

Friday, May 2, 2025

Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035 Feedback form

Unique ID

RPTP-0522

Contact details

Name:

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Organisation (if applicable):

Rail and Maritime Transport Union

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?

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?

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?

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?

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?

Any other comments?



Rail and Maritime Transport Union Submission to Otago Regional Council on 2025 Regional Passenger Transport Plan

The Rail and Maritime Workers Union represents a significant number of transport workers in the Otago region, and elsewhere around New Zealand.

Rail is a significant transport mode, growing in importance worldwide, including in this country.

It is important that Regional Passenger Transport Plans, that are required to look up to 30 years into the future, include an analysis of **all** current and future transport modes, including passenger rail. Unfortunately, the Council's Draft RPTP does not currently do that.

In Otago, this is particularly relevant due to

- a. The growing use of passenger rail for tourist purposes in the Region,
- b. The ability for passenger rail to provide
 - i). start-up, or trial services with existing track and rolling stock, and
 - ii). long-term commuter and inter-regional services (as already happening in the North Island),
- c. The strong support for the restoration of passenger rail from in Otago.
- d. The ability for rail to contribute to the resiliency of transport systems,
- e. The newly-restored presence in Dunedin of a major rail engineering facility,
- f. The ability of rail to provide significant local employment opportunities,

The RMTU draws to your attention

- g. The inclusion of rail as a future mode of public transport in the equivalent Canterbury regional Plan, and
- h. The confirmation by the Government of new passenger rail rolling stock purchases and services in the lower North Island,
- i. The recent decision by the Minister of Rail for the Government to purchase two rail-enabled ferries for Cook Strait, securing the rail link to the North Island for decades into the future.

The benefits of passenger rail

Passenger rail can provide

- a. Medium distance and inter-regional public transport connecting communities that have little or no public transport options, and often few – and expensive – commercial options;
- b. Commuter services with much higher capacity on key congested routes;
- c. A far lower carbon emission footprint than other modes of transport;
- d. An opportunity for significant mode shift on routes served by rail lines;
- e. Greater accessibility for disabled residents;
- f. More affordable inter-regional travel;
- g. Integration of PT services, and ticketing, across modes (eg combined bus and rail journeys);
- h. Tourist transport options that significantly reduce air and car travel.

What about the Government attitude towards (against?) passenger rail?

This Plan covers a 30-year period, including a 10-year investment period. It is important that the Regional Council develops a Plan that represents its communities' current and future transport needs.

