



If calling, please ask for Democratic Services

Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee

Wednesday 3 August 2022, 9.30am

Taumata Kōrero, Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council,
100 Cuba Street, Te Aro, Wellington

Members

Cr Blakeley (Chair)

Cr Brash

Cr Connelly

Cr Kirk-Burnnand

Cr Lamason

Cr Lee

Cr Nash

Cr Ponter

Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as Council policy until adopted by Council

Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee

Wednesday 3 August 2022, 9.30am

Taumata Kōrero, Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council,
100 Cuba Street, Te Aro, Wellington

Public Business

No.	Item	Report	Page
1.	Apologies		
2.	Conflict of interest declarations		
3.	Process for Considering Feedback on the Future Fares Direction	22.320	3
4.	Analysis of Submissions on the Future Fares Direction	22.315	10

**Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee
3 August 2022
Report 22.320**



For Decision

PROCESS FOR HEARING AND CONSIDERING FEEDBACK MADE ON THE FUTURE FARES DIRECTION

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose

1. To advise the Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) of the process for hearing and considering feedback on the Future Fares Direction.

He tūtohu

Recommendations

That the Subcommittee:

1. **Agrees** to the hearing process set out in this report.
2. **Accepts** the late feedback received on the Future Fares Direction.

Te tāhū kōrero

Background

Public consultation

2. At its meeting on 16 June 2022, the Transport Committee approved the consultation documents for the Future Fares Direction.
3. The consultation period was open from 17 June 2022 and closed on 15 July 2022.

Establishment of the hearing subcommittee

4. At its meeting on 16 June 2022, the Transport Committee established the Strategic Fares Direction Subcommittee to hear and consider feedback and to make recommendations to the Transport Committee on the Future Fares Directions. The Subcommittee's Terms of Reference ([Attachment 1](#)) outline the Subcommittee's role and responsibilities.
5. The hearing completes the public consultation phase.

Te tātaritanga Analysis

Principles of consultation

6. There are six principles set out in the Local Government Act 2002. One of these principles is that views presented to a local authority should be accepted with an open mind, and should be given due consideration by the local authority making the decision.
7. The Subcommittee should also account for persons who wish to have their views on the decision or matter considered by the local authority being provided with reasonable opportunity to present those views to the local authority.
8. It is consistent with best practice that members should be present for the substantial duration of the hearing in order to participate in the decision-making of the Subcommittee.

Submissions and feedback

9. Feedback from the community was obtained through the Have Your Say website, together with a number of written submissions received via email. Analysis of the feedback is detailed in Analysis of Submissions to the Future Fares Direction – Report 22.315.
10. Greater Wellington received a total of 1,147 submissions; 710 via Have Your Say, 19 by email, and 418 form submissions from GenZero.
11. There was one late submission received by email, and 12 from GenZero. Officers recommend that these late submissions be accepted for consideration.
12. The written submissions have been distributed to members of the Subcommittee separately. It is suggested that written submissions are taken as read by the Subcommittee and that members only discuss those submissions on which they want to make a particular comment.

Oral presentation process

13. The purpose of the hearing is to hear oral presentations in support of written feedback. At the time of writing this report 28 submitters wished to be heard. Submitters will be heard on Wednesday 3 August and the morning of Thursday 4 August 2022. Deliberations will commence following the hearing of the final speaker. A hearing schedule will be provided to Subcommittee members, with a final version provided on each day of the hearing.
14. Each submitter has been allocated a total time of 10 minutes, which is divided into two equal segments – five minutes for the submitter to speak, and five minutes for the Subcommittee to ask any clarifying questions. Members should keep their questions brief. There is no difference in the allocation of time for individuals and groups/organisations.
15. People speaking to their submissions may speak in person, or online via Microsoft Teams.

Consideration of issues raised in submissions and feedback

16. The Subcommittee must consider all written feedback, regardless of whether an oral presentation was made.

**Ngā hua ahumoni
Financial implications**

17. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**Ngā Take e hāngai ana te iwi Māori
Implications for Māori**

18. There are no implications for Māori arising from this report. However, the Future Fares Review aims to provide equitable access for all communities, including Māori, as well as providing affordable public transport options to places of employment, social services, education, and significant social and cultural events.

**Ngā tikanga whakatau
Decision-making process**

19. The matters requiring decision in this report were considered by officers against the decision-making requirements of the Local Government Act 2002.

**Te hiranga
Significance**

20. Officers considered the significance (as defined in Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002) of the matters for decision, taking into account Council's *Significance and Engagement Policy* and Greater Wellington's *Decision-making Guidelines*. Officers recommend that the matters are of low significance because of their administrative nature.

**Te whakatūtakitaki
Engagement**

21. Due to the low significance of the matters for decision, external engagement was not required.

**Ngā tūāoma e whai ake nei
Next steps**

22. The Subcommittee will prepare a report for Council to consider at its meeting on 25 August 2022, setting out the Subcommittee's recommendations.
23. Each person or organisation who made a submission or provided feedback, and who provided a contact address (including email) will, subsequent to Council adopting the fare structure, receive a response outlining the Council's decision and any key changes.

24. A press release will be published, outlining Council’s decisions and any key changes, and be made available on Greater Wellington’s website.

**Ngā āpitihanga
Attachment**

Number	Title
1	Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee Terms of Reference

**Ngā kaiwaitohu
Signatories**

Writer	Lucas Stevenson – Kaitohutohu Advisor, Democratic Services
Approvers	Alex Smith – Kaitohutohu Matua Senior Advisor, Democratic Services Francis Ryan – Kaiwhakahaere Matua Manager, Democratic Services Luke Troy – Kaiwhakahaere Matua Rautaki General Manager Strategy Samantha Gain – Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-ā-tea General Manager Metlink

He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations
<i>Fit with Council's roles or with Committee's terms of reference</i> The Subcommittee had been charged with carrying out the hearing process for the consideration of feedback made on the Future Fares Direction.
<i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i> The hearing supports the Future Fares Direction, reviews the fare structure of public transport in the Region.
<i>Internal consultation</i> Officers from Metlink were consulted.
<i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i> A risk is that Council could face legal review if members of the Subcommittee are seen to have pre-determined their positions.

Attachment 1 to Report 22.320

Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee

(A subcommittee of the Transport Committee)

1. Purpose

To hear and consider submissions made on the Future Fares Direction consultation document and recommend to the Transport Committee any amendments to the fare proposals contained in the consultation document.

2. Powers

The Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee has the power to:

- Consider both the written and oral submissions, presentations made in support of submissions, and any other feedback on the Future Fares Direction.
- Seek clarification from Council officers on any technical matters.
- Develop recommendations on amendments to the Future Fares Direction for consideration by the Transport Committee.

3. Responsibilities

The Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee shall ensure that:

- The hearing and consideration process is carried out in a way that is effective and timely;
- Submitters are provided with the best possible opportunity to be heard in support of their submission;
- Hearing Subcommittee members receive submissions with an open mind and give due consideration to each submission;
- The decision making process is robust and transparent.

4. Members

The members of the Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee are:

- Cr Roger Blakeley
- Cr Jenny Brash
- Cr Ros Connelly
- Cr Chris Kirk-Burnnand
- Cr Lamason
- Cr David Lee
- Cr Thomas Nash
- Cr Daran Ponter

5. Chair

Cr Blakeley is the Chair of the Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee.

Attachment 1 to Report 22.320

6. Quorum

Four Subcommittee members.

7. Meeting procedures

- All members have equal speaking rights and a deliberative vote.
- The Chair has a deliberative vote; and, in the case of an equality of votes, does not have a casting vote (and therefore the act or question is defeated and the status quo is preserved).
- Members must be present for the substantial part of the hearing and deliberations in order to participate in the decision-making of the Hearing Subcommittee.
- Submitters may speak to their submission by remote participation.

10 Duration of Subcommittee

The Subcommittee is deemed to be dissolved at the end of the decision-making process on the Future Fares Direction.

**Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee
3 August 2022
Report 22.315**



For Decision

ANALYSIS OF SUBMISSIONS ON THE FUTURE FARES DIRECTION

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose

1. To provide the Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) with an overview of the written submissions received on the Future Fares Direction 2022, together with initial officer comments and recommendations on key topics raised in the submissions.

He tūtohu

Recommendations

That the Subcommittee:

1. **Considers** the submissions on the Future Fares Direction 2022 (**Attachment 1**), together with the findings, analysis, and summary of submissions completed by Global Research (**Attachment 2**) and with the officer comments and recommendations set out in this report.
2. **Recommends** to Council, following consideration of the submissions on the Future Fares Direction 2022, and relevant officer advice, any changes to the Future Fares Direction 2022 as agreed by this Subcommittee.

Te tāhū kōrero

Background

2. The proposed fare initiatives have been developed to help achieve the strategic objective set out in Te Mahere Waka Whenua Tūmatanui o te Rohe o Pōneke Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan 2021-2031 (RPTP) of an “efficient, accessible and low-carbon public transport network” by providing greater choice and flexibility for journey planning, fares and fare payment options.
3. The initiatives were designed to achieve four key outcomes which align with policies outlined in the RPTP:
 - a. *Affordability* - with an emphasis of targeting those who may need it most
 - b. *Modeshift* - encouraging greater public transport uptake, with a focus on growth outside peak travel periods
 - c. *Fairness* - price an individual pays relative to distance travelled
 - d. *Simplicity* - making fares easier to use and understand.

4. On 16 June 2022, the Transport Committee approved the Future Fares Direction 2022 consultation document for public consultation (see [Attachment 3](#) and refer Report 22.149). At this same meeting, the Committee established the Future Fares Direction Hearing Subcommittee (Report 22.193) to consider and hear submissions on the Future Fares Direction Consultation.
5. The public consultation period ran from 17 June to 15 July 2022. Public engagement activities during the consultation included virtual engagement sessions.
6. Consultation was promoted through Greater Wellington's online and social media channels, newspaper adverts and on-board poster advertising on the Wairarapa line trains. Digital engagement sessions for the consultation were promoted through the EventFinda website and through other digital channels.
7. During the consultation period, the government's half price public transport fares initiative was in place, and the announcement of its extension beyond 1 September 2022 to 31 January 2023 was made (on 17 July 2022).

Consultation focus

8. In the online survey, respondents were asked for comments on the following open-ended question:
 - a Q1: Please give us your comments on Greater Wellington's adoption of the Government's Community Services Card half-price fares initiative.
9. Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements and to then explain in their own words why they selected that response:
 - b Q2: Metlink should increase the off-peak travel discount from 25 to 35 percent to encourage greater off-peak usage.
 - c Q3: Metlink should introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders.
 - d Q4: Metlink should introduce a policy that allows children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian.
 - e Q5: Metlink should consider including a fare capping discount of 35 percent on a daily and weekly basis.
 - f Q6: Metlink should consider introducing new targeted fares products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region.
 - g Q7: Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based Integrated Fare Structure.
10. The questions requested respondents to either agree or disagree on a scale in relation to each statement and provide qualitative short-form statements on each question. Information on respondent geographical location and public transport usage was also requested.

Submissions received

11. 1148 individual submissions were received. These included 710 submissions via Have Your Say and 438 submissions via direct email. Of the direct email submissions, 418

were through a campaign organised by Generation Zero. 10 submissions were made on behalf of organisations.

12. Of submitters who chose to identify the location they live in, 49 percent live in Wellington City, 10 percent in Porirua, 18 percent in Lower Hutt, 10 percent in Kāpiti, eight percent in Upper Hutt and four percent from the Wairarapa (South Wairarapa, Carterton, and Masterton), one percent reside outside of the Wellington Region, and one percent do not currently reside in New Zealand.
13. The most often used mode of public transport (PT) by respondents were bus (61%) and rail (58%) and eight percent stated they did not use PT. Respondents most often used PT to get to employment and education (83%) and over half reported using PT for leisure (54%). Over a third (38%) reported using PT for essential services including health and retail.

Feedback received at virtual engagement sessions

14. During the consultation period, five virtual engagement sessions were held with stakeholders and interested members of the public. The sessions were held at different times of the day including a weekend session to maximise the opportunity for stakeholders to take part in discussions. While attendance at these sessions were low, the discussions were of high quality.
15. Across the engagement sessions, the key points made by participants were:
 - a The need for an integrated ticketing system whilst also taking into account the perspectives of those that may be digitally disadvantaged or might not want to use or rely on a technology-based system.
 - b The need for a simple, easy to understand system, particularly in regard to cumulative discounting and fare-capping.
 - c Greater Wellington needs to achieve better equity outcomes and access for vulnerable communities including the disability community and those on lower incomes including people who hold Community Services Cards.
 - d The need to address affordability for all in the current economic climate, not just the currently targeted concession groups.
 - e The need for greater incentives for usage of off-peak services over and above the increased off-peak discount proposed in consultation.
 - f Greater Wellington's need to be bold in initiatives to increase public transport usage to contribute to climate change mitigations.
 - g Support for initiatives that provide families and visitors/tourists easy access to public transport and public transport initiatives which support and promote access to local events across the region, not just Wellington City.
 - h An appreciation for the fare capping in principle with Australian models cited as best practice.
16. The virtual engagement sessions had input from representatives of the transport disadvantaged. Key topics from these representatives were disability access,

enhancements to Total Mobility, and the importance and affordability of public transport to the transport disadvantaged community.

Te tātaritanga Analysis

Summary of submissions and key themes raised during the consultation

17. Detailed analysis on all submissions is contained in **Attachment 2**.

Key themes raised in the submissions

18. Overall, submitters were broadly and consistently supportive of the initiatives presented through the consultation with 'agree' responses (Agree, Strongly Agree) recorded in the high 70-80% for the majority of questions.
19. While broadly and consistently supportive of the initiatives presented, many 'agree' submitters did caveat their support through comments on the general themes of:
 - a Greater Wellington providing even greater discounts than proposed including extending concession-level discounts to all public transport users.
 - b Free public transport for concessionaries and/or all public transport users.
 - c The need for simplicity and ease-of-understanding in fare design with some submitters stating their belief that some proposals would add unnecessary complexity and confusion to the fares process.
 - d Whether the network had capacity, or was sufficiently reliable, particularly off-peak, to absorb additional patrons.
20. 'Disagree' responses (Disagree, Strongly Disagree) were low, at eight percent and under for all questions. Disagreement was broadly encapsulated in the broad themes of:
 - a Impact of the proposals on ratepayers.
 - b Need for Greater Wellington to have priority focus on service reliability ahead of fares concessions and discounts.

