Otago Regional Council

Draft Otago Regional **Public Transport Plan**

2025–2035

Contents

Orbus: we'll get you there

Accessible, connected, easy

Otago has two strong-performing urban public transport networks in Dunedin and Queenstown.

We aim to continue to enhance these networks, while also pursuing options to do better for our smaller communities.

We are focused on delivering a system that is reliable, attractive, accessible and supports our region's carbon reduction goals.

This plan aims to drive increased patronage through providing public transport solutions that are easy to understand and meet communities' diverse needs. In short, public transport people want to use — more often.

At the same time, we must delicately balance value for our passengers, funders, and community as we navigate a challenging operating environment.

This plan is about finding the balance to deliver practical public transport solutions that serve our future well.

ORC's transport aspiration guides this plan:

Otago has an integrated transport system that contributes to the accessibility and connectivity of our community, reduces congestion and supports community wellbeing aspirations.

Chairperson's foreword

Gretchen Robertson
ORC Chairperson

I am pleased to present the draft Otago Regional Public Transport Plan 2025–2035 — our blueprint for an integrated transport system that enhances community accessibility and connectivity, reduces congestion, and supports community wellbeing.

I invite you to read this draft plan and provide your feedback.

The draft plan has been developed with the community at its core. ORC staff have worked with local groups to understand their perspectives, and we've collaborated with city and district councils and New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi to ensure it reflects Otago's diverse transport needs.

ORC has made significant improvements in public transport over the past decade, such as raising bus driver wages above the living wage, increasing the number and frequency of bus services and introducing the Transit app to provide passengers with real-time bus tracking and trip planning.

These investments have paid off, as we have seen record-breaking use of our Dunedin and Queenstown bus services.

Our Total Mobility services have also grown significantly, helping more disabled people and those with long-term impairments travel independently and stay connected.

This draft plan outlines our intentions to build on these successes by:

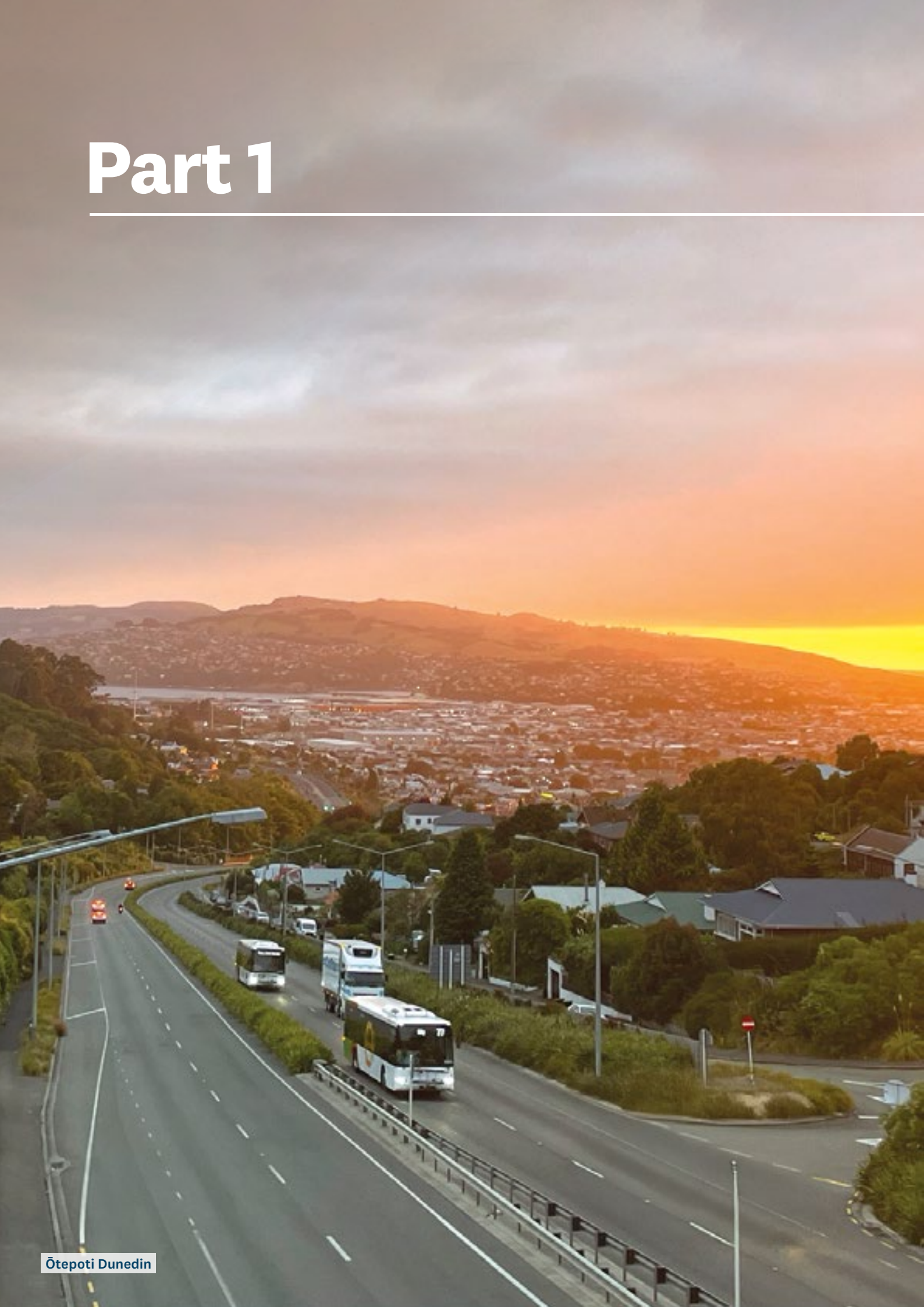
- introducing Motu Move in 2026, which provides passengers with an easy way to pay for public transport across Aotearoa
- transitioning to a fully electric bus fleet in Dunedin and Queenstown
- increasing bus frequencies in Queenstown
- supporting non-profit 'community transport' services to increase access to essential services in our rural communities.

While we have ambitious goals for the future, we must also adapt to changes in our operating environment. The Government Policy Statement on land transport (2024–2034) requires us to recover more costs through private revenue, such as bus fares, and shifts in government funding priorities also impact public transport co-investment.

Despite these challenges, we have an opportunity to look ahead with optimism and build on Otago's positive public transport trends. We remain committed to keeping services accessible and affordable.

Now is your chance to have a say on public transport in Otago. Your feedback on the draft plan will help ensure it reflects community needs and supports a well-connected, vibrant, and resilient region.

Part 1



Ōtepoti Dunedin

Overview

The Otago Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) 2025–2035 is a statutory document that guides Otago Regional Council's (ORC) design and delivery of public transport services, information, and infrastructure.

It is a 10-year strategic document with an emphasis on how ORC's funding and efforts are spent following the first three years of its adoption (2025–2027).

Public transport operates as a system. In order for all the system's elements to integrate and consistently deliver high-quality journey experiences, a high degree of collaboration and commitment across agencies and operators is required.

This RPTP has been prepared in collaboration with Otago's territorial authorities (Dunedin City Council (DCC), Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC), Central Otago District Council (CODC), Clutha District Council (CDC) and Waitaki District Council (WDC)) and New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA).

We have also carried out extensive engagement with mana whenua, operators and community groups to understand their public transport needs, aspirations and priorities.

Conversations with many of these stakeholders has directly informed this document along with feedback received from customers, and 2024 Long-Term Plan (LTP) and Annual Plan public submissions.

This RPTP meets the statutory requirements outlined in the Land Transport Management Act (LTMA) 2003 and follows NZTA's 'Development guidelines for regional public transport plans'.

1.1 Why is public transport important?

It is good for our health and our planet

Well-used public transport services reduce the environmental and health impacts of land transport, including by reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicles and using zero-emission technology.

It makes our communities more equitable

Public transport services support a mode shift from private motor vehicle use and equitable access to places, facilities, services and social and economic opportunities if they are coordinated, integrated, reliable, frequent, accessible, affordable, and safe.

Figure 1a: The importance of public transport, derived from LTMA 2003 Section 115(1).

This RPTP is guided by the LTMA public transport principles presented in Figure 1a and Figure 1b.

Figure 1a outlines the importance of public transport for our health, our planet and the equity of our communities. These principles illustrate that good public transport benefits everyone, even people who do not use it.

Figure 1b highlights the components of a well delivered public transport system. We reflect these principles in all our work, including collaborating with our partner agencies and determining where we invest our money.

Together, these five principles make up the LTMA principles for good public transport. See Appendix A for more details on how this RPTP gives effect to each LTMA principle.

How we deliver good public transport

A strong and fair labour market

Fair and equitable employment or engagement of people in the public transport workforce should ensure that there is a sufficiently robust labour market to sustain and expand public transport services.

Deep collaboration between institutions

Regional councils, territorial authorities, and public transport operators should work together to coordinate public transport services, the provision of infrastructure, and land use as necessary, to meet the needs of passengers and to encourage more people to use the services.

Efficient investment

Public transport services should be provided in a way that assists public transport investment to be efficient and give value for money.

Figure 1b: Principles of delivering good public transport, derived from LTMA 2003 Section 115(1).

While the LTMA principles represent standards of good public transport throughout New Zealand, the ORC transport aspiration captures the Otago-specific public transport vision.

In this way, the ORC transport aspiration also guides this plan. Read more about our transport aspiration within ORC's Strategic Directions 2023-2024 in Appendix B.

ORC transport aspiration

We aspire to provide an integrated transport system that contributes to the accessibility and connectivity of our community, reduces congestion and supports community wellbeing aspirations.

Goal 1: Congestion is reduced, and connection is increased throughout the region.

Goal 2: Carbon emissions are reduced, and air quality is improved across the region, supported by our efficient and affordable public transport services.

Goal 3: Active transport is the preferred mode for short journeys in urban areas.

1.2 Why do we need a Regional Public Transport Plan?

Public Transport Authorities (PTAs) are required to have an RPTP per the LTMA. Section 117 of the LTMA states that the statutory purpose of an RPTP is to provide:

- a means for encouraging regional councils, territorial authorities and public transport operators to work together in developing public transport services and infrastructure
- an instrument for engaging with the public in the region on the design and operation of the public transport network.
- **a statement of:**
  - the public transport services that are integral to the public transport network
  - the policies, procedures and actions that apply to those public transport services
  - the information and infrastructure that support public transport services.

The LTMA requires regional councils to review their RPTP as soon as practicable after the finalisation of the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP). ORC completed a mid-term review of the RLTP in 2024, triggering the renewal of the RPTP.

This renewal was timely, as ORC's previous RPTP (2021–2031) was completed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and much of its content focused on the travel patterns during that period. A lot has changed since then.

Many people now work from home, and public transport patronage has rebounded, with more people taking different types of trips.

Additionally, Otago has undergone significant growth in the last few years, particularly in the Queenstown Lakes district.

As our region grows and evolves, it is essential that we plan our public transport to meet changing transport needs.

1.3 How does this RPTP fit within the wider strategic context?

The RPTP sits within a broader strategic planning and investment framework.

This RPTP has been developed to consider, align, and give effect to a wide range of local, regional and national strategies, plans and policies, as outlined in Figure 2.

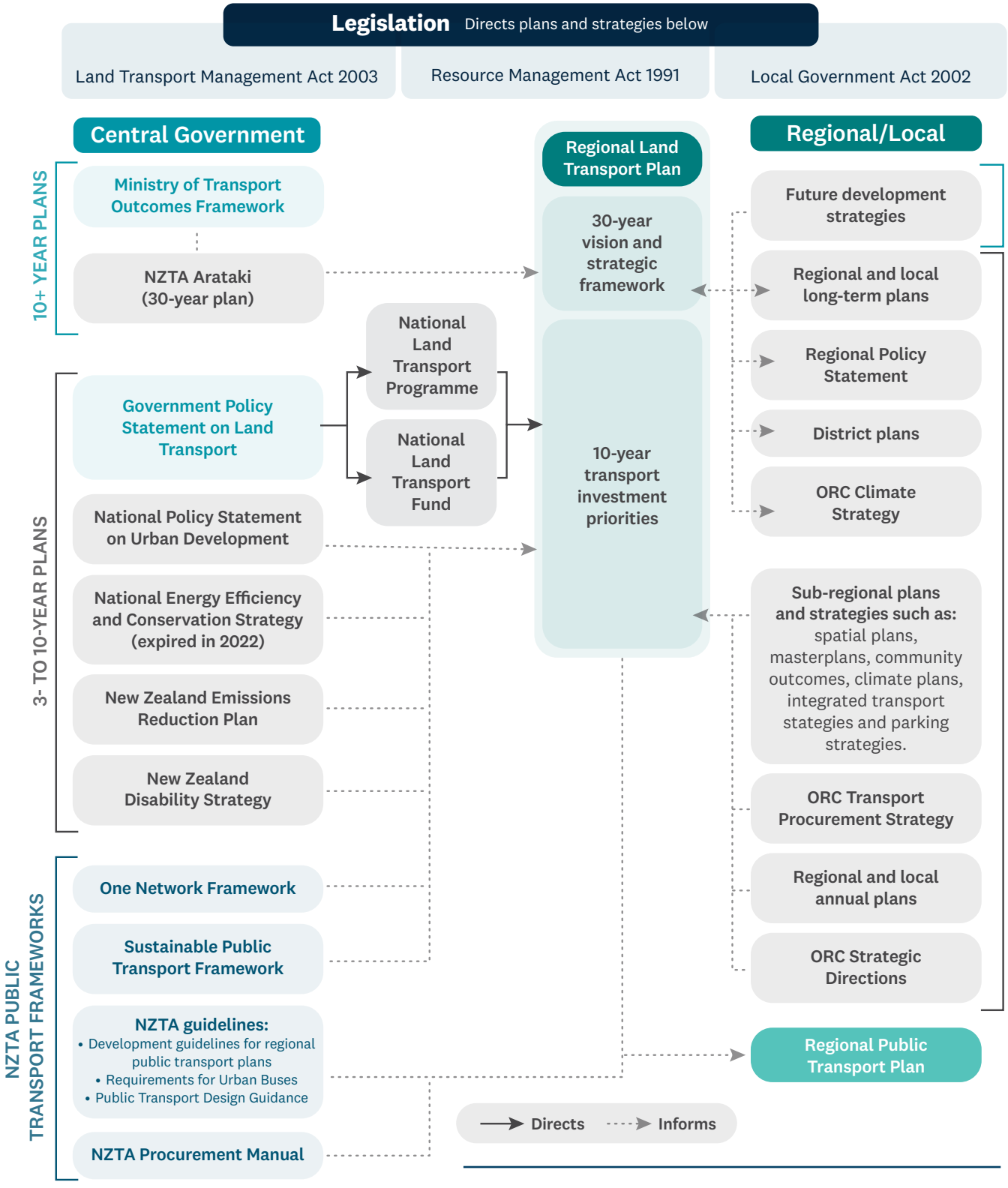


Figure 2: The strategic planning framework of the RPTP.

The key policy drivers for this RPTP are the Government Policy Statement on land transport (GPS), the Ministry of Transport's Transport Outcomes Framework, and the Otago Southland RLTP.

A full list of the plans and strategies informing this RPTP are provided in Appendix C.

Government Policy Statement on land transport (2024–2034)

The GPS sets out central government's strategic priorities for transport planning and investment and is guided by the Ministry of Transport's Transport Outcomes Framework.

The GPS 2024 focuses on achieving four strategic priorities:

- **Economic growth and productivity:** efficient investment in our land transport system connects people and freight quickly and safely, supporting economic growth and creating social and economic opportunities including access to land for housing growth.
- **Increased maintenance and resilience:** New Zealand needs a transport system that is resilient to the impacts of weather events and other natural disasters. Increasing maintenance and resilience enables us to effectively manage and reduce current and future risk and adapt to these challenges.
- **Safety:** a safe transport system is critically important. The steady decline in deaths and serious injuries we observed between the 1980s and early 2010s has slowed over the past decade.
- **Value for money:** the government wants to realise greater value from the financial investment made into our land transport system.

Directed by the GPS, the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) determines the activities which will receive investment from the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF).

As a public transport authority, ORC must propose activities to be incorporated into the NLTP to achieve our regional transport vision. We propose these activities through an RLTP.

The Otago Southland Regional Land Transport Plan (2021–2031)

The Otago Southland RLTP (2021–2031) outlines the 30-year strategic objectives and 10-year network improvement plans for the region's transport network.

The network improvement plans form our application for funding from the National Land Transport Fund for the next three years.

A 2024 mid-term review has been completed to reflect the priorities of the most recent GPS and all transport plans and strategies from Otago and Southland councils.

The current RLTP's 10-year transport investment priorities are:

1. Optimise an **efficient and accessible** transport network through enhanced mode choice provision across the regions.
2. Promote **safety and wellbeing** outcomes across the regional transport network.
3. Enhance network **maintenance and resilience** to ensure community access and connectivity.

The RPTP details how investment allocated in the RLTP will deliver and improve public transport services, infrastructure, and supporting elements in Otago.

1.4 An overview of Otago's public transport system

Roles and responsibilities

ORC is responsible for the delivery of public transport services in Otago.

We set the bus routes and schedules, provide public transport information and contract the service delivery to specialist public transport operators (PTOs).

The current PTOs in our region are Go Bus Transport (Dunedin), Ritchies Transport (Dunedin and Queenstown) and Real NZ (Queenstown ferry). They provide the buses, ferries, drivers and depots and are responsible for ensuring services are delivered to the timetables.

We also manage the Total Mobility Scheme in Otago. These services provide **door-to-door** public transport for disabled people who cannot easily use our buses or ferry. Total Mobility **is a nationwide scheme** whose services are delivered by contracted taxi and mobility vehicle **operators.**

People can also travel around Otago using transport options not currently subsidised by ORC, including exempt inter-regional services and Ministry of Education school services that connect rural areas to schools (Figure 3).

As of 2025, Otago's public transport system consists of the following services:

- the Orbus urban bus network comprising 23 bus routes in **Dunedin** and five bus routes in **Queenstown**
- one ferry service in **Queenstown**
- Total Mobility services in **Dunedin, Ōamaru, Queenstown, Wānaka and Balclutha**
- "exempt" services which are not currently funded by ORC
- Ministry of Education school services which primarily connect rural areas to their closest available schools.

Public transport infrastructure such as bus stops, shelters and interchanges are provided in collaboration with our territorial authorities and NZTA.

Territorial authorities and NZTA are also responsible for designing and regulating roads, though ORC collaborates with them in wider transport and spatial planning.

At a national level, NZTA invests in public transport services and infrastructure through the NLTP and shapes the transport system through strategic frameworks and the GPS on land transport.

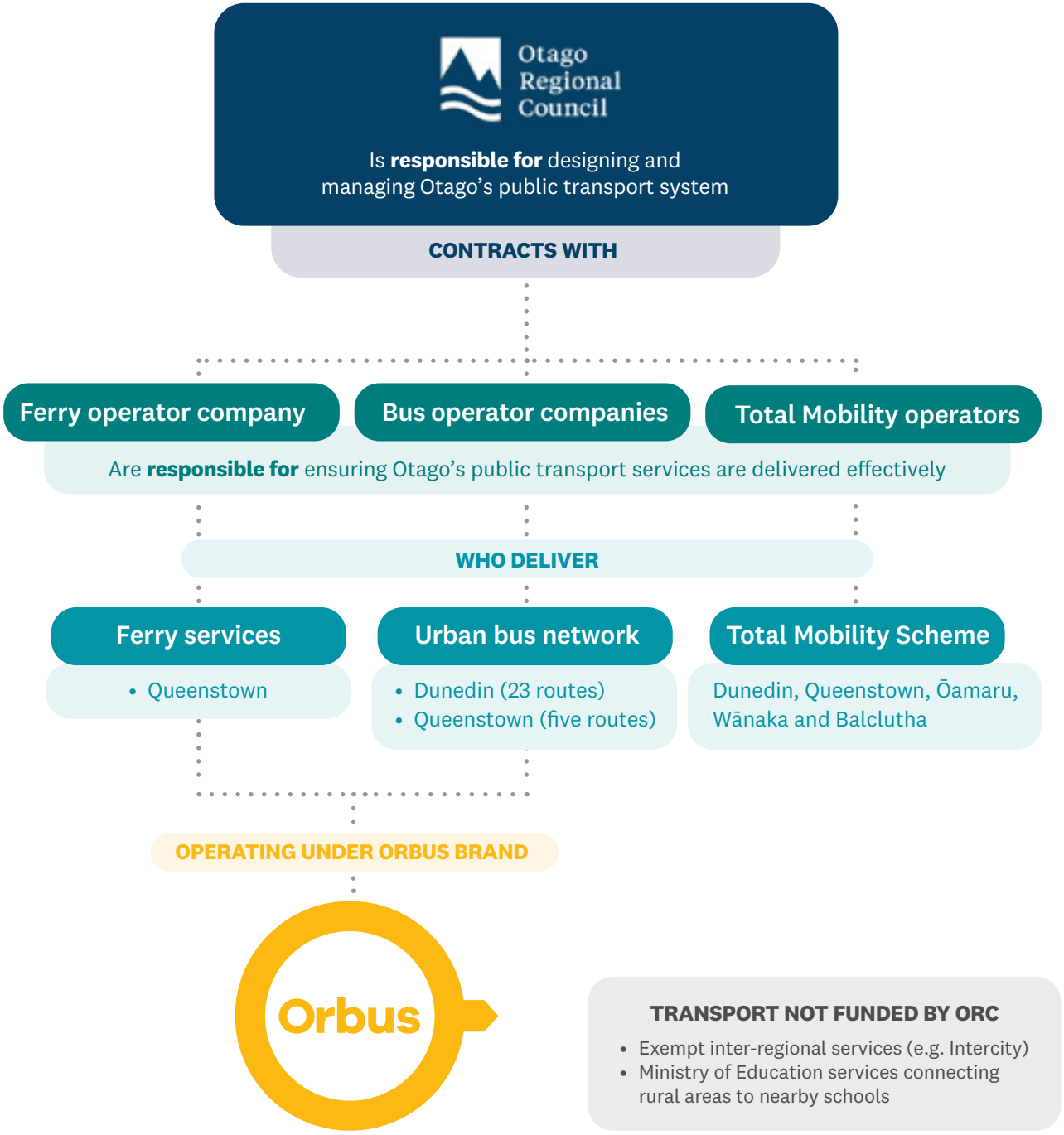


Figure 3: The roles and responsibilities in Otago's public transport system.

Our achievements over the past 10 years

ORC works closely with our partner agencies (NZTA and territorial authorities) and PTOs to plan, fund and deliver public transport services and infrastructure.

Collectively we have invested and made significant improvements to public transport in Otago over the last ten years (Figure 4).

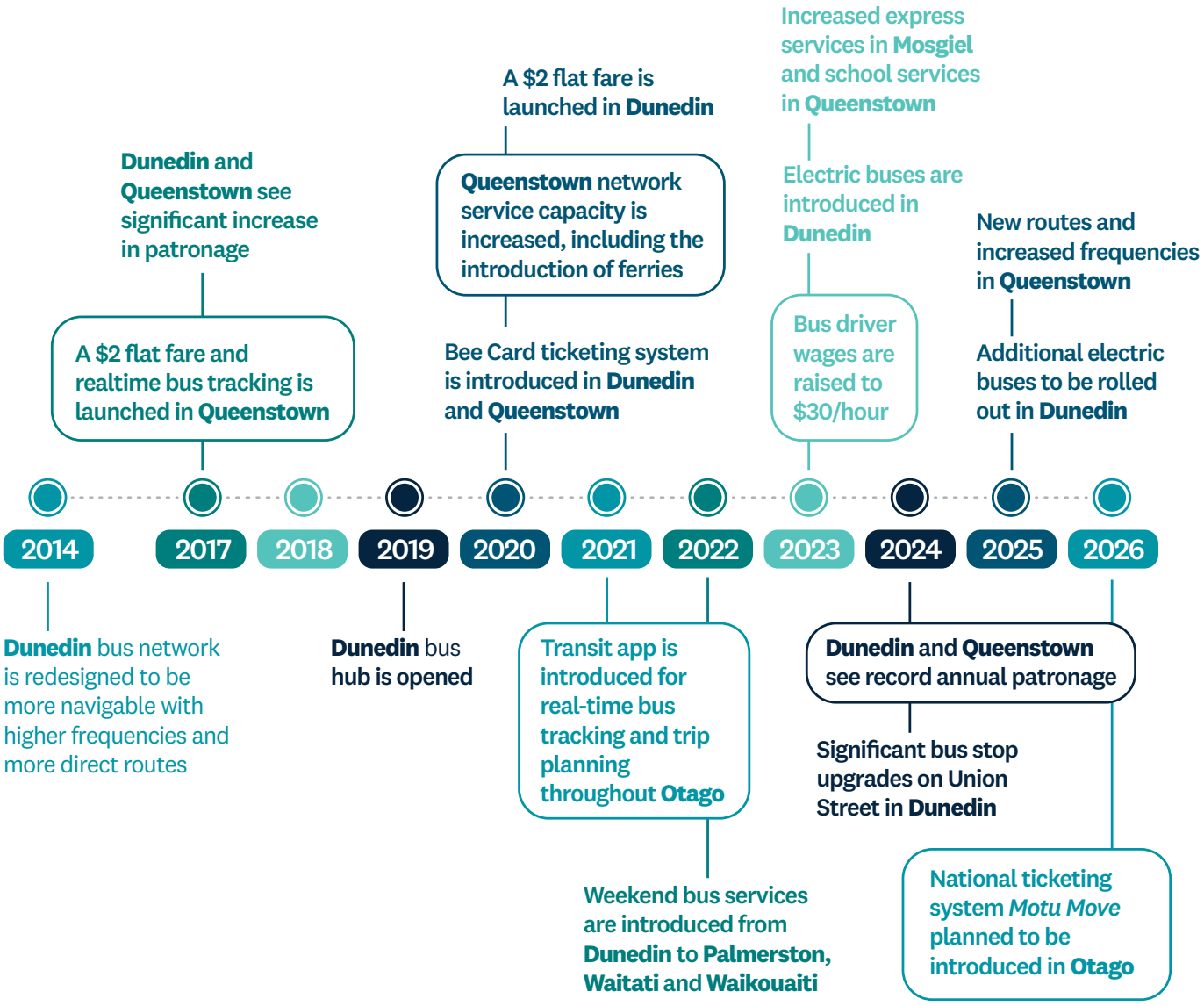


Figure 4: A timeline of key improvements to Otago's public transport since 2015.

Passengers have responded positively to these investments. From 2018 to 2023, the proportion of people using public transport to travel to work increased by 33% in Dunedin (from 4% to 5.3% of mode share) and 24% throughout Otago (from 2.5% to 3.1% of mode share)(Figure 5a).

Similarly, the total number of trips taken using public transport rose from 3.4 million in 2019/2020 to 5.3 million in 2023/2024 — a 54% increase (Figure 5b).

These statistics not only outperform similar-sized urban areas elsewhere in New Zealand, but also defy the national downward trend of public transport use for travel to work.

These statistics tell a clear story: our investments are working, and more people are using public transport as their preferred mode of travel. We aim to build upon these successes to get more people using and benefiting from public transport.

Strengthening these partnerships is one of our key priorities, as doing so will improve how we can serve our communities.

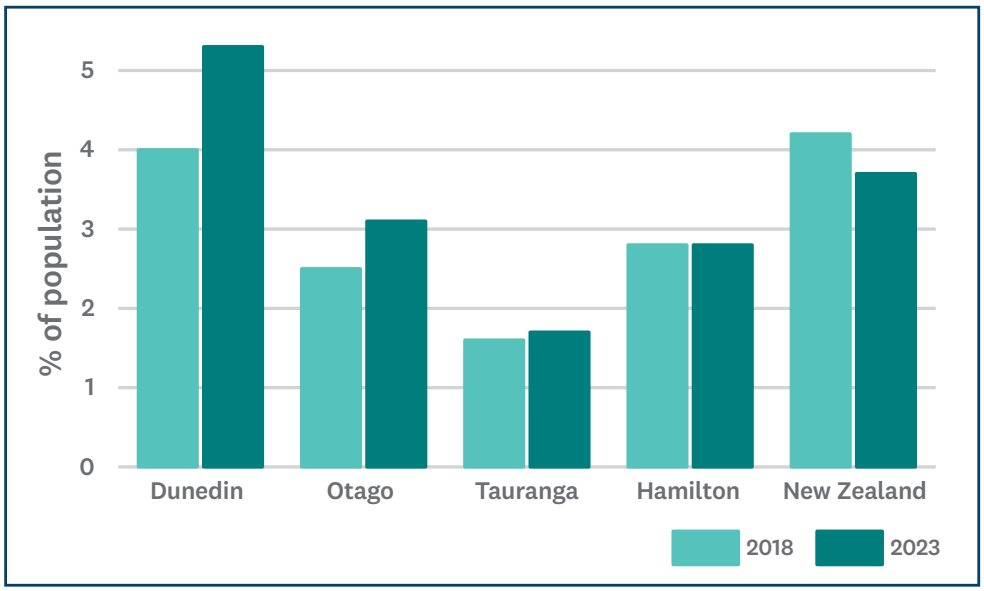


Figure 5a: The proportion of the population using public transport to travel to work in 2018 and 2023[1].

1 Data sourced from the 2018 and 2023 Census.

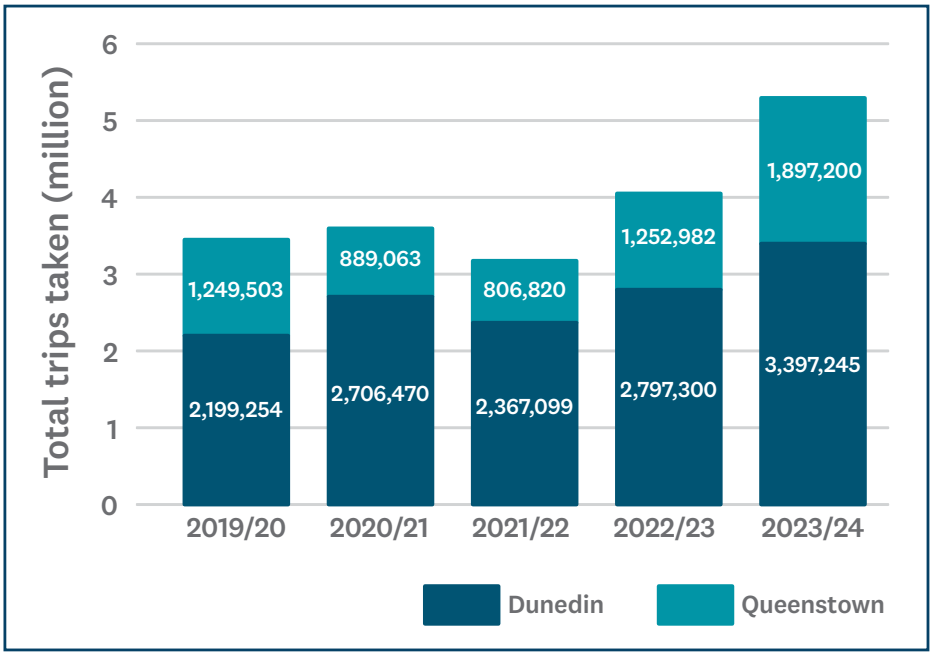


Figure 5b: The total number of trips taken on our bus networks 2019/20 to 2023/24[2].

