

Friday, May 2, 2025

# Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035 Feedback form

Unique ID

RPTP-0527

## Contact details

Name:

Mary O'Brien

Organisation (if applicable):

CCS Disability Action

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:

Passenger experience

We support the key priorities and in particular the Council's commitment to prioritise passenger accessibility, safety, and comfort.

Build Trust

We support the key priorities, and particularly the equity-focused approach and its three principles.

We support the Equity Policy EQ P1 and Equity Actions EQ A1 to EQ A4 and recommend that the Council adopt and implement them.

We also recommend that the Council provide Disability Awareness Training for Total Mobility and Bus Drivers, and Ferry Staff.

Environmental Sustainability

We support the objectives and key properties. The achievement of these will contribute to increased use of public transport, and benefit disabled people and the whole community.

A connected and integrated network

We support the objective and key priorities.

When linked with the Council's commitment to prioritising passenger accessibility, safety, and comfort,

new and improved services and an equity focused approach transport patronage and participation will increase.

## 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:

Community Transport has the potential to “fill the gap” where limited or no public transport facilities exist, and people cannot access essential services such as health, etc., or can only access them at considerable personal and/or financial cost. We continually receive feedback from disabled people across Otago (including Dunedin) who are struggling to attend health and other essential appointments. The increased cost of living places a greater financial burden on transport disadvantaged people. We are receiving feedback from disabled people who have to choose between grocery shopping, attending health appointments, and paying for Transport.

We are very pleased to see that a study of Otago's community and accessible Transport has been undertaken and look forward to the results and contributing to co-design processes.

Funding for Community Transport. We note that the ORC does not currently provide Community Transport providers with funding and recommend that the Council develops a funding mechanism to support rural transport providers. Even small investments from Local Authorities and provision of training and administrative support from Local Authorities can contribute to provide Community Transport Services.

### Recommendations

1. We support the Community Transport Policies CT P1 and CT P2 and recommend that the Council adopt and implement them.
2. Community Transport Actions. We support all the Community Transport Actions and recommend that the Council adopt and implement them.

## 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?**

### Tell us more:

2. Reviewing fare pricing and fare structure.

Fare Structure. Section 6.2. F P2 and F P3.

Concessions. We note that transport disadvantaged people with less ability to pay will be charged lower fares. And we support the free fares for infants under 5 years. Children aged 5- 12 years and super gold cardholders in off-peak hours. This will make a considerable difference to the lives of these people and their families. Whilst we understand the financial constraints that the Council is experiencing, we recommend that Youth (13-18 years) and Community Service Card Holders and travel free on Public transport. Public Transport is likely the main Transport Option for these groups, and the proposed fares will result in decreased patronage and do not fit with the plan's equity principles. The same applies to Super Gold Card Holders after hours.

We support Free Transfers and fare Capping.

Use of Cash - Whilst we understand the reasons for this Community Service Card holders and Super Gold Card Holders are less likely to have access to a Smart Phone and be able to use the bank card payment system.

## 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:**

Charging more for cross-zone travel will be a barrier to transport disadvantaged people who are likely to live in the peripheral areas where housing is cheaper.

## 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:**

Concessions. We note that transport disadvantaged people with less ability to pay will be charged lower fares. And we support the free fares for infants under 5 years. Children aged 5- 12 years and super gold card holders in off peak hours.

This will make a considerable difference to the lives of these people and their families. Whilst we understand the financial constraints that the Council is experiencing, we recommend that Youth (13-18

years) and Community Service Card Holders and should travel free on Public, transport. It is likely that Public Transport is the main Transport Option for these groups and the proposed fares will result in decreased patronage and does not fit with the plans equity principles. The same applies to Super Gold Card Holders after hours.

We support Free Transfers and fare Capping.

Use of Cash - Whilst we understand the reasons for this Community Service Card holders and Super Gold Card Holders are less likely to have access to a Smart Phone and be able to use the bank card payment system.

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

No

### **Tell us more:**

We recommend that Youth (13-18 years) travel free on Public transport. Public Transport is likely their main transport option, and the cost of transport will be a barrier to accessing educational, sporting facilities.

## **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.**

We support Free Transfers and fare Capping.

Use of Cash - Whilst we understand the reasons for this Community Service Card holders and Super Gold Card Holders are less likely to have access to a Smart Phone and be able to use the bank card payment system.

We recommend that Super Gold Card Holders Travel free at all hours.