Individual questions and officers' comments

Q1: Please give us your comments on Greater Wellington's adoption of the Government's Community Services Card half-price fares initiative.

21. Overall, there was general support for Greater Wellington's adoption of the government's Community Services Card half price fares initiative. There was broad and consistent support for the initiative to adopt half-price fares for Community Services Card holders with agreement amongst a large number of respondents that this group needs and would benefit from discounted travel costs.
22. A substantial number of respondents supported the initiative but wanted PT to be even cheaper – or free – for Community Services Card holders; an additional considerable number of people supported the initiative due to the perception that it would prompt greater uptake of PT use which was viewed as having positive environmental benefits.

23. However, a very large number of people (>150) wanted to see the initiative broadened to include one of a number of groups, ranging from 'everyone' to students/young people and people with disabilities.
24. There was support from a considerable number of respondents for all public transport to be free, for every user. This was often in the name of emissions reduction and more liveable cities.
25. While there was minimal opposition to the initiative, there were wide ranging queries or concerns from a large number of people (<150) around how ticketing would be implemented, the ability of the PT network to absorb additional patrons, and broad concerns about the reliability of the PT network.

Officers' comments

26. Council adopted the government's Community Services Card half-price fares initiative on 16 June 2022. This was consistent with the Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) policy "Provide concession fares to targeted groups to increase access to affordable services for those who are most dependent on public transport" which was adopted by Council on 29 June 2021.
27. Consultation included this question as a means to gather insights on public perception of the initiative rather than as a guide to decision making. No further action is required other than to note the feedback.

Officers' recommendation (1): Based on feedback and analysis, officers recommend that the Subcommittee notes the overwhelming support for Council's adoption of the government's Community Services Card half-price fares initiative.

Q2: Metlink should increase the off-peak travel discount from 25 to 35 percent to encourage greater off-peak usage

28. Overall, there was significantly more agreement (81%) than disagreement (7%) for increasing the off-peak travel discount from 25% to 35%.
29. Respondents frequently supported this move in principle but felt that Greater Wellington could go even further than offering a 35% discount for off-peak travel. Respondents thought that a discount of 50% or more would be more likely to have an impact, with some going further to suggest that PT should be free. Increasing the hours considered 'off-peak', extending the discount to cover peak fares as well were also suggested.
30. Respondents who supported increasing the off-peak discount from 25% to 35% argued that this would encourage more people to use PT, leading to lower carbon emissions from fewer cars on the roads; less traffic congestion; safer streets for pedestrians; and more equitable and affordable transport access.
31. A relatively small number of respondents opposed this change. They argued that it would cost too much; that it would not make a difference to public transport use; or that there are too many problems with off-peak timetabling to make it worthwhile.
32. Other suggestions were made around improving the overall reliability and efficiency of the PT system and ticketing issues.

Officers' comments

33. Submissions and discussions during the public engagement sessions revealed general support for increasing the off-peak discount, but a significant number believed that moving from 25% to 35% would have a limited impact on patronage.
34. Officer modelling indicates that a move from 25% to 35% off-peak discount will result in a net revenue loss of approximately 2% (or two million per annum) in the short term but this will be largely offset in the mid-longer term through patronage growth and a small reduction in peak bus service requirements.
35. Modelling also indicates that a move from 25% to 50% off-peak discount will result in a Net Revenue loss of ~5% (or five million per annum). While this initiative will be somewhat offset in the mid-long term through patronage growth and reducing peak bus service requirements, modelling also indicated that additional off-peak services may be required.
36. Regardless of off-peak discount size, more regular promotion of off-peak discounts could be considered to help raise awareness and maximise the intended outcomes (i.e. affordability and network efficiency)
37. Advice provided to officers showed that 50% discount, while at the upper end, was not unknown internationally and was likely to drive a degree of travel behaviour change as well as patronage growth. The key concern was around potential timing of implementation given the potential cost of the discount and network capacity requirements it might create.
38. The RPTP currently defines off-peak as “weekdays between 9 am and 3 pm and after 6.30 pm and all-day weekends and public holidays”. In effect, Council’s 5 August 2021 decision to the continuation of the 25% Early Bird discount on buses (Report 21.328) has expanded the definition of off-peak for bus users to include “before 7 am weekdays”. With the roll out of Snapper onto the rail network, consideration will need to be given from an equity perspective as to whether the Early Bird discount will also be applied in the future to rail.
39. Increasing the off-peak discount is an initiative that, following Council decision-making, can be implemented in the short-term and progressively increased if so desired.

Officers’ recommendation (2): Officers recommend that the Subcommittee deliberate which of three options is included in the Future Fares Direction recommendations to Council

- a Retaining the current 25% off-peak discount
- b Moving from a 25% to a 35% off-peak discount with subsequent Net Revenue loss of \$2 million (with significant cost offset in the mid-long term through reducing peak capacity requirements)
- c Moving from a 25% to a 50% off-peak discount with subsequent Net Revenue loss of \$5 million (with a modest cost offset the mid-long term through reducing peak service capacity requirements)

Officers’ recommendation (3): In addition, officers recommend that the Subcommittee deliberate whether the current Early Bird bus discount is formally incorporated into the

off-peak discount, and is included in the Future Fares Direction recommendations to Council

- a Amending the current RPTP definition of off-peak for buses to “weekdays before 7 am, between 9 am and 3 pm and after 6.30 pm and all-day weekends and public holidays”.**
- b Conducting further modelling to determine whether this pre-7 am off-peak discount be applied to the rail network including the Wairarapa Line (all peak services from Masterton depart prior to 7 am. See paragraphs 102 to 113).**

Q3: Metlink should introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders.

- 40. Overall, there was significantly more agreement (79%) than disagreement (8%) for introducing cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders.
- 41. Comments were largely supportive of introducing cumulative off-peak discounts, as respondents argued that anything which makes PT more affordable and appealing is a positive change.
- 42. The fewer than one fifth of respondents who opposed the proposal to introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders did so for a range of reasons. A small number of respondents argued that this approach is unfair – either to rate payers who fund the public transport system, or to those who cannot choose to travel off peak. Meanwhile, others simply stated that they did not see any additional benefit in offering greater discounts to the groups identified over other users, or that it is simply unnecessary to discount fares so heavily.
- 43. Other suggestions were made around extending the discount to other groups beyond those identified and making public transport free to limit confusion.

Officers' comments

- 44. The introduction of cumulative discounts is a mid-term initiative which will either require a degree of software development by existing ticketing provider Snapper or integration into the longer-term NTS.
- 45. Now that public consultation has determined broad, if qualified, support for the introduction of cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders, Officers will work on determining the cost and effective timing for implementation

Officers' recommendation (4): Based on feedback and analysis, officers recommend that cumulative concessions for all concession holders is included in the Future Fares Direction recommendations to Council.

Officers will work with Snapper to identify implementation timings and costs and report options for Council decision as part of the annual fares review process

Q4: Metlink should introduce a policy that allows children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian.

- 46. Overall, there was significantly more agreement (86%) than disagreement (5%) for allowing children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian.

47. Respondents most frequently offered support for this initiative as they believed it would make family travel more accessible and affordable.
48. A large number of respondents urged that measures be taken to further increase access and affordability, most often this was by way of extending the initiative to weekdays, to other young people (such as students), and that unaccompanied children should also receive the subsidy.
49. There was broad support for free travel on weekends for children with their parent or guardian on the basis that it would increase the use of PT, which, when expanded on, was thought to have a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits.
50. The small amount of opposition to this initiative was most often expressed in general terms, with concerns around preferential treatment of children and injustice issues for those paying a full fare.
51. A range of suggestions and queries were made, suggesting, again, broad support for free fares (not just for children) as well as broad support for a well-functioning and reliable PT network.

Officers' comments

52. The Future Fares Direction consultation package implicitly indicated that the “children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian” would apply to all Metlink PT services at weekends.
53. Since consultation commenced, further modelling and operator discussions by officers have indicated that, if Council adopts this policy, it should be with a ‘carve out’ to exclude two premium services; the harbour ferry services and the new Airport Express.
54. The harbour ferry services are unique contractually in that they operate on a ‘net contract’ where the operator East by West collects and retains fares and receives a further per month subsidy top-up from Greater Wellington to make the service both financially viable for the operator and attractive fares-wise for passengers. The current subsidy is approximately \$60,000 per month. There is no off-peak discount on ferries.
55. Introducing the child free at weekends policy on to the ferries would require an additional subsidy top-up of a quantum that has not yet been modelled. Modelling the impact (and thus the likely additional subsidy required) of the introduction of this policy onto ferries will be challenging. This is because (a) such a policy might attract more ‘day-tripping’ parents and children than other PT modes due to the tourism nature of the ferry services and (b) the risk of large numbers of children displacing fare-paying passengers would be greater than on other modes due to restricted ferry capacity.
56. In addition to this consideration, officers understand that the Department of Conservation (DoC) is considering introducing a surcharge for travel to Matiu/Somes Island to help manage/mitigate the environmental impact of visitors on the island’s delicate ecosystem. If and when DoC introduce such a surcharge, this will have to be factored into the ferry subsidy, potentially increasing it beyond current budgetary ceilings.
57. During the consultation period, the new Airport Express (AX) service successfully commenced 1 July 2022. Since launch, the AX has been a resounding success with patronage levels greatly exceeding Metlink expectations.

58. The AX is currently fully funded by Greater Wellington and currently receives no Waka Kotahi FAR funding support. Greater Wellington also pay a per-passenger access fee to Wellington International Airport.
59. Officers have been working closely with WellingtonNZ on sustainable tourism initiatives for the region with a particular focus on the AX's potential to contribute to regional mode shift and decarbonisation goals. WellingtonNZ's current traveller in-flow modelling for the region is indicating a significant return to high visitor numbers to the region through the airport from early Summer 2022 onwards.
60. Current AX patronage growth strongly indicates that the service will exponentially grow during the summer period onwards, thus making it important that Metlink reserves current capacity for fare-paying air travel passengers.
61. Officers consider that there is a significant degree of risk of unintended impacts on AX capacity if the child free at weekends policy is extended to the AX and note due to airport services charges would add significant unrecoverable costs to the service.

Officers' recommendation (5): Officers recommend that the Subcommittee deliberate a policy to be brought to Council for decision-making:

Introducing a policy that allows children to travel free on non-premium service buses and trains on weekends and public holidays when accompanied by their parent or guardian.

That Metlink harbour ferry services and the Airport Express be excluded from the free child travel on weekends and public holidays policy.

Q5: Metlink should consider including a fare capping discount of 35 percent on a daily and weekly basis.

62. Overall, there was significantly more agreement (85%) than disagreement (6%) for including a fare cap discount of 35% on a daily and weekly basis. 8% of respondents were neutral, and 2% did not know.
63. Respondents frequently supported fare capping but felt that Greater Wellington could go further than what is proposed. Respondents felt that rather than a discount, users should be offered free PT once a certain threshold had been met, and some felt that a dollar amount cap would be better than a certain number of trips.
64. Respondents who supported this initiative noted that fare capping is delivered successfully in other parts of New Zealand and the world, so Wellington would benefit from it as well. They also felt that capping fares may lead to more people using PT.
65. The fewer than one tenth of respondents who opposed the initiative felt that it will have limited benefits. These respondents argued that as only regular users will benefit from this additional discount, it is unlikely to encourage more people to use public transport, or that the discount is not high enough to be worth implementing.
66. Other comments included calls to simply make PT free for users altogether; questions about the funding and implementation of this initiative; concerns about ticketing; and comments about overall network.

Officers' comments

67. Introduction of fare capping is a longer-term initiative dependent on the introduction of integrated electronic ticketing through the National Ticketing Solution (NTS).
68. The introduction of integrated ticketing will require a complete overhaul of Greater Wellington's entire fares structure to enable the introduction of a fares capping structure / technology in a manner that is clear and uncomplicated for PT users.
69. International advice also highlighted that free PT travel after a threshold was reached was a powerful behavioural change tool but also came with significant network capacity and cost challenges. Hence capping beyond a 35% discount could be challenging within the existing network capacity and funding structures. However, the implementation was still deemed a viable and worthwhile initiative in the mid to long term with sufficient planning, network capacity increases and funding support.
70. Now that public consultation has determined broad, if qualified, support for the introduction of fare-capping, this proposal will be brought to Council in the next triennium as part of a broad fares package towards introduction of integrated ticketing through the NTS.

Officers' recommendation (6): Based on feedback and analysis, officers recommend that a fare capping discount of 35 percent on a daily and weekly basis is included in the Future Fares Direction recommendations to Council.

Q6: Metlink should consider introducing new targeted fares products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region.

71. Overall, there was significantly more agreement (76%) than disagreement (6%) for introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family, and event travel across the region. A high proportion of respondents were positive to this initiative, while also providing specific comment or suggestions on particular concessions that could be provided.
72. Concessions for events and groups were the most commonly discussed. Transport fares to be included within event ticketing prices was a common proposal. While fewer in number, there was also support for family and other group concessions, with the outcome sought making it easier and cheaper for a group to take public transport than to share a personal vehicle.
73. Tourism concessions were also commonly suggested, with a three day pass popular. A common point also made was that the system needs to be simple to access and understand. Simplicity was also sought for all users, with enhanced Snapper capability as a mechanism to achieve this.
74. Regional travel concessions and connectivity across modes were also supported.
75. The fewer than one tenth of respondents who were negative toward these initiatives made points including locals should be prioritised over tourists and a simple approach was preferred, and this was assessed to be complex.
76. Again, within queries and suggestions about this approach was a call for all public transport to be free. While a call to improve transport infrastructure and the network

was also made. A group of respondents sought more detailed information before they could provide an informed opinion.