2 Data sourced from internal ORC database.

1.5 Challenges and opportunities

Some of the key challenges and opportunities this RPTP seeks to address are:

Confronting the climate emergency	Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. Public transport plays a key role in reducing private car dependence and usage and lowering transport-related emissions. We have an obligation to future generations to act now.
Public safety	Anti-social behaviour at stops and interchanges and on services undermines the appeal of public transport.
Sustainable workforce	Bus drivers are the backbone of public transport. We must ensure they are fairly compensated and feel valued in their profession.
Increasing transport choice	Otago's high private car dependence is suppressing public transport use, contributing to congestion and poor liveability outcomes. Investing in public transport provides people with more transport choices, enhances access to opportunities and improves community health, connectivity and equity.
Regional connectivity	People living in Otago's small urban centres and rural communities have limited public transport options. This poses significant inequities in accessing essential services for those unable to drive.
Planning and meeting needs as our region grows	As our region grows, we must be able to respond to changing travel demand. This includes aligning policies and long-term planning with territorial authorities and considering alternative cost-effective public transport solutions that maintain well-functioning urban environments. This is particularly relevant for Queenstown and surrounding areas.
Affordability and funding	Balancing investment in high-quality public transport while keeping our services affordable and attractive to passengers is challenging in a constrained financial environment.

1.6 Our key priorities in this RPTP

Based on ORC's Strategic Directions, our external strategic environment, challenges and opportunities, and statutory requirements, we have developed five focus areas which form the basis of this plan. Each focus area has an associated objective. Table 1 below summarises our key priorities to achieve each objective.

Table 1: The five focus areas guiding this RPTP

Focus area	Objective	Key priorities
1. Passenger experience	**Provide useful public transport services that respect the safety and wellbeing of passengers, particularly for transport-disadvantaged people.**	• Deliver a high-quality customer experience by prioritising passenger access, safety and comfort • Easy access to timetable, ticketing, and real-time information • Promotion and education on how to use our services to reduce barriers to access
2. Build trust	**Proactively engage with communities and organisations, including iwi, to foster trust and ensure public transport projects align with community priorities.**	• Strong collaborative relationships with key partners in the planning and delivery of public transport • Utilise an equity-focused approach to supporting the needs of transport-disadvantaged people
3. Environmental sustainability	**Invest in a public transport system that promotes positive outcomes regarding greenhouse gas emissions, pollutants and land use.**	• Proactively support good land use policy through integration with public transport design • Support electrification of the public transport fleet
4. A connected and integrated network	**Deliver a reliable and convenient public transport system that improves personal freedom and access to opportunities.**	• Design services according to best-practice design principles • Enhance urban networks through new services and improvements to frequency and service hours • Enhance regional connectivity through trial services and community transport
5. Value for money	**Provide public transport services in a manner that represents good value for money.**	• Set fares so they are simple, fair and affordable to users, but generate sufficient revenue to maintain financial sustainability of our services • Improve financial performance by enhancing third-party revenue sources and implementing efficiencies in service delivery • Procure service contracts in a way that supports fair pricing, a competitive market, and sustainable delivery of services

Part 2

Focus area 1: Passenger experience

Objective: Provide useful public transport services that respect the safety and wellbeing of passengers, particularly for transport-disadvantaged people.

For public transport to make our region more equitable and less reliant on private vehicles, we must provide a consistently good experience to our passengers.

Delivering a convenient, reliable, safe and accessible experience will make passengers who need our services happier to use them, and those who have other transport options more likely to return to them.

A positive passenger experience requires all the steps of a public transport journey to go well.

These steps include:

- Planning your journey
- Paying for your journey
- Travelling from your origin to the bus stop or waiting area
- Waiting
- Boarding
- Travelling on the service
- Alighting, or getting off
- Transferring services
- Travelling from the service to your destination
- Returning to your origin
- Providing feedback

In our passenger experience objective, we use the following terms:

- **Useful:** the service takes passengers where they want to go in a reliable and punctual way.
- **Safety:** the service induces passengers to feel both real and perceived safety.
- **Wellbeing:** the service enables passengers to travel with comfort and dignity.
- **Transport disadvantaged:** the service provides a suitable way to travel for people who cannot get around easily.

Our goal is to drive positive passenger experience to attract more people to use public transport and serve Otago's public transport needs.

> *Each time without exception your drivers have been very warm, friendly and courteous.*
>
> Portobello resident and Route 18 passenger

> *It is awesome to see the driver looking out for his community, ensuing no one is missed and everyone gets home safely.*
>
> Queenstown Route 4 passenger

> *Thank you for responding to the safety concerns of locals.*
>
> Waitati resident and Route 1 passenger

> *Total Mobility is one of the main reasons I can still live alone and maintain independence.*
>
> Dunedin resident and Total Mobility passenger

> *I am lucky enough to live in a suburb which has a 15-min service, but I have found other area buses I use are great too. I prefer using the bus to using my car when I can.*
>
> Dunedin bus passenger

> *I'm excited to see the new digital sign at my bus stop.*
>
> Central Dunedin bus passenger

2.1 Public information

Our services are only as good as the public information we provide for them.

We are committed to providing public information on fares, ticketing, code of conduct, timetables, wayfinding, and accessibility that:

- is easy for users and the wider community to understand
- is accurate and up to date, so users can make transport choices with confidence
- is accessible for people of all abilities.

We use a range of methods to communicate with users and the wider community, including social media, the Transit wayfinding app, on-bus posters, electronic real-time signs, 24-hour customer experience phone access and the Orbus website.

Some areas where we intend to further improve our public information include:

- **Wayfinding.** To support our passengers in navigating the network with confidence and ease, we seek to build on existing wayfinding, both physical and digital, and identify new opportunities to improve navigation.
- **Exempt service info.** Much of the regional public transport network is delivered by exempt services. These are commercial services that run without public subsidy, such as Intercity. Although we do not manage these services, we will seek to provide information about them so that passengers have a full picture of the transport options available to them.
- **New technology.** Innovative products for communicating public transport information pose exciting opportunities for improving our passenger experience. We will continue to explore investing in new technology where it adds meaningful value to our services, including on-bus audio announcements and alert screens at key interchanges.

Case study: Transit app

In 2021, ORC integrated our bus services with the Transit wayfinding app, making it easier for passengers to plan journeys, track buses' real-time location, send us instant feedback and receive alerts about detours and delays.

The Transit app has consistently gained popularity among passengers in Dunedin and Queenstown. From January 2023 to December 2024, the number of users increased by 40%, to 14,998 users.

Our passengers have also regularly provided feedback that the app makes using our services more predictable and pleasant.

We are committed to continually improving the Transit app's ease of use and accuracy to ensure the best possible journey experience.

Public information policies	
PI P1	**Information:** provide information to passengers and the public that supports access to public transport services in a way that is: • easy to understand • accessible and widely available • accurate and up to date.

Public information actions | The council will:	
PI A1	Monitor and evaluate the Orbus webpage, Transit app and customer feedback data to ensure our public information content and tools are effective.
PI A2	Continuously enhance our real-time passenger information system to improve wayfinding and build trust with passengers.
PI A3	Explore technologies that meaningfully improve the accuracy, clarity and accessibility of public information.
PI A4	Encourage passengers to access public transport information via digital channels while maintaining existing physical signage.
PI A5	Work with exempt service operators to provide relevant public information about exempt services that form part of Otago's regional network.
PI A6	Provide open access public transport data in a way that is up to date, reasonably priced and useful to groups including researchers and third-party platforms.
PI A7	Work with disability advocacy groups to extend public transport information channels to include accessible formats such as NZ Sign Language, Easy Read, Braille, large print and audio.

2.2 Safety

We strive for our passengers to feel safe and secure throughout their entire transport journey.

It is a passenger's right to use public transport with the confidence that they will be safe on every trip, regardless of its place or time. A consistently safe experience will also attract new passengers.

While public transport is proven to be one of the safest forms of transport, we recognise risks to passengers' safety may arise from factors including unsafe road conditions and anti-social behaviour.

We also recognise that passengers experience safety and comfort differently depending on their gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and cognitive disabilities.

To minimise these risks and deliver a consistently safe experience for all passengers, we are committed to making both infrastructure- and behaviour change-related actions.

Infrastructure-related safety actions involve ORC coordinating investment in physical infrastructure and vehicles to enhance our passengers' safety.

They include:

- collaboration with our partner agencies to improve road, public transport, and pedestrian infrastructure informed by New Zealand Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design guidelines (see Section 5.4)
- collaboration with service operators to ensure the highest standard of passenger and driver safety on board vehicles (see Section 2.7).

Behaviour change-related safety actions involve working with our partner agencies and key stakeholders to make our services more secure and comfortable for passengers and staff.

They include:

- collaboration with service operators to deliver rigorous driver training (see Sections 2.3 and 3.3)
- collaboration with schools to address anti-social behaviour (see Section 3.3)
- marketing campaigns to improve awareness of best safety practices for passengers (see Section 2.5)
- use of security services at our interchange facilities to safely identify and manage anti-social behaviours that pose a risk to our drivers and passengers (see Section 5.4).

Safety policy	
S P1	**Safety:** deliver a consistently safe end-to-end journey public transport experience for all passengers and staff through proactive, targeted, and collaborative infrastructure and behaviour change-related interventions.

2.3 Customer service

Customer service shapes public perception of public transport in ways that service performance and marketing cannot.

When passengers feel respected and well-served, they are more likely to use public transport more often and recommend it to others.

We strive for all drivers, ticketing retailers, and ORC staff to consistently deliver outstanding customer service to build trust with existing passengers and attract new ones.

We provide all public transport staff, either directly or through our service operators, with extensive training to ensure we meet the needs of all passengers, including:

- transport-disadvantaged people (see Section 2.8), including people travelling with a wheelchair or service dog
- people travelling with domestic pets, pushchairs, strollers, suitcases, scooters, skates, skateboards, skis, snowboards, and bikes
- people who are new to our services, including visitors to Otago.

Customer service policies	
CS P1	**Customer service standards:** deliver efficient, respectful, and solution-oriented customer service to maximise customer satisfaction and trust in our services.
CS P2	**Training:** collaborate with service operators, ticket retailers, and customer experience staff in training of all staff involved in public transport delivery to provide outstanding customer service that builds trust with existing passengers and attracts new ones.
CS P3	**Personal items on public transport:** permit passengers to travel with the following items: • Domestic pets: domestic pets can travel for free and only during off-peak times. Pets must be fully enclosed in a suitable pet carrier, not a bag or backpack. The carrier must be on the passenger's lap to avoid being a tripping hazard. • Pushchairs and strollers • Service dogs • Suitcases • Wheelchairs • Scooters, skates and skateboards • Skis or snowboards • Foldable bikes Passengers are not permitted to bring the following items aboard: • Non-foldable bikes[3] • Surfboards • Mobility/motorised scooters Passengers hold responsibility for the collection, storage and movement of their items on public transport. Items must not pose safety hazards or inconveniences to drivers or other passengers, for example, by blocking walkways or seating areas.

3 Non-foldable bikes can be attached to the bike racks fitted on the front of buses. In 2024, NZTA implemented a temporary restriction on bike racks on buses. Visit orc.govt.nz/orbus for the latest information about using bike racks on buses.

We take our responsibility to uphold our standards of customer service seriously, but we know mistakes happen.

Any instances of poor customer service reported to us are recorded and addressed as soon as possible to prevent further issues and restore trust.

Passengers and the public can provide feedback on our website, by phone, by email and in person. We record all public transport-related complaints, requests, enquiries, and compliments received and continuously analyse them to inform improvements in our services.

ORC's strategy and customer team is developing a framework to improve our customer services' quality and efficiency. This will be implemented over the course of this RPTP.

Customer service actions | The council will:	
CS A1	Require service operators to provide robust training programmes for drivers, including specialised training in: • effectively assisting passengers of all access needs, including disabled people and those travelling with young children • de-escalating anti-social behaviour or customer dissatisfaction, where safe to do so.
CS A2	Provide staff involved with customer feedback comprehensive and ongoing training, including specialised training in: • recording, addressing, analysing, and reporting customer feedback data • de-escalating customer dissatisfaction.
CS A3	Work with ticket retailers to provide ongoing customer service training, and up-to-date ticketing and fare information.
CS A4	Undertake a public transport customer satisfaction survey (of NZTA standard) on an annual basis.
CS A5	Consider continuous customer feedback and NZTA public transport satisfaction survey data when reviewing Orbus Code of Conduct and implementing network and service changes.

2.4 Ticketing system

An easy-to-use and integrated ticketing system is central to an accessible and easy-to-use public transport service.

Since 2020, we have implemented and optimised our Bee Card ticketing system — a simple smartcard system shared among ten other public transport networks across the country.

The Bee Card system has provided passengers with benefits like tagging on and off trips, online top-ups, and managing multiple cards through one online account.

Motu Move, the National Ticketing Solution implemented by NZTA, will be rolled out in Otago in 2026.

Figure 6: Motu Move is the future national public transport ticketing system and will be rolled out in Otago in 2026.

This new ticketing system will offer features including:

- contactless debit or credit card payments, including digital wallets such as Apple Pay and Google Pay
- a national Motu Move prepaid card
- concessions (discounts) can be linked to whichever type of card you choose
- no contactless or online transaction fees
- a mobile app for easy access
- faster top-up processing
- acceptance across all public transport buses, trains and ferries across Aotearoa New Zealand
- locally set fares

As we transition from the Bee Card to Motu Move, we will provide a well-communicated and easy-to-understand transition procedure for passengers.

Ticketing system policy	
TS P1	**Ticketing:** implement and promote an easy-to-use, accessible, and integrated ticketing system to provide seamless payment for all passenger journeys.

Ticketing system actions | The council will:	
TS A1	Require operators of contracted services integral to the public transport networks to participate in any integrated ticketing system ORC owns or participates in.
TS A2	Collaborate with NZTA to effectively transition from the Bee Card to Motu Move ticketing system through activities including public education campaigns and Bee Card replacement schemes.

2.5 Branding and marketing

Branding, marketing, and outreach activities help shape the public perception of the Orbus network and public transport more generally.

When people perceive public transport as convenient and accessible, they are more likely to choose it over other modes of transport.

Maintaining a well-liked and easily identifiable brand is essential for retaining existing passengers and attracting new ones. The Orbus brand, introduced in 2017, has enabled our services to be consistent and marketable, creating a sense of place and identity in Otago.

Marketing our services effectively makes it easier for people to choose public transport and navigate the network.

To achieve this, we will continue to develop our advertising and community outreach activities.

This includes helping our communities understand how to use and benefit from our services. We will prioritise promoting our services with transport-disadvantaged groups to help overcome any barriers and allow them to use our services with confidence.

Branding and marketing policies	
BM P1	**Branding:** operate Orbus services to develop and maintain a brand which: • is strong, consistent and regionally integrated • aligns with ORC values, such as community wellbeing and environmental sustainability.
BM P2	**Marketing and promotion:** actively promote Otago's public transport services to positively reinforce their affordability, accessibility, sustainability, and convenience.

Branding and marketing actions | The council will:	
BM A1	Implement and maintain a strong and regionally aligned Orbus brand so that it is consistently applied across public transport services, and supporting infrastructure.
BM A2	Continuously develop and promote strategic marketing campaigns to raise awareness, reduce barriers to access, improve safety and increase patronage of Orbus services.
BM A3	Collaborate with partner agencies, communities, and relevant stakeholders to: • implement targeted promotion and outreach programmes designed to educate the public and build confidence using public transport • identify and understand the barriers that prevent communities from using public transport, with a particular emphasis on perceptions of inaccessibility.
BM A4	Collaborate with partner agencies to coordinate the promotion of wider regional transport projects that include public transport.

2.6 Special events

Special events provide an opportunity to attract people and revenue to our region.

We are committed to working with event organisers and venues to provide detours, additional services, and ticketing agreements where it is logistically and financially feasible to do so.

By providing targeted event travel, we make events more accessible, safe, and sustainable, while reducing disruption to other road users. It also encourages new users to use our services.

Case study: Serving cruise ship passengers in Dunedin

From October to April cruise ships regularly visit Dunedin, generating significant tourism activity.

On the busiest days, more than 5,000 cruise ship passengers disembark at Port Chalmers and have the option to travel to Dunedin's city centre on public transport or commercial shuttles.

To maintain a reliable service for locals using the Port Chalmers bus and attract cruise ship passengers, ORC has collaborated with Port Otago and Dunedin City Council to develop and implement a Cruise Ship Action Plan.

By proactively scheduling additional services and streamlining ticket sales, cruise ship passengers generated over 15,000 additional bus trips and over $45,000 in fare revenue in the 2023/2024 season alone.

The success of our cruise ship-targeted services highlights the potential for special event travel to bring positive social outcomes to the community while being financially viable for ORC.

Port Chalmers

Special events policy	
SE P1	**Events:** support access to events to reduce congestion, improve safety, and maintain the operational performance of the transport network, where logistically and financially viable.

Special events actions | The council will:	
SE A1	Where funding for targeted public transport services is secured by third parties, such as event organisers, support **special events** by: • contracting and managing service provision on behalf of event organisers • providing discounted fares to use on the existing public transport network • undertaking promotional/marketing activities.
SE A2	Financially contribute to the provision of public transport services for **major events.** Special events are considered to be major where each condition below is met: • Sufficient public funding is available • The event is generally expected to have more than 10,000[4] attendees on any one day • The event takes place within ORC boundaries • The wider community would benefit from event-related public transport services.
SE A3	Work with partner agencies, event organisers and other relevant groups to plan and implement public transport services for special events in a way that reduces congestion, improves safety, and maintains the operational performance of the transport network.
SE A4	Maintain an annual calendar of planned events to assist with the planning and provision of public transport.

4 This threshold is informed by Otago territorial authorities' definition of a major event.

2.7 Service and vehicle quality standards

Service quality standards

Our passengers' perception and experience of our services is largely determined by how well our services operate.

A high-quality service is a result of the following operational practices:

- Adherence to the published timetable, and availability of real-time information to give passengers confidence even when a vehicle is running late
- Realistic trip times so that trips are not consistently early or late
- Coordination between drivers to support any timed transfers that are necessary for efficient network operations
- Minimisation of cancelled services, and notification when a trip is cancelled.

Real-world conditions can be unpredictable. It is therefore not possible or realistic to completely avoid deviations from scheduled services, particularly when there are roadworks or at certain times of year (such as the beginning of school terms).

We closely monitor our services for deviations, including cancelled trips, late departure from the first stop, missed stops, and failure to connect the service to the correct trip for real-time information. Where these deviations are due to factors within the control of operators, we apply financial penalties.

However, not all elements of service performance are within our or operators' direct control. In these instances, we work with road controlling authorities to enable road and stop configurations that allow for fast and reliable public transport.

Our targets for punctuality and reliability are outlined in Section 7.1.

Service quality standards policy	
SQ P1	**Quality:** deliver a service that meets the highest standards of safety, reliability, and punctuality.

Service quality standards actions | The council will:	
SQ A1	Set public transport timetables that: • adhere to a repeating "clockface" schedule as much as practical • are based on realistic and achievable running times, varying between peak, interpeak, and early morning and late night times • use intermediate timing points that allow late-running trips to catch up and early trips to be held, without significantly slowing down running times.
SQ A2	In work with service operators, implement the following practices to minimise deviations from specified service: • Include measurable and enforceable provisions in contracts, including provisions relating to the Key Performance Indicators of the RPTP and Annual Plan, to enforce adherence to specified service • Collaborate with operators to ensure that adherence to specified service is embedded in driver training and culture • Financially penalise contractors, within contractual terms in a proportionate and fair way, for deviations from service specifications, where the deviation is within the reasonable control of operators.
SQ A3	Maintain, optimise and promote real-time information so passengers can accurately track and predict vehicle arrivals.
SQ A4	Work with contracted operators to maintain a consistently safe passenger and driver experience through safety measures including: • Full closed-circuit television (CCTV) coverage on all buses, both inside and outside • Rigorous driver training, including safe driving and de-escalation components • Enforcement of vehicle safety standards • Security staff at additional interchanges and on services where suitable.
SQ A5	Collaborate with territorial and road-controlling authorities to implement public transport priority or other efficiency measures that will improve reliability and punctuality.

Vehicle quality standards

Delivering our public transport service with high-quality vehicles directly improves our passengers' access to safe, sustainable, and comfortable transport.

We work closely with our service operators to meet the NZTA Requirements for Urban Buses (RUB). The requirements are designed to continuously improve public transport bus quality.

They focus on ensuring public transport vehicles are:

- **Safe and appealing:** the RUB prioritises making public transport bus travel safer and more appealing to all passengers, with a focus on the elderly, disabled people, and commuters. Standards like high-visibility handrails, minimum aisle widths, noise level requirements, and real-time driving evaluation technology ensure our vehicles meet all passengers' needs.
- **Environmentally sustainable:** the RUB mandates public transport vehicles achieve high environmental standards. Read more on how we will meet these environmental standards in Section 4.2.

While the RUB only applies to buses, we use the general principles of quality and accessibility set out in the RUB as guidance for non-bus public transport vehicles.

This includes our ferry service, which meets the required Maritime NZ standards, and any future non-bus public transport vehicles in our fleet.

Future updates to the RUB

NZTA intends to incorporate the following future technologies in the RUB:

- Driver Fatigue Management systems
- Cyclist detection system
- Acoustic vehicle alerting systems on electric buses to alert blind and low-vision people
- Autonomous braking
- Lane-keep assist.

Vehicle quality standards policies	
VQ P1	**Vehicle standards (RUB):** all vehicles and vessels used to operate Otago Regional Council public transport services, at a minimum, comply with the RUB. At the time of this RPTP, the requirements state: • Vehicles new to urban bus service entering our fleet adhere to the latest version of RUB • Vehicles previously used for urban bus service entering our fleet adhere to the RUB section corresponding to the contract's age • Vehicles in the existing fleet undergoing midlife refurbishment adhere to the RUB 2024 version.
VQ P2	**Vehicle standards (ORC requirements):** through procurement of vehicles, assignment of vehicles to trips, and ongoing collaboration with operators, the fleet should support safety and good passenger experience in the following areas: • Sufficient capacity to meet peak demand on particular routes • Enhanced seating capacity (as opposed to standing capacity) on routes with significant running at 80 km/h or above, or long passenger trip lengths • Sufficient onboard luggage capacity for the needs of particular routes (particularly with regards to airports and sports equipment) • Universal availability and safety of external bike racks • Additional safety, accessibility, environmental and comfort features • Driver protection structures (e.g. screens).

Vehicle quality standards actions | The council will:	
VQ A1	Procure new fleet through service contracts that meet RUB standards in VQ P1 above, and additional requirements as outlined in VQ P2 above.
VQ A2	Require ferries on contracted services to comply with Maritime NZ standards and encourage use of established best practices.
VQ A3	Collaborate with key stakeholders, including disability advocacy groups and service operators, to monitor vehicle safety and accessibility and advocate for vehicle quality standards that meet the needs of all passengers, particularly transport-disadvantaged people.

2.8 Improving accessibility for transport-disadvantaged people

When transport systems fail to meet the needs of everyone in the community, the people whose needs go unmet experience **transport disadvantage.**

Without adequate transport options, transport-disadvantaged people are excluded from life-enhancing opportunities. As a result, the community becomes less equitable.

A core purpose of public transport is to uplift people out of transport disadvantage by providing accessible, affordable, and available transport options.

A range of personal, demographic, social, and geographical attributes impede people's access to opportunities and the use of public transport services and facilities.

Those who are most likely to experience transport disadvantage include:

- disabled people
- people without drivers licences, including children and the elderly
- people with low incomes
- people with physical and mental health conditions
- people in isolated rural locations
- people in households with no access to private vehicles.

ORC is committed to delivering an equitable public transport network that provides opportunities for everyone.

By providing transport options for transport-disadvantaged people, there are significant social and economic benefits for our whole community.

Other sections of this RPTP also cover how we address the needs of transport-disadvantaged people, such as our equity-focused approach to decision making (Section 3.1), increasing modal choices by integrating land use planning with public transport (Section 4.1), expanding services into more communities in Otago (Section 5.2) and improving affordability through fair fares (Section 6.2).

Accessibility policy	
A P1	**Accessibility:** deliver an equitable and accessible public transport network for transport-disadvantaged people across all our services. This includes our urban bus networks, ferry services, Total Mobility, and any new services.

Total Mobility

Some disabled people have transport needs that cannot be fully met by a fixed-route public transport service.

To support these people in meeting their daily needs and enhancing their community participation, local and central government jointly fund Total Mobility.

Total Mobility is a nationwide scheme that provides subsidised door-to-door transport services for eligible people through approved commercial taxi and mobility operators.

Total Mobility is an exempt integral service in Otago's public transport network. It currently comprises 16 operators who serve some 8660 registered clients in Dunedin, Queenstown, Wānaka, Ōamaru and Balclutha.

To make sure the service is available to all people who need it, ORC implements the eligibility principles outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: ORC Total Mobility user eligibility principles

NZTA guideline	ORC interpretation
General eligibility	
An eligible person must have an impairment that prevents them from undertaking any one or more of the following five components of a journey unaccompanied, on a bus, train or ferry in a safe and dignified manner: 1. Getting to the place from where the transport departs. 2. Getting onto the transport. 3. Riding securely. 4. Getting off the transport. 5. Getting to the destination.	When applied to mobility impairments, steps 1 and 5 will be interpreted as a person's ability to walk 500 metres on paths that may have some minor slopes and irregularities. When applied to mobility impairments, steps 2 and 4 will be interpreted in light of a person's ability to board a kneeling bus from ground that is the same height as the ground under the bus.
Eligibility of children	
The scheme should be available to children to support their independent participation in the community, in ways that are similar to other children in their peer group who do not have impairments.	Children aged less than five are not eligible for Total Mobility in Otago. Children of age 5-12 may be considered eligible for Total Mobility, if the reason for application is to support their increasing ability to travel independently in their community, in line with their peer group. Independent travel does not preclude the support of caregivers.

One challenge facing Total Mobility in Otago's small communities is the lack of suitable operators, leaving communities with limited access to opportunities.

Compounding this is the disproportionately large share of ageing people in these small communities compared to our urban centres. ORC will continue to explore ways to bring accessible transport services to small communities, including through expanding Total Mobility services and community transport.

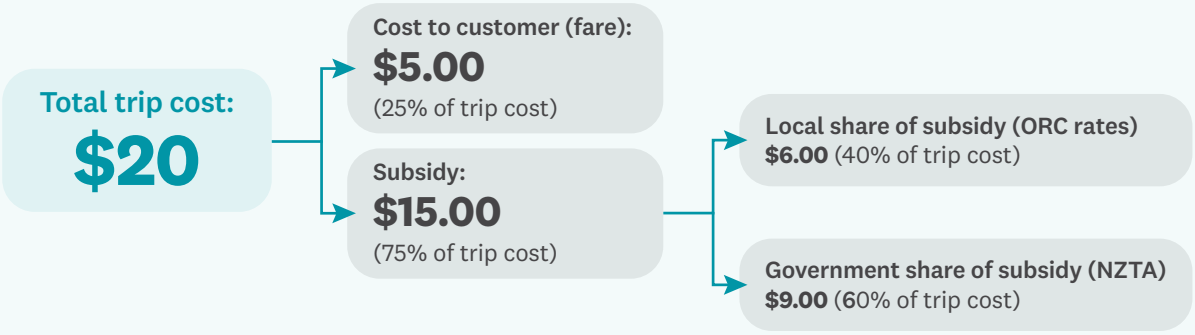
An additional challenge arises from social organisations struggling to remain involved in Total Mobility as assessment agencies due to their constrained resourcing. In 2024 we saw multiple agencies withdraw their services while other agencies have reported similar constraints. This under-resourcing persists as demand for eligibility assessments increase.

Since ORC's previous RPTP, we have made Total Mobility more affordable by raising the fare subsidy cap from $25 to $37.50. We will continue to prioritise the affordability of Total Mobility as these customers are largely on fixed or low incomes. For more information about how Total Mobility trip costs are funded, see Figure 7.

Central government began reviewing Total Mobility in 2024. It is therefore important that ORC be flexible in its approach to Total Mobility, as the nature and details of the scheme may change.

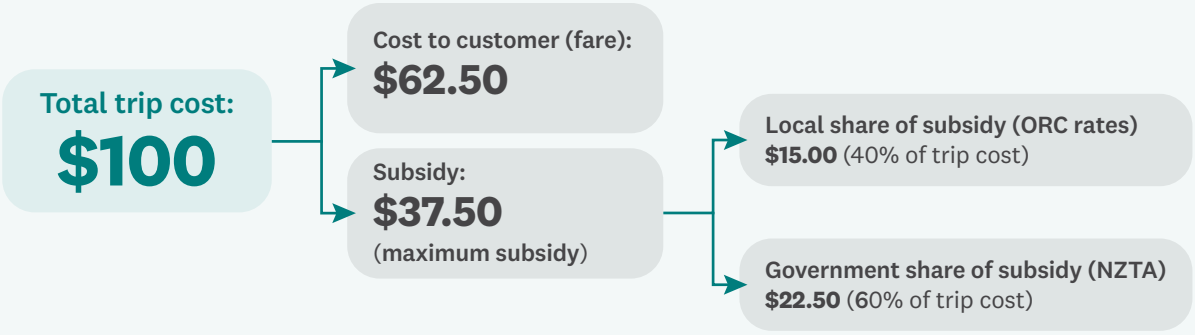
Example 1:

The trip's fare is $20 (under the subsidy cap)



Example 2:

The trip's fare is $100 (over the subsidy cap)



Example 3:

The trip's fare is $100 (over the subsidy cap) and a wheelchair hoist is used

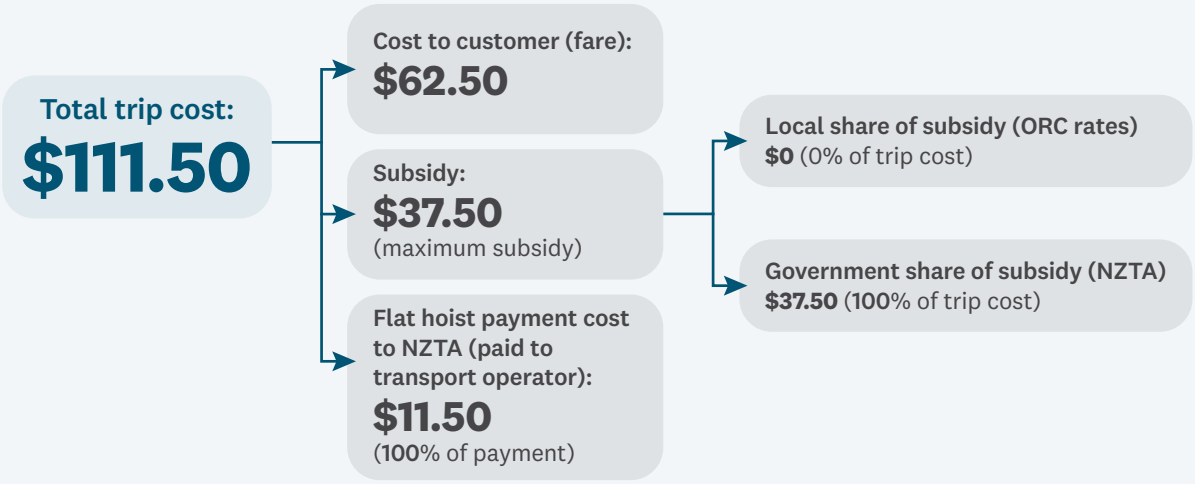


Figure 7: Total Mobility trip funding examples and breakdown.

