

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035 Feedback form

Unique ID

RPTP-0208

Contact details

Name:

Hunter Hatfield

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

No

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:

There is nothing particularly wrong with these priorities, but I feel it doesn't emphasise enough the core goal: make public transport at least as good of an experience as driving in a car for as many people as possible. Increasing frequency is a longer-term goal in the plan, but the frequency and destinations need to be a number one priority. As long as passengers feel that they must wait to board, go slower, and then walk longer to a final destination than driving in a car, many will not choose public transportation. But those things need not be the case for core areas.

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:

It would be great to hop a bus to Central from Dunedin or otherwise be able to get around without needing a car.

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:

This increase seems reasonable considering the defunding from national government. Consider tying it to an improved service. Perhaps \$2.50 lets you keep thing as they are and meet the new govt revenue targets. But perhaps \$2.75 lets you make a significant improvement in service that you can explain is tied to the increase.

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?

Yes

Tell us more:

Yes, seems reasonable considering the direct connection of distance to cost. Might consider even another zone within Dunedin, rather than the entire core city on one price. However, again, it would be good to tie this to a direct service improvement.

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:

A big focus in the network should be getting students out of cars. Public transport, when it's safe, could be the ticket to freedom for kids. They can get to parks, sportsfields, schools, and friends without being tied to caregivers driving them around. Market it as such.

Also, revisit routes so that schools and particularly the university are target areas. It's a 15-25 minute walk from much of the university to the bus hub. This makes a 15 minute car journey without traffic into a 30-45 minute trip each way. There are a couple routes that go to campus, but they do not appear synchronised to much of anything so I can almost never transfer from one bus to one of the uni ones in a timely manner. It's the largest employer in the city. The uni as destination should be a core feature of the network.

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.

The overall goal of the network should be for the large majority of people to be able to complete their daily transportation need without the use of a car. Dunedin is a geographically constrained city with the harbour and hills. If we grow, traffic will only get worse over time. People haven't been able to park near a business in city centre for a decade, and there's no reason to expect that to return unless the city economy collapses. But public transport could get you pretty close. It needs to be easier to go shopping in city centre by bus than it is by car.

The long-term plan needs to be for dedicated space for public transport -- busses or a trolley/rail -- that can take the public transport passenger whipping past cars as they sit in traffic and dropping passengers off within 300 metres of the destination. When drivers see that the transport is better, they will start choosing transport, making both the environment and driving itself better (for those who truly need a private vehicle). Dedicated lanes with highly frequent, automated transport is probably not in the current budget and plans. But we need to be working towards it or it never will be.