Officers' comments

77. Officers have been working closely with WellingtonNZ on sustainable tourism initiatives for the region and are in the process of completing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which will lead to the development of a series of initiatives including:
- a Develop and implement a Tactical Plan to support the Airport Express service as a primary option for visitors and residents travelling in and out of the city
 - b Develop and implement a Tactical Plan to promote public transport links to key visitor destinations across the region
 - c Develop and implement policies and solutions in collaboration with Te Papa and Tākina Events to incorporate public transport tickets and fare products into Tākina Wellington Conference & Exhibition Centre and Te Papa events and offerings
 - d Establish a Major Events Support Forum to systematise operational planning for major events support and promotion
 - e Establish a Sustainable Businesses workstream to promote public transport usage in the region through targeted fare products and initiatives.
78. A report on this joint initiative will be brought to Transport Committee on 22 September 2022.
79. WellingtonNZ have submitted on this fares review commenting that they “strongly advocates in support of introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family, and event travel across the region. This step is vital to create clear and streamlined options for visitors to get to and between Wellington attractions around the CBD and wider region. Current products are focussed to a core commuter user group however more visitors can be encouraged to use public transport through the right product and information provision. This has been clearly evidenced by the early success of the Airport Express”.
80. With the public feedback on this initiative showing strong support for new targeted fares products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region, officers recommend that this initiative be rolled into the developing work programme with WellingtonNZ and be reported to Council on an ongoing basis for the purposes of decision-making and planning.

Officers' recommendation (7): Based on feedback and analysis, officers recommend that introducing new targeted fares products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region is included in the Future Fares Direction recommendations to Council.

Officers' recommendation (8): In addition, officers recommend that the Subcommittee request that the Transport Committee be advised of the emerging work programme with WellingtonNZ in this area.

Q7: Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based Integrated Fare Structure.

81. While almost two thirds of respondents agreed that Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure, support was often tempered with critiques of how the current system is difficult to navigate. This can be interpreted as strong support for a simpler, and more just system in which fares do not compound over a single journey that happens to cross zones.
82. The one fifth of respondents who were neutral on this initiative indicate a high degree of apprehension about how the initiative will be implemented and comments reinforced there was some confusion over exactly what it will mean for various journey types.
83. Support was conditional from a considerable number of respondents on their resultant fares being cheaper for their particular journeys, these included indirect journeys that are not consistent with typical commuter journeys.
84. Opposition from fewer than one tenth of respondents was primarily based on fears that a distance model may be more expensive and/or disincentivise PT use. This was particularly the case for short trips.
85. There was reticence from a substantial number of respondents based on the perceived complexity of the new system; respondents wanted a cheap system that is easy to use.

Officers' comments

86. Like the long-term proposals of fare capping (paragraphs 62 to 70), the introduction of a distance-based Integrated Fare Structure is a longer-term initiative dependent on the introduction of integrated electronic ticketing through the National Ticketing Solution (NTS).
87. The introduction of integrated ticketing will require a complete overhaul of Greater Wellington's entire fares structure to enable the introduction of distance-based charging in a manner that is clear and uncomplicated for PT users.
88. Now that public consultation has determined broad, if qualified, support for the introduction of distance-based charging, this proposal will be brought to Council in the next triennium as part of a broad fares package towards introduction of integrated ticketing through the NTS.

Officers' recommendation (9): Based on feedback and analysis, officers recommend that introducing a distance based Integrated Fare Structure is included in the Future Fares Direction recommendations to Council.

Specific issues to note

Issue 1: Total Mobility services subsidy

89. While not included in the fares review consultation, the topic of Greater Wellington and central government support for Total Mobility was raised by a considerable number (<50) of submitters, rising to very large number (>150) when submissions through the Generation Zero campaign are factored in.
90. The general theme of these submissions was that Total Mobility services be subject to the same level of discounts as traditional PT services. 418 submissions through the

Generation Zero campaign calling to make “all Total Mobility services free for Total Mobility card holders”.

91. There was also uncertainty as to whether Total Mobility customers be included in the recently announced Community Connect Scheme which affords a 50% discount to Community Service Card Holders.
92. A number of submitters raised human rights and equity issues associated with Total Mobility with a submission from the Disabled Persons Assembly citing Articles 9 and 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, noting that the right to access transportation and to be part of one’s community is vital.

Officer comments

93. The Total Mobility scheme is provided throughout New Zealand and is jointly funded by local and central government. The scheme subsidises door-to-door transport via contracted taxi services for disabled people who cannot independently use regular public transport services, all or some of the time. Total Mobility users receive a 50% discount, up to a maximum of \$40 per trip, on eligible trips including wheelchair accessible services.
94. As part of the government’s current half-price fares initiative, the Total Mobility subsidy has been increased to a maximum subsidy per trip of \$60. This is in force until 31 January 2023.
95. In Wellington, Total Mobility cards have Snapper cards built in for paying bus fares and already have the Accessibility concession applied.
96. Disabled customers and advocates have long pointed to the financial challenges and burden many in our Region face every day, particularly to travel for health and essential services. In response to these acknowledged challenges, Greater Wellington adopted an Accessibility Charter on 9 September 2021 with the vision that “Metlink public transport network is accessible for all with ease and dignity”.
97. The Charter commits Greater Wellington to “Continue to recognise and develop Total Mobility as a core part of the public transport network”.
98. Analysis of the submissions indicate that there is some public confusion on the difference between the Accessibility concession for traditional PT that Total Mobility card-holders are eligible for, and the subsidisation of taxi services that Greater Wellington and central government provide.
99. While submissions generally support increased subsidisation of traditional PT services for Total Mobility card-holders, the primary focus of submitters has called for greater subsidisation of the taxi services, something that was not within the intended scope of this review.
100. Officers have been advised by Ministry of Transport and Waka Kotahi that the total mobility subsidisation is not currently in scope of Community Connect rollout.
101. However, the Ministry of Transport has advised that they are currently reviewing the Total Mobility scheme as a whole; they have not indicated whether this review would be completed ahead of the 1 February 2023 implementation of the Community Connect Scheme.

Officers' recommendation (10): Officers recommend that the Subcommittee ask the Transport Committee to request that officers conduct further modelling, options analysis and discussions with the Ministry of Transport on potential additional support for Total Mobility for future Council decision-making.

Issue 2: Gold Card timetabling impacts for Wairarapa customers

102. While not included in the fares review consultation, the topic of Super Gold Card holder access to Wairarapa services was raised in submissions from Carterton District Council (CDC), South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) and a small number of Wairarapa residents.
103. The general theme of these submissions was that service access for Super Gold Card holders in the Wairarapa was constrained due to the current timetabling of services, primarily rail.
104. SWDC's comment summarises the perspective from Wairarapa; "free fares should be extended to those who travel with a SuperGold Card both peak and off-peak times. Currently this is the system in Auckland funded by Auckland Transport".

Officer comments

105. Wairarapa rail services to and from Masterton (and the seven non-Metropolitan Rail stations including Maymorn) are currently notable in that, while an integral part of the Metlink public transport network, do not have similar levels of off-peak service to the Metropolitan Rail Network (e.g. Hutt Valley line, Kāpiti line and Johnsonville line).
106. Metlink currently offers four morning services from Masterton to Wellington (5.46 am, 6.20 am, 6.47 am and 10.30 am) and one weekend morning service (7.45 am). In addition, there is one afternoon weekday service (3.38 pm), a later Friday-only service departing Masterton at 8.14 pm and a weekend service departing Masterton at 4.45 pm.
107. Outbound services to Masterton depart Wellington week mornings at 8.21 am with four services in the afternoon (12.45 pm, 4.25 pm, 5.30 pm and 6.18 pm). An additional Friday only service departs Wellington at 10.25 pm. Weekend service to Masterton depart at 9.55 am and 6.55 pm.
108. The nub of the long-standing and consistent feedback from Wairarapa customers, representatives and advocates is that current weekday timetabling and restrictions on Gold Card use to off-peak only, results in only one (10.30 am) service to Wellington being accessible for free fares and only two return services to Masterton (12.45 pm and the 10.25 pm Friday only service).
109. This can be 'gamed' if a Gold Card user takes a Metropolitan Rail connection in the evening from Wellington to Petone (6.31 pm scheduled departure), Waterloo (6.37 pm departure or Upper Hutt (6.55 pm departure), but, understandably, this is perceived as an inconvenience.
110. As noted in paragraph 38, officers recommend amending the definition of 'off-peak' to include bus services prior to 7 am to align with the current Early Bird discount policy for bus.

111. Applying this to the Wairarapa Line rail services would provide instant benefits to Super Gold Card holders. It would also, however, provide an off-peak discount to the bulk of current standard commuters to Wellington from the Wairarapa incurring significant revenue loss to Greater Wellington.
112. The development of a targeted Super Gold Snapper concession card is currently planned in 2023. This will provide the opportunity for more targeted concessions to Super Gold Card holders.
113. It should be noted that, currently, a special surcharge is in place on outward bound Wairarapa services from Wellington is in place which requires Hutt Valley travellers to pay a minimum \$10.50 fare to Petone, Waterloo and Upper Hutt.

Officers' recommendation (11): Officers recommend that the Subcommittee ask Transport Committee to request that officers conduct further modelling and options analysis on potential changes to the Wairarapa Line for Super Gold Card users for future Council decision-making.

Ngā hua ahumoni Financial implications

114. The fare strategy implementation includes an assessment of the wider impacts (including financial impact) of the proposed fare initiatives currently being considered. Based on financial modelling conducted during the fares review, the recommended changes are designed to be cost neutral in the mid-long term.
115. This consultation is designed to determine broad public interest in, and support for, a range of fares initiatives. Following the consultation process and public hearings, the Subcommittee will be asked to determine which package of initiatives should be taken to Council for further consideration. At that point, Council will be presented with a detailed financial model for the particular fares package recommended for consideration to enable deliberation and decision-making.
116. Financial analysis of the particular fares package presented to Council will determine the potential impact on a future Annual Plan.

Ngā Take e hāngai ana te iwi Māori Implications for Māori

117. The fares review aims to target groups within the community who may benefit from or rely on public transport services.
118. Māori will be positively impacted by the implementation providing more affordable Public Transport options. Further, the fares will be easier to use and understand. The changes will make Public Transport more accessible for all communities including Māori.
119. This contributes to the principles behind Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Partnership, Protection, and Participation. Public Transport allows Māori to travel affordably to places such as employment, social services, education, and culturally significant events.

120. Public Transport also aims to decrease the amount of greenhouse gas emissions in the environment which appeals to the protection of the environment which is important in te ao Māori given a special connection to the whenua (land). The consultation on the Future Fares Direction gave Māori, mana whenua and other communities a voice to have their say and input into the implementation of the proposed fare initiatives.

Te huritao ki te huringa o te āhuarangi
Consideration of climate change

121. The future fare system is expected to contribute to the Region's mode-shift and decarbonisation targets – by:
- a Retaining the current public transport users
 - b Targeting groups with higher potential for mode-shift
 - c Targeting areas with lower public transport mode-share
 - d Competing with the cost of alternative non-sustainable modes of transport
 - e Targeting journeys with higher decongestion and decarbonisation benefits.
122. The principles advance the commitment to provide a low emissions public transport network.
123. The principles have no adverse implications for greenhouse gas emissions over their lifetime and therefore do not require an approach to reduce them.
124. Climate change impacts are unlikely to have any direct effect upon the fare structure and fare products over its lifetime.

Ngā tikanga whakataua
Decision-making process

125. Officers recognise that the matter referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance to affected or interested parties.
126. The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

Te hiranga
Significance

127. Officers considered the significance (as defined by Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002) of this matter, taking into account Council's *Significance and Engagement Policy* and Greater Wellington's *Decision-making Guidelines*. The consideration of submissions is part of a decision-making process that will lead to making a decision of high significance within the meaning of the Local Government Act 2002.

**Te whakatūtakitaki
Engagement**

- 128. Public engagement activities were conducted for this review during the consultation period 17 June to 15 July 2022.
- 129. In accordance with the Significance and Engagement Policy, officers have determined that the appropriate level of engagement was ‘consulting’.
- 130. All consultation was carried out in accordance with the consultation principles set out in the Local Government Act 2002 and Greater Wellington’s Community Engagement Approach.

**Ngā tūāoma e whai ake nei
Next steps**

- 131. The Subcommittee will:
 - a Deliberate on the submissions received and heard, and agree on the recommendations regarding the Future Fares Direction 2022 on 3 August 2022.
 - b Provide a report to Council on 25 August 2022 with the Subcommittee recommendations for the final Future Fares Direction 2022.
- 132. The final Future Fares Direction will be prepared by officers for Council’s approval at its meeting on 25 August 2022.
- 133. Submitters will be advised of the outcomes of this consultation process.

**Ngā āpitihanga
Attachments**

Number	Title
1	Submissions (circulated separately)
2	Summary and the analysis of submissions on the Future Fares Direction
3	Future Fares Direction Consultation document

**Ngā kaiwaitohu
Signatories**

Writers	Bernard Nunns – Policy Advisor Emmet McElhatton – Manager Policy Metlink
Approvers	Tim Shackleton – Manager Metlink Commercial, Strategy and Investment Samantha Gain – General Manager, Metlink

<p>He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations</p>
<p><i>Fit with Council's roles or with Committee's terms of reference</i></p> <p>The Transport Committee established this Subcommittee. Under the Transport Committee's Terms of Reference the Committee is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Approving strategies, policies and guidelines to deliver public transport in accordance with the Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan. b Review periodically the performance and effectiveness of transport strategies, policies, plans, programmes and initiatives. <p>Council committed in the RPTP to provide: "A fares and ticketing system that attracts and retains customers and balances user contribution with public funding".</p>
<p><i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i></p> <p>This aligns with the NTS programme of work identified in Greater Wellington's LTP.</p> <p>This also aligns with policies set out in the RPTP.</p>
<p><i>Internal consultation</i></p> <p>In preparing this report, consultation was undertaken with relevant officers including across the Metlink group, and Te Hunga Whiriwhiri.</p>
<p><i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i></p> <p>There are no known risks arising from the matter for decision.</p>



GWRC Future Fares Review

ENGAGEMENT: summary and analysis

July 2022

Prepared by Global Research Ltd
For



Contents

Contents.....	1
Executive summary	2
Background	2
Key findings	3
Project overview.....	8
Background	8
Engagement objectives	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Engagement description	9
Engagement results	10
Who responded to the survey	10
Written comments analysis and reporting overview.....	14
Comments on Greater Wellington’s adoption of the Government’s Community Services Card half-price fares initiative	16
Metlink should increase the off-peak travel discount from 25 to 35% to encourage greater off-peak usage	24
Metlink should introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders	33
Metlink should introduce a policy that allows children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian	41
Metlink should consider including a fare capping discount of 35% on a daily and weekly basis	49
Metlink should consider introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region.....	58
Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure.....	69
Other comments.....	79

Executive summary

Background

Since the Regional Public Transport Plan was adopted in 2021, the New Zealand Government has announced a range of initiatives to promote public transport usage, to help New Zealand achieve its climate change goals and make public transport more affordable for more people. One key initiative in Budget 2022 is the provision by the Crown of targeted funding to Public Transport Authorities, to provide half-price fares for holders of Community Service Cards from 1 September 2022.