Total Mobility policies	
TM P1	**Service provision:** provide Total Mobility services that are accessible, useful and available for people with long-term impairments that are unable to access regular public transport safely, reliably and with dignity.
TM P2	**Collaboration:** collaborate with Ministry of Transport and NZTA to maximise the efficiency of the Total Mobility scheme, including by supporting the process and outcomes of the Total Mobility review.
TM P3	**Operator and agency eligibility:** develop standardised frameworks to assess the eligibility of potential and existing transport operators and mobility agencies in a way that serves disabled people with a diverse range of needs and maintains good value for money.
TM P4	**Affordability:** investigate potential barriers to Total Mobility's affordability for passengers, including the $37.50 fare subsidy cap, subject to financial viability and the outcome of the central government's Total Mobility review.
TM P5	**Wheelchair accessible vehicles:** support transport operators by providing hoist installation funding to incentivise investment in wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

Total Mobility actions | The council will:	
TM A1	Ensure that reasonable and actionable measures are taken to ensure operators and agencies meet their contractual obligations, including comprehensive auditing of vehicles, training, and health and safety.
TM A2	Develop an operator and agency contract procurement process to reduce barriers to entry, promote transparency and resourcing, and enable wider geographic coverage for eligible operators and agencies.
TM A3	Define eligibility for Total Mobility users according to the NZTA criteria, along with specific interpretations by ORC as set out in Table 2.
TM A4	Explore options to provide payments for agencies conducting assessments to promote agency retention.
TM A5	Review the current $37.50 fare subsidy cap as a potential barrier to accessibility. Collaborate with other regions to understand the impacts on user behaviour and expenditure a higher fare cap would have.

Community transport

Community transport is a not-for-profit service established, funded and operated by community entities to enhance transport access in areas where traditional public transport is not feasible.

While there are several community transport providers in Otago, ORC does not currently provide them with financial support. This leaves many of our isolated communities with limited access to essential services, including the Dunedin and Queenstown hospitals.

A study of Otago's community and accessible transport has been undertaken to provide ORC with insight into potential community transport models that can be co-designed with community entities so they can run their own community transport services.

This study will be used to guide work with our communities in the establishment of a subsidised community transport programme as part of Otago's public transport network.

Community transport policies	
CT P1	**Community transport criteria:** provide support for community transport services where all the below criteria are met: • There is a demonstrated need for a transport service in the community • There is no alternative public transport service available to the community • There is willingness by members of the community to set up, operate and maintain a trust or similar non-profit structure to oversee the governance of the service, and for people to volunteer as drivers • There is sufficient funding available to support the establishment and administration of the trust and the purchase of vehicle(s) • The establishment of the trust has the support of the relevant territorial authority.
CT P2	**Community transport support:** support for community transport services will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and may include: • Council staff assisting local groups to establish a trust or service in a new area • Financial grants towards vehicle purchase/replacement and operation, and trust administration costs, subject to availability of funding • Provision of necessary supporting technology to make community transport services easier to manage and more accessible for users, subject to availability of funding • Where possible, leverage ORC's purchasing ability to obtain best value for community vehicle/hoist purchase and other professional services such as driver training.

Community transport actions | The council will:	
CT A1	Develop a framework for identifying and prioritising a community transport programme that supplements our core public transport network.
CT A2	Collaborate with our partner agencies and community organisations to develop a shared vision for community transport, applying data-driven approaches and community engagement to identify challenges and opportunities and co-design solutions.
CT A3	Trial a community transport service in a selected area with the intention to scale up the service based on the trial's outcomes and community needs.
CT A4	Develop a framework to fund and support a robust community transport system in Otago in alignment with policies CT P1 and CT P2.
CT A5	Prepare community transport projects for inclusion in future annual plans, long-term plans, regional public transport plans, regional land transport plans and relevant business cases.

Case study: Pīkau community transport programme in rural Northland

In 2024, the mobility company Liftango collaborated with Ngātiwai iwi to launch a pilot community transport programme providing an on-demand bus service to under-served Māori communities in rural Northland.

Named Pīkau, which means 'to carry on the back', the community-led programme facilitates access to marae, hospitals and supermarkets between Whangaruru and Whangārei, 71 kilometres away.

The programme is co-designed, led and owned by Ngātiwai iwi and is funded by the Hoe ki angitū — NZTA Innovation Fund. The programme has produced significant community benefits, according to Ainsley Hughes, Liftango's Project Lead for Pīkau:

"My time in Northland working with community members on the co-design of Pīkau only reinforced how vital transport is for creating better health, wellbeing and social outcomes. All too often we see industry conversations about transport focusing on cost savings and efficiency metrics, ignoring so many of the critical social benefits a service like Pīkau brings to the community. The willingness and enthusiasm of our project partners to support Pīkau is an excellent step forward in refocusing this narrative on equity."

Many of Otago's communities face similar transport disadvantages as those in Whangaruru, and the Pīkau case demonstrates the potential benefits community transport can bring to under-served areas.

Focus area 2: Build trust

Objective: Proactively engage with communities and organisations, including iwi, to build trust and ensure public transport investments align with stakeholder priorities.

A well-functioning public transport system requires ORC to collaborate with our partner agencies, communities and other relevant stakeholders.

This collaboration involves the cultivation of strong working relationships built on trust. Without trust, we will struggle to navigate challenges and deliver an effective public transport system Otago communities deserve.

We will focus on three strategies to build trust with mana whenua, our partner agencies and key stakeholders:

- Adopting an equity-focused approach for improving access for transport-disadvantaged people
- Embracing meaningful engagement processes
- Building collaborative working relationships.

3.1 Our equity-focused approach

ORC will use an equity-focused approach in delivering public transport, allocating resources fairly to improve access to opportunities for transport-disadvantaged people.

This differs from an equality approach, where resources are allocated on an equal basis for all but may not adequately address the specific needs of transport-disadvantaged people (Figure 8).

Figure 8: The difference between equality, which treats everyone the same regardless of their specific circumstances, and equity, which involves addressing individual needs to achieve fairness. (Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2017)

ORC's equity-focused approach is based on three principles:

1. Community engagement:

ORC will proactively engage with communities that may be underrepresented in decision-making processes regarding public transport.

2. Access:

residents across Otago can safely access multiple transport options to reach their destination.

3. Address historical disinvestment:

ORC will collaborate with our partner agencies to invest in areas historically underserved by transportation projects to improve safety for people walking, cycling and using mobility assistance to access public transport services.

Equity policy	
EQ P1	**Decision making:** equity will be at the forefront of public transport decision making.

Equity actions | The council will:	
EQ A1	Review and analyse public transport data, including patronage statistics, service frequency and coverage, and demographic data to identify patterns of inequity in service provision and investment.
EQ A2	Conduct meaningful engagement with transport-disadvantaged people that goes beyond requesting feedback, encouraging them to articulate their public transport needs and co-create solutions through workshops, meetings, focus groups and surveys.
EQ A3	Prioritise public transport investments and policies that increase patronage for transport-disadvantaged people while also maximising operational efficiency and managing the trade-offs between patronage- and coverage-oriented networks.
EQ A4	Collaborate with partner agencies and disability advocacy organisations to explore the development of a Public Transport Disability Action Plan.

Case study: Bringing more public transport to Ōamaru

Ōamaru is the largest town in North Otago (population ~14,000) and is the main service hub for rural communities in the Waitaki Valley.

It is home to many transport-disadvantaged people, including students, retirees, former refugees and Māori and Pasifika communities.

Ōamaru has historically lacked public transport investment, and most residents have few transport options, forcing them to rely on private cars. Ōamaru features a relatively high population density, with the town centre, supermarkets and industrial area centred around a single corridor (State Highway 1).

These conditions are ideal for public transport, as a high-frequency fixed-route bus service could improve access to opportunities for a significant number of people. For example, a bus service from the North End to Weston via the Historic Precinct could serve 10,400 people within a 10-minute walk of a likely bus stop.

Similar bus services have proven successful elsewhere in New Zealand; Horizon Regional Council's introduction of a similar high-frequency service in 2023, nicknamed 'The Tide', has become one of Whanganui's most popular services.

ORC has not received central government funding to support a trial bus service within Ōamaru. Nevertheless, ORC remains committed to improving transport options for people living in Ōamaru and investigate and trial a bus service between Ōamaru and Dunedin in the near future.

At present, ORC offers Total Mobility services to transport-disadvantaged people, serving over 600 people in Ōamaru with 16 vehicles, including two wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

Ōamaru

3.2 Our engagement process

ORC aspires to go beyond our statutory consultative responsibilities to ensure public transport decisions are informed through meaningful engagement processes.

We aim to foster open and honest dialogue with stakeholders to build the trust necessary for a successful public transport system now and in the future.

We will follow He Mahi Rau Rika: Otago Regional Council Significance, Engagement and Māori Participation Policy, to ensure that public transport decision making is transparent and equitable.

We also recognise the importance of sharing the knowledge and wisdom of mana whenua and that engagement with iwi is based on the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi.

Engagement policies	
E P1	**Relationships:** strong relationships with Otago's diverse stakeholders are developed and maintained so public transport priorities and investments align with their needs and interests.
E P2	**Engagement:** our stakeholder engagement processes adhere to He Mahi Rau Rika: Otago Regional Council Significance, Engagement and Māori Participation Policy.

Engagement action | The council will:	
E A1	Engage in meaningful dialogue with diverse stakeholders interested in public transport to understand their transport needs.

3.3 Collaborative working relationships

Developing collaborative working relationships with diverse stakeholders is essential for the success of our public transport system.

For example, we can enhance the operational efficiency of our daily operations and improve strategic decision making by working closely with our partner agencies, including public transport operators, NZTA and territorial authorities.

There are also opportunities to attract co-funding, combine work programmes and complete transport projects by working with other groups.

These relationships may be particularly important for us to access new funding sources to make public transport improvements when government funding is limited.

This section outlines our policies and actions for developing and maintaining these important collaborative working relationships to improve public transport.

Collaborative working relationships policy	
CWR P1	**Relationships:** collaborative working relationships are developed and maintained with our partner agencies and key stakeholders to increase operational efficiency, improve strategic decision making and support transport projects.

Collaborative working relationships actions | The council will:	
CWR A1	Engage in open and regular dialogue with our partner agencies and key stakeholders to align expectations, identify and address inefficiencies and optimise the operation of our services.
CWR A2	Work collaboratively and develop joint work programmes with our partner agencies to integrate public transport projects and investments that align with each party's respective priorities and capabilities.
CWR A3	Support the sharing of information and data with and between our partner agencies, operators, and relevant stakeholders to inform future planning and understand transport trends, changing demands, growth and technological change.

ORC aims to develop collaborative working relationships with ...

Public transport operators:

ORC regularly collaborates with PTOs to address service delivery issues and customer feedback, change routes, and monitor network performance.

This collaboration is crucial for ORC to refine network performance, identify areas of improvement and evaluate how we meet regulatory requirements.

Partner agencies:

ORC aims to collaborate with territorial authorities and NZTA, which will enable us to coordinate work programmes along shared priorities and proactively meet communities' transport needs.

This is important in the Queenstown Lakes district, which is undergoing rapid growth and development, and in the Central Otago, Clutha and Waitaki districts, where public transport is lacking.

In recent years, ORC and Dunedin City Council have successfully collaborated to deliver significant improvements around Dunedin, such as:

- improving the safety and accessibility of bus stops in key locations including Princes Street, Dunedin Hospital, the tertiary area and Cargill's Corner
- increasing the frequency of buses to Dunedin Hospital
- enhancing bus route efficiency by implementing a primary bus corridor from Dunedin Bus Hub to South Dunedin.

Academic institutions:

ORC could potentially strengthen collaborative working relationships with academic institutions, including the University of Otago and Otago Polytechnic.

Doing so would enable us to exchange knowledge, respond to new research and collaborate on public transport projects and programmes that improve public transport while mutually benefitting students, academic institutions and ORC.

Local communities and organisations:

ORC can collaborate with local communities and organisations in conjunction with our territorial authorities to support community-led projects that improve public transport infrastructure and capacity.

Focus area 3: Environmental sustainability

Objective: Invest in a public transport system that promotes the best possible environmental outcomes regarding greenhouse gas emissions, pollutants and land use.

Transport is a major contributor of greenhouse gas emissions in Otago.

This is partly because many of our communities lack transport options and must rely on private cars as their primary mode of travel. The lack of transport options in Otago has environmental consequences.

The cumulative consequence of increasing private car use has led to increased traffic congestion, greenhouse gas emissions and the emission of harmful pollutants.

This results in poor air quality and an elevated risk of respiratory illnesses. If we want Otago's environment and communities to be healthy and connected, it is crucial that people have multiple transport options to get where they want to go, including via public transport, walking and cycling.

ORC is committed to providing communities with more transport options and better environmental outcomes regarding greenhouse gas emissions, pollutants, and land use. Achieving these outcomes will require us to take a holistic view of the transport sector's environmental impacts.

Our approach to reducing the environmental impacts of public transport is focused on two key topics: integrating land use planning with public transport and decarbonising our public transport fleet.

4.1 Integrating land use planning with public transport

Reducing the environmental impact of Otago's transport sector will require a greater proportion of people travelling by public and active transport compared to private cars.

To achieve this goal, we must provide useful and frequent public transport services in urban areas. However, it is difficult to provide such services equally across all urban areas.

This is because some areas have low population densities, which makes it more expensive and less efficient to deliver public transport while maintaining a low cost to ratepayers (Figure 9).

ORC's capacity to provide useful and frequent public transport depends on the presence of well-functioning urban environments, which in turn relies on urban form factors of proximity, linearity, connectivity, and density as outlined in Appendix E and transit-oriented development principles outlined in Appendix F.

The policies and actions in this section outline ORC's commitment to collaborate with key stakeholders to plan well-functioning urban environments that support public transport and minimise environmental impact.

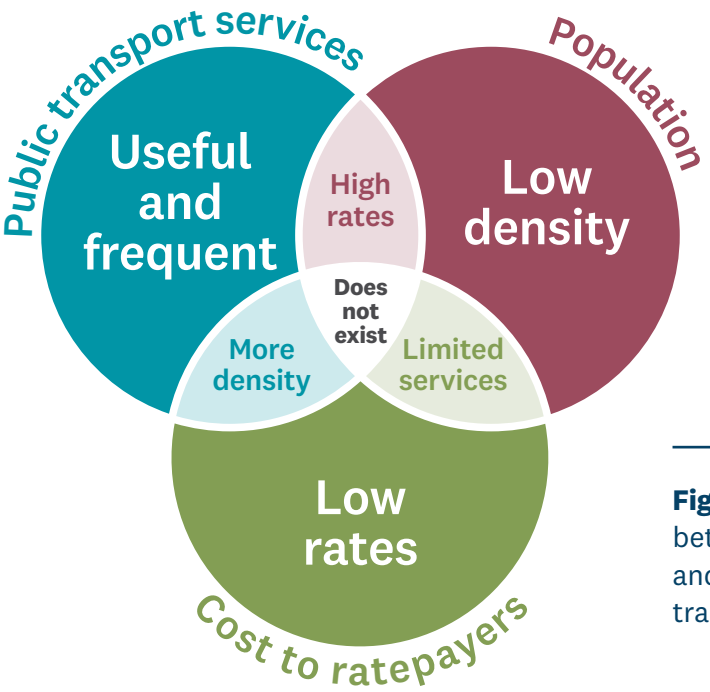


Figure 9: ORC must consider the trade-offs between population density, service provision and cost to ratepayers when making public transport decisions.

Land use policies	
LU P1	**Supporting development:** ORC will collaborate with territorial authorities and NZTA to support development of new urban areas, redevelopment and/or the expansion of existing urban areas that enable viable frequent public transport service provision through the following features: • Acknowledgement of the unique characteristics and challenges of places • Consistency with the urban form and transport design factors such as proximity, linearity, connectivity, and density, as outlined in Appendix E.
LU P2	**Sufficient services:** ORC will not provide public transport services sufficient to enable well-functioning urban environments where the nature and location of the proposed urban development is inconsistent with the urban form factors of proximity, linearity, connectivity, and density, as outlined in Appendix E.

Land use actions | The council will:	
LU A1	Use statutory planning processes and proactively engage with relevant stakeholders, including developers and territorial authorities, to ensure decisions regarding land use, the development of new urban areas, redevelopment and/or the expansion of existing urban areas are well integrated with existing and potential public transport services and infrastructure in line with the urban form factors outlined in Appendix E.
LU A2	Proactively engage with stakeholders involved in land use, urban development and transport planning around policy and investment to support useful and frequent public transport services in well-functioning urban environments that align with transit-oriented development principles, as outlined in Appendix F.

Case study: Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan and Grow Well Whaiora Partnership

The Grow Well Whaiora Partnership between Queenstown Lakes District Council, Kāi Tahu and central government was established in 2021 to develop a long-term strategy and investment plan for future development in the Queenstown Lakes area.

The partnership delivered the Queenstown-Lakes Spatial Plan (2021), which established urban outcomes such as 'Public transport, walking and cycling is the preferred option for daily travel'.

Achieving this goal will require coordination between ORC and relevant stakeholders to ensure land use is concentrated, mixed and integrated well with public and active transport networks.

ORC's policies and actions to integrate land use planning with public transport complement those in the Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan, and will be crucial to meeting our transport, climate and environmental goals outlined in ORC's Strategic Directions 2024–2034.

Tāhuna/Queenstown

4.2 Decarbonising our bus fleet and related infrastructure

Decarbonising our bus fleet and related infrastructure is a crucial step towards reducing our environmental impact, as it limits harmful pollutants and carbon emissions, improves air quality and reduces noise in our communities.

In 2021, ORC successfully trialled one electric bus along multiple routes in Dunedin, paving the way for the full electrification of our bus fleets in Dunedin and Queenstown.

Figure 10 shows the expected timeline ORC will roll out electric buses over the next few years to meet central government's target of a fully decarbonised public transport bus fleet nationwide by 2035.

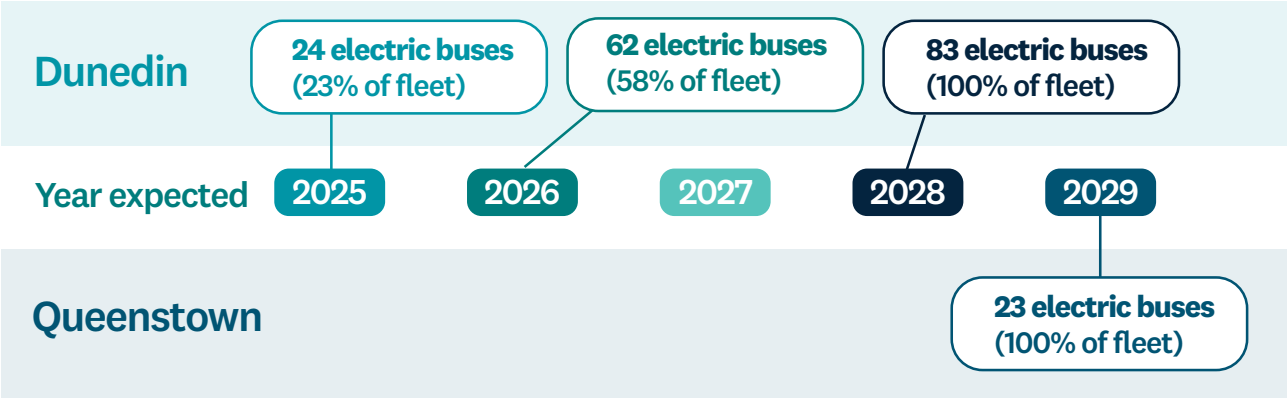


Figure 10: The expected dates ORC will roll out electric buses in Dunedin and Queenstown. These figures are subject to change based on changes to the operating environment.

Decarbonisation policies	
DC P1	**Decarbonised fleet:** deploy a fully decarbonised public transport bus fleet by 2035 while retaining the flexibility to use diesel buses as a secondary option to meet operational needs.
DC P2	**Supporting infrastructure:** new and existing charging infrastructure will align with NZTA charging design principles and, when practicable, be powered by renewable energy sources.

Decarbonisation actions | The council will:	
DC A1	Phase out diesel buses in favour of zero-emission electric buses when procuring new unit contracts.
DC A2	Coordinate with service operators and partner agencies, including through procurement processes, to ensure the bus fleet, charging stations, network changes and supporting infrastructure are strategically planned and maintained in a way that considers long-term environmental implications.
DC A3	Investigate and implement strategies to source electricity for charging stations from renewable energy.

Focus area 4: A connected and integrated network

Objective: Deliver a reliable and convenient public transport system that enhances personal freedom and access to opportunities.

Designing a public transport network requires care. Good public transport serves many different types of travel at once, and we cannot deliver a service that meets everyone's needs perfectly.

However, with careful design of our services and infrastructure, we can maximise the usefulness and legibility of our network, so that it works as well as possible for as many people as possible.

In our objective, we use the following terms:

- **Reliable:** the service is dependable and available when we say it will be.
- **Convenient:** the service fits with people's needs.
- **Access to opportunities:** our services allow people to get to where they want to go to participate in education, employment, social and recreational activities.
- **Personal freedom:** our services support people's independence: it's not just for travelling when they *need* to, it's for travelling when they *want* to.

5.1 How we design our network and services

1. **Serve diverse trip types:** we aim to provide services that connect people to diverse destinations across an urban area, including restaurants, shops, beaches, parks, and libraries. We want our services to be frequent throughout the day, seven days a week. We can achieve this principle by designing services that support complex travel patterns that are time and cost efficient.

2. **Prioritising a patronage-oriented network:** we must balance two competing goals when designing public transport services: patronage and coverage. A patronage-oriented network focuses on high-demand areas, has many frequent services, and can effectively compete with cars, maximising fare revenue and reducing congestion. In contrast, a coverage-oriented network provides access to as many areas as possible and provides greater access for transport-disadvantaged people, but may result in lower patronage and less fare revenue. We see patronage-oriented networks as the best approach for Otago's environment and communities to be healthy and connected while also acknowledging the importance of maintaining existing coverage levels. Figure 11 depicts the outcomes and trade-offs between patronage and coverage service design.

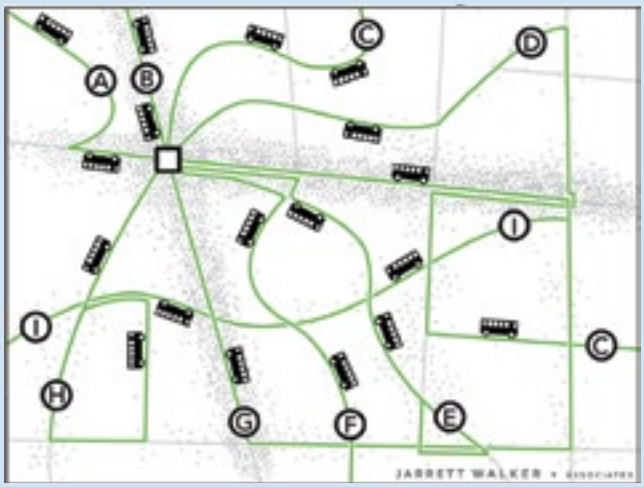
3. **Mode-neutrality:** public transport should improve people's access to opportunities regardless of whether they are travelling by bus, ferry, train, tram or any other mode. At present, buses are the dominant transport mode in Otago because they are cost efficient, can adapt to changing demand and can serve a wide range of areas. We also acknowledge the importance of being adaptable in the modes we support in response to changing community needs and technological advancements.

Coverage-oriented service design

Outcomes
Resources spread out resulting in low service frequencies less-direct services, less convenience and low patronage.

Benefits
Inclusive access, particularly for those who need it most.

Weakness
Will not significantly increase the proportion of trips made by public transport, shape urban form, or deliver other benefits associated with more public transport use.



Patronage-oriented service design

Outcomes
High service frequencies, direct service alignments resulting in maximum convenience and high patronage.

Benefits
- Increase the proportion of trips made by public transport
- Shape urban form
- Reduce harmful emissions.

Weakness
Many people will not have services nearby, impacting inclusive access.

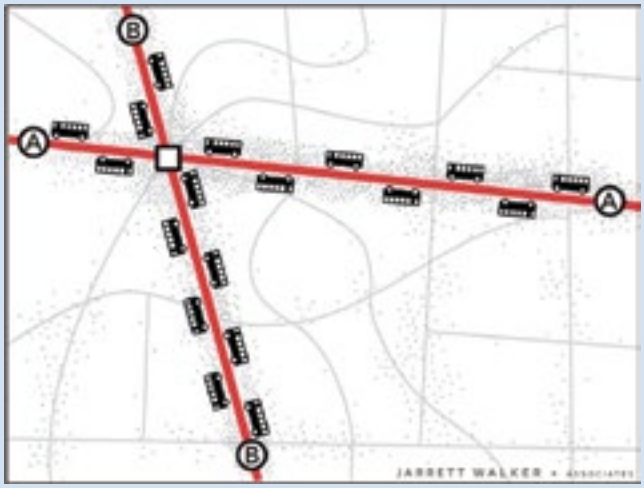


Figure 11: Coverage- vs patronage-oriented service design.
(Source: Jarrett Walker & Associates, 2018)

Service design policies	
SD P1	**Design principles:** public transport services are designed in a way that: • serve diverse trip patterns • maximise frequency • avoid unnecessary duplication of service • operate full frequencies across long service hours. The following design practices will guide our decision making (where these come into conflict, a reasonable balance will be sought): • Direct service, with travel times as competitive with private vehicle travel times as practical • Maximise access and travel options to town centres and other major trip attractors, such as educational institutions • Integrate with surrounding land use and operate through the heart of communities, rather than around the edges, to maximise the number of people and destinations within walking distance of a service • Operate on suitable streets, avoiding diverting around narrow back streets and staying on wider main roads • Minimise the number of transfers passengers need to make • Support seamless transfers, network function and efficiency • Support connections with other modes of transport, including walking for all trips, cycling (particularly in areas with strong identified demand or potential demand for cycling), and private vehicles (in the cases of longer trips, or to divert car parking away from central areas) • Services that overlap for significant sections of their route will be designed and timetabled in a way that provides a more frequent combined service over the common section and more opportunities to transfer.
SD P2	**Trade-offs:** the public transport network should be simple and designed in a way that prioritises patronage while also acknowledging the need to deliver quality coverage to support equitable access as much as possible with the resources available.
SD P3	**Service design factors:** ORC will consider the following factors when assessing coverage in a service design: • Walking distance to the nearest stops • Steepness of streets used to access stops • The quality of the walking infrastructure • Access to return trips • Cycling access to bus stops • Private vehicle access to bus stops for longer-distance trips.

SD P4	**Adding or changing services:** the following principles will guide decisions on whether and how ORC adds new services or makes changes to existing services: **Guiding principles for new services:** 1. Accessibility and support from local communities 2. Potential to increase patronage at present and under expected growth in the next 10 years 3. Consistency of land use with the urban form factors outlined in Appendix E 4. Quality and extent of supporting public transport infrastructure and multi-modal access 5. Adherence of a new service's area with the service design principles of serving diverse trip types, prioritising a patronage-oriented network and mode-neutrality 6. Cost, revenue, and funding projection support the long-term viability of the new service 7. New services may initially be implemented on a trial basis before integrating them into the network on an ongoing basis. **Guiding principles for changes to existing services:** Where a service fails to consistently meet patronage expectations, ORC will take the following actions before reducing the level of service or ending the service: 1. Investigate the patronage potential of the service 2. Identify and assess options to improve the service to attract patronage (e.g. route changes, promotional activities or infrastructure improvements) 3. Consider other ways of delivering the service 4. Consider combining the service with others or shortening the service to end at a key stop or destination.
SD P5	**Mode neutrality:** public transport will be delivered using the most appropriate mode (e.g. bus, ferry, tram, etc.) to meet demand, purpose, community need and value for money.
SD P6	**On-demand services:** in areas where fixed-route services are inefficient at providing coverage, on-demand services should be considered as an alternative. The following principles should apply to the use of on-demand services: • The value of on-demand services should be evaluated on a like-for-like basis with cost-equivalent fixed-route alternatives. • Except when highly targeted in nature, on-demand services should be integrated, as much as practical, into Orbus branding, fare payment and fare structures. • The impact of on-demand services on commercial small-vehicle markets should be considered in decisions to implement on-demand, especially with regards to Total Mobility operators.

5.2 Our public transport routes and service levels

The foundation of our network is our well-performing urban networks in Dunedin and Queenstown. These urban networks primarily consist of integral services operating under subsidy.

Urban services are classified according to their network function as **rapid, frequent, or connector** services, supplemented by **targeted** services to fulfil special purposes (Figure 12).

Regional services in Otago primarily consist of exempt services operating without subsidy (the exception being the current Palmerston–Dunedin service).

These services are integral to the wider regional network, and ORC has an interest in enhancing the regional network with subsidised services through this RPTP.

The regional network is classified as consisting of **regional link** or **city link** services at **primary, regular,** or daily **service levels,** along with **targeted** services. Some examples of these are outlined in Table 3.

Table 4 details these network service layers in greater detail including how they are incorporated into Otago's network.

