050. We need to plan ahead, but with no public transport in place at all right now, we are already behind.

We lag behind Queenstown, where a bus has been run for years. As part of the Queenstown-Lakes District and Otago region, Upper Clutha residents pay the same rates as Whakatipu residents, but do not have the same access to transport.

Beyond the local commute lines (Hawea/Albert Town and Luggate to Wanaka etc), we also need public transport connecting Upper Clutha to the Whakatipu basin and to Central Otago.

Community groups in Wanaka from POW to Wao to Community Link have been researching and advocating for public transport, even trialing a shuttle programme while waiting for ORC to act. (Read more about community action here: <https://crux.org.nz/crux-news/wao-weve-just-got-to-get-out-of-the-car>). ORC needs to step up and provide access to public transport to the Upper Clutha.

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?

No

Tell us more:

N/A - we don't have fares to increase in the Upper Clutha, as we don't have public transport.

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:

N/A - we don't have fares to increase in the Upper Clutha, as we don't have public transport.

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, when we get public transport in the Upper Clutha, fares should be free for children.

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, when we get public transport in the Upper Clutha, fares should be discounted for teens.

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.

Virtually the only mention of Wanaka in ORC's summary is "We will continue to explore public transport options for our smaller communities.... including Wānaka..."

We are 20,000 people in the Wanaka ward, and that's just the residents.

We also have thousands of tourists, making our community significantly larger than the other "smaller communities" listed. Balclutha, Oamaru, Clyde, and Alexandra are not major tourist destinations.

Wanaka is also the only smaller community listed that is rapidly growing. Balclutha, Oamaru, Clyde, and Alexandra are not projected to double in population by 2050.

It feels a bit like Wanaka is invisible. But we are here, we need transport, and we are growing. We ask that our regional council plans for us too.