After some years of having a dual ticketing system on the Wellington public transport network, one being Snapper on buses and the other being a paper-based ticketing system on rail, Greater Wellington's Public Transport Authority Metlink is currently rolling out electronic ticketing through Snapper on the metropolitan rail network. Once this work is completed in late 2022, GWRC will implement a more consistent range of fares, concessions and ticketing products across the network. It will also introduce an integrated ticketing system through the Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency-led National Ticketing Solution.

Before Greater Wellington adopts its new approach to fares and ticketing on our public transport network, it has given residents, customers, community groups and businesses the opportunity to provide feedback on three focus areas for this Fares Review:

- > Specific new concessions and discounts.
- > New types of ticketing and fares products you might want to buy.
- > How the overall journey costs and distance travelled will change across the region with the introduction of a new Integrated Fare Structure.

Greater Wellington Regional Council sought views on the future direction of Metlink fares from Friday 15 June to Friday 15 July 2022. This feedback will be used to improve the way GWRC structures and charges fares for the services they provide.

Key findings

Overall findings

- > There was strong overall support for **making public transport more accessible** to encourage mode shift away from cars, with respondents emphasising the importance and urgency of reducing emissions.
- > **Far more respondents supported the proposed changes than disagreed.**
 - o Comments showed there was **broad support for half-price fares** for community services card holders.
 - o Almost two-thirds (62%) of respondents supported the introduction of a distance-based integrated fare structure.
 - o At least three-quarters of respondents agreed with the following proposals:
 - Increasing the off-peak discount from 25% to 35%;
 - Cumulative off-peak discounts for concession holders;
 - Children travelling for free with a guardian on the weekend;
 - A fare capping discount of 35% on a daily and weekly basis;
 - New targeted fare products for group, visitor, family, and event travel across the region.
- > Respondents who supported the proposed initiatives generally did so under the understanding that initiatives such as off-peak discounts, fare capping, and other discounts would **lead to greater social equity** and help to ensure that everyone can participate in society with as few public transport barriers as possible.
- > Those who expressed support frequently **wanted initiatives to go further**, for example, cheaper or free fares for everyone, cheaper peak fares, or for various other groups (such as tertiary students) to have access to discounted fares. It was suggested higher impact measures may be necessary to achieve behaviour change and emissions reductions at the necessary scale, such as measures targeted to high-use groups such as commuters.
- > There were consistent calls for **simple, straightforward fare structures** and integrated ticketing. People often suggested that different prices at different times or that applying various discounts or a fare-cap percentage would be confusing and could act as a barrier. While people agreed with fare capping in principle, they felt it needed to be simpler and more generously discounted to incentivise use.
- > Opposition to the changes was generally based on concerns around **how the measures would be funded, issues of fairness** for other groups who were not eligible for a discount, or concerns that prices for full-fare users would end up higher to balance the costs. Respondents also expressed apprehension about the ability of the public transport system to cope with increased capacity.
- > Across questions, there were repeated calls for **easy to use, frequent, and reliable** public transport services to both ensure ease of use, and to encourage greater uptake. This often included more, and more regular, off-peak services, extended routes, and extended hours.

Question summaries



Q1 Greater Wellington should adopt the Government’s Community Services Card half-price fares initiative

- **There was broad and consistent support** for the initiative to adopt half-price fares for Community Services Card holders, with agreement amongst a large number of respondents that this group would benefit from discounted travel costs.
- A substantial number of respondents supported the initiative but wanted PT to be even cheaper – or free – for CSC holders; an additional considerable number of people supported the initiative due to the perception that it would prompt greater uptake of PT use and reduce carbon emissions.
- However, **a very large number of people wanted to see the initiative broadened** to include various other groups, with suggestions ranging from ‘everyone’ to students/young people and people with disabilities.
- There was support from a considerable number of respondents for all PT to be free, for every user. This was often in the name of emissions reduction and more liveable cities.
- **There was minor opposition** to the initiative, however, there were wide-ranging queries or concerns from a large number of people. These were largely around how ticketing would be implemented, the ability of the PT network to absorb additional patrons, and broad concerns about the reliability of the PT network.



Q2 Metlink should increase the off-peak travel discount from 25 to 35 percent to encourage greater off-peak usage

- Respondents frequently supported this move in principle, but felt that GWRC could go even further than offering a 35% discount for off-peak travel. Respondents thought that a discount of 50% or greater would be more likely to have an impact, with some going further to suggest that PT should be free. Increasing which hours are considered ‘off-peak’ and extending the discount to cover peak fares as well were also suggested.
- Respondents who supported increasing the off-peak discount from 25% to 35% argued that this would encourage more people to use PT, leading to lower carbon emissions from fewer cars on the roads; less traffic congestion; safer streets for pedestrians; and more equitable and affordable transport access.
- **A relatively small number of respondents opposed this change.** They argued that it would cost too much; that it would not make a difference to PT use; or that there are too many problems with off-peak timetabling to make it worthwhile.
- Other suggestions were made around improving the overall reliability and efficiency of the PT system and addressing ticketing issues.

Survey response

AGREE: 82% (574 respondents)
DISAGREE: 7% (48 respondents)
NEUTRAL: 11% (77 respondents)
DON'T KNOW: 1% (5 respondents)



Q3 Metlink should introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders

- Comments were largely supportive of introducing cumulative off-peak discounts, as respondents argued that anything that makes PT more affordable and appealing is a positive change.
- **The small group – less than 10% – of respondents who disagreed** with the proposal to introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders did so for a range of reasons. A small number of respondents argued that this approach is unfair, either to ratepayers who fund the PT system, or to those who cannot choose to travel off-peak. Meanwhile, others simply stated that they did not see any additional benefit in offering greater discounts to the groups identified over other users, or that it is simply unnecessary to discount fares so heavily.
- Other suggestions were made around extending the discount to other groups beyond those identified and making PT free to limit confusion and hassle.

Survey response

AGREE: 79% (554 respondents)
 DISAGREE: 8% (57 respondents)
 NEUTRAL: 11% (78 respondents)
 DONT KNOW: 2% (11 respondents)

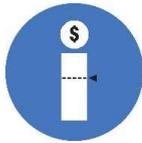


Q4 Metlink should introduce a policy that allows children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian

- Respondents most frequently offered support for this initiative as they believed it would make family travel more accessible and affordable.
- **A large number of respondents urged that measures be taken to further increase access and affordability.** Most often this was by way of extending the initiative to weekdays, to other young people (such as students and teenagers), and that unaccompanied children should also receive the subsidy.
- There was broad support for free travel on weekends for children with their parent or guardian on the basis that it would increase the use of PT, which, when expanded on, was thought to have a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits.
- **The small amount of opposition to this initiative was most often expressed in general terms,** with concerns around preferential treatment of children and injustice issues for those paying a full fare.
- A range of suggestions and queries were made, again with broad support for both free fares (not just for children) and a well-functioning and reliable PT network.

Survey response

AGREE: 86% (603 respondents)
 DISAGREE: 5% (34 respondents)
 NEUTRAL: 9% (63 respondents)
 DONT KNOW: 1% (5 respondents)



Q5 Metlink should consider including a fare capping discount of 35 percent on a daily and weekly basis

– Respondents frequently supported fare capping but felt that GWRC could go further than what is proposed. Respondents felt that rather than a discount, users should be offered free PT once a certain threshold is met, and some felt that a dollar amount cap would be better than a certain number of trips.

Survey response

AGREE: 85% (597 respondents)
 DISAGREE: 6% (40 respondents)
 NEUTRAL: 8% (55 respondents)
 DONT KNOW: 2% (12 respondents)

- Respondents who supported this initiative noted that fare capping is successfully delivered in other parts of New Zealand and the world, so Wellington would benefit from it as well. They also felt that capping fares may lead to more people using PT.
- **Those who opposed the initiative** (less than 10%) felt it will bring limited benefits. These respondents argued that as only regular users will benefit from this additional discount, it is unlikely to encourage more people to use PT, or that the discount is not high enough to be worth implementing.
- Other comments included calls to simply make PT free for users altogether; questions about the funding and implementation of this initiative; concerns about ticketing; and comments about overall network.



Q6 Metlink should consider introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family, and event travel across the region

- **A high proportion of respondents were positive about this initiative** while also providing specific comments or suggestions on particular concessions that could be provided.
- **Concessions for events and groups were the most commonly discussed.** It was frequently proposed that transport fares be included within event ticketing prices. While fewer in number, there was also support for family and other group concessions, with arguments made that it should be easier and cheaper for a group to take PT than it is to share a personal vehicle.
- **Tourism concessions were also frequently suggested,** with a three-day pass popular. A commonly made point was that the system needs to be simple to access and understand. Simplicity was also sought for all users, not just tourists, with people suggesting enhanced Snapper capability as a mechanism to achieve this.
- Regional travel concessions and connectivity across modes were also supported.
- **The respondents who were opposed these initiatives** (less than 10%) did so on various grounds, including that locals should be prioritised over tourists and that a simple approach was better than complex targeted fares.
- Again, other queries and suggestions about this approach included calls for all PT to be free, as well as suggestions to improve transport infrastructure and the network. A group of respondents felt they needed more detailed information before they could provide an informed opinion.

Survey response

AGREE: 75% (527 respondents)
 DISAGREE: 6% (41 respondents)
 NEUTRAL: 16% (111 respondents)
 DONT KNOW: 3% (21 respondents)



Q7 Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based Integrated Fare Structure

- While around two-thirds of respondents agreed that Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure, support was often tempered with critiques of the navigability of the current system. This can be interpreted as strong support for a simpler and fairer system in which fares do not compound over a single journey that happens to cross zones.
- The one fifth of respondents who were neutral on this initiative indicated a high degree of apprehension about how the initiative will be implemented, and comments reinforced there was some confusion over exactly what it will mean for various journey types.
- Support was conditional from a considerable number of respondents on their resultant fares being cheaper for their particular journeys; these included indirect journeys that are not consistent with typical commuter journeys.
- Opposition from a proportionally small group of respondents was primarily based on the fears that the system will be too complicated. Additional fears include that a distance model may be more expensive and/or disincentivise PT use. This was particularly the case for short trips.

Survey response

AGREE: 62% (434 respondents)
 DISAGREE: 6% (41 respondents)
 NEUTRAL: 19% (129 respondents)
 DON'T KNOW: 6% (44 respondents)

Additional comments made

- The greatest number of comments offered by submitters, all received via the 'additional comments' field of the Generation Zero website portal, were about climate change and the need for better and cheaper PT to **combat the worst effects of climate change**. Emissions reduction was a key goal for this group.
- **Free public transport** was supported in substantial numbers of Generation Zero additional comments, sometimes for climate change and environmental reasons and sometime for social good reasons.
- Free or **discounted student travel** was supported by a considerable number of Generation Zero and Victoria University of Wellington submitters.
- Other groups facing financial hardship were also said to benefit from free PT, this included CSC holders, people with disabilities, children, and the elderly.
- Broad **social and economic benefits of PT** use were discussed and such benefits were said to have positive impacts at a community wide level.

Project overview

Background

Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) adopted Te Mahere Waka Whenua Tūmatanui o te Rohe o Pōneke Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan 2021-2031 on 29 June 2021. The RPTP guides the design and delivery of public transport services, information and infrastructure in the Wellington region.

The RPTP sets out a series of policies for Ko ngā utu me te tahua Fares and Funding under the policy objective: 'A fares and ticketing system that attracts and retains customers and balances user contribution with public funding'. Specific fares policies include:

- > Participating in an integrated ticketing solution that supports integration of fares and the public transport network.
- > Applying a consistent fare structure and pricing approach that recognises the wider benefits and costs of public transport.
- > Providing concession fares to targeted groups to increase access to affordable services for those who are most dependent on public transport.
- > Providing incentives to encourage more frequent use of public transport, more off-peak travel and greater use of electronic ticketing.

During public consultation on the draft RPTP in February and March 2021, and public hearings the following April, Greater Wellington received many submissions on the topic of fares. And while there was a lot of public support for the introduction of a simplified and more efficient ticketing system across our network, a number of people called for the cost of public transport to be reduced to make it a more accessible and attractive option for more people.

Since the RPTP was adopted, the New Zealand Government has announced a range of initiatives to promote public transport usage to help us achieve our country's climate change goals and make public transport more affordable for more people. One key initiative in Budget 2022 is the provision by the Crown of targeted funding to Public Transport Authorities to provide half-price fares for holders of Community Service Cards from 1 September 2022.

After some years of having a dual ticketing system on the Wellington public transport network, one being Snapper on buses and the other being a paper-based ticketing system on rail, Greater Wellington's Public Transport Authority Metlink is currently rolling out electronic ticketing through Snapper on the metropolitan rail network. Once this work is completed in late 2022, we'll be able to implement a more consistent range of fares, concessions and ticketing products across the network. We'll also introduce an integrated ticketing system through the Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency-led National Ticketing Solution.