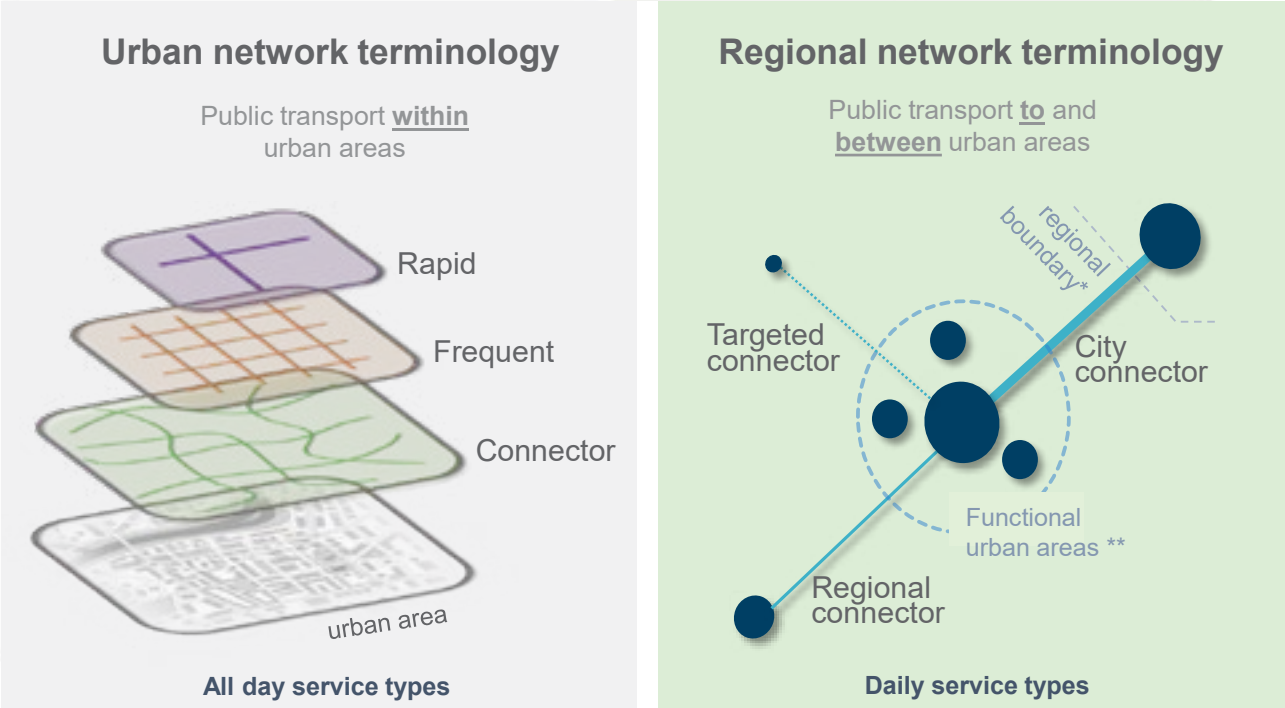


Figure 12: Public transport network terminology.
(Source: NZTA)

Table 3: Examples of different types of public transport services.

Urban Rapid

Auckland's rapid NX1 and NX2 services together form a north-south spine of the North Shore's bus network, operating in the dedicated Northern Busway for much of their length.

Due to the busway and its services, 30% of passenger trips crossing the Auckland Harbour Bridge are by bus, and this is expected to increase over time[5].

5 *https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plans-projects-policies-reports-bylaws/our-plans-strategies/auckland-plan/transport-access/Pages/the-northern-busway.aspx*

Urban Frequent

Queenstown's Route 1 operates between Remarkables Park, Wakatipu High School, and Queenstown Airport to the west of Frankton, along Frankton Road through Queenstown to Fernhill and Sunshine Bay.

Services operate every 15 minutes from 6am to 7pm, and continue half-hourly past midnight, seven days a week. This makes this route one of the most intensively operated public transport services in New Zealand outside of Auckland, Wellington, or Christchurch.

The ability to run such high levels of service seven days a week comes from the combination of population and employment density and visitor numbers to Queenstown that drives high all-day and all-week demand.

Urban Connector

Dunedin's Route 50 operates from St Clair Park and Corstorphine in the city's south-west, through the city centre to Helensburgh in the north-west.

Services run half-hourly from around 6am to 7pm on weekdays, and hourly from 7pm to 11pm in evenings and all day on weekends.

The service mostly runs directly on main roads but includes some diversions to direct routing that increase the coverage achieved by the service, notably by looping around the St Clair Park area.

Regional Link

Dunedin's Route 1 is a Secondary Regional Link service.

The service provides peak-hour and limited off-peak and weekend connections from the city of Dunedin to several coastal townships to its north.

Peak trips are subject to high demand from commuters and school students, while off-peak trips allow people to take a day trip to these towns without requiring a private vehicle.

City Link

InterCity's Dunedin to Queenstown service is a Daily City Link service, connecting Otago's largest urban areas of Dunedin and Queenstown via intermediate centres including Balclutha, Alexandra, Clyde, and Cromwell, and with connections to services across the South Island.

The service operates on a commercial basis, outside of ORC's control, but forms an integral part of Otago's public transport network and is recognised as such by this RPTP.

Targeted

Dunedin's Route 39 is a public transport service that, while available to the general public, is designed to serve school travel, with one trip per day in each direction to connect Green Island with schools on the hills above central Dunedin.

The service exists because there is high demand for travel between Green Island and these schools, but there is no easy way to make this connection on our network of all-day Connector and Frequent services.

If future routes were able to make this connection, the targeted service would no longer be required, and this school travel pattern could be integrated into all-day routes.

Table 4: The different network service layers and how they can be incorporated into Otago's public transport network.

See Appendix G for a full list of integral services.

Urban Rapid service	**Role and function**	**Key characteristics**	**Service hours and frequency targets**	**Infrastructure targets**
	• Moves a very high number of people • Strongly shapes the public transport network, urban form and land development	• Turn-up-and-go frequencies • High-capacity vehicles • Travel times competitive or even faster with private car	• 6am–8pm: every 10 minutes or better • 4am–6am, 8pm–1am: every 15 minutes or better	• Delivered by high-capacity vehicles on a fixed route (bus, tram, etc.) • Dedicated right-of-way with limited interactions with other traffic • Mostly premium and intermediate stops
	Our current services	Otago lacks urban rapid services, though some elements of urban rapid services apply where many routes overlap (e.g. Dunedin Bus Hub).		
	Our aspirations	No current plans to implement full rapid service, but: • we want to enhance key spines, where the combined service may approach rapid standards • we support the future study of an "off-line" rapid service in Queenstown, likely using ropeway technologies		

Urban Frequent service	**Role and function**	**Key characteristics**	**Service hours and frequency targets**	**Infrastructure targets**
	• Moves many people • Influences the shape of the public transport network, urban form and some land development	• High frequencies throughout the day; passengers have less reliance on the timetable as waits will be short • Direct routing on main roads to minimise running time • Travel times competitive with private car	• 6am–8pm: every 15 minutes or better • 4am–6am, 8pm–1am: every 30 minutes	• Delivered by buses on fixed routes • Bus priority infrastructure (e.g. bus lanes) in areas of high congestion • Mostly intermediate- and standard-quality bus stops
	Our current services	• One frequent service in Queenstown, three in Dunedin (including the two St Kilda services, considered together) • Service hours are shorter than above targets and Dunedin services are reduced on weekends		
	Our aspirations	• Increase the number of frequent services, including (in Dunedin) cases where multiple connector services combine • Enhance hours of service towards above targets and full weekend frequencies • Enhance infrastructure towards targets		

Urban Connector service

Role and function	Key characteristics	Service hours and frequency targets	Infrastructure targets
• Moves a moderate number of people • Supports, but does not shape, urban form and land development	• High service availability, but frequencies are merely regular: passengers need to coordinate their travel to a timetable or on-demand wait times • Service design principles compromised in order to achieve greater coverage	• 6am–8pm: every 30 or 60 minutes (extra peak services when needed to meet capacity requirements) • 8pm–12am: every 60 minutes • On-demand services have 30–60-minute expected waiting times	• Delivered by buses or ferries, generally on fixed routes • Some areas may be better served using on-demand service design • Operates in mixed traffic alongside private cars • Mostly standard-quality bus stops

Our current services	Core networks in Dunedin and Queenstown. Most Dunedin services are half-hourly, while Queenstown services are hourly (half-hourly at peak for strongest routes). Dunedin has reduced weekend services.
Our aspirations	• Strongest Connector routes to be upgraded to Frequent • Implement Connector service in Ōamaru and Wānaka (either fixed-route or on-demand) • Enhance hours of service towards above targets and full weekend frequencies • Enhance infrastructure towards targets • Investigate on-demand service where fixed-route services perform poorly

Regional service types

City link Connects major urban areas to each other		Regional link Connects small urban areas to a larger city
Primary **(city link or regional link)** • Same service aspirations as frequent urban services	**Secondary** **(city link or regional link)** • Similar service aspirations to connector services, but frequency could be reduced below hourly service level to 3–6 trips per day	**Daily** **(city link or regional link)** • 1–2 trips per day

Our current services	• No examples of primary in Otago • Palmerston–Dunedin service (3–4 trips per day) is a contracted secondary service. • Wānaka–Queenstown service (4 trips per day) is an exempt secondary service • Some exempt services, such as Intercity services, operate daily

Our aspirations	• Implement contracted daily or secondary services:
	  • Ōamaru–Dunedin
	  • Balclutha–Dunedin
	  • Alexandra–Queenstown
	  • Wānaka–Queenstown
	• Support the development of the wider regional network of exempt services

Targeted services

Description **Targeted services are those that are integral to the network but are best delivered in a targeted manner to meet specific transport needs. Targeted services operate within the urban and wider regional networks and must represent good value for money to receive subsidy from ORC.**	
Our current services	• Total Mobility services for people with long-term mobility impairments • School services targeting school students in areas that are not serviced by the urban public transport network • Commuter services to meet the peak demand for travel to and from work • Community transport services linking people in isolated communities with other urban areas (no ORC involvement) • Special event services providing transport for people attending nearby events
Our aspirations	• Enhance the availability of Total Mobility, especially the availability of wheelchair-accessible vehicles • Where possible, enhance connector/frequent services to serve schools without targeted services, but offer school-targeted services where there is demand that cannot be met • Operate express commuter services where there are significant travel-time savings compared to all-day service (such as along a motorway) • Support the operations of community vehicle trusts financially and logistically • Support major event services across Otago

Our rural network aspiration: increase regional connectivity

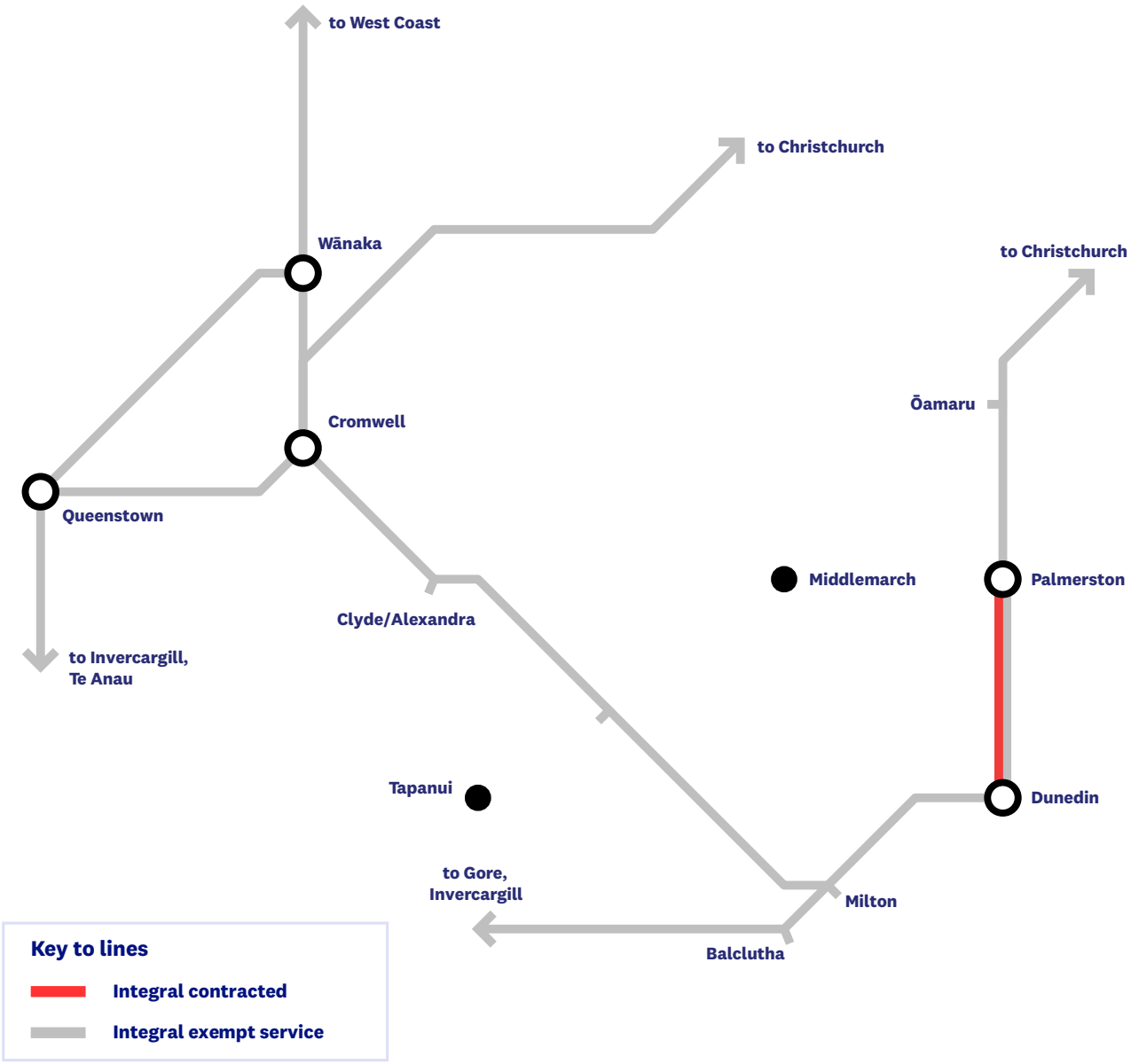
Many people in Otago's rural areas have limited or no access to public transport, forcing them to depend on private cars to access opportunities.

Although the sparse population of Otago's rural areas limits what public transport can achieve, we aim to enhance the basic level of connectivity across the region.

The following maps show the current, next 10-year, and 10–30-year maps outlining the **expected development** of the Otago regional network.

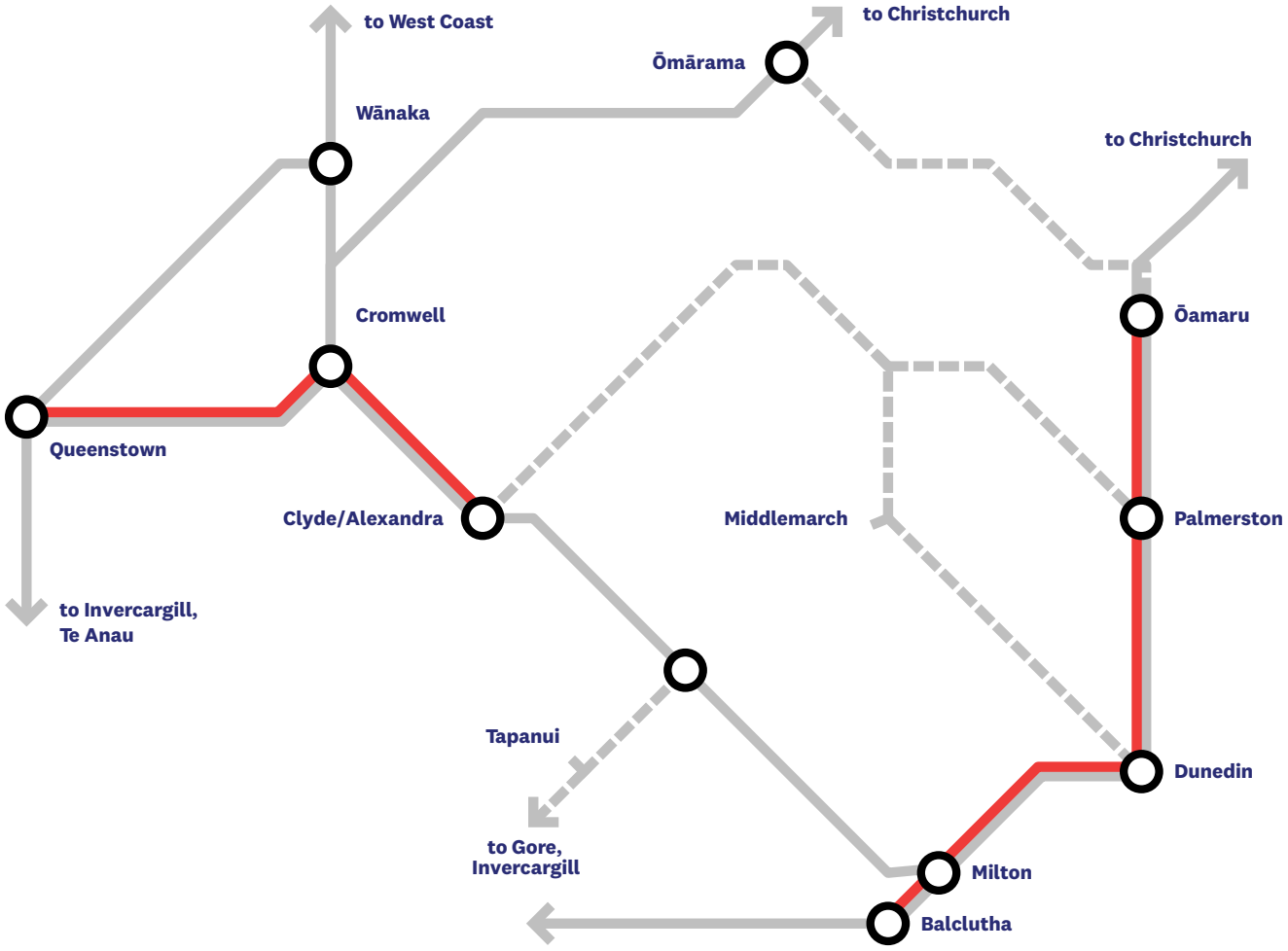
Current map

- Contracted regional service only exists between Dunedin and Palmerston.
- Wider network of exempt services provides regional and inter-regional connectivity along major state highways and in Queenstown Lakes / Central Otago.
- Secondary state highways do not have any significant services.



Next 10 years
(subject to funding and further study)

- New contracted services Dunedin–Balclutha, Alexandra–Queenstown to supplement exempt services.
- Dunedin–Palmerston service to be extended to Ōamaru.
- Support community vehicle trusts to establish basic connectivity to the most remote areas (secondary state highways shown to illustrate this in map).

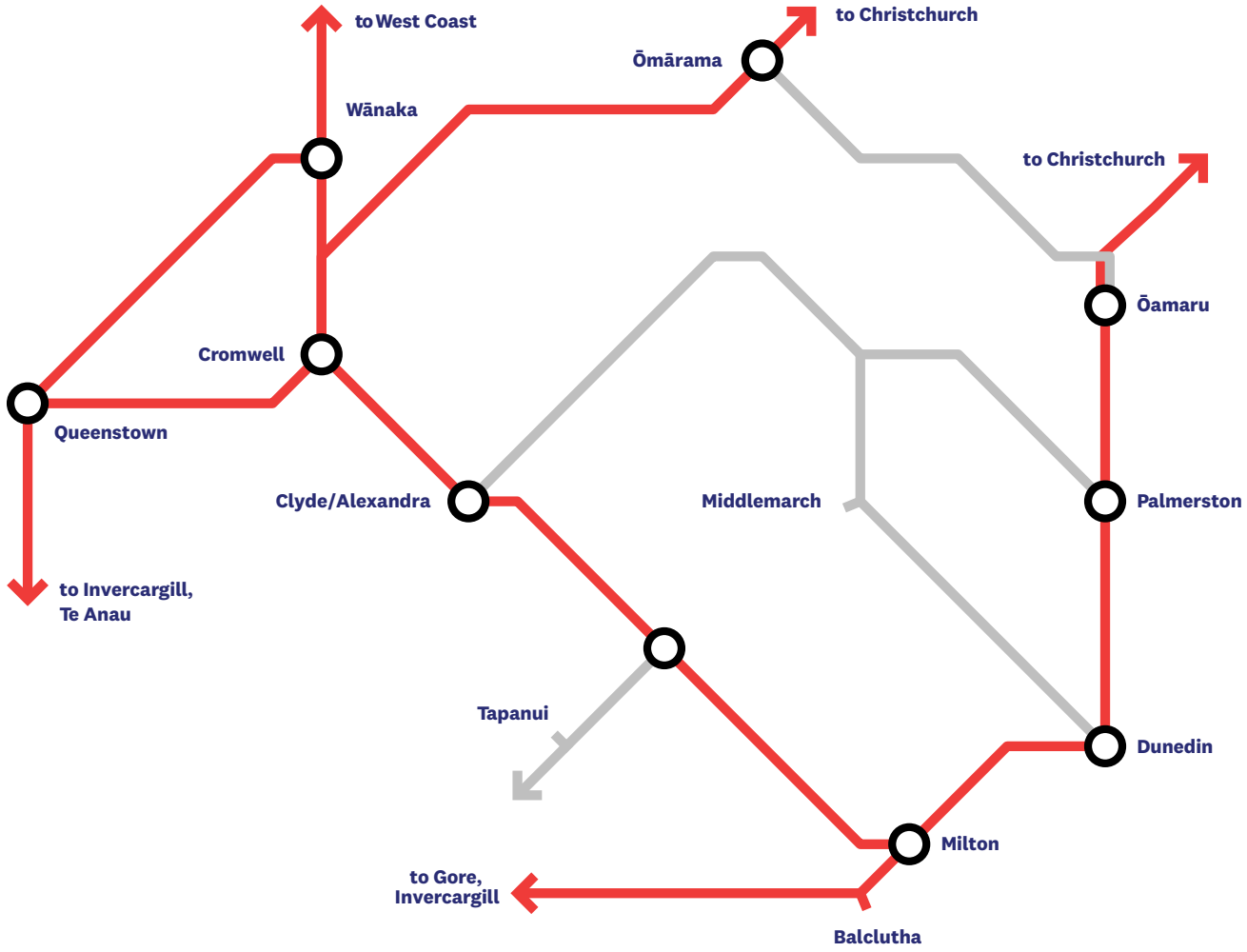


Key to lines

- Integral contracted service
- Integral exempt service
- Potential Community Transport

10–30 years
(speculative)

- Main regional and inter-regional services fully integrated into contracted network of integral services.
- Develop daily services on secondary highways where viable.
- Community vehicle trusts to continue to provide basic options also (not shown).



Key to lines

- Integral contracted service (primary or secondary)
- Possible daily contracted services

Queenstown urban network aspirations

Queenstown is a high-growth centre, and it is essential that the development of public transport proactively supports this growth.

We plan to progressively increase service levels across the network.

Due to expected long-term population growth, our most popular public transport route will likely be from the new Homestead Bay development, through existing Jack's Point and Hanley's Farm areas, into Frankton and Queenstown.

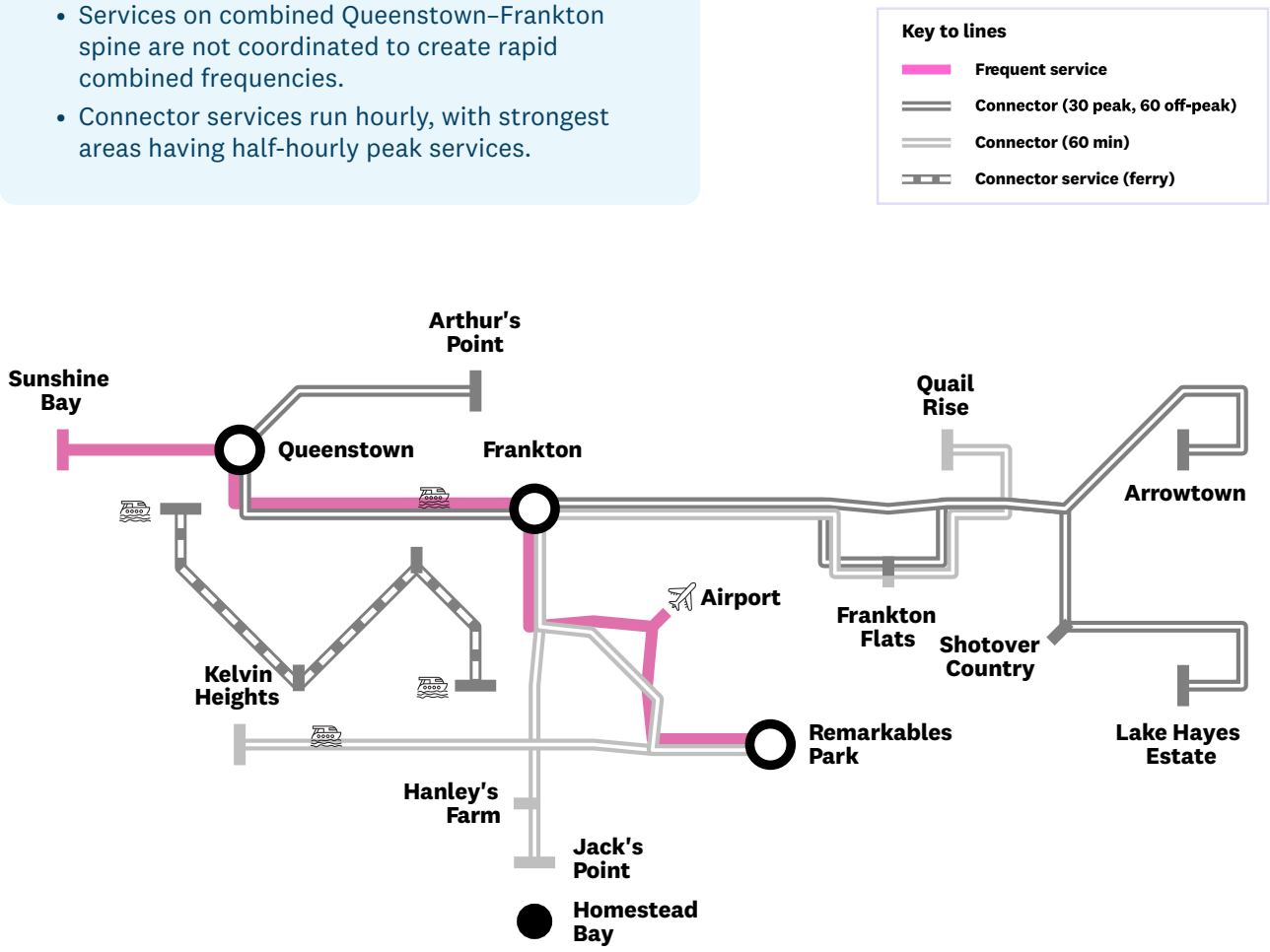
Our plan is that this, and other key routes in the network, will be served by high-capacity articulated buses.

Additionally, there may be a future study of the case for other modes to serve this area, including an off-line option and a direct ferry service.

The following maps show the current, 0–3-year, 3–6 year and 6–30-year maps outlining the **expected development** of the Queenstown Orbus network.

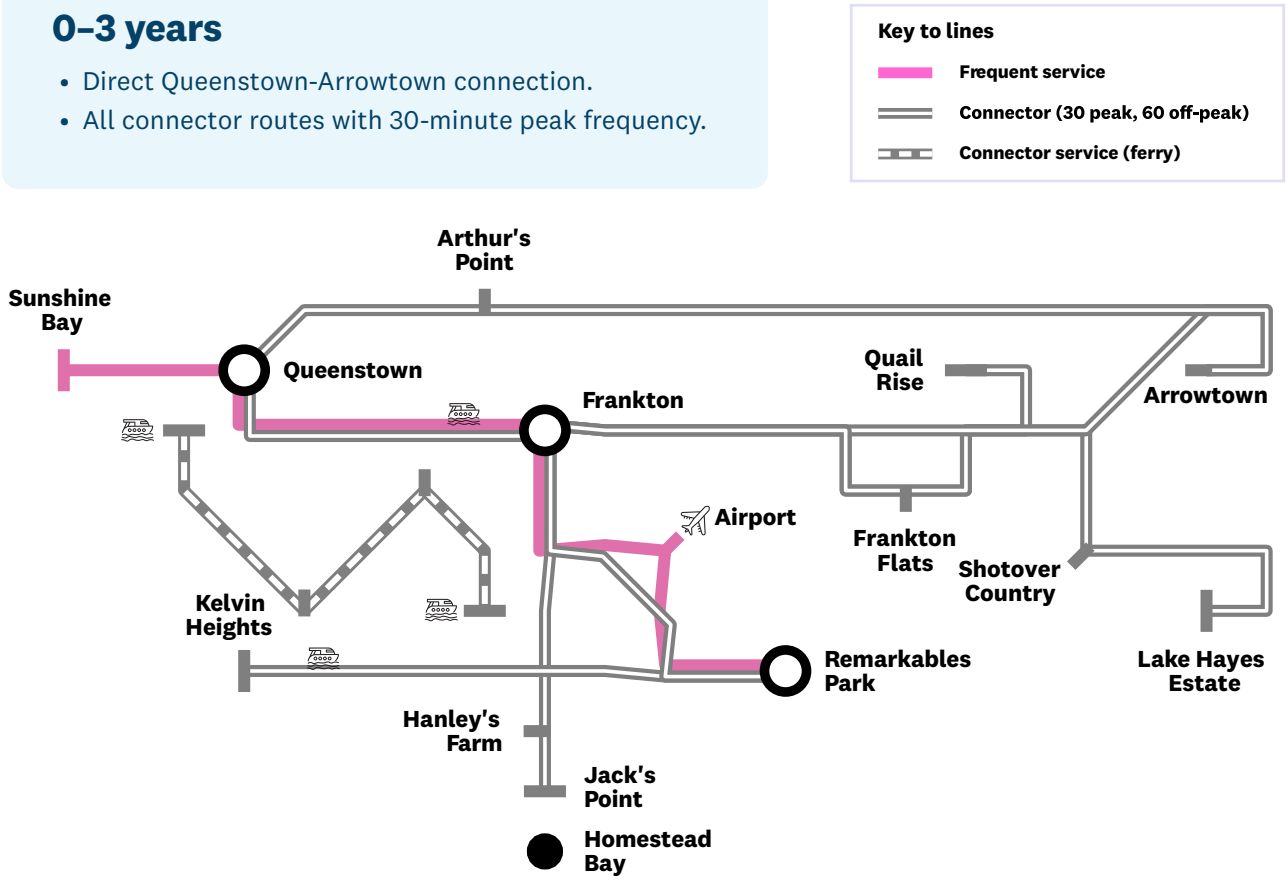
Current map

- No direct route from Queenstown to Arrowtown.
- Services on combined Queenstown–Frankton spine are not coordinated to create rapid combined frequencies.
- Connector services run hourly, with strongest areas having half-hourly peak services.



