

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035 Feedback form

Unique ID

RPTP-0060

Contact details

Name:

Erika Buky

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?

Yes

Tell us more:

As an Otago Peninsula resident, I find an hourly bus service inadequate, and I am sure it discourages bus use by others. Anyone with an appointment on the hour or half-hour in town is liable to waste time coming in much earlier than necessary and/or having to wait a long time for a return bus. Even if 15-minute service isn't viable for this route, it should be at least half-hourly throughout the day and evening.

I can't do the calculations, but if there's a trade-off to consider between service provision and buying electric buses, I suspect that a more frequent service that would encourage more people to take the bus instead of driving would yield more environmental benefits than an hourly electric bus.

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

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:

Given the attitude of the current national government and current budgetary processes, this may be inevitable. But I hope you'll consider the literature showing that free bus service on some routes creates a net social, financial, and environmental benefit.

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:

Granted, I have a personal stake in this because I live just outside the proposed zone 1, but a flat fare across all areas seems simple and equitable, not only for passengers but also for businesses outside the proposed central zone that depend on customers and clients from all over the city. It also reduces hardship on people (young and old) in outlying areas who do not drive.

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:

I don't have kids, but I support keeping free fares for children because it seems more likely to encourage families to take the bus rather than drive when they're travelling together. It also encourages the use of the bus for school journeys, which can significantly reduce pollution, congestion, and danger to children (and others) from being hit by road-ragey parents in cars at school opening and closing times.

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.

Dunedin needs a regular airport bus service from the bus hub, like any other livable city. My only options at present are to ask someone to drive me to the airport (a long and polluting two-way journey), a staggeringly expensive taxi ride (ditto), an expensive and excruciatingly long shuttle ride (because Peninsula residents are always at the far end of the route), or leaving my car at the airport, aggravating the pressure on parking and paying an exorbitant bill--to say nothing of adding to traffic congestion and pollution. If shuttle operators scream at this prospect, perhaps they could be involved in operating the airport buses.

In the short term, PLEASE continue to exert pressure on Waka Kotahi to get the bike racks on buses back in use. I've been driving more for the past several months because I don't have the option of cycling and taking the bus one way to save time or avoid adverse weather or unsafe conditions. Bike racks on buses may seem like a frivolity to those who don't ride, but they allow many people to reduce their car journeys.