What we want your views on:

Before Greater Wellington adopts its new approach to fares and ticketing on our public transport network, we'd like to give our residents, customers, community groups and businesses the opportunity to give us feedback on three focus areas for this Fares Review:

- > Specific new concessions and discounts.
- > New types of ticketing and fares products you might want to buy.
- > How the overall journey costs and distance travelled will change across the region with the introduction of a new Integrated Fare Structure.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Greater Wellington Regional Council sought views on the future direction of Metlink fares from Friday 15 June to Friday 15 July 2022. This feedback will be used to improve and enhance the way GWRC structures and charge fares for the services they provide.

Engagement description

Public consultation was open from 15 June to Friday 15 July 2022 via Greater Wellington's *Have Your Say* website.

Consultation process was supported by a series of digital public engagement sessions held via MS Teams which gave members of the public an opportunity to discuss the consultation focus prior to making formal submissions.

Overall, 1138 submitters provided feedback on the Metlink: Future Fares Review 2022.

- > 710 online surveys were completed
- > 20 submissions in respondents' own formats:
 - o 10 from individuals
 - o 10 from an organisation
- > 418 Generation Zero form responses.

In the online survey, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following six statements and then to explain in their own words why they selected that response.

- > Q2: Metlink should increase the off-peak travel discount from 25 to 35 percent to encourage greater off-peak usage.
- > Q3: Metlink should introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders.
- > Q4: Metlink should introduce a policy that allows children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian.
- > Q5: Metlink should consider including a fare capping discount of 35 percent on a daily and weekly basis.
- > Q6: Metlink should consider introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region.
- > Q7: Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based Integrated Fare Structure.

One other open-ended question was asked:

- > Q1: Please give us your comments on Greater Wellington's adoption of the Government's Community Services Card half-price fares initiative.

Responses have been organised by comments made in support of the stated initiative, and those in opposition. Comments in which suggestions were made are also included. Further explanation of how written comments have been analysed can be found on page 13.

Engagement results

Note that the charts contained within the report are based only on the 710 online survey responses. This includes respondent characteristics and the degree of agreement with six statements. Individual and organisational submissions contained no demographic data.

Who responded to the survey

The online survey asked respondents to respond to questions about:

- > The part of the region the respondent lives in.
- > The public transport modes regularly used.
- > The most common reasons for using public transport.

Summary of respondent characteristics

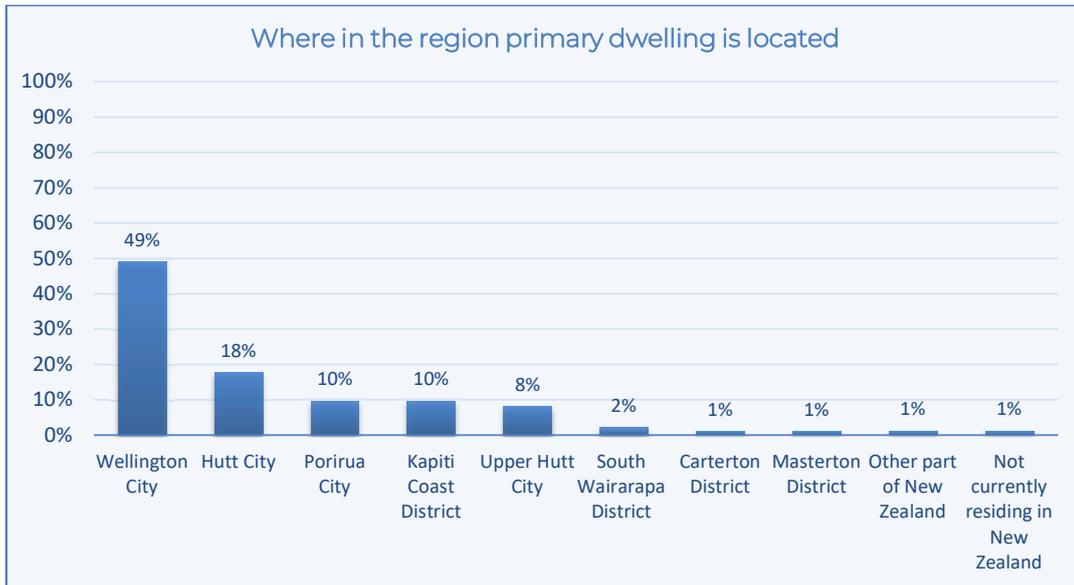
- > Almost half of respondents (49%) had a primary dwelling in Wellington City with one quarter of respondents (26%) from either Hutt City or Upper Hutt. 10% of respondents reported living in Porirua City, and a further 10% lived in the Kāpiti Coast District.
- > The most often used mode of public transport were bus (61%) and rail (58%), while 8% stated they did not use PT.
- > Respondents most often used PT to get to employment and education (83%) and over half reported using PT for leisure (54%). Over a third (38%) reported using PT for essential services including health and retail.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

The parts of the region respondents were from

Respondents were asked: *Where in the region is your primary dwelling located?*

RESPONSE OPTIONS: Wellington City; Hutt City; Upper Hutt City; Porirua City; Kāpiti Coast District; South Wairarapa District; Carterton District; Masterton District; Other part of New Zealand; Not currently residing in New Zealand



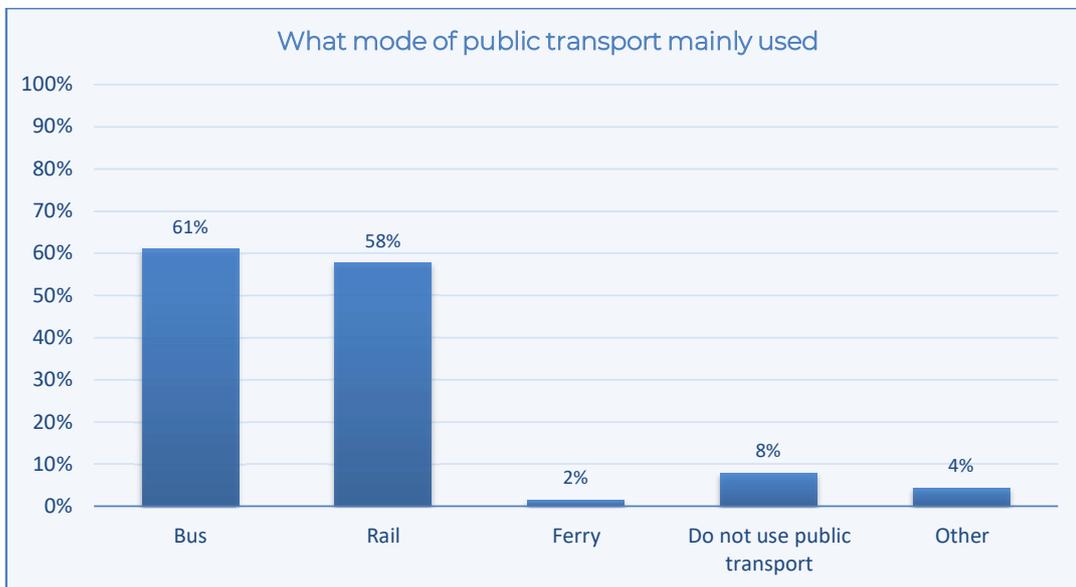
Results

- > Over two thirds (67%) of respondents primarily reside in Wellington or Hutt City:
 - 349 (49%) respondents' primary dwelling was in Wellington City.
 - 125 (17.6%) respondents' primary dwelling was in Hutt City.
- > The remaining third of respondents were from a variety of places across the region, with each comprising less than 10% of respondents:
 - Porirua City (68, 9.6%); Kāpiti Coast District (68, 9.6%); Upper Hutt City (57, 8%); South Wairarapa District (15, 2.1%); Carterton District (7, 1%); Masterton District (7, 1%).
- > The remaining 2% of respondents were from outside of the region:
 - Other part of New Zealand (8, 1.1%); Not currently residing in New Zealand (8, 1.1%).

Transport modes used by respondents

Respondents were asked: *What mode of public transport do you mainly use?*

RESPONSE OPTIONS: Bus; Rail; Ferry; Do not use public transport; Other (respondents could select more than one response)



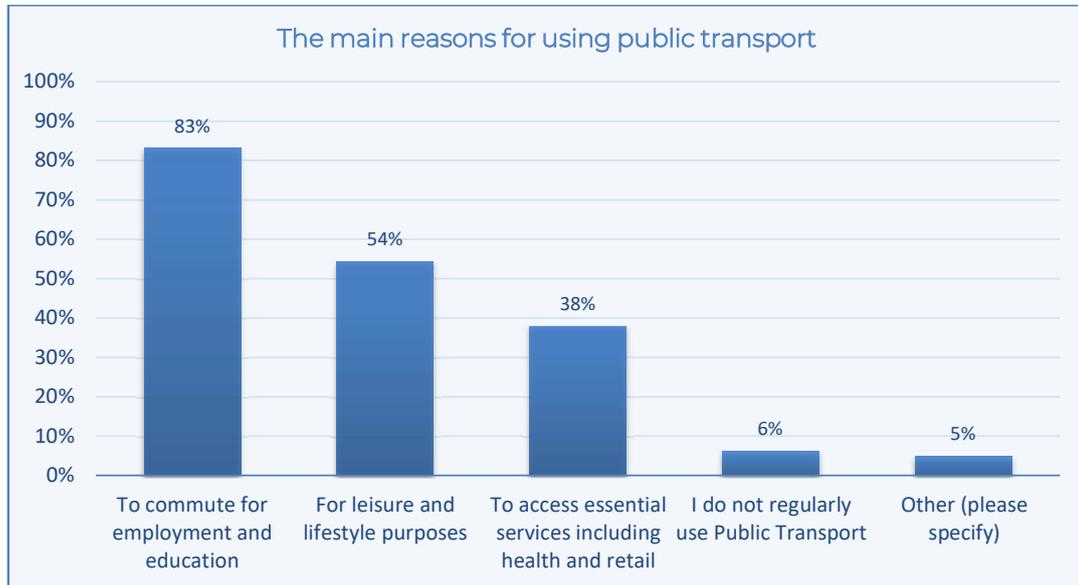
Results

- > A similar proportion of respondents who use bus and rail responded to the survey:
 - 433 (61%) of respondents use buses.
 - 410 (58%) of respondents use trains.
 - 191 (27%) of respondents use buses and trains.
- > A small proportion of respondents (11, 2%) use ferries.
- > 56 (8%) respondents don't use public transport.
- > 31 (4%) respondents use other transport modes.

Uses for public transport

Respondents were asked: *What are your main reasons for using public transport? (Tick all that apply.)*

RESPONSE OPTIONS: To commute for employment and education; To access essential services including health and retail; For leisure and lifestyle purposes; I do not regularly use Public Transport; Other (respondents could select more than one response)



Results

- > The main reason respondents use public transport is to commute to employment and education:
 - 591 (83%) of respondents use public transport to commute for employment or education.
- > Just over half of respondents use public transport for leisure or lifestyle purposes:
 - 386 (54%) of respondents use public transport for leisure or lifestyle purposes.
- > Just over one-third of respondents use public transport to access essential services including health and retail:
 - 269 (38%) of respondents use public transport for essential services.
- > A small proportion of respondents (44, 6%) don't regularly use public transport

Written comments analysis and reporting overview

Analysis approach

The following discussion presents analysis of respondents' level of agreement with particular statements, as well as analysis of written feedback provided by respondents who had either completed the online survey or those who submitted written feedback in their own formats.

In the online survey, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with six statements in the Fares Review, as well as provide open-ended responses to one other question. The text of the questions is provided above each chart at the start of each section.

The discussion section of this report has been structured by respondents' answers to the opinion questions and the points they made

The submissions received in respondents' own formats were combined with relevant survey questions. Where comments were not directly relevant to any of the specific questions asked, these have been discussed in a final section titled *Other comments*.

How analysis was completed

Comments were filtered by agreement (or not) with the prompt statement provided by GWRC. Global Research analysts read each comment received from individuals and organisations and coded (sorted) them into themes and topics based on the points made. Some comments contained multiple points relevant to multiple topics. Consequently, many comments were coded to multiple places. The analysis was assisted by NVivo qualitative analysis software.

Analysts then synthesised the coded comments and used the results to inform the analysis in this report.

Reporting

Report structure

The report structure is based on the questions that were asked in GWRC's online survey. Because respondents were asked about their level of agreement with several statements, and then why they gave the answer they did, the report presents each question with a chart showing the level of agreement, and below that, the responses which are grouped under three categories:

- > Comments in support of the statement
- > Comments in opposition to the statement
- > Comments offering a suggestion or change, or with a query about the statement.

The analysis is presented with reference to the 'prompt statement' that heads each section. Note that the order in which the topics are presented is the order they were asked in the survey.

Number of respondent comments

Throughout the discussion of written comments, the number of points made on particular topics have been consistently represented by the amounts described below:

- > A very large number: 150+ comments
- > A Large number: 100 – 149 comments
- > A sizeable number: 75 – 99 comments
- > A substantial number: 50 – 74 comments

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

- > A considerable number: 25 – 49 comments
- > A moderate number: 15 – 24 comments
- > Several comments: 8 – 14 comments
- > A small number: 4 – 7 comments
- > A few: 3 comments
- > A couple: 2 comments

The numbers in brackets represent the number of points made on particular topics. The aggregate of all points made on particular topics is included in the heading.

Respondent quotes

To illustrate the calibre and flavour of the feedback, quotes from respondents have been included throughout the report. These are indented and italicised. Note that obvious grammar and spelling mistakes have only been amended where clarity required it.

Analysis by different respondent groups

Analysis was completed to identify potential differences in the feedback received from different groups of respondents. This was done for three main categories (response options and proportions presented above):

1. Where people live
2. Reasons for travel
3. Transport mode preferences

Once all data had been coded, queries were run on different groups of respondents to uncover any significant differences and insights. So that consistent comparisons could be made between the proportions of comments made by different groups, responses from different groups were weighted.

Where significant differences were made between different groups these have been identified and findings are discussed in a text box at the end of each question section.

Note that this is qualitative research so the differences were based on the simple difference in the number of comments made on particular topics (after weighting) and are not statistically significant. They do though give an indication of the differences in opinions between different population groups, where they could be reasonably identified.