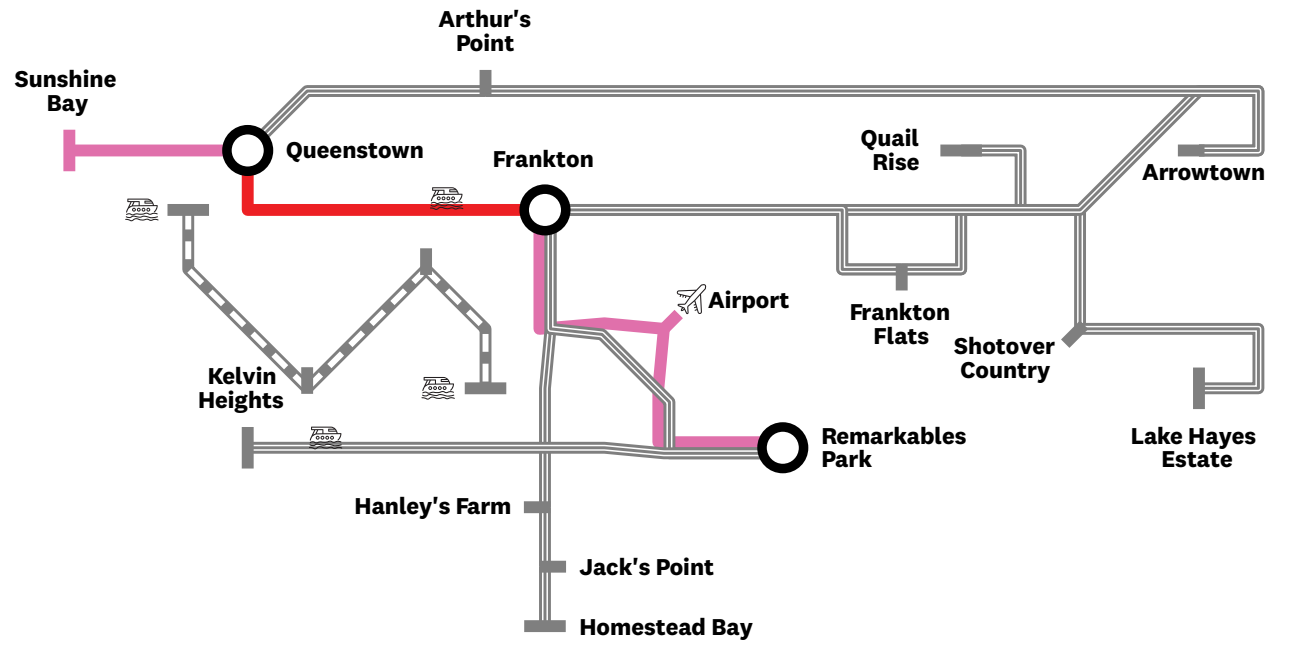
0–3 years

- Direct Queenstown-Arrowtown connection.
- All connector routes with 30-minute peak frequency.



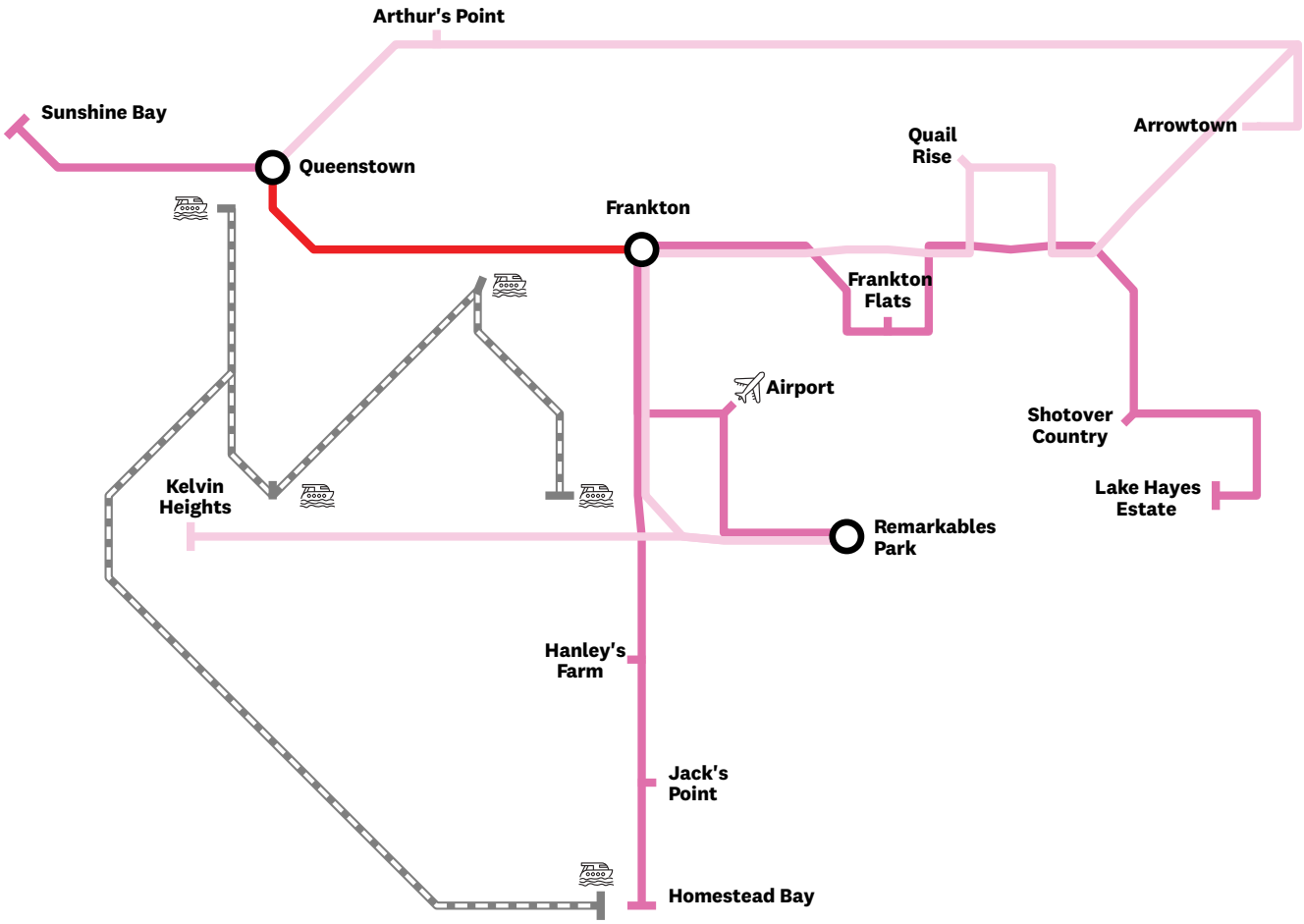
3–6 years

- All connector routes with 30-minute all-day frequency.
- Timetables to be coordinated to create 7.5-minute frequency between Queenstown and Frankton.
- Extension to Homestead Bay as development occurs.
- Articulated buses begin to be introduced to increase capacity.
- Development of on-demand services away from core routes.



6–30 years

- Services across network to be increased to frequent levels (per business case).
- Missing road connections such as Quail Rise are filled in, allowing more direct routes.
- Potential ferry to Homestead Bay.
- Potential for rapid off-line service between Queenstown and Homestead Bay (not shown).
- Continuing development of on-demand services away from core routes.



Dunedin urban network aspirations

Dunedin is a medium-to low-growth city with a mature public transport network.

Development of this network will, with minor exceptions, be focused on enhancing existing service areas.

As of 2025, ORC has an existing plan for upgrading bus frequencies across Dunedin through the Fares and Frequencies Business Case.

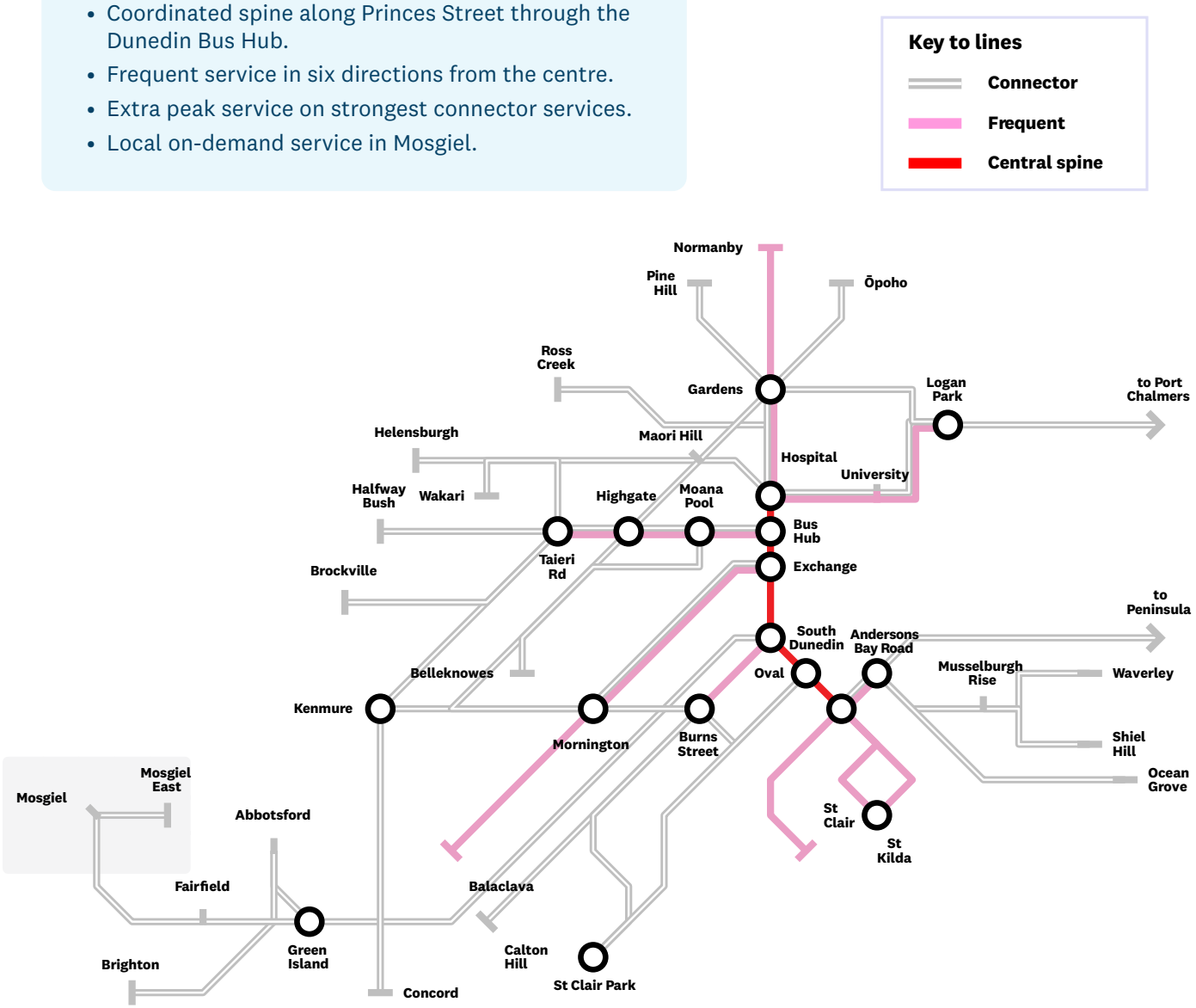
This business case did not receive government funding in the 2024–27 National Land Transport Programme.

Despite this, we are seeking to implement what frequency improvements we can, along with optimisations and route changes (still to be developed).

The following maps show the current, next 10-year and 10–30-year maps outlining the **expected development** of the Dunedin Orbus network.

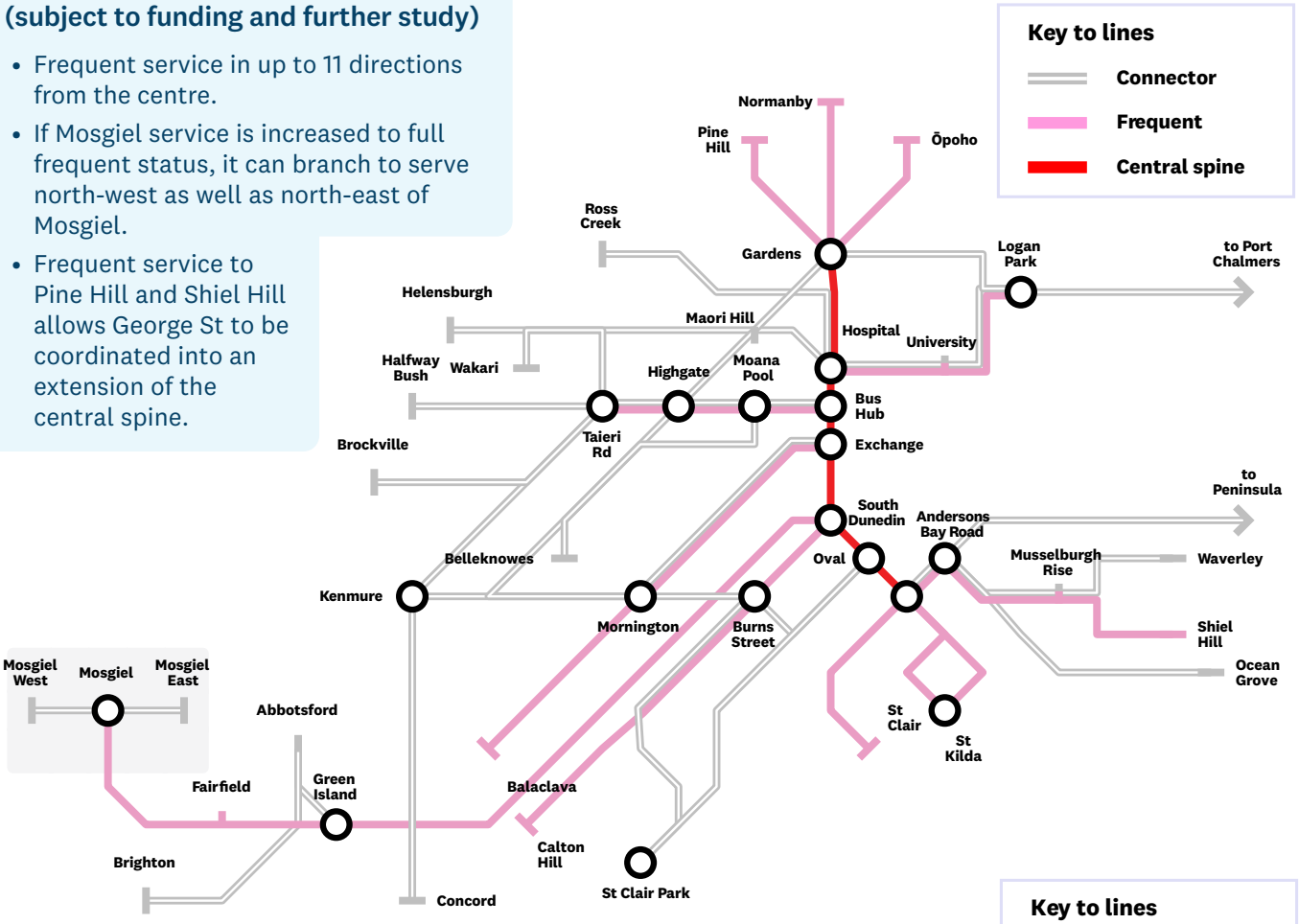
Current map
(July 2025)

- Coordinated spine along Princes Street through the Dunedin Bus Hub.
- Frequent service in six directions from the centre.
- Extra peak service on strongest connector services.
- Local on-demand service in Mosgiel.



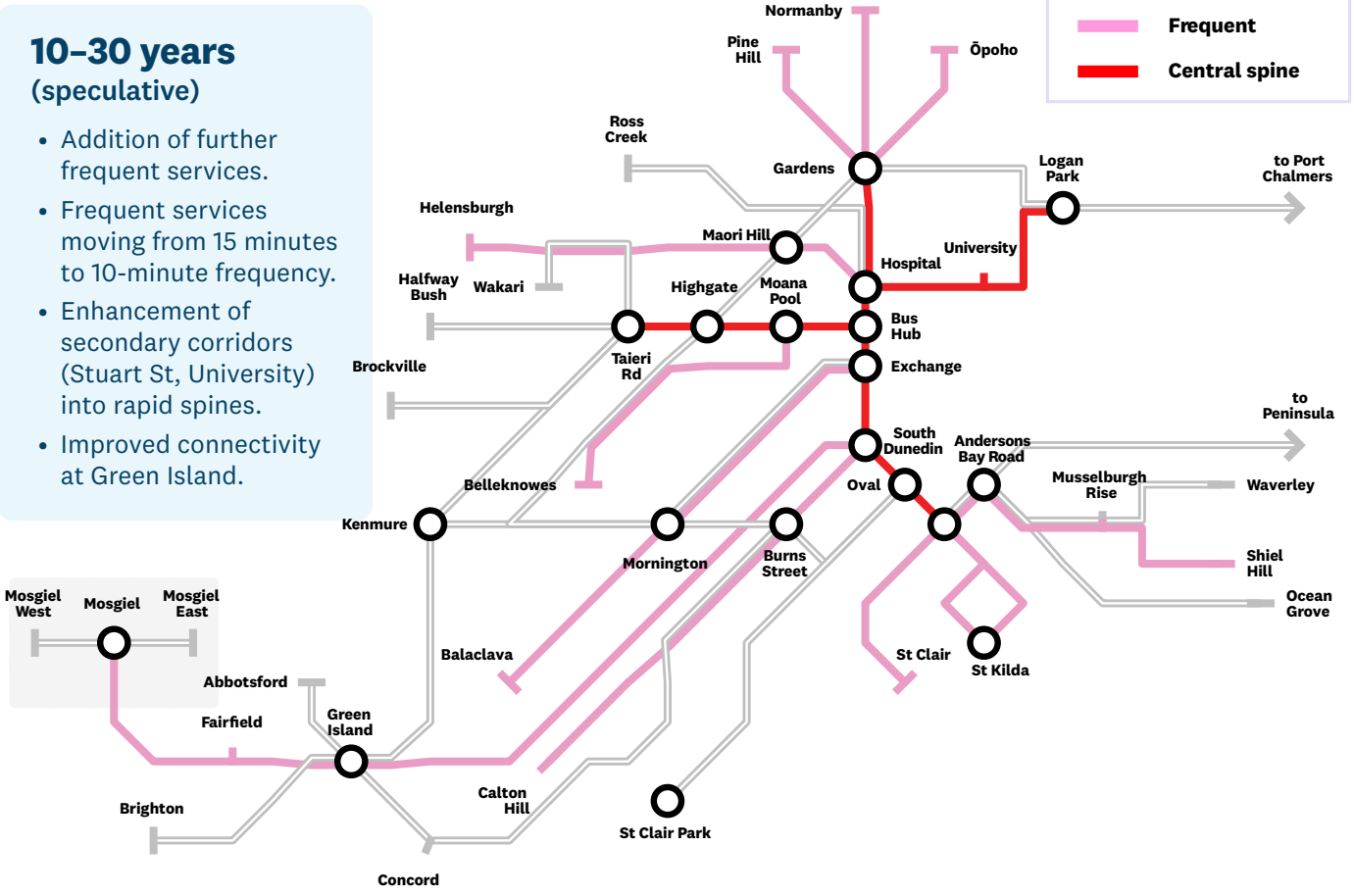
Next 10 years
(subject to funding and further study)

- Frequent service in up to 11 directions from the centre.
- If Mosgiel service is increased to full frequent status, it can branch to serve north-west as well as north-east of Mosgiel.
- Frequent service to Pine Hill and Shiel Hill allows George St to be coordinated into an extension of the central spine.



10–30 years
(speculative)

- Addition of further frequent services.
- Frequent services moving from 15 minutes to 10-minute frequency.
- Enhancement of secondary corridors (Stuart St, University) into rapid spines.
- Improved connectivity at Green Island.



Integral and exempt services

In Appendix G of this RPTP, we identify which public transport services are integral to Otago's public transport network.

We identify these services as integral because they are fundamental to achieving service outcomes of patronage and coverage, and delivering safe, effective and efficient public transport in Otago.

They also contribute to achieving our aspirations and goals of our Strategic Directions, especially the strategic direction for transport.

Contracted services

High-quality public transport usually requires a level of public subsidy. A subsidised service operates under a service contract and is therefore within our control: we can set the terms of the contract and operate it under policies set out in this RPTP. This ensures we can plan and deliver our integral services in an integrated manner.

Those integral services that we fund, or intend to fund in the next 10 years, are identified as **integral contracted services.**

Exempt services

An exempt service is a public transport service that operates, without subsidy, on the initiative of the operator and priced at market rates.

ORC can accept or refuse registration of some exempt services, and maintains a register of these services, but they are not otherwise subject to the policies of this RPTP. The process for registration and variation of an exempt service can be found on our website[6].

Some exempt services are integral services to Otago's public transport network. Although these services are largely out of ORC's control, they deliver a part of the regional network and the outcomes we seek from public transport. We therefore identify these services as integral exempt.

This means we acknowledge their importance and long-term interest in these services, but we are not currently intending to contract these services (or similar services) ourselves to bring them under our control.

This may be because:

- we would like to subsidise these services in the long term but are not in a position to at present, *or*
- we do not see a need to subsidise these services as the current service is of good quality and already delivering the outcomes we would seek.

Not withstanding the above, we can provide certain limited financial support for integral exempt services, without taking full control of the services in a service contract.

This can be:

- funding for small-vehicle operations (Total Mobility and community transport operations)
- funding to lower the fares of exempt services to align with other public transport services.

6 *https://www.orc.govt.nz/orbus/travel-with-us/about-orbus/register-an-exempt-public-transport-service/*

Network form and function policies	
NF P1	**Basis of identification of integral services:** a current or prospective public transport service may be identified as integral to Otago's public transport network on the basis that it: • supports the transport needs of Otago residents and visitors • safely, effectively, and efficiently achieves outcomes of coverage and/or patronage of public transport services • contributes to achieving the aspirations and goals of ORC's Strategic Directions (Appendix B), especially the Transport Strategic Direction.

NF P2	**Integral contracted services:** a service may be identified as an integral contracted service when:
	• operating the service under contract is considered necessary to maintain the service's existence or quality
	• the service is funded, or future funding is actively being sought
	• funding the service represents good value for money for ratepayers, taking into consideration the extent to which other funding sources (such as the National Land Transport Fund) impact the cost
	• urban and regional public transport services identified as Integral Contracted on the integral services table (Appendix G) will be delivered and subsidised:
	  • in networks as outlined in Section 5.2
	  • with forms and functions outlined in Section 5.2.

NF P3	**Approach to delivery of integral services:** integral contracted services will be allocated into contractual units and delivered through service contracts to ORC. Integral exempt services will be allocated into exempt units according to their mode, function, and geographic area, and will be delivered by private operators on a commercial or not-for-profit basis.
NF P4	**Exempt services:** subject to value for money considerations, ORC may provide financial assistance to identified integral exempt services based on: • supporting Total Mobility and community transport services • supporting the affordability of passenger fares that are more in line with similar contracted services.
NF P5	**Financial assistance of exempt services:** subject to value for money considerations, ORC may provide financial assistance to identified integral exempt services based on: • supporting Total Mobility and community transport services • supporting the affordability of passenger fares that are more in line with similar contracted services.

NF P6	**Targeted services:** the need for targeted services will be minimised by accommodating as many trips as possible on our core network. However, subject to funding availability and value for money, targeted services may be provided under the following conditions: • In the shorter term, the service supports trips that cannot reasonably be made through other public transport services. • In the longer term, the public transport network cannot reasonably be adapted to support trips that the targeted service can support. • Services targeted at school travel should primarily support travel to the nearest available school.
NF P7	**Urban areas:** prioritise the development of frequent services (subject to funding availability) to support mode shift and increased patronage. The connector service layer will be maintained to ensure wide availability of service.
NF P8	**Smaller communities:** transport solutions to improve connectivity for our smaller regional centres and communities will be prioritised and tailored for each community, matching need with availability of resources and funding.

Network form and function actions | The council will:	
NF A1	Develop and design service improvements in line with future network structures outlined in Section 5.2.
NF A2	Support Otago's regional public transport network by: • operating existing contracted services • coordinating with partner agencies and local communities to design viable[7] regional services • providing financial and logistical support to community transport operators across the region • identifying and promoting exempt public transport services which are integral to the regional network.
NF A3	Work with our partner agencies to ensure that appropriate supporting physical infrastructure, pedestrian facilities, and wayfinding information is strategically placed to support easy and safe access to the public transport network.
NF A4	Work collaboratively with key stakeholders to implement integrated packages of activities designed to achieve mode shift in urban areas. These may include: • public transport service provision • bus priority infrastructure • pricing mechanisms (fares and parking) integrated with plans for urban intensification and active transport provision • mode-shift promotion activities.

7 Viability is defined in terms of policy SD P4 (Section 5.1).

NF A5	Design timetables in such a manner that they:
	• have timing points and accurate running times to avoid early or excessively late running
	• support seamless transfers between different services
	• to the extent that is practical, run at a consistent interval (e.g. 10 minutes past the hour)
	• allow sufficient, but not excessive, layover between trips so that:
	  • there is sufficient recovery time between trips to ensure recovery from late running
	  • drivers have sufficient breaks to meet Employment Relations Act requirements
	  • dwell time outside residential properties is minimised
	  • the timetable represents value for money.

NF A6	Periodically review the design and configuration of services, considering factors such as: • Performance of services • Their adherence to network design principles, prioritising a patronage-oriented network • Contractual cycles • Land use changes (including location of key services and destinations) • Travel behaviour patterns (e.g. working from home) • Change in the legislative, regulatory, and funding environment of public transport. Service reviews may be restricted to a small geographic area (such as a small number of suburbs) or broader (at a network level). Where a service review covers central areas of a network, such a review should include consideration of strategic infrastructure such as interchanges, which could have a significant impact on service design.

5.3 Multi-modal access

A public transport system that integrates well with other modes enhances access, choice and personal freedom.

Designing and planning for seamless integration between modes, particularly walking, cycling, and shared mobility is therefore fundamental in our network approach. It is also critical to achieving our goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality in our region.

Our aim is for active transport to be the preferred mode for short journeys in our urban areas. Longer journeys should be easily and safely completed by linking modes with public transport.

We are fortunate to have iconic and attractive long-distance walking and cycling trails, as well as urban walking and cycling networks in our region.

The next step is to progress the connectivity of these assets with our public transport system to enable more sustainable longer-distance travel options and provide greater opportunities for more people to choose public transport.

Multi-modal access policies	
MM P1	**Multi-modal access:** improve the connectivity of the public transport network with active transport networks, shared mobility and other modes by collaborating with our partner agencies, operators and key stakeholders in the provision of: • safe and accessible walking, cycling and micro-mobility connections to public transport services and facilities • cycling and micro-mobility parking facilities at public transport interchanges and other key locations • a means for carrying bicycles and micro-mobility on all scheduled services • reducing conflict between buses and vulnerable users such as cyclists, pedestrians and micro-mobility users using appropriate design solutions which retain access for these modes • identifying and developing locations considered suitable for park-and-ride facilities consistent with Policy IN P5.
MM P2	**Tourism:** encourage sustainable economic growth and promotion of green tourism based around public and active transport.

Multi-modal access actions | The council will:	
MM A1	Develop a regional public and active transport connectivity strategy and programme of activities that address barriers and improve the use of public and active transport in the region.
MM A2	Continue to investigate ways to integrate cycling with use of public transport in urban areas (e.g. dedicated cycle parking at public premium public transport stops).
MM A3	Work collaboratively with our partner agencies to improve walking and cycling connections to public transport.
MM A4	Provide cycle parking at strategic locations where there is evidence of demand to support greater access to the public transport network by alternative modes.

5.4 Infrastructure

Network assets

‘Network assets’ refers to highly visible public transport infrastructure ‘out on the network’.

This includes bus stops, ferry wharves, bus lanes, and some operational infrastructure that interacts with street design and urban design, such as where buses layover and drivers take breaks away from their depots.

Under the division of responsibilities in the wider transport system, a large proportion of network infrastructure is managed and/or regulated by city and district councils. The detail of this relationship varies from place to place and for different types of infrastructure.

In all cases it is essential that ORC, as the public transport authority, collaborates closely with city and district councils, and NZTA in its Road Controlling Authority function, to deliver infrastructure that supports the public transport network.

Table 8: Bus stop categories outlined in the NZTA One Network Framework.

Bus stop type	Description	Typical bus stop design
Interchange	Key network location where many services meet and connections between services across a wide area of the network are available. An interchange will be used by many buses at once, and sees a very high level of foot traffic, requiring a sophisticated design with significant facilities which are given strong priority. Otago’s urban networks will not have more than 1-2 interchanges.	
Premium	A very heavily used bus stop, operating in a place with very high amenity. The quality of the facilities is of high priority. May operate as an interchange for a small set of services. Only a small number of premium stops are expected across the network.	

Bus stop type	Description	Typical bus stop design
Intermediate	A heavily used bus stop, operating in a place with high amenity. Facilities are of increased quality. A minority of stops, but not an insignificant number, are expected to be intermediate.	
Standard+	A moderately used bus stop with a standard level of service. Infrastructure is of a standard design and there should be a shelter.	
Standard	A moderately to lightly used bus stop with a standard level of service. Infrastructure is of a standard design and a shelter is not required.	
Basic	A very lightly used stop with a low level of service and requiring minimal infrastructure. Only a minority of stops are at a basic level.	

Boarding locations

Bus stops are the network assets with greatest immediate passenger impact.

The comfort, convenience, and safety (perceived and real) of these waiting areas has a significant impact on how users interact with public transport.

In developing our network of bus stops, we will consider factors such as:

- **Stop spacing:** close-together stops may make public transport more accessible, but can significantly slow down a service, and the increased number of stops may mean that investment in the quality of stops needs to be spread more thinly.
- **Pairing:** if a stop is available for trips in one direction, there needs to be another stop available for return trips. This means that stops should generally be paired, close to each other on opposite sides of the road, and sections of route that only run in one direction of a road should be avoided where possible.
- **Accessibility:** improvements to the design of bus stops and their surrounding environments can have a significant positive impact on disabled and transport-disadvantaged people.
- **Public transport's place on streets:** well-designed public transport infrastructure can enhance the street environment and give permanence to public transport's place in this environment.

Although we would like to bring all our stops up to a high standard in all of these areas, the realities of funding are such that there will be far more improvements we would like to make than we can deliver, so we need to prioritise.

To support prioritisation, we vary our expectations for bus stops depending on the nature of the stop, as shown in Table 8.

Most stops in Otago are of standard or intermediate service levels, with some premium stops on frequent routes and rapid corridors, and some basic stops serving lightly used locations.

Bus stops are graded into these categories guided by the One Network Framework. The exact details of what infrastructure can be expected at a stop varies depending on its local detail.

For example, a stop where very few passengers board but many disembark will not require a shelter, but still requires good accessibility and pedestrian connectivity.

However, without regard to any specific stop, Table 9 indicates what features are essential, recommended, and optional for different categories of bus stops.

This will be the starting point for the design of new stops or the upgrade of existing stops. It is acknowledged that not all features are realistic in all contexts, both due to local conditions (for example slopes, limited available space) and financial constraints.

Interchanges and central city operations

There are currently three significant public transport interchanges in Otago: the Dunedin Bus Hub, Frankton Bus Hub, and Stanley Street Bus Hub.

