

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

# Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035 Feedback form

Unique ID

RPTP-0421

## Contact details

Name:

charlotte flaherty

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:

I am a regular user of Dunedin's bus service and, as such, am aware of the range of needs of people who use the bus.

With this in mind, I find the focus areas are well articulated, thoughtful, and comprehensive.

## 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

Tell us more:

Keep going with this. I can't wait to hear more about how this will work.

## 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:

Dunedin's bus passenger numbers tell a great story! Bus use is continuing to rise and the flat \$2 fare has contributed to that.

I value our bus system and I can afford to pay the extra 25%. However, some of our bus users struggle financially and the increase (although small) might increase hardship. Instead of increasing the fare across the board, is it possible to set up a trial and ask for contributions from those regular bus users who can afford it and would like to help. One option could be to contribute a set amount (25% of the top up fee) when you top up your Bee card be on the Bee Card website. The trial might give an indication of what sort of response to expect.

## 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:

The increase in bus passenger numbers in Dunedin and Queenstown is admirable. Some of this is down to pricing in relation to zones (or lack of). Dunedin previously had zoning which made it much more expensive to travel by bus than the current pricing regime.

Zoning allows no discrimination between low and high income passengers and disadvantages those who live further from the centre of town. It could also act to disincentivise bus commuters in Mosgiel, thereby increasing congestion and fossil-fuel emissions.

## 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:**

Travel behaviours are set early in life. Offering free fares for children aged 5 - 12 years creates the opportunity for these youngsters to develop a lifetime bus habit with all the concomitant benefits. This is especially important given the imperative to move away from fossil-fuel based transport.

A starting point for this lifetime travel habit is when families use the bus for group outings. I couldn't afford this when my children were young because the cost of a family trip across zones on the bus was too high. Free fares also offers the opportunity for children in this age bracket to start using the bus when they move from primary to intermediate or secondary school. This develops their independence, allows them to experience social interactions they wouldn't have on a family car trip, and gives them a greater range across the city.

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

Yes

**Tell us more:**

A standardised concession discount for youth removes ambiguity and ensures people in this age group can use the bus service without surprises if they move between centres.

## 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.**

.I enjoyed reading the Draft Regional Public Transport Plan

It is a well thought-out and comprehensive interrogation of public transport possibilities and actualities. The concepts, sections, and sequencing were nicely written and easy to follow. I have confidence that Otago Regional Council has a clear direction for public transport into the future so am fully supportive of the action plan for the next three to 30 years. Keep going - you're doing a fantastic job