Acronyms used

- GWRC** Greater Wellington Regional Council
- CSC** Community Services Card
- RPTP** Regional Public Transport Plan
- PT** Public transport
- EV** Electric vehicle

Comments on Greater Wellington’s adoption of the Government’s Community Services Card half-price fares initiative

Respondents were asked: *Please give us your comments on Greater Wellington’s adoption of the Government’s Community Services Card half-price fares initiative.*

Summary findings

- > There was broad and consistent support for the initiative to adopt half-price fares for Community Services Card holders, with agreement amongst a large number of respondents that this group needs and would benefit from discounted travel costs.
- > A substantial number of respondents supported the initiative but wanted PT to be even cheaper – or free – for CSC holders; an additional considerable number of people supported the initiative due to the perception that it would prompt greater uptake of PT use with consequent environmental benefits.
- > However, a very large number of people wanted to see the initiative broadened to include various other groups, ranging from ‘everyone’ to students/young people and people with disabilities.
- > There was support from a considerable number of respondents for all PT to be free, for every user. This was often in the name of emissions reductions and more liveable cities.
- > There was minor opposition to the initiative, however, there were wide-ranging queries or concerns from a large number of people. These were largely around how ticketing would be implemented, the ability of the PT network to absorb additional patrons, and broad concerns about the reliability of the PT network.

Note that while respondents were not asked to select their level of agreement on this topic, responses have been organised by those who agreed, disagreed or were neutral – this was informed by the specific comments made by respondents in their answers.

Support for CSC holder half-price fares (579 comments)

Support, but could go even further

206 comments

A very large number of respondents supported Greater Wellington’s adoption of the Government’s CSC half-price fares initiative but wanted to see it go further. Varied reasons were offered and are outlined below.

Half price for everyone (77)

A sizeable number of respondents called for the initiative to apply to all PT users, some making the case that recent cost of living increases have impacted everyone, not just those on a low income, and that everyone would benefit from half-price fares.

Yes this is good, however those on middle incomes are hard hit too and fare discounts for everyone should be adopted.

I strongly agree that CSC holders should receive half-price fares. However, I also believe that this scheme should be taken further, and half-price fares retained for all travellers.

Comments such as “it’s great but it should be for everyone”, and “should be expanded for all customers” were made. Respondents generally agreed that making CSC holders eligible for half-price

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

fares was a good start, but urged that prices be made cheaper for everyone to make PT the default mode of travel.

Half price fares have been amazing recently, please consider this for everyone. Or go a step further and make it free for everyone.

Even cheaper or free for CSC holders (64)

A considerable number of respondents wanted to see CSC holders able to access PT at no cost. (Note that comments in which respondents call for free PT for everyone are discussed below under the heading 'All fares cheaper or free'.)

Some noted that half-price fares are still too expensive for this group, while the majority of comments simply called for free fares to be made available to CSC holders. Some comments expressed this emphatically.

Free public transport for community services card holders is a must. This should not be limited to off-peak, but peak times too.

Support any initiative that helps mobility and cost issues for community card holders. Should be free and funded by WINZ.

It's fantastic. Community service card holders should be fully subsidised. But half price is a great start. It won't affect me but very happy for those it will.

A small number of people suggested extending the discount to 75% for CSC holders, making the point that this would further enable access to PT.

I support the adoption of the initiative, but believe it could be expanded further - larger discounts (especially off-peak), and wider groups included.

Extend to groups who are non-CSC holders or who have difficulty using PT (39)

A considerable number of respondents pointed out that there are many low-income earners who are not eligible for a CSC, and so would not be able to benefit from Greater Wellington's adoption of the Government's CSC half-price fares initiative. Such comments noted the need to include others on a low income in this initiative, with one person noting that the initiative as it stands will not "reach everyone who needs it".

I suggest you create much broader eligibility for this scheme if you want to get the impacts you seek.

I support this but unsure it resolves the equity issue as the income threshold for CSCs is very low.

A moderate number suggested that people with disabilities, or those who hold a Total Mobility Card (and their support people) should be catered for to enable greater mobility.

It is a good idea, but I think that there are others who should also be given this as an option ... mobility card holders etc.

Extending this discount to mobility services allows those who are not as able to catch the bus the same opportunity as everyone else to connect with their community, friends, see the doctor, patronise local businesses and seek education and employment. Isolation due to lack of transport means people with disabilities are not seen in the community, and are denied the lives everyone else takes for granted.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

One respondent made an impassioned plea on this topic, arguing that due to the difficulty some face in using PT, cheaper taxis are needed. This respondent described in detail the process they take to use PT, and the physical and emotional toll it has on them (as well as the financial cost). In the following comment, the respondent describes the process involves in attending an appointment (prior to the availability of discounted PT).

Complete trip cost \$18.54 and took 4 hours and 35 minutes not including the time in the appointment. In a taxi the round trip would have taken 40 minutes, but would have cost me \$28 at current funding rates, this is 9% of my weekly income, and given this is not the only place I have to go in a week, is simply not affordable.

A submission from the **Disabled Persons Assembly** cited Articles 9 and 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, noting that the right to access transportation and to be part of one's community is vital.

Suggestions around the broadening or the parameters for eligibility included: linking the discount to those who are eligible for a cost of living payment through Work and Income; extending eligibility to people who earn below the median wage; those who hold a Leisure Card; and extending the peak fare discount to Gold Card holders.

For students or young people (26)

A considerable number of people wanted to see students (and also children, young people, under 18s or under 25s) able to access a half-price fares for PT.

Many of the comments were simple in nature, stating things like "good, but should be for students too" or similar. High school students and tertiary students were the most frequently noted, and a small number of respondents argued that any school student ought to be eligible for half-price PT.

I support the adoption of the initiative, but believe it could be expanded further - larger discounts (especially off-peak), and wider groups included (e.g. all students, not just those that qualify for the CSC).

One submission, written in support of greater access to cheap or free PT for young people, linked early use of PT with ongoing commitment to PT use into adulthood:

We would like to see families on lower incomes having greater access to transport and also can see a future where children who adopt public transport habits now will continue to prioritise public transport usage into adult life.

General support

175 comments

A very large number of respondents offered general support for Greater Wellington's adoption of the Government's CSC half-price fares initiative. Comments were largely succinct, and all expressed positivity towards the initiative.

A range of comments were made in favour of the initiative including the following: a brilliant idea; good; support this move; it's a good idea; excellent; sounds good; tautoko this; I welcome this. Additional comments are quoted below.

Long overdue, & very welcome.

It is a great initiative and should be rolled out as soon as possible.

I agree this should go ahead.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Assists disadvantaged people

129 comments

A large amount of respondents' support for the initiative was on the basis that it would benefit CSC holders, people on a low income, or disadvantaged people. Respondents commented that this initiative would "be a big help to those on a limited income", that it would provide "discounted travel for those with greater needs", and that it would increase social equity.

Targeting CSC holders was viewed as an appropriate way to ensure those in need are able to access discounted travel. It was stated that this initiative would be "good for card holders", and that CSC "card holders should have reduced fares".

Fully support. It is important to remove barriers to accessing work, goods and services.

I think this is a great idea as it gives CSC holders more affordable public transport, which could mean the difference between travelling or not leaving the house at all.

Very good idea, as it supports those who are disadvantaged and/or vulnerable in our community.

Just over a quarter of these comments went into more detail about the specific benefits to CSC holders, such as enabling people on a low income to "get to work", and students to get to their places of study.

It will help people on disability benefits or sickness benefits who do not qualify for a total mobility card the more opportunities to get out and about in their local community therefore benefiting their mental health and well-being.

Support community services card discounts because fares are more likely to be a barrier to getting around and social participation on a relatively lower income.

Will increase public transport use

46 comments

A considerable number of respondents agreed that the initiative would encourage the use of PT, in many cases adding that the corresponding drop in car usage would be beneficial for both congestion and for environmental reasons.

Comments reiterated that making PT cheaper and therefore easier to access was a necessary step in encouraging use, and that this would have flow-on benefits in reducing emissions.

I think it's amazing, has obviously brought in more people using public transport (which is great for the environment & climate change), and we need to see more of it!

Cheaper fare would mean more user...less car, less pollution. It's a win-win for all.

Yes. All measures which promote public transport use are encouraging.

Several respondents explicitly stated that the drop in PT fares either had or would encourage them to use PT more frequently. Comments of this nature ranged from "I have used the bus so much more", to the following:

This is a good thing, at the current half price deal, I have made casual weekend trips on the train that I would not have made under a full price situation.

It's made public transport more affordable and convenient for myself and partner. We used to travel in via car, now it's much more attractive to take public transport. We use buses and East by West Ferry.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Conditional support**8 comments**

A small number of respondents offered conditional support, a few on the basis that the initiative should apply only at off-peak times (as peak times are already near capacity).

One respondent wanted assurance that rates would not be used to pay for the initiative, and another called for monthly or weekly discounted passes for people who are not CSC holders.

Support only if Crown funds as part of a nationwide initiative.

Should have no end date**4 comments**

A small number of respondents wanted to see the discount applied permanently.

Greatly support this initiative - retain half price fares for all CSC holders indefinitely.

Other support**11 comments**

Additional respondents noted that the initiative would disproportionately benefit certain groups or that the initiative would not assist them personally. One person stated that the initiative would “be better” for “people from outside Wellington”, while another noted that it will not impact on people who can “comfortably afford to drive”.

Whilst this is a positive directive for those eligible. It does not help the majority of your customers. For someone like myself it has zero benefit.

Other points in support of the initiative include that it took “a while” to implement, that the initiative would promote social cohesion, and one respondent hoped that the discount would not be difficult for users to access.

Lastly, one respondent supported the initiative for attending employment or appointments only.

Opposition to CSC holder half-price fares (10 comments)**General opposition****10 comments**

Opposition to the initiative, though in small numbers, was mostly based on the idea that it is unfair to discount travel for some groups. There was the perception that those who are not eligible for discounted travel will be subsidising others’ travel (whether through payment of rates or their own full price fares).

User pays, stop discounting, our rates are too high already.

Other objections were that peak travel time PT is already at capacity, and that this initiative will only assist a small minority. Lastly, one person feared that the system could be abused, claiming that CSC holders “structure their finances” to give the appearance of being on a low income.

Queries or suggestions on CSC holder half-price fares (100 comments)**Fares should be cheaper or free for all****43 comments**

A considerable number of respondents argued that all PT should be free for all users. Amongst these comments there were some in support of the half-price fares for CSC holders initiative, who simply thought it did not do enough, and some who deemed it to insufficiently cater to the needs of both the environment and the people of Wellington. Note that because comments went beyond the eligibility of CSC holders for cheaper PT travel, they are discussed separately.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Many of the comments were simple statements such as “make it free for everyone”, “stop collecting fares”, or “[it] needs to be free”.

Where arguments were made in support of free PT for all, these were mainly environmental; there was support for mode shift away from personal vehicles for emissions reduction reasons. The sentiments of the following comments are indicative of many.

It is a move in the right direction and I strongly support the social good objective. In view of climate change however, I think free PT is necessary to incentivise major mode shift out of private vehicles.

Free fares would remove the financial barrier for everyone, including community service card holders while encouraging further uptake of public transport for those currently choosing personal vehicles.

In the name of climate change mitigation and fighting poverty, all public transit should be entirely free of fees.

Additionally, a small number of respondents noted that the administrative burden of fare setting and fare taking would be eliminated with a free PT system, thus reducing costs for that aspect of PT. One respondent claimed that “it would make more money if it were free” due to the economic activity increased PT usage would generate. This person went on to state:

However, in the absence of free fares for all, targeted reduced fares for the most disadvantaged people is preferable to everyone paying full price.

A few people cited examples of European centres currently offering heavily discounted or free PT, including the Netherlands, Germany, and Luxembourg.

Snapper or ticketing issues

14 comments

Several respondents wanted to see the system administered via Snapper. This was to avoid the requirement to show one’s CSC at the point of boarding PT services. Some had queries around how the discount would be applied, and wanted to ensure that the implementation of the discount was readily available and made easy for users.

As long as the discount could be applied to a Snapper card (or equivalent) so that they don't have to produce their CSC every time they access transport.

Request for clarification on matters

10 comments

The way in which the discount would be implemented was of concern to several respondents. Questions such as “how will it work though?”, and “Is it taxpayers or ratepayers that foot the bill?” show there is some uncertainty about implementation of the initiative. Other queries included whether or not Gold Card Holders whose card is also a CSC are eligible, and how compliance would be ensured.

It's a good move. Keen to see the data about the impact of half price fares and cost benefit analysis about extending it further.

An additional respondent wanted to see research on whether or not CSC holders indeed even use PT (the respondent had read somewhere that lower income earners are more likely to own a car and use that to commute).

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Reliability and network issues

9 comments

There were concerns about the reliability of the existing PT network, and the ability of that network to increase its capacity of users. Several respondents expressed fears that the network was already at capacity and that providing discounted fares would exacerbate this issue.

Reliability of services was also raised as a potential issue in the event of increased patronage.

I think implementing a discount for community service card holders will encourage more people to use public transport BUT that is provided the public transport is reliable (which it is not at the moment).

Certain areas were cited as in particular need of improvement. These include “between the Hutt and Porirua”, Otaki, the number 84 bus, and the number 2 “from the Glenmore and Garden stop” (which is reportedly always full at peak commuting times).

Respondents were concerned about network reliability and usability.

Publicity or promotion

9 comments

Several respondents raised the issue of how the initiative might be publicised. There were concerns that people might not find out about it, with one person urging that MSD “proactively inform CSC holders”. Another respondent stated they had not heard of how to access the discount, and another made the comment that “a lot of people don’t know about it enough”.

I hope effort is made to ensure people who are eligible for CSCs know how to get them so they can access the discount.

Other

15 comments

Several respondents simply stated “no comment” or n/a in response to the question.

A small number of respondents made other suggestions; these included ending free travel for Gold Card holders (who, this person claimed, are often “well off”); introducing a congestion charge which, alongside low PT fares, would promote PT usage; and off-peak fares for those travelling “in the opposite direction to peak traffic”.

Two respondents queried the point of the question, stating that the initiative is a Government dictate, and to not implement it would be nonsensical.

Findings from specific groups

Comparisons were made between different groups of respondents. Refer to the description on page 15 for more information on this process.