Interchanges play a key network function in providing high-quality locations to get on and off buses as well as make connections between services. A strongly performing interchange supports a simple, legible network structure.

As a public transport network grows over time, the design and operation of interchanges may need to be reviewed to determine their suitability:

- Are the interchange locations right for efficient operations?
- Do the interchanges have sufficient capacity (for buses, and for passengers)?
- Are there other options for central-city operations that rely less on single interchanges? (e.g. multiple smaller interchanges, or spreading investment across a wider corridor rather than a single location).

The Frankton Bus Hub is currently being redeveloped by NZTA, while the development of a stronger facility in central Queenstown to replace the current on-street Stanley Street Bus Hub is a key action in the long-term implementation of the Queenstown Public Transport Business Case.

We do not yet have a long-term plan for the Dunedin Bus Hub or any facility(ies) that would replace it. The policies below outline the considerations that we will apply to decisions around the development of new facilities.

Table 9: Essential, recommended and optional features for bus stops outlined in the NZTA One Network Framework.

Feature	Premium	Intermediate	Standard+	Standard	Basic
Kerb height	Essential	Essential	Recommended	Recommended	Optional
Hardstand	Essential	Essential	Essential	Essential	Recommended
Tactile pavers	Essential	Recommended	Recommended	Optional	Optional
Connecting footpath	Essential	Essential	Recommended	Recommended	Optional
Crossing	Essential	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Optional
Bus stop sign	Essential	Essential	Essential	Essential	Essential
Bus box	Essential	Essential	Essential	Essential	Essential
Bus stop text	Essential	Recommended	Optional	Optional	Optional
No stopping marking	Essential	Recommended	Recommended	Optional	Optional
Street lighting	Essential	Essential	Recommended	Recommended	Optional
Shelter lighting	Essential	Essential	Recommended	Recommended	Optional
Seating	Essential	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Optional
Shelter	Essential	Essential	Recommended	Optional	Optional
Rubbish bin	Essential	Recommended	Optional	Optional	Optional
Recycling bin	Recommended	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
Stop-specific timetable	Essential	Essential	Recommended	Recommended	Optional
Public art	Recommended	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
Community noticeboard	Recommended	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
Ski racks (Queenstown only)	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Optional	Optional

Bus priority infrastructure

Where peak-hour buses face congestion, priority measures such as bus lanes can allow buses to bypass congestion.

As well as significantly improving passenger experience with faster trip times, priority measures may have a significant impact on operating costs, as they have the potential to reduce the number of buses required to maintain the peak frequency.

Bus priority measures are not needed in all areas of the network. They are beneficial primarily in locations where peak operating speeds are significantly lower than off-peak speeds, such as in central city locations.

However, these are often locations where there are many competing needs in street design, and less street space to accommodate these needs.

It is important that the impact, including financially, of bus priority measures is fully understood.

Bus layover, driver break facilities and opportunity charging

Locations where buses sit still, especially at the end of trips but also mid-trip at interchanges, are strategically important.

Buses often sit stationary, either at the last stop of a trip, the first stop of the next trip, or another location that is not a passenger stop.

At these locations, there is potential for drivers to take breaks, late-running buses to catch up to their schedule, and battery-electric buses to be charged, this is known as opportunity charging.

These actions all have the potential to increase the reliability of services and reduce the cost of service. Opportunity charging could also allow for an improved bus fleet, as it reduces the weight of batteries needed for a bus to run all day long.

This could allow the bus to carry more weight (such as increasing the maximum number of passengers) or reduce the axle weight (to minimise the damage the vehicle does to the road).

It could also reduce the number of buses required, and the amount of charging capacity required at bus depots.

Park and ride facilities

Park and ride facilities allow for travellers to easily switch from a private-vehicle journey to a public transport journey, creating a viable alternative to parking in central areas where there is limited capacity.

Enabling assets

While ‘network assets’ are highly visible to the public, ‘enabling assets’ are the behind-the-scenes infrastructure that make public transport work.

Strategic enabling assets consist of assets with long and medium-length lifetimes, such as land, energy supply infrastructure, depot facilities for staff, vehicles and maintenance assets.

Enabling assets have typically been controlled by public transport operators, but ORC is looking to move in the direction of a mixed model where we take a more direct interest in certain assets. This is driven by the need to support a competitive market for service contracts, by reducing barriers to entry.

However, any move towards a mixed model needs to be carefully managed. For the current procurement cycle, we are satisfied that electrification-by-contract is producing good outcomes in Dunedin, where there are two operators and three depots.

In Queenstown, however, it is difficult to access strategically valuable land at locations that work for the public transport network, and the network’s size is such that it will operate as a single contract.

For this reason, ORC plans to secure land for an electric depot to enable multiple operators to compete for this contract with confidence that they can access a suitable depot.

Infrastructure policies	
IN P1	**Bus stop categorisation and design:** bus stops are categorised on the basis of the NZTA One Network Framework as shown in Table 9. The design of bus stop infrastructure should adhere to NZTA Public Transport Design Guidance and New Zealand Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design guidelines, and support high-quality end-to-end journey experience. Investment in bus stop facilities should aim, to the extent practical, to include elements as laid out in Table 9.
IN P2	**Accessibility:** public transport infrastructure and facilities, as well as supporting infrastructure such as footpaths and crossings, are designed and constructed in a way that aligns with universal design principles to prioritise the accessibility, safety and comfort of all passengers.
IN P3	**Bus stop locations:** decisions about the locations and spacing of bus stops will consider: • the service design principles in SD P1 • the suitability of the street environment and impact on adjacent land, including the ability to install elements of the features outlined in Table 9 • efficient spacing, ideally 300–400 metres in continuous urban environments, that avoids slowing down services and allows for concentration of investment into fewer stops • access to locations that are heavily used by people with mobility impairments, such as retirement homes.
IN P4	**Central city and interchange operations:** central city bus stops, including but not limited to any interchanges will: • support network legibility and opportunities to connect between services • have sufficient capacity for passenger and bus movements, including reasonable increases in frequency • be located at a place that does not divert services from efficient and direct routings • support a safe, attractive street environment for all users • be consistent with the efficient operations of exempt and excluded bus services in the area and passenger connections between exempt and contracted services • be right-sized so as to achieve value for money in construction and operations.

Infrastructure policies	
IN P5	**Park and ride:** the following principles will guide the assessment and development of park and ride facilities: • Consider the potential of park and ride as an alternative to providing car parking for developments in high demand urban areas • Consider the potential to improve other access options, including feeder services, and enhanced walking, cycling and micro-mobility access • Ensure alignment with future land use plans, and flexibility to respond to future land use changes • Locate to serve travel patterns which cannot effectively be served by public transport alone, or active transport connections, due to factors such as urban form and density • Locate to intercept car commuters as early as possible in their journey and ahead of bottlenecks to avoid adding to existing congestion • Locate and design to extend coverage of the public transport network • Locate and design to maximise uptake by people who would otherwise make their whole journey by car.
IN P6	**Enabling assets:** move towards a mixed model for control or ownership of strategic enabling assets, such as electric bus depots. Decisions to own, or take a level of control over, strategic enabling assets will be based on maintaining a competitive supplier market and achieving value for money in service contracts.

Infrastructure actions | The council will:	
IN A1	Advise, support, and work with our community and road controlling authorities in the design and implementation of bus stops and bus priority measures.
IN A2	Advise, support, and work with our community and partner agencies in the long-term design and implementation of infrastructure that supports central city bus operations, including interchanges.
IN A3	Collaborate with road controlling authorities and bus operators in optimising the locations, facilities, and operations of layover locations, including: • driver break facilities, including toilets and centralised break facilities • opportunity charging • timetable efficiency • the needs of exempt and excluded services in the area.
IN A4	Support the development of a long-term electric bus depot in Queenstown in order to support electrification and a competitive long-term market for service contracts. This may include the purchase of land and long-term control of the depot.

5.5 Parking management

Parking is critical to support a well-functioning urban environment, and directly influences travel choice.

Parking regulation and management therefore plays a key role in managing the complex demands for space on our streets.

When people travel by car, they rely on access to parking at or close to their destination. This means that with ample and free or cheap parking across much of our region, car travel can be perceived to be more attractive or convenient than public transport.

But as our region grows, increased vehicle use has led to increasing demand for road space and parking, congestion, unreliable journey times, and broader liveability issues, especially in Queenstown. Parking is complex and cannot be solved by simply providing more parking.

Rather, we need to work collaboratively across the region to provide practical and alternative ways for people to get around, while ensuring the parking we have is valued, managed efficiently, and prioritised for those who need it most.

This includes managing parking in a way that supports public transport, because public transport allows growth in economic activity without growth in congestion. This will be particularly important to allow Queenstown's economy and employment to grow and not be stifled by road congestion.

One of our key priorities is ensuring parking is managed in a way that:

- provides good access so our buses can move in and out of bus stops safely and easily
- minimises congestion
- disincentivises car travel when other modes are available
- supports and contributes to the reliability and attractiveness of our public transport services.

Parking management policy	
PM P1	**Parking management:** parking in Dunedin and Queenstown (including supply and pricing) is managed in a way that supports growth in public transport use.

Parking management action | The council will:	
PM A1	Collaborate with partner agencies to ensure parking strategies and fare policies align and support the use of public transport. Collaborate in the development of effective parking management plans to achieve model shift and emission-reduction targets.

Focus area 5: Value for money

Objective: Provide public transport services in a manner that achieves good value for money.

Delivering value for money is about providing a public transport system that uses our limited resources to best serve our communities.

We will continue to do this by delivering efficient, reliable and accessible services that increase patronage (value), whilst balancing the distribution of costs between passengers, central government and ratepayers (money).

Through the GPS 2024-34, the government has set an expectation to reduce the public subsidy of public transport costs. This means we will need to actively investigate and implement initiatives that work towards increasing our private revenue sources over time.

Demonstrating value for money will be critical to maintain funding for existing services and access future funding to support public transport improvements in our region.

Our overall approach to value for money in this RPTP is to increase our overall revenue stream with a particular focus on growing private revenue.

This will involve:

- promoting increased use
- reviewing fare pricing and fare structure
- looking for additional operating efficiencies
- exploring new funding options.

We must, however, not lose sight of the communities and societal benefits of public transport within the value-for-money analysis.

People value access, transport choice and the economic, health and environmental benefits that a convenient, reliable and efficient public transport system delivers.

We value these outcomes and will continue to balance what people need, what they value and what we can afford to achieve these for our communities.

6.1 Funding

The costs of providing public transport are met through a combination of **public revenue** (central government funding and rates) and **private revenue** (fares and third-party revenue).

Public revenue

Rates: ORC collects rates from Otago ratepayers to help fund public transport. 80% of this revenue comes from targeted rates, applied to areas with immediate access to Orbus public transport services.

This recognises the impact that public transport has on the area it serves. The final 20% of rates comes from general rates, paid by all ratepayers in Otago. This recognises the wider economic and environmental value that public transport has for all of Otago.

Rates and funding for public transport are determined through the Long-Term Plan and Annual Plan processes. This is the opportunity for ratepayers to see the financials and provide feedback on the funding of public transport.

Central government funding: central government funding for public transport infrastructure and services generally comes from the NLTF. Funding is allocated by NZTA through the NLTP and guided by the priorities set out in the GPS.

From time to time, special Crown funding sources are made available for particular purposes. This can supplement NLTF funding or provide support for special projects. One ongoing example of this is the SuperGold Card scheme, which provides free off-peak travel for people over the age of 65.

Private revenue

Fares: passengers pay fares on a trip-by-trip basis. This revenue can be used to reduce the cost to ratepayers and the NLTF or can be invested in improving the service with more trips, or other enhancements.

Fare substitutes: a fare substitution scheme allows a third party, such as an employer or an educational institution, to pay fares on behalf of certain passengers.

Commercial revenue: advertising on the back of the buses is an example of commercial revenue. Other examples include advertising on bus stops or shelters, sponsorship revenue, and commercial retail or rental income.

Commercial revenue could play a part in enhancing public transport revenue.

Other funding sources

While not considered private revenue (that contributes to our private share funding targets), other revenue from sources such as developer contributions, parking revenue and congestion charging are examples of revenue that may assist in offsetting public transport operational costs to reduce funding required from ratepayers and taxpayers, or to enhance service levels.

Distribution of costs

The distribution of costs across the funding sources changes over time in response to passenger demand and fares, network service levels and central government priorities.

Fares collected from people using our services (and other revenue) generally contributed around one-fifth of the cost of providing public transport services and associated infrastructure in Otago in 2024/25. The remainder of the cost is split roughly equally between local rates and central government funding.

Our funding policies centre around increasing overall revenue streams, with a particular focus on growing private share. This will require careful management.

The background and further detail on measuring and increasing private share is outlined in Appendix I.

We are committed to improving public transport in Otago over the next 10 years and beyond.

However, the speed and extent to which we can grow our network and services, including catering for growth and connecting our regional centres, will be dependent on funding and our ability to meet any increased operational costs.

Decisions will be guided by our ability to balance financial sustainability (to ratepayers, taxpayers and bus users), transport system efficiency, equity and our emission-reduction targets.

Otago public transport funding 2024/25

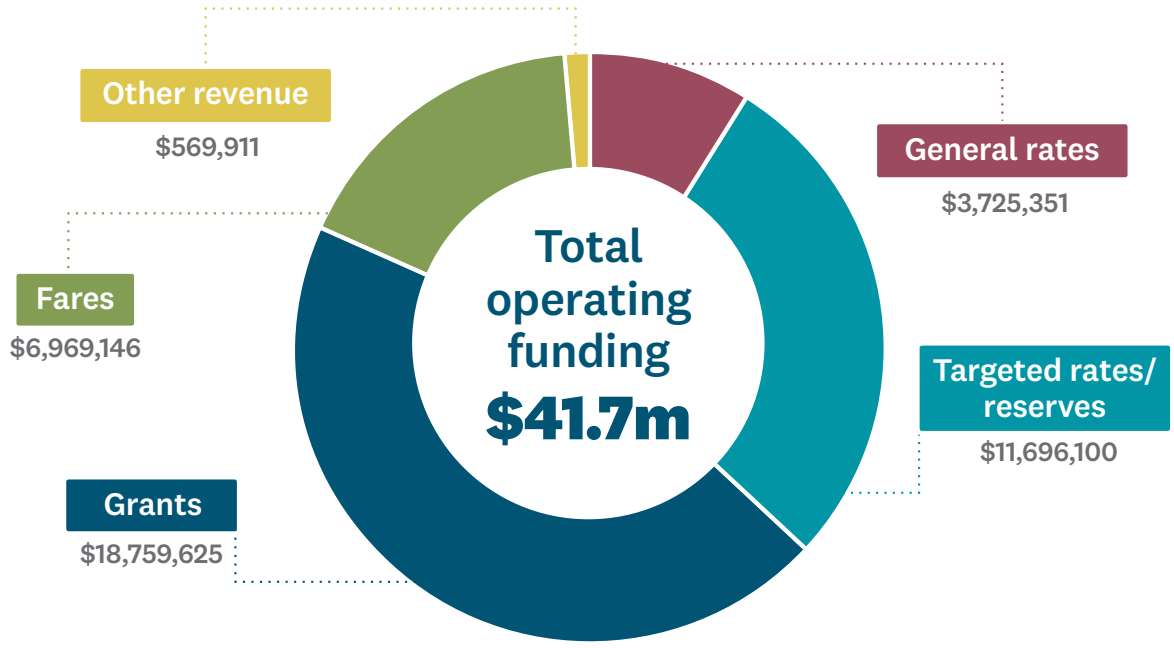


Figure 13: The distribution of public and private funding for ORC's 2024/25 public transport operation.

Funding policies	
FS P1	**Allocation of funding:** public transport funding will be allocated in a way that optimises community access, choice, and environmental outcomes, while being financially prudent.
FS P2	**Private share:** actively work towards increasing the private revenue contribution to the cost of public transport over time.
FS P3	**Public transport activities without central government funding:** support public transport activities without central government funding only in cases where: • the activity achieves good value for money for ORC, due to being exceptionally valuable or having an alternative funding source that provides a similar level of support to central government funding • the activity is a trial service, where the success of the trial would create a strong case for future central government funding.
FS P4	**Third-party funding:** Develop and grow third-party funding to increase private share by identifying and implementing feasible initiatives such as: • fareshare — employers and other entities subsidising fares for nominated groups • advertising — utilising space on vehicles and infrastructure for digital and static advertising • retail opportunities • corporate sponsorship.

Funding actions | The council will:	
FS A1	Work with partner agencies to implement network and service improvements that: • align with long term strategies • are at a rate which is affordable for the community and users.
FS A2	Collaborate with our partner agencies to coordinate and align parking strategies and other travel-demand management tools to improve the value of public transport and achieve wider regional carbon-reduction and mode-shift outcomes.
FS A3	Work with partner agencies and other stakeholders to increase private revenue sources and explore alternative opportunities to fund the public transport network.
FS A4	Develop a public transport revenue plan to consider progressive changes to fares and revenue.
FS A5	Undertake research and regional market analysis to understand the willingness of passengers and potential passengers to pay for public transport.
FS A6	Develop an evidence base to inform viability of potential third-party funding initiatives to assist with setting and achieving private share targets.
FS A7	Regularly review the network to consider opportunities to optimise services and reduce overall operating expenditure.

6.2 Fares

Setting fares is a key decision ORC must make when operating public transport.

There are two key considerations in setting our fares:

1. **Base fare level:** what should the basic cost of an adult trip with no discounts be? This is the base fare level, which requires us to balance affordability for the passenger, ORC and other funders. Usually, a higher base fare will mean less patronage, but more revenue.
2. **Fare structure:** how should fare levels vary from this base fare for different trips? This is the fare structure. Fares could be varied for different users (such as a lower fare for young or elderly people), for different times of day, for trip distances, or in a range of other ways. See Attachment 1 for proposed zones for the Dunedin and Queenstown networks.

The base fare level and the fare structure will both have an impact on an **average fare.** In Otago, this will be lower than the base fare level due to concessions.

Fare policies	
F P1	**Base fare level:** fares for integral services are structured around a base fare level that balances the following considerations: • Sufficient affordability for users to incentivise regular usage • Maintaining the financial sustainability of services for Council • Competitiveness with the direct costs of driving, such as fuel and parking costs.
F P2	**Fare structure:** from the base fare level, fares for integral services will be structured in a way that balances the following considerations: • Simplicity of the fare system • Incentivising regular usage • Varies between different user and trip types in a way that is equitable and fair • Allowing different user and trip types to be served in a way that is financially sustainable for Council • Aligns with NZTA's fares and pricing policy settings and guidance. The structure may include the following elements: • **Concessions:** transport-disadvantaged people with less ability to pay will be charged lower fares, as outlined in F P3 below. • **Free transfers:** ensuring that people can travel in complex ways without being charged more than they would for a single-vehicle trip. • **Fare capping:** weekly and daily costs are capped to reward regular use. • **Distance structure:** trips operate under a zonal fare system. Our proposed zones are outlined in Attachment 1. • **Use of cash:** eliminate the use of cash payments following the implementation of bank card payments with NTS. Until this point, cash fares should be higher, and a whole-dollar value to minimise cash handling. • **Variation between centres:** Queenstown, Dunedin, and other parts of Otago have different community aspirations, demands and trip patterns, which may justify some differences in fare policy.

<table>
<tr><td>F P3</td><td>Discounted travel for transport-disadvantaged groups:
offer the following concessions off the adult base fare:
<table><tr><th>Concession</th><th>Concession discount</th></tr><tr><td>Infant (under 5 years)</td><td>100% (free)</td></tr><tr><td>Child (age 5 to 12)</td><td>100% (free)</td></tr><tr><td>Youth (age 13 to 18)</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>Community Services Card</td><td>50%</td></tr><tr><td>SuperGold Card</td><td>100% (free) in off-peak only</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>F P4</td><td>Corporate fare schemes: support the implementation of concessions funded by third parties, such as workplace or student travel schemes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>F P5</td><td>New funded concessions: implement any new, funded concession, if Council considers that:
the concession will not have a significant negative financial or operational impact
the concession does not undermine the effectiveness or integrity of the wider fare structure
the concession aligns with NZTA’s fares and pricing policy settings and guidance.</td></tr>
<tr><td>F P6</td><td>Fare reviews: base fare level reviews will be conducted annually, and fare structure (including concessions) reviews at least six yearly to ensure that:
The base fare level is adjusted in line with inflation
The base fare level and fare structures remain in line with policies F P1, F P2, and F P3.
Any decision to increase fares in order to improve financial performance should include consideration of whether there are alternative interventions that could deliver a similar improvement in financial performance.</td></tr>
<tr><td>F P7</td><td>Total Mobility: continue to provide funding to enable concession fares for use of the Total Mobility service.</td></tr>
</table>

Fare actions | The council will:	
F A1	Undertake region-wide fare analysis to give effect to the RPTP fares and funding policies and establish a base fare level that adequately balances affordability to users and other funders.
F A2	Review base fare levels annually, as a part of Annual Plan and Long-Term Plan processes, and the fare structure at least every six years.
F A3	Collaborate with our partner agencies to coordinate and align parking strategies and other travel-demand management tools with fare policy to improve the value of public transport and achieve wider regional carbon-reduction and mode-shift outcomes.

What about free fares?

One common suggestion is to have free fares for public transport. A free service would be popular and increase patronage. However, we don't think free public transport works for Otago at present for six reasons:

1. **Fare revenue can buy more service**
   The money we get from fares allows us to run more buses, which increases patronage. Implementing free fares would likely require us to increase rates or reduce our services.
2. **It's fair to the community**
   When someone rides public transport, the whole community benefits — they are a potential car off the road, reducing congestion, carbon emissions, and more. For this reason, it's reasonable that they do not pay the full cost — it's worth subsidising the service. However, riding public transport is not an act of charity: people choose to ride the bus because it is useful to them. It's reasonable to ask them to pay a fair share of the cost.
3. **We believe in our service**
   We think public transport should be good enough to be worth paying for.
4. **We don't want success to be a problem**
   When public transport is free or excessively cheap, usage becomes a problem. When buses get too full, it is hard to increase capacity. In the long term, it will put us in a position where the success of public transport is a problem rather than good news.
5. **Data collection**
   Free travel would negate the need for passengers to use a card and tag on and off our services. This reduces our ability to understand our community's travel patterns, therefore limiting our capacity to plan services effectively.
6. **Government policy**
   Not only would free/ultra-cheap fares cost us money directly, they would also put our central government funding share at risk. The government has made it clear that a reasonable share of the cost of public transport needs to be recovered from users and third parties.

6.3 Procurement approach

ORC delivers public transport services through service contracts.

This means that, although we take responsibility for planning and designing public transport, our services are delivered under contract by private specialist public transport operators.

The details of how we design, award, and manage these contracts are outlined in a separate document, our Transport Activities Procurement Strategy 2024–2027. For procurement we group our services into contractual units.

A contractual unit contains a group of services that serve a particular geographic area. This may be a single service, but more often is a grouping of services that it makes sense (strategically and operationally) to award as a single contract.

The way we procure our service contracts and other activities, such as ticketing, passenger information and support, play a key role in ensuring we achieve value and efficiency from our transport investment.

Procurement policies	
PA P1	**Allocation of services into units:** integral services will be grouped into contractual units based on: • effectively meeting network outcomes • operational efficiency of services • supporting a competitive and efficient market.
PA P2	**Procurement:** public transport contractual units will be procured in accordance with the NZTA Procurement Manual and ORC's Transport Activities Procurement Strategy, with a focus on achieving value for money through: • competitively tendered partnering contracts as the primary method of supplier selection • directly negotiated contracts in instances where this supports a competitive market in the long term.
PA P3	**Collaboration:** maintain an open and collaborative approach to network planning, development, procurement and service delivery with our operators.

Procurement actions | The council will:	
PA A1	Transition to the new unit structure outlined in Appendix G through a combination of competitive tenders, directly negotiated contracts, and/or variations to existing contracts.
PA A2	Design service contracts and undertake procurement in a manner that: • is open and transparent • creates opportunities for market entry by new and capable suppliers • provides adequate lead times to allow operators sufficient time to secure necessary resources • provides service continuity to passengers • where possible, supports the continuing operation of multiple suppliers across Otago, and within the Dunedin network • appropriately allocates roles, responsibilities and risk between ORC and operators within the contract framework • includes fair and open mechanisms for contracts to be varied to implement service changes within the life of contracts • considers the whole-of-network impact of procurement processes, beyond the routes being immediately procured • aligns future contract expiry dates so that related units can be contracted in a single process.
PA A3	Engage with our territorial authorities about ORC public transport procurement processes within their jurisdictions. Take a proactive approach to align infrastructure planning with opportunities to improve routes and service levels as part of the contracting process.

6.4 Workforce sustainability

The sustainability of the public transport workforce has been a central issue in recent years. Bus drivers have a demanding job and represent the public face of our service.

It is crucial that we have a workforce with experience, skill, and the enthusiasm to deliver a service that is both safe and delivers a positive experience to users. To achieve this, we need to attract and hold on to great drivers.

Through the intervention of ORC, and with the support of operators and central government, Otago's bus contracts now include a base wage requirement that is significantly above the living wage. It also increases year-by-year in line with the labour market.

While fairly compensating our services' workforce, there is still work to do. ORC will continue to work with operators and our partner agencies to make sure driving buses is attractive and safe. This includes designing reasonable shift lengths, break facilities and driver safety strategies.

Workforce sustainability policies	
WS P1	**Fair and equitable:** ORC will plan, procure and deliver public transport services in a way that ensures employment and engagement of the public transport workforce is fair and equitable, thus providing a sustainable labour market and sustainable provision of public transport services.
WS P2	**Wages:** public transport contracts will continue to include a base wage requirement which ensures that at least the current wage levels of bus drivers are maintained, with annual adjustments based on labour cost indices.

Workforce sustainability action | The council will:	
WS A1	Collaborate with operators and partner agencies to: • enhance driver access to quality essential facilities such as toilets at key network locations, such as interchanges and the termini of bus routes. • design services and timetables in a way that enables drivers to have access to essential facilities while on break, and to meet Employment Relations Act break requirements in an efficient way.

Part 3

Implementation and monitoring

This chapter outlines how Otago's public transport services will be monitored and reviewed. It also includes guidance on when the RPTP will be reviewed and the process for making changes to it, including when changes are considered significant.

7.1 Performance monitoring and evaluation

We manage, monitor, and evaluate the performance of our public transport services and network for the following reasons:

- To ensure services contribute to wider community outcomes
  - For patronage-oriented services, we aim to induce mode shift, alleviate congestion, reduce emissions, and enable productive urban land use
  - For coverage-oriented services, we aim to provide choice, improve inclusive access and meet the needs of transport-disadvantaged people
- To improve end-to-end journey experience for passengers and encourage more people to use public transport
- To enable continuous improvements to the efficiency, effectiveness and value for money from public investment in public transport services and infrastructure.

We monitor our performance at two levels: the **service** level and the **network** level. We will ensure that all units comply with unit and network monitoring requirements of NZTA as technology allows.

Service performance

We monitor and evaluate performance of each public transport service unit.

The outcomes of these service-level evaluations inform the following processes:

- **Operational management:** identifying operating trends and opportunities for improvement on an agile, day-to-day basis.
- **Contract management:** to ensure that services are being operated in the way we require of our operators, and in order to collaborate to find new solutions.
- **Continuous improvement:** to enable continuous improvement to passenger end-to-end journey experience, network efficiency, and value for money from public investment in public transport.

As part of ORC's monitoring process, we undertake regular comprehensive reviews of each contracted service unit.

Our unit contracts include specific performance targets relevant to each unit to ensure that the services meet the overall objectives of this RPTP.

Service-level performance measures include patronage, reliability, punctuality, customer satisfaction, fare revenue, cost per kilometre, and cost per passenger boarding for each route and service unit.

Network performance

The performance of the overall public transport system, or network, is also monitored and evaluated.

The outcomes of these network-level evaluations inform the following processes:

- **Regular reporting:** monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting to Council and its committees and NZTA
- **Planning:** analysing data for the purpose of long-term planning and identifying future improvements, including identifying investments that represent good value for money through business case processes; ensuring our higher-performing services offset lower-performing ones to enable well-functioning integrated networks.
- **Data sharing:** ensuring we have easy access to reliable data that we can share with partner agencies to support their own operational management, reporting, and planning; and with the public subject to the requirements of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the restrictions of the Privacy Act 2020.

Network-wide measures include patronage, passenger satisfaction, reliability, punctuality, coverage levels, mode shift, and emission levels.

Monitoring and evaluation methods and measures

We monitor and evaluate our performance from various sources including:

- our ticketing system
- real-time information
- customer feedback
- annual customer satisfaction survey
- information provided by operators.

On an individual basis, service performance is expected to vary significantly depending on the type of service provided. This means we have lower performance expectations for low-frequency connector services than for frequent services.

On a network-wide basis, the council expects to trend in the direction as outlined in Table 10 relative to each performance measure.

Table 10: Performance measures for this RPTP

KPI	Success measure	Target or approach
Service utilisation	**Patronage** Annual public transport boardings in Whakatipu Annual public transport boardings in Dunedin	Increase annually
	Mode share[8] Percentage of trips taken using public transport	Increase
Passenger experience	**On-time performance** Percentage of Whakatipu-operated services departing first stop between 1 minute early and 5 minutes late Percentage of Dunedin-operated services departing first stop between 1 minute early and 5 minutes late	Greater than 90%
	Service delivery Percentage of Whakatipu scheduled services delivered Percentage of Dunedin scheduled services delivered	Greater than 99%
	Passenger satisfaction Overall passenger satisfaction with Whakatipu public transport system in annual survey Overall passenger satisfaction with Dunedin public transport system in annual survey	Maintain or increase three-year rolling average at greater than 90%
Total Mobility	**Passenger satisfaction** Overall passenger satisfaction with Total Mobility at annual survey	Maintain or increase three-year rolling average at greater than 90%

8 Mode share figures are derived from the New Zealand 5-yearly census and Household Travel Survey.

7.2 Making changes to this RPTP: Our significance policy

This RPTP can be varied at any time. Any variation must be assessed for its significance in accordance with Section 126 of the LTMA 2003.

The degree of significance of a variation determines the level of consultation required.

This section sets out our policy on how ORC will determine if a variation is deemed 'significant' as required in the LTMA.

ORC will also follow internal significance policy (He Mahi Rau Rika: ORC Significance, Engagement and Māori Participation Policy) when assessing the degree of significance and deciding on appropriate engagement and consultation processes.

For variations that are deemed to be significant, the LTMA requires ORC to follow the consultation requirements outlined in Section 125 of the LTMA.