Where people live

- > Respondents from Hutt City were more likely than respondents from other areas to comment that in addition to CSC holders, half price fares should be offered to all users. These respondents generally supported the proposal to allow half price travel for this group, but argued that the benefits would be more equitable and far-reaching if this were extended to all users.
- > Respondents from Wellington City were most likely to suggest that all fares should be cheaper or free for all users, rather than discounted for certain groups.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Reasons for travel

- > Respondents who mainly travel to access essential services (including health and retail) were more likely to support the 50% discount travel for CSC holders. This group was also most likely to call for free (or significantly cheaper) public transport.

Transport mode preferences

- > Bus users were more likely than rail users to call for the discount to go further, with some wanting PT to be free for all users, and others wanting cheaper or free PT for particular groups. This was a typical comment, "This is good but off-peak travel for community services card holders should be free".

Metlink should increase the off-peak travel discount from 25 to 35% to encourage greater off-peak usage

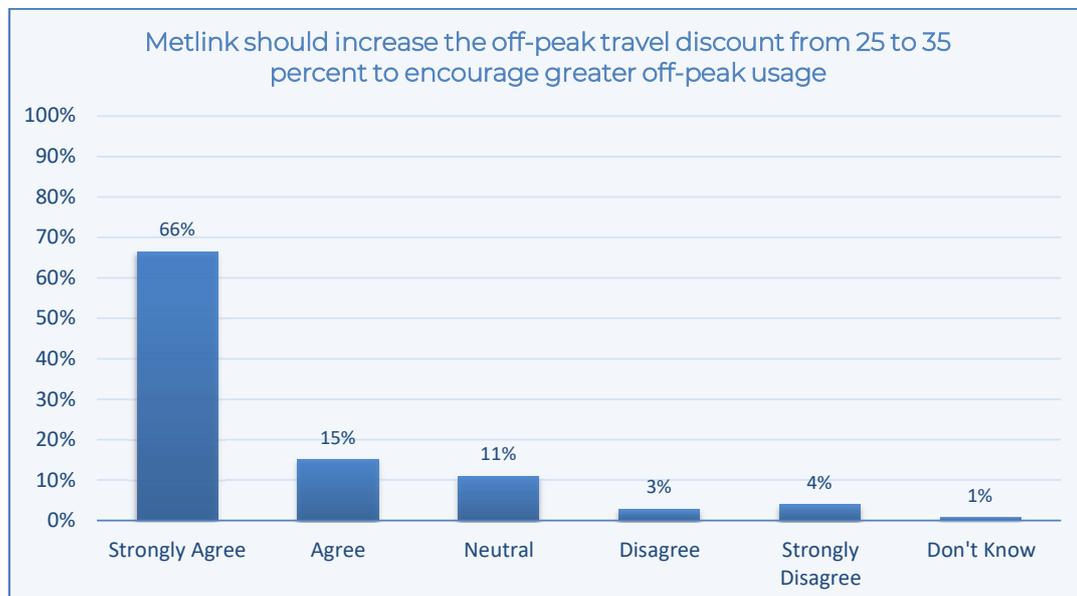
Summary findings

- > There was significantly more agreement (81%) than disagreement (7%), while 11% of respondents were neutral and 1% didn't know.
- > Respondents frequently supported this move in principle but felt that GWRC could go even further than offering a 35% discount for off-peak travel. Respondents thought that a discount of 50% or more would be more likely to have an impact, with some going further to suggest PT should be free. Increasing the hours considered 'off-peak' and extending the discount to cover peak fares as well were also suggested.
- > Respondents who supported increasing the off-peak discount from 25% to 35% argued this would encourage more people to use PT, leading to lower carbon emissions from fewer cars on the roads; less traffic congestion; safer streets for pedestrians; and more equitable and affordable transport access.
- > A relatively small number of respondents opposed this change. They argued that it would cost too much; that it would not make a difference to public transport use; or that there are too many problems with off-peak timetabling to make it worthwhile.
- > Other suggestions were made around improving the overall reliability and efficiency of the PT system and ticketing issues.

Level of agreement or disagreement

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: *Metlink should increase the off-peak travel discount from 25 to 35 percent to encourage greater off-peak usage*

RESPONSE OPTIONS: Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Don't know



Results

Overall, there was significantly more agreement than disagreement with the proposal off-peak travel discount from 25 to 35 percent to encourage greater off-peak usage:

- > **574 (82%) respondents agreed**
 - o 468 (66.5%) strongly agreed
 - o 106 (15.1%) agreed
- > **48 (7%) respondents disagreed**
 - o 20 (2.8%) disagreed
 - o 28 (4%) strongly disagreed
- > **77 (11%) respondents were neutral**
- > **5 (1%) respondents didn't know**

Support for increasing the off-peak travel discount to 35% (437 comments)

Support, but could go even further

180 comments

A very large number of respondents supported this initiative but felt that the council could go further in its plan to offer an increase from 25% to 35% for off-peak travel. Comments from this group are discussed below:

Support for increased discount (80)

A sizeable number of respondents argued that while they support an increase from 25%, they felt that it could be greater than 35%. Specific figures suggested by respondents ranged from 40% up to 75%. The most common suggestion, however, was that it should be half price (50%).

I think off peak discounts should be 50%. I do not feel incentivized with just 35%. The "half price" punch line is a better appeal to people in general - it's a good marketing line.

It should be 50%. Send a clear message that travelling by public transport is cheaper.

Fares should be reduced even further to encourage mode shift from private vehicles to public transport, especially at peak times. As well as shifting travel from peak to off peak.

Support for free public transport (39)

Similar to the comments above, a considerable number of comments called for an even greater reduction in fares, making PT free. Some of these comments were vague and did not specify whether respondents wanted to see free public transport off-peak, or at all times, though most comments suggested that it should be free at all times, for everyone.

All fares should be free for the greater good of the public and to reduce car usage.

Brilliant, though for best effect public transport should be completely free for everyone.

I agree but this is very much a compromise. If climate change is to be taken seriously, then all public transport should be free.

Metlink should be increasing usage across the board. Better to make public transport free all the time.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Discount peak time travel (30)

A considerable number of respondents made comments discussing the value of reducing fares during peak time, as well as off-peak. These respondents suggested that increasing peak time discounts would be more likely to have beneficial effects on PT patronage, transport affordability, emissions reduction, and that it will encourage those who cannot choose what time they travel (due to work hours etc.) to use PT over cars.

Again great but should be during peak times too otherwise not going to have enough of an effect on emissions - most people use the train at peak times. That is when the discount is needed.

Remove "peak" fares all together and make all fares off peak rates. We want as many people as possible to use public transportation. Fares shouldn't be a barrier.

Retaining half-price fares across the board would be a more equitable solution. Incentivising people to travel off-peak is great, but why not have enough public transport capacity that people can easily be transported during peak times, and at a lower fare?

Increase discount for certain groups (23)

A moderate number of respondents argued that various groups, including gold card holders, students, children, and those using cash fares or any other fares (e.g., monthly pass, single trip), should be able to access off-peak discounts on PT. These comments argued that limiting the discount to off-peak 10-trip ticket for trains or Snapper cards for buses may exclude those who need it most.

I travel off peak frequently but see many people don't take advantage of the discount because they have a peak 10 trip or buy a cash ticket. Discounts should not penalise people who can't afford to buy 10 trips.

Include off peak in single and child fares as well.

Extend off-peak hours (14)

Several respondents argued that off-peak hours should be extended, including early morning and evenings/nights. One respondent suggested that peak hours should be 7-9am, and 3pm-6pm, and all other times should be discounted. These respondents argued that expanding off-peak hours would encourage more people to take advantage of discounted rates and opt for PT rather than driving.

The off-peak discount should be higher (at least 50%) and off-peak hours extended to later in the afternoon.

Off-peak should also include early-bird (5am-7am) and night owl (6pm-8pm) to reduce demand on peak services. I suggest one discount value, say 35%, for all fares for all people and at off-peak times. Let's keep it simple.

Yes and off-peak times should start at 6pm.

A small number of these respondents also noted that alongside extending off-peak hours, improving the frequency and reliability of off-peak travel would result in higher public transport use at those times.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

It would be awesome to have off-peak travel in the early morning too. Incentivising off-peak travel, particularly on weekends, needs to go hand in hand with regular and reliable services.

I think overall lower fares incentivise ppl to take public transport not just at certain times of the day. The issue isn't off peak v peak but rather fare costs in general. Also lack and frequency of available off-peak services are another deterrent.

Only if services before 6am are also considered off peak. The trains are often shorter (have less carriages) and on the Kapiti line at least, there are no express services at that time. So, they're very much like off peak services.

General support

77 comments

A sizeable number of respondents expressed general support for increasing the off-peak travel discount from 25% to 35%. These comments were largely general in nature, with statements such as "good idea", "I support it", or "I agree" being typical responses. Those who did give additional detail noted that all discounts are welcome, and that this change will make PT easier and more affordable.

This would make it worth using public transport after hours compared to Uber etc.

I am all for making public transport more affordable.

Support initiatives that will increase PT use

73 comments

Approximately the same number of respondents expressed support for increasing the off-peak discount from 25% to 35% as they felt this would lead to more people choosing to use PT. The benefits that respondents predicted would come as a result included lower carbon emissions from fewer cars on the roads; less traffic congestion; safer streets for pedestrians; and more equitable and affordable transport access.

Anything to help reduce car use and cost of living pressures.

*The current half price discount across the board for all users has increased my own usage of public transport by about four times the amount. I don't have to *worry* anymore about how I can afford to get home from work or university. Seriously, this has been a game changer. Any discount at this point, for any group, I can absolutely strongly agree with and endorse.*

I think it would greatly increase the use of public transport. My aunty just got her gold card and has reorganised her work day so she is always traveling off peak. I can see others doing this also if they felt they were saving a noticeable amount of money.

Support spreading transport use outside peak times

60 comments

A considerable number of respondents supported increasing the off-peak travel discount from 25% to 35% as they felt this would help to spread PT use across the day, easing pressure on busy, peak-time services.

These respondents argued that the PT system is underutilised at off-peak times, and struggles to keep up with demand during peak hours. Therefore, by incentivising off-peak travel with an increased fare discount, more people will opt to travel off-peak, reducing the stress on the system at busy times.

This will encourage people to use public transport more during off-peak hours and reduce the strain that it is currently put on the public transport when people are going to and from work.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Given constraints around drivers and vehicles, off-peak discounts encourage more efficient use of the network.

Better use of off-peak time and increased environmental impact.

Increasing the discount will encourage people who don't need to travel at peak time to go off-peak which should help with the lack of proper capacity at peak.

On a similar note, a moderate number of respondents suggested that increasing the off-peak travel discount to 35% would encourage people to think more carefully about what time they choose to travel, resulting in a more even spread of PT use throughout the day and perhaps encouraging people to spend more time in the city while they wait for off-peak services to begin.

I'd really like to see this as it will encourage people to plan their travel outside of peak when possible.

It would encourage my family and I to consider weekend day trips to Wellington.

As for a sports initiative I go to that starts within peak time. A higher discount would encourage me to leave earlier and maybe spend some time doing other things at location rather than either not going or paying extra.

Support assisting lower income households

9 comments

Several respondents supported this initiative as it will help those who need it most by making PT a more affordable and accessible option.

Any discount will help. Off peak travellers will probably be students, retired and part time workers who need discounts

Increasing the discount will undoubtedly be a big win for lower income workers, and the general population as well. It is an incredibly positive proposal.

Obviously where family budget is limited and prices for everything for everyone is going up - anything to help is welcomed.

Conditional support

24 comments

A moderate number of respondents offered support alongside caveats or conditions. These included: as long as it doesn't increase the price for other users; as long as it doesn't cause a rates increase; and as long as it can be used on other ticket types such as a monthly pass.

I support this as long as it does NOT lead to peak fares going up. Keeping peak fares affordable is critical to shifting more commuter trips to public transport.

Several others were supportive but noted various issues or requirements, for example that many workers, particularly lower income workers, will not have the flexibility to rearrange start and end times around off-peak transport; that it needs to be combined with other changes (e.g., price, operational hours, reliability, bus routes and timetabling); or felt that it was unlikely to make a big difference, particularly on week days.

I support this, but it still probably wouldn't be enough to convince me to use public transport outside of my commute from the Hutt into Wellington during peak hours.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Benefits for businesses**2 comments**

Two respondents noted that encouraging travel during off-peak hours will help get more people into the city, which will be good for businesses.

Opposition to increasing the off-peak travel discount to 35% (42 comments)**General opposition****23 comments**

A small number of respondents simply stated that the discount should be kept at 25%, while a few others worried that increasing discounts for off-peak services would cost too much.

Other respondents argued that the change from 25% to 35% would not make a difference to PT use, or that there are too many problems with off-peak timetabling to make it worthwhile.

A few respondents also felt that having different prices for peak and off-peak is not a good system. They proposed that a better system to encourage PT use and solve demand issues would be to increase the number of services at peak times to support demand, and to have a flat fee across the whole day that makes PT a cheaper option than driving.

I tend to use public transport during peak times therefore this discount doesn't apply to me. Even if I do end up catching an off-peak service, I'm not going to buy an off-peak ticket just for those travels.

While I understand why it's used, I don't like peak/off-peak pricing at all.

Off peak travel is a false economy given the low availability of it. A flat cost throughout the day allows travel when people need to. Management of demand should be met with increased supply of service.

Prefer peak time discount**15 comments**

A moderate number of respondents argued that a peak time discount would be better than discounting off-peak fares. These respondents argued that many people are not able to choose when they travel due to work, family, or other commitments, and therefore increasing discounts for off-peak travel would not have a significant impact on the number of people using it.

These respondents suggested that focusing on making peak-time travel more affordable would yield more benefits, in terms of PT patronage, climate impacts, and congestion issues. Some respondents did not offer such detail, and simply stated that reducing peak-time fares would be preferred.

You can see the off-peak time as a discount, or you can see the peak time as extra expensive. If that's the case people are not likely to want to switch to public transport e.g. if they are taking their car. You will have a greater impact on climate change by shifting people's 'compulsory habits' rather by shifting their leisure habits.

Focus on affordable and reliable peak-time commuter travel.