Assessing significance

The significance of any proposed variation will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

When assessing the significance of a proposed variation, ORC will consider:

- **Strategic alignment:** the extent to which the variation departs from the vision and objectives of this RPTP or ORC's Strategic Directions, or affects the RLTP or any of the region's local authority long-term plans.
- **Community views:** the extent to which the community's views on the matter are already known through previous ORC public consultation. If the community has already shown a clear preference for a particular option, then the decision to proceed with this option is less significant than a decision to proceed with an option that is clearly not favoured by the community, or when the community's views are unknown.
- **Area of impact:** the extent to which the variation will have an impact across the region, or a more localised impact. Where the impact is expected to be local in nature, a targeted consultation process may be undertaken.
- **Safety and accessibility:** the extent to which the variation will impact on the council's ability to ensure the safety and accessibility of the public transport system for passengers, workers and the general public.
- **Network operations:** the extent to which the variation will impact on the overall level, quality and performance of public transport services in the region.
- **Compatibility with good land use practice:** the extent to which the variation will assist or adversely impact on the council's ability to achieve good land use outcomes that support effective delivery of services.
- **Practicality:** ORC aims to make policy decisions on behalf of its communities in a well-informed, efficient and effective manner. This will not be achieved if the decision-making process is either unreasonably costly or unreasonably slow. The council will take into consideration the urgency and magnitude of proposed change in association with its decision making.
- **Cost:** the magnitude of the proposed change in terms of financial cost to the region.
- **Precautionary principle:** where the significance of a matter being considered or a decision being made is unclear or the matter is controversial, then ORC will take a cautious approach, treating the issue as of more, rather than less, significance.

Significant variations

Matters that are always considered significant include:

- any change to this significance policy
- any change with a more than minor impact on ORC's ability to:
  - achieve the Long-Term Plan's strategic directions regarding transport; and,
  - achieve the objectives of the RPTP or the RLTP
- significant changes to the network, including major reorganisation of units
- significant changes in funding requirements that trigger ORC's Long-Term Plan significance policy.

Non-significant variations

The following matters are considered 'not significant' and do not require full public consultation.

ORC will determine what the appropriate level of consultation is (for example, targeted community consultation) based on the nature of the change and our obligations under the Local Government Act.

- Minor editorial changes or updates to this RPTP
- Fare level and structure changes
- The addition, removal or amendment of any matter that has already been the subject of public consultation or otherwise consulted on in accordance with Section 125 of the LTMA
- The addition, removal, or amendment of policies or objectives required to maintain consistency with any other plan, policy or directive of regional council or central government
- The addition, removal or amendment of individual units, including trial units, consistent with the RLTP
- Minor changes to service descriptions after a service review, for example changes to the frequency and hours of a service that result in the same, or better level of service
- Changes to the descriptions of services or service groupings following a service review, provided there is no significant increase in cost.

Attachments

8.1 Attachment 1: Proposed Fare Zones for revised fare structure

A zone fare structure is one where passengers travelling further distances (i.e. across multiple zones) will pay a higher fare than people travelling shorter distances (i.e. within one zone).

Zone fare structures are commonly used throughout New Zealand, including in Auckland, Hamilton and Wellington.

ORC is considering adopting a zone fare structure for the urban bus networks in Dunedin and Queenstown. This attachment contains the proposed zone boundaries.

Proposed zone boundaries — Dunedin

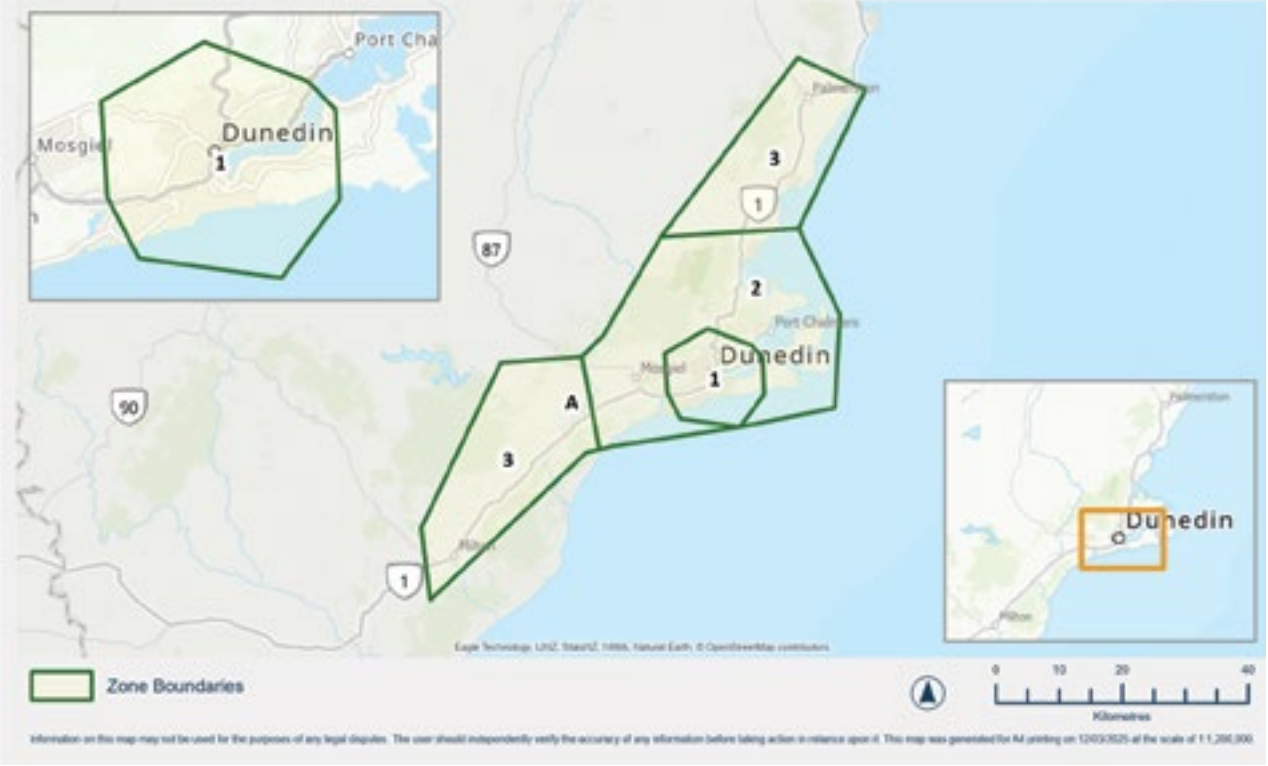


Figure 14: The proposed zone boundaries for the Dunedin bus network (2025).

Proposed zone boundaries — Queenstown

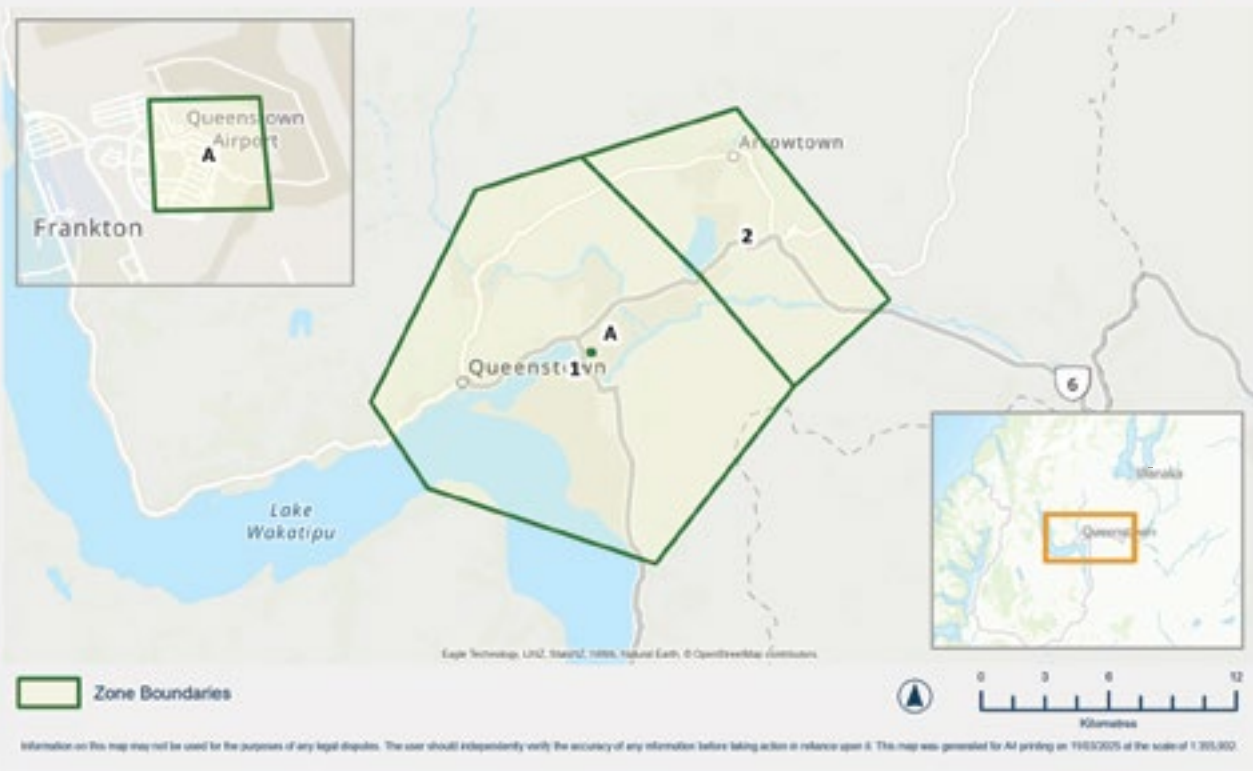


Figure 15: The proposed zone boundaries for the Queenstown bus network (2025).

Appendices

9.1 Appendix A: LTMA principles in this RPTP

Section 115(1) of the LTMA notes that public transport in New Zealand must be guided by five principles. This appendix highlights how this RPTP gives effect to each of these principles.

Public transport principle (LTMA Section 115(1))	**Sections of this RPTP giving effect to the principle**
(a) Well-used public transport services reduce the environmental and health impacts of land transport, including by reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicles and using zero-emission technology.	4.1: Integrating land use planning with public transport 4.2: Decarbonising our bus fleet and related infrastructure 5.1: How we design our network and services 5.3: Multi-modal access 5.5: Parking management
(b) Public transport services support a mode shift from private motor vehicle use and equitable access to places, facilities, services, and social and economic opportunities if they are coordinated, integrated, reliable, frequent, accessible, affordable, and safe.	2.1: Public information 2.2: Safety 2.3: Customer service 2.4: Ticketing system 2.6: Special events 2.7: Service and vehicle standards 2.8: Improving accessibility for transport-disadvantaged people 3.1: Our equity-focused approach 3.2: Our engagement process 5.1: How we design our network and services 5.3: Multi-modal access 6.2: Fares
(c) Fair and equitable employment or engagement of people in the public transport workforce should ensure that there is a sufficiently robust labour market to sustain and expand public transport services.	3.3: Collaborative working relationships 6.4: Workforce sustainability
(d) Regional councils, territorial authorities, and public transport operators should work together to co-ordinate public transport services, the provision of infrastructure, and land use as necessary to meet the needs of passengers and to encourage more people to use the services.	2.6: Special events 2.7: Service and vehicle standards 3.3: Collaborative working relationships 4.1: Integrating land use planning with public transport 4.2: Decarbonising our bus fleet and related infrastructure 5.3: Multi-modal access 5.4: Infrastructure 5.5: Parking management 7.1: Performance monitoring and evaluation
(e) Public transport services should be provided in a way that assists public transport investment to be efficient and give value for money.	6.1: Funding 6.2: Fares 6.3: Procurement approach

9.2 Appendix B:
Strategic Directions 2024–2034 and goals

Strategic Directions 2024–2034 is ORC's leading strategic document designed to steer work programmes towards achieving the vision of a healthy and connected environment and communities ki uta ki tai (from the mountains to the sea).

It is structured around six core themes: partnerships, communities, environment, resilience, climate and transport. Each theme is driven by an aspiration and three goals.

Strategic Directions outlines a vision for public transport in Otago and has guided our thinking in developing this RPTP.

Table 11 illustrates the relationship between the core themes of the Strategic Directions and the focus areas guiding this RPTP.

ORC Strategic Directions 2024–2034

Table 11: An overview of how the focus areas of this RPTP relate to the six core themes of Strategic Directions 2024–2034 — Partnerships, Communities, Environment, Resilience, Climate and Transport.

Partnerships	**How this RPTP relates to Partnerships:** **Focus area 2 (Build trust)** establishes our approach to build meaningful relationships with mana whenua, partner agencies, key stakeholders and community groups to ensure public transport outcomes are aligned with their aspirations, needs and interests.
Communities	**How this RPTP relates to Communities:** **Focus area 2 (Build trust)** demonstrates our commitment to having open and meaningful dialogue with communities so they can be active participants in public transport decision making.
Environment	**How this RPTP relates to Environment:** **Focus area 3 (Environmental sustainability)** affirms our strategy to contribute to a healthy environment ki uta ki tai (from the mountains to the sea) through decarbonisation and integrating public transport with land use.
Resilience	**How this RPTP relates to Resilience:** **Focus area 3 (Environmental sustainability)** outlines policies and actions that promote public transport in well-functioning urban environments that are sustainable and resilient in alignment with the Regional Policy Statement.
Climate	**How this RPTP relates to Climate:** **Focus area 2 (Build trust)** highlights our approach to working collaboratively with our partner agencies and other stakeholders to address the diverse factors impacting climate. This includes public transport, land use development and infrastructure. Collectively we will work together to increase public transport patronage and reduce people's dependence on private cars, ultimately lowering emissions. **Focus area 3 (Environmental sustainability)** elevates the climate emergency as a core consideration of public transport decision making.
Transport	**How this RPTP relates to Transport:** **Focus area 1 (Passenger experience)** outlines our intentions to foster a public transport system that respects passengers and supports community wellbeing aspirations. **Focus area 3 (Environmental sustainability)** demonstrates our commitment to the development of well-functioning urban environments that reduce carbon emissions and congestion, improve air quality and promote public and active transport as the preferred modes of travel. **Focus area 4 (A connected and integrated network)** highlights our goals to improve connectivity throughout the region. **Focus area 5 (Value for money)** discusses our intention to provide useful public transport in a way that is affordable for passengers and that is affordable for passengers, central government and ORC.

9.3 Appendix C: Strategic context

This RPTP considers, aligns and gives effect to a range of local, regional and national strategies, plans and policies outlined in Figure 2. Below is a comprehensive list of all the strategic documents taken into account in this RPTP's development:

National plans and strategies

- NZTA Arataki (30-year Plan)
- Ministry of Transport Outcomes Framework
- Government Policy Statement on land transport
- National Land Transport Programme
- National Land Transport Fund
- National Policy Statement on Urban Development
- National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (expired in 2022)
- New Zealand Emissions Reduction Plan
- New Zealand Disability Strategy

NZTA public transport frameworks

- Sustainable Public Transport Framework
- One Network Framework
- NZTA guidelines:
  - Development guidelines for regional public transport plans
  - Requirements for urban buses
  - Public Transport Design Guidance
- NZTA Procurement Manual

Regional plans and strategies

- Otago Southland Regional Land Transport Plans
- Otago Regional Policy Statement
- ORC Long-Term Plan
- ORC Climate Strategy
- ORC Transport Procurement Strategy
- ORC Strategic Directions

Sub-regional plans and strategies

- Clutha District Council

- District Plan
- Long-Term Plan
- Climate Change Strategy
- Destination Strategy
- Living and Working in Clutha Strategy
- Transport Activity Management Plan

- Central Otago District Council

- District Plan
- Long-Term Plan
- Destination Management Plan
- Transportation Activity Management Plan
- Cromwell 'Eye to the Future' Masterplan
- Teviot Valley Spatial Plan
- Vincent Spatial Plan

- Dunedin City Council

- Future Development Strategy
- District Plan
- Long-Term Plan
- Disability Strategy
- Integrated Transport Strategy
- Interim Speed Management Plan
- Destination Management Plan
- Dunedin's Social Wellbeing Strategy
- Te Ao Tūroa - Dunedin's Environment Strategy
- Zero Carbon Plan 2030

- Queenstown Lakes District Council

- Grow Well | Whaiora — Spatial Plan
- District Plan
- Long-Term Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Land Transport Asset Management Plan
- Te Kirikiri/Frankton Masterplan
- Frankton to Queenstown — Queenstown Town Centre Masterplan
- Ladies Mile Masterplan

- Waitaki District Council

- District Plan
- Long-Term Plan
- Uplifting Waitaki: Hāpaitia te Waitaki Economic Development Strategy
- Interim Speed Management Plan
- Ōamaru, Weston and Kakanui Spatial Plan
- Central Ōamaru Masterplan

9.4 Appendix D: Our engagement process for this RPTP

Our engagement process for this RPTP followed internal guidelines outlined in ORC's Engagement Approach: A Guide to Connecting with Community (2024).

This process meets the consultation requirements in the LTMA Act 2003 (Sections 124 and 125) and follows the principles of consultation detailed in the Local Government Act 2002 (Section 82).

Our engagement with mana whenua followed He Mahi Rau Rika: Otago Regional Council Significance, Engagement and Māori Participation Policy in recognition of our partnership approach.

Our engagement process involved a combination of surveys, focus groups and meetings with our mana whenua partners, partner agencies (NZTA, territorial authorities and public transport operators), workforce, and community groups with an interest in public transport.

The thoughts and perspectives of these parties influenced the content and direction of the RPTP and were collated into a 'What We Heard' report (below). This report was shared with these parties to communicate how their input contributed to our decision making.

Following NZTA's Development Guidelines for Regional Public Transport Plans (2024), our engagement process employed a relational approach to engagement focusing on communication as a process to create shared understandings.

Our intention was that this approach will enable ORC to embrace a long-term approach to public transport delivery where we collaborate closely and share information with our mana whenua partners, partner agencies and community groups.

What we heard: Engagement insights for the Otago Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035

Background

- Otago Regional Council (ORC) is currently revising the Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035. This Plan will guide the priorities and investments in public transport in Otago over the next ten years.
- From October 2024 to January 2025, ORC conducted meetings, focus groups and surveys with people representing government agencies and ministries, community advocacy groups, tourism groups, mana whenua and educational institutions across Otago. Our intention was to listen and understand their perspectives on public transport and incorporate them into the Plan. In total, we reached out to 124 stakeholders and successfully engaged with 52 of them.
- We co-designed the Plan with Dunedin City Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council, Clutha District Council, Central Otago District Council, Waitaki District Council and the New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi to ensure it represents Otago's diverse transport needs.
- This report summarises 'What We Heard' from those conversations. It is intended to inform key stakeholders about how their input influenced ORC's decision making while developing the Plan.

The stories we heard

Key stakeholders shared their insights on many aspects of public transport.
These insights can be summarised into four main stories:

The rural story

People living in Otago's rural communities have few public transport options and are forced to rely on private vehicles to get around.

This situation poses challenges for people who are unable to drive, as they have limited access to opportunities.

Key issues that people raised include:

- Enhancing regional connectivity by improving public transport between rural communities and urban services (e.g. Dunedin hospital and airport)
- Exploring 'community transport' (e.g. Community Vehicle Trusts) as a potential solution to enhance connectivity between rural communities and urban centres

The passenger story

Passengers need to feel safe, valued and respected when taking public transport.

Key issues that people raised include:

- Breaking down barriers to using public transport through promotion and community outreach
- Improving the quality and quantity of bus shelters and seats
- Improving wayfinding tools that provide accurate and real-time information to passengers (e.g. Transit app and electronic signage)
- Enhancing the reliability and frequency of our bus networks and Total Mobility services, including extending operating hours
- Ensuring public transport is a comfortable experience for people with accessibility issues, including by increasing driver training
- Maintaining fares that are affordable for passengers

The Queenstown story

The Queenstown area and surrounding communities have experienced rapid growth and development over the past few years and is expected to continue in the foreseeable future.

This growth has increased private car usage which has led to traffic congestion.

Key issues that people raised include:

- Working collaboratively with key stakeholders in land-use and transport planning to create options for people to ride bikes, walk and take public transport, so there are many different, easy ways for people to get around
- Exploring the potential for new transport modes, including expanding ferry access or ropeway services
- Investigating ways to improve transport for tourists throughout the Queenstown Lakes district and neighbouring areas

The relationship story

Improving public transport requires ORC to build relationships and work collaboratively with communities, public transport operators, territorial authorities and other relevant stakeholders.

Key issues that people raised include:

- Building trust with key stakeholders through open and honest dialogue
- Integrating decision making and aligning work programmes with key stakeholders to ensure the public transport network meet's everyone's needs

Our next steps

These stories will play a crucial role in shaping the policies and actions that form the foundation of the ORC Regional Public Transport Plan 2025-2035.

While we cannot guarantee their immediate implementation, these insights will be carefully considered and prioritised where possible in our work programmes.

Moving forward, we invite you to provide feedback through the public submission process, which is currently scheduled for March 2025.

9.5 Appendix E: Urban form factors

This appendix should be read alongside Section 4.1, which outlines ORC's approach to integrating land use planning with public transport.

This approach aligns with ORC and central government policies and strategies directing changes to urban environments that increase accessibility to public transport, including the:

- New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (2005), National Policy Statement on Urban Development (2020),
- Urban Growth Agenda,
- Otago Regional Policy Statement (2019),
- Joint DCC/ORC Future Development Strategies for Dunedin
- Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan (2021).

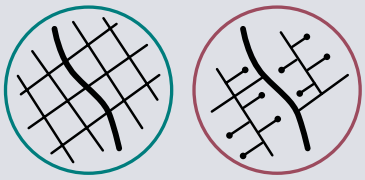
Table 12 highlights four urban form factors that influence the viability of providing useful and frequent public transport in Otago: proximity, linearity, connectivity and density.

Where a new development area does not align with one or more urban form factors, it should be assumed that public transport provision sufficient to enable a well-functioning urban environment cannot be publicly provided.

The assessment criteria can be used to inform planning for new development areas and assess the potential viability of useful and frequent public transport service provision.

The table is not intended to be a definitive list of all factors that require consideration.

Table 12: Four urban form factors that influence the viability of providing useful and frequent public transport in Otago.

Urban form factor	Macro-urban implications		
Proximity What is the distance between key destinations?	 Shorter distances between key destinations **enable** well-functioning urban areas  Longer distances between key destinations **reduce affordability** for all transport modes	**Proximity**	**Shorter distances**	**Longer distances**
		Vehicle kilometres travelled	Lower	Higher
		Energy demand	Lower	Higher
		GHG emissions	Lower	Higher
		Consumption of land	Lower	Higher
		Impact on nature	Lower	Higher
		Cost of infrastructure	Lower	Higher
		Cost of transport	Lower	Higher
		Active transport viability	Higher	Lower
		Access to opportunities	Higher	Lower
Linearity Are key destinations located 'on the way' to one another?	 Reasonably direct paths between key destinations **improve travel time** and **affordability** for all transport modes  Indirect paths between key destinations make public transport **less time efficient and less affordable** and make walking and cycling **less attractive,** leading to higher car use.	**Linearity**	**More linear**	**Less linear**
		Vehicle kilometres travelled	Lower	Higher
		Energy demand	Depends on the specific development and context	
		GHG emissions		
		Consumption of land		
		Impact on nature		
		Cost of infrastructure		
		Cost of transport	Lower	Higher
		Active transport viability	Higher	Lower
		Access to opportunities	Higher	Lower
Connectivity Are local street networks easily connected?	 **More connected** **Less connected** More connected street networks **promote active transport use** and offer **greater access** to public transport stops and hubs than less connected street networks.	**Connectivity**	**More connected**	**Less connected**
		Vehicle kilometres travelled	Lower	Higher
		Energy demand	Depends on the specific development and context	
		GHG emissions		
		Consumption of land		
		Impact on nature		
		Cost of infrastructure		
		Cost of transport	Lower	Higher
		Active transport viability	Higher	Lower
		Access to opportunities	Higher	Lower
Density Are diverse key destinations densely or sparsely located?	 **Higher density** **Lower density** Higher-density development leads to **higher patronage** and **more cost-efficient** public transport services compared with lower-density development.	**Density**	**Higher density**	**Lower density**
		Vehicle kilometres travelled	Lower	Higher
		Energy demand	Lower	Higher
		GHG emissions	Lower	Higher
		Consumption of land	Lower	Higher
		Impact on nature	Lower	Higher
		Cost of infrastructure	Lower	Higher
		Cost of transport	Lower	Higher
		Active transport viability	Higher	Lower
		Access to opportunities	Higher	Lower

Public transport implications	**Assessment criteria** for considering the viability of useful and frequent public transport services
Doubling the travel distance roughly doubles the resources (labour and energy) and funding required to deliver a public transport service. Minimising travel distances enhances the viability of frequent service provision. Delivering high-frequency services over long distances is not considered viable.	Is the development area in very close proximity to the existing built urban area?
New development areas that require a frequent service to deviate from a linear alignment make the service more expensive to provide and increase travel times for people not wanting to access that specific area. In this scenario, the service is likely to cost more and have less patronage and is not considered viable.	Is the new development area situated 'on the way' to other existing key destinations through a direct route alignment? **Or:** Can the area be serviced with a short linear extension to an existing or planned public transport line? **Or:** Does the new development area justify the creation of a new frequent line that connects to other key destinations in a way that aligns with the assessment criteria in this table?
The local street network design determines whether it is possible to deliver public transport services that operate efficiently and where people can access the service easily and safely. Connected street patterns for active transport will enable many people to be within a short distance of public transport hubs compared with a disconnected street pattern. Delivering high-frequency services to/within an area with a disconnected street pattern is not viable.	Will the development area have a highly connected and safe active transport network? Will the street layout and design enable the efficient movement of public transport vehicles? Will on-street public transport infrastructure enable the safe and efficient boarding and alighting of people of all abilities during all weather conditions?
Doubling the density of an area will roughly double the patronage on a public transport service. Higher density with diverse key destinations (e.g. housing options at multiple price points, supermarkets, cafes and parks) promotes more public transport use, as each additional person is more likely to use public transport because of other factors associated with higher density, such as parking scarcity, more congestion and better active transport links. Frequent services require higher densities to warrant investment in service provision.	Is the development area characterised by a higher density with diverse key destinations that warrants frequent service provision?

9.6 Appendix F: Transit-oriented development principles

ORC aims to bring useful and frequent public transport services to high density, mixed-use transport hubs that follow transit-oriented development principles.

This approach offers numerous benefits, including reduced trip distances, improved journey times and reliability, increased productivity and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Transit-oriented development is supported by the Ministry of Transport and aligns with the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 to promote well-functioning urban environments.

Effective transit-oriented development considers seven key factors: design, distance to public transport, density, diversity, destination accessibility, demand management and demographics.

Table 13 outlines ORC's criteria for assessing the provision of useful and frequent public transport services in existing and proposed transit-oriented development areas.

Table 13: Principles of transit-oriented development and the assessment criteria for ORC to provide useful and frequent public transport to proposed transit-oriented development areas.

Principle	Assessment criteria for providing useful and frequent public transport services to proposed transit-oriented development areas
Design — prioritise walking and cycling through effective street and infrastructure designs to reduce reliance on car use.	Is the development area designed in a way that is conducive for safe public and active transport as the primary mode of transport? Examples include safe accessibility to transport hubs (e.g. foot and cycle paths, streetlights) and amenities (e.g. benches, parks landscaping).
Distance to public transport — locate transport hubs as a focal point in urban areas.	Is the development area easily accessible and located near a transport hub?
Density — optimise residential and commercial densities with higher density within a specific walking distance threshold and less dense on the periphery to reduce distance of travel.	Is the development area dense enough to support public and active transport services within a 15-minute walk of residential and commercial opportunities, and a 30-minute walk in less dense areas on the periphery of urban areas?

Principle	Assessment criteria for providing useful and frequent public transport services to proposed transit-oriented development areas
Diversity — create complementary mix of land uses and activities within higher density zones to make urban centres a safe and attractive destination to live, work and play.	Does the development area support mixed land uses within a higher density sufficient to make it a safe and attractive area to live, work and play? Examples of diversity include a range of housing options, employment and educational opportunities, shops and services and community facilities.
Destination accessibility — make public transport options highly accessible, well connected and integrated with surrounding environment to support inclusive access for all ages and abilities.	Is the development area accessible, connected and well-integrated with the surrounding environment in a way that facilitates access to a wide variety of destinations for people, including transport-disadvantaged people?
Demand management — use complementary measures such as parking measures to manage demand and promote diverse transport options.	Are there site-specific or area-wide complementary measures that manage demand to increase public transport use in the development area? Examples include parking availability, adequate drop-off zones, public transport facilities, rideshare programmes and supporting local and regional policies.
Demographics — understand how demographics influence basic, social and economic needs and their associated behavioural changes.	Will the development area significantly impact nearby communities of diverse incomes and backgrounds, for example, through housing availability and affordability?

9.7 Appendix G: Table of Integral Services including routes, frequency and hours of operation

Table 14: List of Integral Services in Dunedin and Queenstown.

Service	Service identifier branding	Streets/areas served (not exhaustive)	Network layer	Headway and approximate hours of operation	Current unit	Future unit
Normanby – City	Route 8	North Road, George St	Urban Frequent	Every 15min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 30min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 2	Unit 2
St Clair – City		Macandrew Road, King Edward St, Princes St				
Halfway Bush – City	Route 44	Taieri Rd, Stuart St	**Common section** Urban Frequent **Branches** Urban Connector	**Common section** Every 15min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 30min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends) **Branches** Every 30min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 60min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 4	Unit 2
Brockville – City	Route 55	Brockville Rd, Kaikorai Valley Rd, Stuart St				
St Kilda – City	Routes 44 and 55	Victoria Rd, Prince Edward St, Princes St				
Balaclava – City – University	Route 63	Mornington Rd, Glenpark Ave, High St, Great King St, Albany St, Union Street	Urban Frequent	Every 15min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 30min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 1	Unit 1

Pine Hill – City	Route 5	Pine Hill Rd, George St	Urban Connector	Every 20min (6am–9am, 3pm–6pm weekdays) Every 40min (9am – 3pm weekdays) Every 60min (6pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 3	Unit 1
Calton Hill – City		South Rd, Princes St				
Ōpoho – City	Route 10	Signal Hill Rd, George St	Urban Connector	Every 20min (6am–9am, 3pm–6pm weekdays) Every 40min (9am–3pm weekdays) Every 60min (6pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 3	Unit 3
Shiel Hill – City		Highcliff Rd, Musselburgh Rise, Andersons Bay Rd, Princes St				
Ridge Runner	Route 15	Union St, Dundas St, Bank St, Highgate, Mailer St, Glen Rd, Hillside Rd	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 60min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 3	Unit 1
Concord – City – University	Route 37	Main South Rd, Kaikorai Valley Rd, Stuart St, Great King St, Albany St, Union St	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 60min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 1	Unit 1
Port Chalmers – City	Route 14	Harrington St, Carey's Bay, SH88, Sawyer's Bay, Union St, Albany St, Great King St	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 60min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 1	Unit 4

Peninsula – City	Route 18	**Regular service** Portobello Rd, Portsmouth Dr, Midland St, Princes St **Extension to Harington Point** Harington Point Rd, diversion through Harwood	**Regular service** Urban Connector **Extension to Harington Point** Regional Secondary	**Regular service** Every 30min (6am–9am and 3pm–6pm weekdays) Every 60min (9am–3pm and 6pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends) **Extension to Harington Point** Up to 5 trips per day	Unit 1	Unit 4
Belleknowes – City	Route 19	Kenmure Rd, Highgate, Ross St, Arthur St, Stuart St	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 60min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 4	Unit 3
Waverley – City		Larnach Rd, Belford St, Somerville St, Musselburgh Rise, Andersons Bay Rd, Princes St				
Ross Creek – City	Route 3	Tanner Rd, Fulton Rd, Malvern St, George St	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 60min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 4	Unit 2
Ocean Grove – City		Tomahawk Rd, Victoria Rd, Royal Cres, Andersons Bay Rd, Princes St				
Helensburgh – City	Route 50	Wakari Rd, Balmacewan Rd, Drivers Rd, Pitt St	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 60min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 2	Unit 2
Corstorphine – City via St Clair Park		Middleton Rd, Aberdeen Rd, Hillside Rd, Princes St				

Wakari – City	Route 33	Greenhill Ave, Balmacewan Rd, Chapman St, Nairn St, Stuart St	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 60min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 2	Unit 2
Corstorphine – City via South Rd		Middleton Rd, Corstorphine Rd, South Rd, Burns St, Hillside Rd, Princes St				
Kenmure – City	Route 61	Kaikorai Valley Rd, Kenmure Rd, Stanley St, Elgin Rd, Mailer St, High St	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–7pm weekdays) Every 60min (7pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 4	Unit 4
Mosgiel – City via Green Island	Route 77	Factory Rd, Gordon Rd, Main Rd (Fairfield), Main South Rd, SH1, Andersons Bay Rd, Hillside Rd, Princes St	Urban Connector	Every 15min (6am – 9am and 3pm – 6pm weekdays) Every 30min (9am – 3pm and 6pm–11pm weekdays, 6am–11pm weekdays)	Unit 5	Unit 5
Mosgiel – City Express	Route 78	Factory Rd, Gordon Rd, Princes St	Urban Targeted	Every 30 min (6am–9am weekdays to City, 3pm–6pm weekdays to Mosgiel. No off-peak or weekend service.	Unit 5	Unit 5
Brighton – Abbotsford – Green Island	Route 70	**Main route** Brighton Rd, North Taieri Rd, Paterson St, Main South Rd **Extension** Kaikorai Valley Rd	**Main route** Urban Connector **Extension** Urban Targeted	Every 30min (6am–9am and 3pm–6pm weekdays) Every 60min (9am–3pm and 6pm–11pm weekdays, 7am–11pm weekends)	Unit 5	Unit 5

Mosgiel On-Demand	To be determined	Streets in Mosgiel, Wingatui	Urban Connector	Service available 9am–6pm weekdays. 30-minute expected wait time.	Unit 5	Unit 5
Palmerston – Dunedin	Route 1	**Main route** Palmerston, Waikouaiti, Karitāne, Waitati, Dunedin **Warrington service** Warrington, Waitati, Dunedin	**Main route** Regional Secondary **Warrington service** Regional Daily	**Main route** 4 trips per day in each direction **Warrington service** 1 trip per day in each direction	Unit 1	Unit 7
Pine Hill – Logan Park High School	Route 95	Pine Hill Rd, Ōpoho Rd, Logan Park High School	Urban Targeted	1 trip per day in each direction on school days	Unit 3	Unit 6
Pine Hill – Dunedin North Intermediate	Route 96	Pine Hill Rd, North Rd	Urban Targeted	1 trip in afternoon peak only	Unit 3	Unit 6
Green Island – South Dunedin	Route 40	Main South Rd, Riselaw Rd, Middleton Rd, Bay View Rd	Urban Targeted	1 trip per day in each direction on school days	Unit 3	Unit 6
Green Island – Otago Boys High	Route 39	Main South Rd, Kaikorai Valley Rd, Stuart St, Arthur St	Urban Targeted	1 trip per day in each direction on school days	Unit 1	Unit 6
Ōamaru – Dunedin	To be determined	SH1 Ōamaru–Dunedin	Urban Connector	3 trips per day in each direction	n/a	Unit 7

Balclutha – Dunedin	To be determined	SH1 Balclutha–Dunedin	Urban Connector	3 trips per day in each direction	n/a	Unit 7
Remarkables Park – Sunshine Bay	Route 1	Red Oaks Drive, Airport, Frankton Rd, Stanley St, Lake Esplanade, Fernhill Rd	Urban Frequent	Every 15min (6am–7pm) Every 30min (7pm–1am)	Unit 6	Unit 8
Jack's Point – Queenstown	Route 2	Homestead Bay Rd, Howden Drive, Kingston Rd, Frankton Rd, Stanley St	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–9am, 3pm–7pm) Every 60min (9am–3pm, 7pm–10pm)	Unit 6	Unit 8
Arrowtown – Queenstown		Adamson Dr, Centennial Ave, Ramshaw Ln, Manse Rd, Malaghans Rd, Gorge Rd				
Lake Hayes Estate – Queenstown	Route 3	Nerin Square, Erskine St, Jones Ave, Frankton-Ladies Mile Hwy, Shearer Dr, Frankton Rd, Stanley St	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–9am, 3pm–7pm) Every 60min (9am–3pm, 7pm–10pm)	Unit 7	Unit 8
Arrowtown – Frankton	Route 4	Adamson Dr, Centennial Ave, Ramshaw Ln, Arrowtown-Lake Hayes Rd, Frankton-Ladies Mile Hwy	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–9am, 3pm–7pm) Every 60min (9am–3pm, 7pm–10pm)	Unit 7	Unit 8

Quail Rise – Frankton	Route 5	Ferry Hill Dr, Tucker Beach Rd, Frankton-Ladies Mile Hwy, Shearer Rd	Urban Connector	Every 30min (6am–9am, 3pm–7pm) Every 60min (9am–3pm, 7pm–10pm)	Unit 7	Unit 8
Kelvin Heights – Frankton		Peninsula Rd, Red Oaks Dr, Kawarau Rd				
Queenstown Ferry	Route F	Hilton Hotel, Frankton Marina, Bay View, Queenstown	Urban Connector	11 trips (8am–10pm)	Unit 8	Unit 11
Queenstown – Alexandra	To be determined	Queenstown, Frankton, Cromwell, Clyde, Alexandra	Regional Secondary	4 trips per day in each direction	n/a	Unit 9
Queenstown – Wānaka	InterCity	Queenstown, Cromwell or Cadrona, Wānaka	Regional Secondary	4 trips per day in each direction	n/a	Unit 15
Christchurch – Dunedin	InterCity	Christchurch to Dunedin via Ashburton, Timaru, Ōamaru	Regional Daily	2 trips per day in each direction	n/a	Unit 14
Christchurch – Queenstown	InterCity	Christchurch to Queenstown via Tekapo	Regional Daily	1 trip per day in each direction	n/a	Unit 14
Dunedin – Queenstown	InterCity	Dunedin to Queenstown via Milton, Alexandra, Cromwell	Regional Daily	1-2 trips per day in each direction	n/a	Unit 14

Dunedin – Invercargill	InterCity	Dunedin to Invercargill via Gore	Regional Daily	1 trip per day in each direction	n/a	Unit 14
Queenstown – Te Anau	Intercity / Great Sights	Queenstown to Te Anau via Kingston	Regional Daily	1 trip per day in each direction	n/a	Unit 14
Queenstown – West Coast	InterCity	Queenstown to Franz Joseph via Wānaka	Regional Targeted	Trips operate less than daily	n/a	Unit 14
Queenstown - Invercargill	Catch-a-Bus South	Queenstown to Invercargill	Regional Targeted	Trips operate on-demand for limited users	n/a	Unit 12
Total Mobility	Various	Dunedin, Ōamaru, Queenstown, Wānaka, Balclutha, Alexandra, other areas according to supplier availability	Urban Targeted Regional Targeted	Varies depending on service	n/a	Unit 13
Community Transport	Regional Targeted	Trips operate on-demand for limited users	n/a	Varies by case	n/a	Closest relevant contracted unit
Special Event service	Various	Any area of Otago	Regional Targeted	Varies by case	n/a	Closest relevant contracted unit

9.8 Appendix H: Tables of units

Current contractual units

Table 15: The units whose contracts are active as of the commencement of this RPTP.

Unit Number, Name, and Mode	Geographic description	Contract duration	Comment
Unit 1: East-West connections and regional (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to:** • Balaclava via Mornington, • Concord via Kaikorai Valley, • Logan Park via University • Port Chalmers via University • Peninsula • Palmerston **Targeted school trips between Green Island and Otago Boys' High School**	September 2017–September 2026	Transition routes to new unit structure upon expiry
Unit 2: South Dunedin and Connections (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to:** • Normanby • St Clair • Corstorphine via Hillside Rd and Middleton Rd • Corstorphine via Hillside Rd and Caversham • Wakari via Stuart St • Helensburgh via Maori Hill	September 2017–September 2026	Transition routes to new unit structure by contract variation

Unit 3: North Dunedin and Connections (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to:** • Shiel Hill • Calton Hill • Pine Hill • Ōpoho **South Dunedin to University via Mornington, Maori Hill, Gardens** **Targeted school trips between:** • Pine Hill, Dunedin North Intermediate, Logan Park High School • Green Island and South Dunedin schools	October 2022–March 2031	Transition routes to new unit structure by contract variation
Unit 4: South-East and Connections (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to:** • Waverley • Ocean Grove • St Kilda • Kenmure via Mornington • Belleknowes via Stuart St • Brockville via Stuart St • Halfway Bush via Stuart St • Ross Creek	August 2016–August 2028	Transition routes to new unit structure by contract variation
Unit 5: South-West Dunedin (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to Mosgiel:** • Via Green Island and Fairfield • Targeted express services **Green Island to:** • Brighton • Abbotsford **On-demand service in Mosgiel**	July 2025–June 2034	Unit to be maintained in new unit structure
Unit 6: Southern Corridor and Connections (Bus)	**Central Queenstown to:** • Jack's Point via Frankton • Arrowtown via Arthurs Point • Sunshine Bay • Remarkables Park via Frankton and Airport	November 2017–November 2026	Extent contract to match Unit 7 and transition routes to new unit structure on expiry

Unit 7: Eastern Corridor and Connections (Bus)	**Frankton to:** • Arrowtown • Queenstown • Lake Hayes Estate • Quail Rise • Kelvin Heights	November 2017–November 2029	Transition routes to new unit structure on expiry
Unit 8: Lake Whakatipu (Ferry)	**Queenstown to Hilton Hotel via:** • Kelvin Heights • Frankton Marina	July 2020–June 2025	Procure new contract

Future contractual units

Table 16: The units and contracts we will seek to transition to in the future.

Unit Number, Name, and Mode	Geographic description	Contract duration	Comment
Unit 1: University and Connections (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to:** • Pine Hill • Calton Hill via Caversham • Logan Park via University • Balaclava via Mornington • Concord via Kaikorai Valley [Option: move to Unit 5 and replace with Central Dunedin to Kenmure via Mornington] **South Dunedin to University (via Mornington, Maori Hill, Gardens)**	September 2026–June 2035	

Unit 2: South Dunedin and Connections (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to:** • Normanby • St Clair • Corstorphine via Hillside Rd and Middleton Rd • Corstorphine via Hillside Rd and Caversham • Wakari via Stuart St • Helensburgh via Maori Hill • Ross Creek • Ocean Grove	September 2026–June 2038	
Unit 3: South-East Dunedin and Connections (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to:** • Shiel Hill • Waverley • Belleknowes via Stuart St • Ōpoho	To be confirmed	
Unit 4: Miscellaneous Routes (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to:** • Kenmure via Mornington [Option: move to Unit 1 in place of Central Dunedin to Concord] • Port Chalmers via University • Peninsula	To be confirmed	
Unit 5: South-West Dunedin (Bus)	**Central Dunedin to Mosgiel:** • Via Green Island and Fairfield • Targeted express services **Green Island to:** • Brighton • Abbotsford **On-demand service in Mosgiel**	July 2025–June 2034	

Unit 6: Dunedin Schools (Bus)	**Green Island to:** • South Dunedin schools • Otago Boys' High School **Pine Hill to:** • Logan Park High School • Dunedin North Intermediate	To be confirmed	Expected to be served by older diesel buses to make full use of assets
Unit 7: Dunedin Regional (Bus)	• **Dunedin to Ōamaru via Palmerston** • **Weston to Ōamaru North via South Hill** • **On-demand in Ōamaru** • **Dunedin to Balclutha via Airport**	To be confirmed	Only Dunedin to Palmerston area can be served with current funding. Other services will need to be contractual options.
Unit 8: Queenstown Urban (Bus)	**Frankton to Queenstown** **Queenstown to:** • Sunshine Bay • Arrowtown via Arthurs Point **Frankton to:** • Jack's Point • Lake Hayes Estate • Arrowtown • Quail Rise • Kelvin Heights	November 2029–June 2041	Contract will include staged service increases and gradual introduction of new fleet, subject to funding
Unit 9: Queenstown School (Bus)	**Same geographic area as Queenstown Urban**	November 2028–June 2035	Not currently funded
Unit 10: Queenstown Regional (Bus)	**Queenstown to Alexandra via Cromwell, Clyde**	November 2028–June 2035	Not currently funded
Unit 11: Lake Whakatipu (Ferry)	**Queenstown CBD to Hilton Hotel via:** • Kelvin Heights • Frankton Marina	July 2025–June 2030	

Exempt integral units

Table 17: Existing and potential future exempt integral units in Otago.

Unit Number, Name, and Mode	Geographic description	Contract expiry	Comment
Unit 12: Total Mobility (small vehicle)	**All areas of Otago**	June 2026 (multiple contracts)	Small-vehicle financial assistance is permitted
Unit 13: Community Transport (small vehicle)	**All areas of Otago**	Not applicable	Small-vehicle financial assistance is permitted
Unit 14: Integral coach services (bus)	**Exempt routes on [current regional map], excluding Wānaka – Queenstown connection**	Not applicable	Financial assistance for the purpose of fare reduction is permitted
Unit 15: Wānaka–Queenstown (bus)	**Wānaka to Queenstown via:** • Cromwell • Cadrona	Not applicable	Financial assistance for the purpose of fare reduction is permitted

9.9 Appendix I: Cost recovery and measuring private share of operating cost

This appendix provides further information about measuring the private share of public transport service operating cost.

It also presents the context and detail supporting our private share policy FS P2 set out in Section 6 (Value for money) of this plan.

Further, this appendix has been developed to respond to a requirement by NZTA to detail our private share targets in our RPTP.

Background

Value for money is a strategic priority guiding all transport investments under the GPS 2024.

This means there is a focus on achieving greater value from the financial investment in public transport activities funded through the NLTP.

The GPS includes an expectation for PTAs to actively work towards increasing private share revenue (fares and third-party revenue).

Although this presents challenges to ORC and the ambitions that we and our community have for public transport, our NLTP funding is an essential part of how we ensure value for money for our own ratepayers.

As such, we will actively work to grow the private share contribution to the costs of our services. By doing so, we will support the continuity of funding for existing services and place ourselves in the best possible position to seek funding for future public transport improvements.

Private share

Private share is a measure of cost recovery and represents the proportion of public transport operating expenditure funded from private revenue sources.

In previous RPTPs, cost recovery was referred to as farebox recovery. NZTA have recently changed their cost recovery policy framework, including redefining farebox recovery to private share of operating expenditure.

Private share is calculated using the following formula[9]:

Private share of operating expenditure

$$\text{Private share of operating expenditure} = \frac{\text{Total private revenue}}{\text{Total operating expenditure}}$$

Where:

Private revenue =

	Passenger fares	Passenger fare revenue for all subsidised services.
+	**Private fare substitutes**	Third-party revenue from private fare schemes.
+	**Commercial revenue**	Third-party revenue from commercial sources including advertising, sponsorship **and** rental or investment income generated from the delivery of the public transport system.
+	**Enforcement fees**	Revenue generated from enforcement associated with the public transport system, e.g. fines of unpaid tickets.

Operating expenditure =

	Passenger services	Total gross expenditure on public transport services, prior to applying any subsidies.
+	**Operations and maintenance**	Total gross expenditure on the maintenance, operations and management of public transport services and infrastructure, prior to applying any subsidies.

The government's aim is to increase private share to support the increased costs of public transport and reduce the pressure on ratepayers and taxpayers.

9 Total Mobility private share is not included in the public transport private share calculations or targets.

Increasing private share

Measuring cost recovery is important to assess the distribution of operating costs between users and funders.

Figure 16 below indicates how operating costs for public transport are distributed between funders.

Private share reflects the private benefits of users of public transport, while the public share reflects public transport's benefits to road users, the environment and wider community outcomes.

Increasing private share will reduce the amount of public subsidy required to meet our total operating costs.

Private share can be increased by:

- increasing patronage to collect more fare revenue
- reducing operating costs by optimising or cutting services
- increasing the average fare paid by increasing the base fare or changing the fare structure
- growing third-party revenue streams, such as advertising.

With a complex interaction of factors influencing people's decision to use (and pay for) public transport, how we increase private share over time to meet our private share targets will require careful management.

Adjusting anything too quickly or without careful consideration may undo our recent patronage gains and negatively impact private share revenue.

Figure 17 (on page 126) outlines the implications and trade-offs that we will carefully manage.

Funding equation

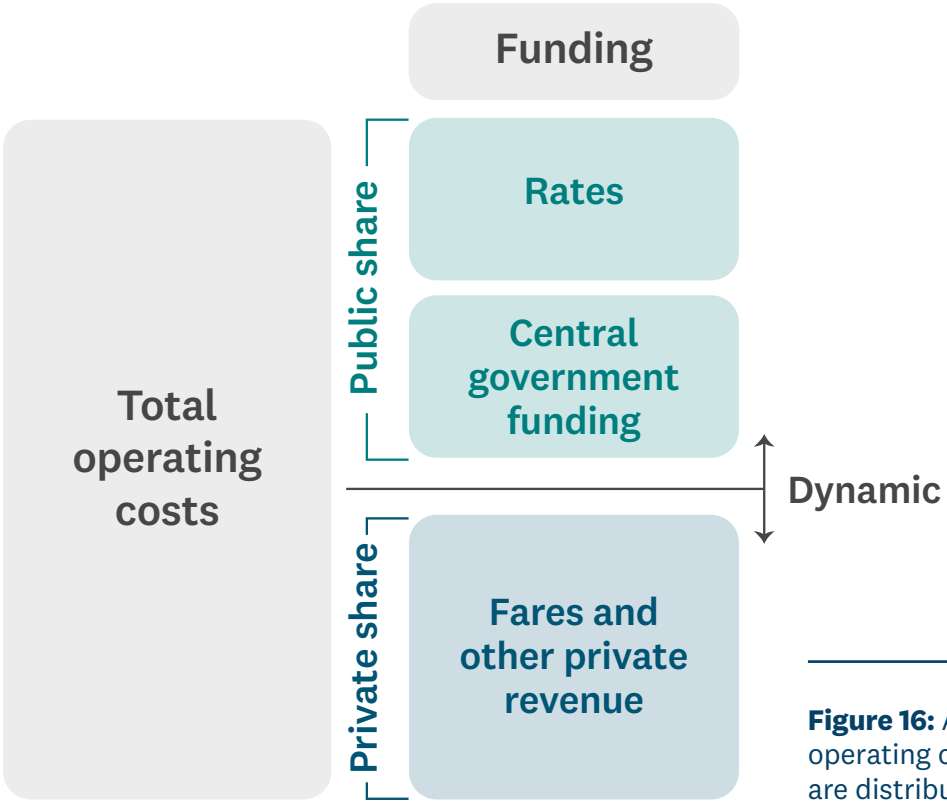


Figure 16: A depiction of how operating costs for public transport are distributed between funders.

Interactions between patronage, fares and service levels

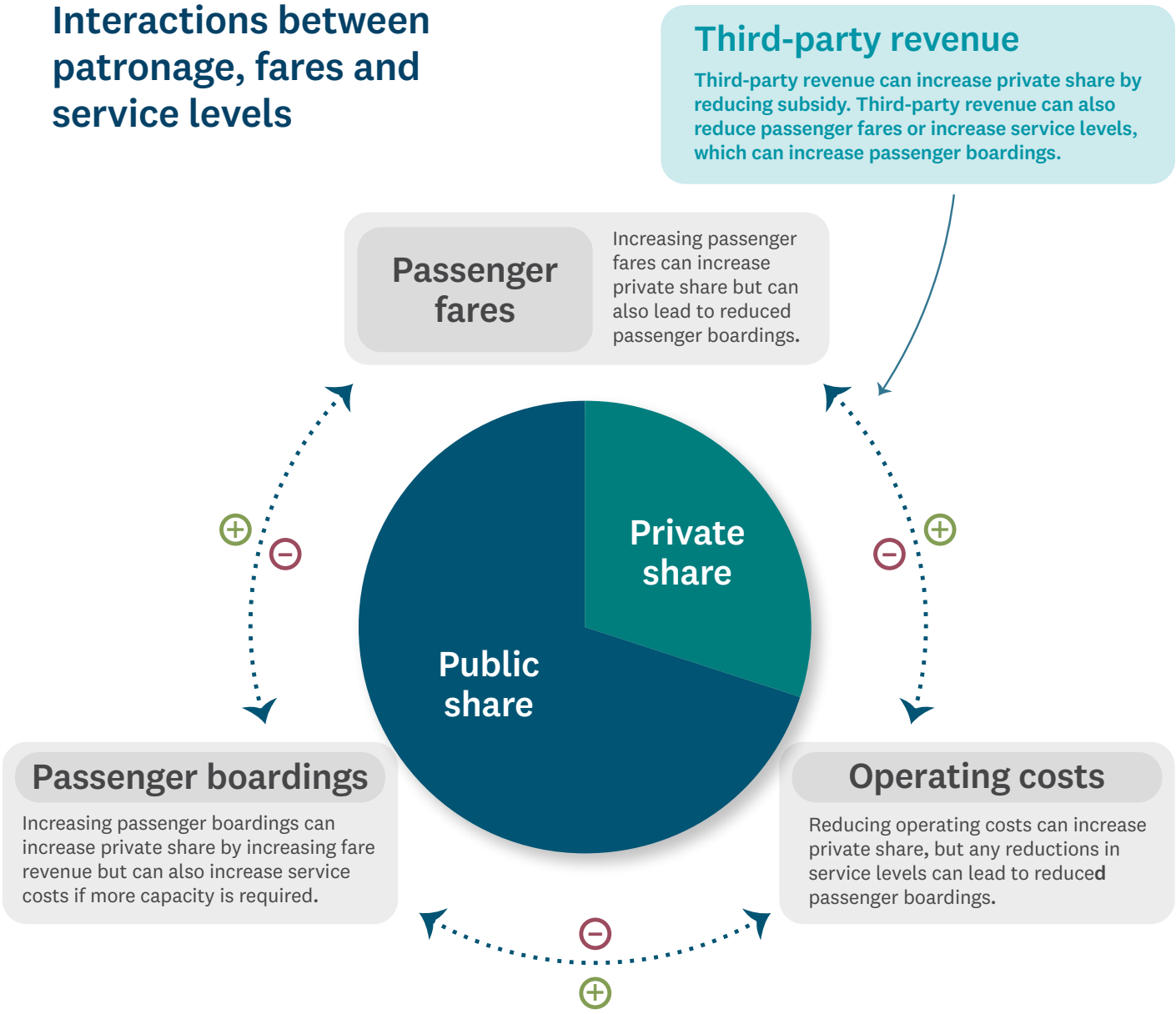


Figure 17: Interactions between patronage, fares and service levels.
(Source: NZTA)

Passenger fares

Public transport provides choice and an alternative to using the private car.

This means the relationship between bus fares and the cost of driving (petrol costs, parking costs) is particularly important, and provides a useful comparator for how much we can adjust our public transport fares.

The average private-share contribution in Otago is $1.45 per trip (mostly coming from fares), compared to a private car running cost of $1.25[10].

This means that, due to relatively short average trip lengths on most public transport routes, Otago has one of New Zealand's highest average fares compared to private car operating costs. This leaves little room for us to increase fares.

10 Note: Private car costs have been calculated using a simplified methodology which is simply the IRD 2023/24 per kilometre rate for running costs only ($0.30 excl. GST) multiplied by the average public transport trip length in our region. This comparison excludes costs such as parking and congestion.

Service optimisation

Public transport costs largely come from:

- the cost of paying drivers and supporting staff to operate and maintain vehicles
- the cost of vehicles — both in purchasing vehicles and batteries, and daily running costs such as fuel or electricity
- infrastructure costs: both passenger infrastructure such as bus stops, stations, and bus lanes, and operational infrastructure such as depots.

If we can make more efficient use of drivers, vehicles, and infrastructure, then we can reduce the amount we spend on public transport, or deliver a greater amount of service for the same cost.

This will improve our financial performance (including private share) and put us in a better position to attract funding for future investments.

Areas of potential optimisation include:

- reducing out-of-service running through:
  - timetable and route design
  - availability of depots and driver break facilities that are close to routes
- avoiding excessively indirect routes
- priority infrastructure such as bus lanes to speed up trip times, especially at peak
- easy fare payment to speed up getting on and off our services
- making full use of assets such as buses across their whole lifetime
- technological solutions to inform efficient deployment of vehicles and drivers.

Private share targets

Our 2023/2024 private share of operating costs was 18.7%. This is a strong result and well above regions and networks of a similar size (Figure 18).

ORC has included Policy FS P2 (see Section 6.2) to actively work towards increasing private revenue contribution to the cost of public transport over time in this RPTP.

This supports the direction from central government to actively work towards increasing private share to offset the cost to ratepayers and the taxpayer for public transport services.

Our private share or operating targets for the next three years are:

- 20% for the 2024/2025 year
- 25% for the 2025/2026 year
- 30% for the 2026/2027 year

Council recognises that our ambition to increase private share must be balanced with a lens of realism in terms of the mechanisms we have to do this in Otago.

Fiscal sustainability must also be balanced with the wider community outcomes we value.

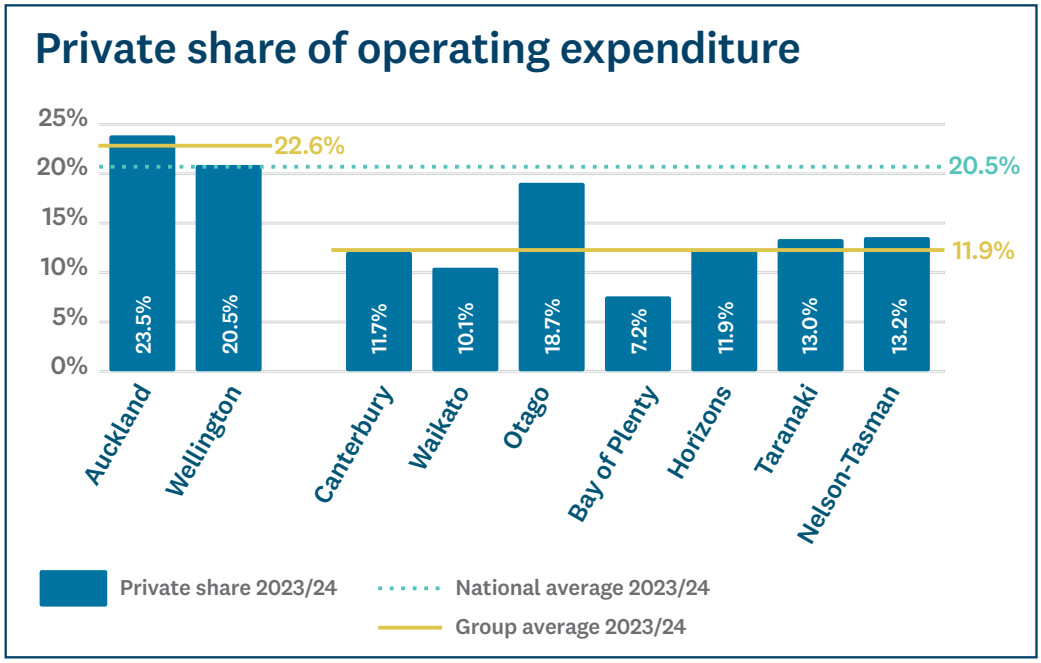


Figure 18: Regional comparison of private share. (Source: NZTA 2024).

Glossary

Term	Definition
Action	Specific items of work that we intend to undertake in the next 3–10 years.
Community Transport	Not-for-profit service established, funded and operated by community entities to enhance transport access in areas where traditional public transport is not feasible.
Engagement	The process of two-way dialogue between ORC and our iwi partners, stakeholders and communities; both formal and informal.
Key stakeholders	Individuals (as well as groups of individuals, organisations or a political entity), with a specific stake in the outcome of a decision affecting a policy, project or proposition (e.g. NZTA, territorial authorities and public transport operators).
Motu Move	A national ticketing and payment system providing easy, consistent ways to pay for buses, trains and ferries across Aotearoa. Motu Move is expected to be launched in Otago in 2026.
Off-peak hours	Weekdays 9am until 3pm, weekends and public holidays.
Orbus	ORC's brand for public bus and ferry services in Dunedin and Queenstown.
Policy	ORC's position on a particular topic that we will refer to when we make decisions about our public transport network.
Partner agencies	ORC works closely in both the strategic decision making, funding and delivery of our public transport system with our partner agencies NZTA and our region's territorial authorities/road controlling authorities.
Peak hours	Weekdays before 9am and from 3pm to 6.30pm.
Public transport operators	Entities who are contracted by ORC to deliver public transport services and who typically provide resources and infrastructure, including buses, ferries, drivers and depots.
Territorial authorities	A tier of local government which administer the districts and cities alongside regional councils. There are five territorial authorities in Otago: Central Otago District Council, Clutha District Council, Dunedin City Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council and Waitaki District Council.
Total Mobility	A nationwide scheme that provides subsidised door-to-door transport services for eligible disabled people through approved commercial taxi and mobility operators.
Transport-disadvantaged people	Groups of people who face difficulties in accessing transportation due to various factors such as disabilities, low income or age (e.g. disabled people, children or people in isolated rural locations).
Unit	All services that are integral to the region's public transport network are grouped into units.

List of acronyms

Acronym	Definition
CDC	Clutha District Council
CODC	Central Otago District Council
DCC	Dunedin City Council
GPS	Government Policy Statement
LTMA	Land Transport Management Act
LTP	Long-Term Plan
NLTF	National Land Transport Fund
NLTP	National Land Transport Programme
NZTA	New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi
ORC	Otago Regional Council

Acronym	Definition
PTA	Public Transport Authority
PTO	Public Transport Operator
QLDC	Queenstown Lakes District Council
RLTP	Regional Land Transport Plan
RPTP	Regional Public Transport Plan
RUB	Requirements for Urban Buses
WDC	Waitaki District Council

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