People for whom there will be no perceived benefit**4 comments**

Four respondents opposed this initiative as they felt it did not benefit them personally.

Queries or suggestions about increasing the off-peak travel discount to 35% (122 comments)

Concerns about PT system and reliability

38 comments

A considerable number of respondents suggested that improvements to the existing PT service should be conducted alongside (or in some cases, instead of) a reduction of off-peak fares. These comments suggested that there are significant issues with the reliability and frequency of PT services in Wellington currently that need to be addressed before more people will choose PT.

In particular, a few respondents noted that if GWRC wants more people to travel off-peak, then Metlink needs to stop cancelling off-peak bus services and make off-peak travel a more reliable and efficient option.

I think this is an excellent idea. It would be great if it could be accompanied by more reliable services, specifically late at night.

Excellent idea BUT the Wairarapa line has a TERRIBLE off peak timetable. More departure times MUST be added. It hasn't changed much (nothing added) in the 15 years I've lived in Featherston. And this region has grown exponentially! Also, two trains in and out on weekends?? Absolutely crap.

Concern that off-peak hours are too limited

30 comments

While they supported making PT more affordable overall, a moderate number of respondents suggested that the fare discount should apply beyond off-peak times or apply at any time of day given that some people cannot choose when they travel. These respondents argued that this is a better way of encouraging PT use and will be more effective at reaching the outcomes desired than simply reducing off-peak fares.

Concession is good but really should be encouraging everyone throughout the day including peak to use public transport.

Abolish off peak fares and use the discount for all travellers. Most people don't have the option of when they travel. It's not like people choose to travel at the same time as everyone else willingly.

People travel when they need to. A carrot of further discount won't help if the service is so occasional, and just one cancellation then slows travel by a lot when traveling off peak. Travel during peak allows more choices and shorter waits for connections.

Concerns about ticketing

13 comments

Several respondents discussed implementation and ticketing. The main issue respondents raised was that discounts for off-peak services creates extra complexity to the ticket buying process, and that restricting discounts to certain types of tickets only (i.e. off-peak 10 trip pass) creates another barrier for users to make the most of discounts.

The most common solutions offered by respondents were either to implement digital ticketing, or to implement the discount on all fares regardless of whether it is peak or off-peak. A few respondents discussed their own experiences with this:

Yes I think this is a good idea. I also hope that all the fees are digital. I have a paper 10 ticket off-peak train ticket which I haven't used recently as it's a full price fare - but I don't use the train enough to justify buying a 50% train ticket 10 trip. I have been

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

paying in cash while the 50% has been in place as it's cheaper than my full fare 10 trip ticket being used.

Good idea, could go further though. While it will be solved by trains getting snapper cards, I find that even though I'm on the train off-peak, if I don't have an off-peak 10 ride as well as my peak one, I'm paying peak prices even when not traveling at peak time purely because I don't have both in my wallet.

I was unaware there was an off peak discount due to buying a monthly ticket, the current monthly ticket is poorly structured and implemented. This should be a digital solution.

Further detail sought

12 comments

Several respondents had questions around the research that went into this initiative, or other questions about how it will be implemented. Most commonly, respondents questioned whether there is evidence to support the hypothesis that reducing off-peak fares a further 10% will move users from cars to PT, or concerns about how this decrease in fares will be funded.

One respondent suggested that a trial should be conducted to see if the initiative does have an impact before it is implemented permanently.

A few other questions included:

Doesn't seem like a big decrease, how does this compare to other transport services globally?

Regarding the definition of "off peak": it says it's after 9am - is this different from the "early bird" (before 7am) 25% discount? If so the early bird should be included in the off peak 35% discount.

I didn't know off-peak finished at 6.30pm in weekday evenings. Have been using my peak 10 trip ticket all the time (including weekends) and now feel I've been paying too much! This problem will be removed when electronic ticketing is on all lines. When will this happen? Why is it taking so long?

Discount travel in opposite direction to main flow

3 comments

Three respondents suggested that a discount should be offered for those travelling in the opposite direction to main traffic flow during peak times as well as off-peak travel.

Information and communication

3 comments

Three respondents called for better communication about discounts and off-peak travel times, with one respondent stating:

Noting that weekends and evenings are considered off-peak, I think this needs to happen AND those times need to be more publicly communicated. Despite being a frequent user, I did not know that weekends were off-peak.

About the process

1 comment

One respondent stated that the survey was difficult to deal with, noting that it was too text-heavy.

Other or no comment

23 comments

Several respondents made other comments that did not fit into any of the above categories or had no comment.

Findings from specific groups

Comparisons were made between different groups of respondents. Refer to the description on page 15 for more information on this process.

Where people live

- > People from Wellington City and Hutt City were more likely to state that the off-peak travel discount percentage should be increased, compared to those from the Kāpiti Coast, Upper Hutt City, and Porirua City. Given that these areas are outside Wellington City's more central areas, this suggests that travel costs at off-peak times is currently more likely to be deemed satisfactory by those who live outside the city.

Reasons for travel

- > Respondents who use travel to access essential services including health and retail were the group most likely to state that all public transport should be free. This was compared to commuters, and leisure travellers. This is not to say that those who use PT to get to work would not like cheaper PT, rather, that those who use PT for essential services like health and retail were more likely to suggest free or considerably cheaper travel.
- > One such respondent, who was typical of many, stated that the initiative was brilliant, but went on to qualify this with "though for best effect, public transport should be completely free for everyone".

Transport mode preferences

- > Bus users were more likely to request a larger discount than rail users. This was a typical comment, "35 percent still doesn't seem like enough - could this be changed to 50 percent off?".
- > Bus users were also more likely than rail users to request for all public transport to be free.

Metlink should introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders

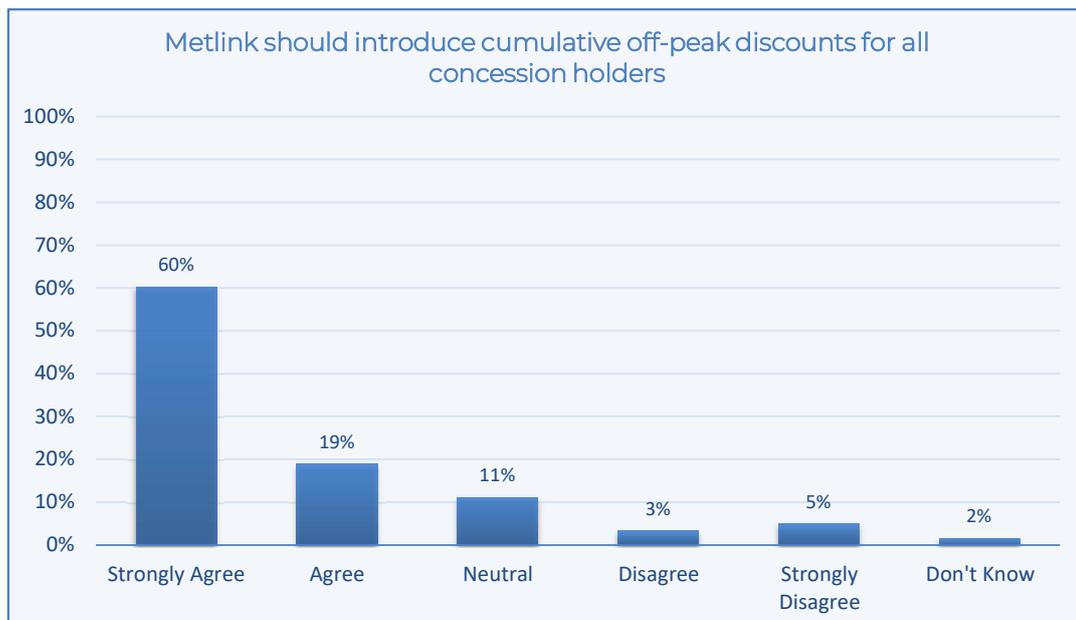
Summary findings

- > There was significantly more agreement (79%) than disagreement (8%), while 11% of respondents were neutral and 2% didn't know.
- > Comments were largely supportive of introducing cumulative off-peak discounts, as respondents argued that anything which makes PT more affordable and appealing is a positive change.
- > The relatively small number of respondents who opposed the proposal to introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders did so for a range of reasons. Some respondents argued that this approach is unfair – either to ratepayers who fund the public transport system, or to those who cannot choose to travel off-peak. Meanwhile, others simply stated that they did not see any additional benefit in offering greater discounts to the groups identified over other users, or that it is simply unnecessary to discount fares so heavily.
- > Other suggestions were made around extending the discount to other groups beyond those identified and making public transport free to limit confusion and hassle.

Level of agreement or disagreement

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: *Metlink should introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders*

RESPONSE OPTIONS: Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Don't know



Results

Overall, there was significantly more agreement than disagreement with the proposal that Metlink should introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders:

- > **554 (79%) respondents agreed overall**
 - o 422 (60.3%) strongly agreed
 - o 132 (18.9%) agreed
- > **57 (8%) respondents disagreed overall**
 - o 23 (3.3%) disagreed
 - o 34 (4.9%) strongly disagreed
- > **78 (11%) of respondents were neutral**
- > **11 (2%) of respondents didn't know**

Support for cumulative discounts for all concession holders (228 comments)

General support

85 comments

A sizeable number of respondents offered general support for the initiative to introduce cumulative discounts for concession holders during off-peak hours. These comments were mostly general in nature, with “agree”, “yes”, “great idea”, and “I support this” being typical.

Support for more affordable, accessible PT

39 comments

A considerable number of respondents expressed support for this proposal as they feel it will help to make PT more affordable, accessible, and attractive for everyone. These respondents argued that offering cumulative discounts to concession holders will mean that some financial burden and accessibility barriers will be lessened for those who need it most.

Strongly agree. These are groups you've focused on as deserving concessions. If you have the capacity to continue to ease the financial pressures exerted on them by public transport accumulations, why not offer these discounts? Very good by me.

Cheaper for everyone is the best.

Travel is currently using a big percentage of the income of those who have to travel for work etc. and this would assist their being able to live a better life.

The sooner the better, accessibility should always be a priority for our community.

Anything that makes public transport more affordable to more people is worthwhile.

Calls to increase or extend discount

36 comments

A considerable number of respondents supported offering cumulative discounts for concession holders but argued that it should be further extended for various groups. Several respondents advocated for extending the discount or making travel free for particular groups, including children, students, and Gold Card holders, or argued that PT should be free for concession holders during off-peak hours.

Make it the same discounted price for all children, students and Community Service Card holders, and free for seniors and accessibility card holders.

I personally think concession holders should be free at these times.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Remaining comments made by a moderate number of respondents suggested that the off-peak discount should apply to all users, not just those who qualify for concessions.

Yes, but all commuters should be enjoying the discount fares

Again, concessions should be shared with all users. Otherwise you are encouraging those who can afford to drive their car to stay in their cars. Offering discounts only to specific groups is grossly unfair. It should be shared evenly through all users.

Support for initiatives that will increase PT use

22 comments

A moderate number of respondents expressed support for the proposal to introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for concession holders as they felt this would encourage and increase PT use. The majority of these comments did not expand on *why* this was a good thing but indicated strong support for increased PT use generally.

Doesn't affect me but if it encourages more use of public transport then I agree with it.

Anything that increases use of public transport is a good thing.

A few others who offered more detail specified that increasing PT use, particularly off-peak, will reduce stress on the transport network, improve road safety, and reduce car dependency.

Off-peak travel benefits everyone. All the groups above may struggle with cost of transport for various reasons and will benefit from greater fare reductions off peak. Although I wouldn't fit into any of these concession groups, I support greater reduction of their off-peak rates.

Qualified support

15 comments

A moderate number of respondents offered qualified support for this initiative, often adding stipulations such as “as long as it doesn't inflate the cost of the already expensive full price fare”, or “as long as it is fairly implemented”.

The main concern raised, as mentioned in the example above, is the impact that increasing off-peak discounts for concession holders may have on regular bus/train fares if the costs need to be recouped elsewhere.

Another couple of respondents noted that as long as the service remains financially viable, they support this proposal.

One respondent suggested that while they support offering increased discounts to these groups, perhaps the discount should be capped at 80% to ensure that users are offered a good deal but that it is still sustainable.

Tertiary student concession

8 comments

Several respondents offered support specifically for the tertiary student concession. These respondents noted that students are often living under tight financial circumstances and therefore, every bit helps.

Students already have to face high renting costs and high food costs. This would be a good option for those who want to study.

As a student myself I struggle with the price of public transport.

Absolutely, the city is growing with more students than ever as well as combined with the cost of living crisis, these discounts make absolute sense to have in place.

Initiative will encourage off-peak travel **5 comments**

A small number of respondents commended this initiative, stating that it will encourage off-peak travel and therefore ensure a more efficient use of the network and encourage more people to travel on PT on weekends.

The accessibility concession **2 comments**

Two respondents expressed support specially for the accessibility concession.

Any discount for kids or people with accessibility issues is a positive thing. If it enables them to get out and about to different activities and allows them freedom then it's a good thing.

Opposition to cumulative discounts for all concession holders (41 comments)

General opposition **25 comments**

Respondents who generally opposed the proposal to introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders did so for a range of reasons. A small number of respondents argued that this approach is unfair – either to ratepayers who fund the PT system, or to those who cannot choose to travel off-peak.

No let the user pay and don't load the extra costs onto rate payers.

Unfair on those who work. Just because I work doesn't mean I have a large disposable income.

This will be very unfair to middle working class people as they are facing high tax rate and also get impacted by inflation rate without any government benefits.

Others simply did not feel that this was a good idea; did not see any additional benefit in offering greater discounts to the groups identified over other users; felt that frequent users should be prioritised; or felt it is simply unnecessary to discount fares so heavily.

Apart from tertiary- rest have significant discount already. I have kids - 50 percent is very good value for \$ already. Also - strongly against using fares to up use during peak when the service is so crap for existing users.

Again the group that use public transport during off peak times is not that big and still doesn't make sense to encourage this group because majority of people will travel during peak hours. Doesn't seem to be any value in discounting for a smaller group.

A few respondents simply felt that this proposal would not have much of an impact or benefit.

Concerns about complexity of ticketing **16 comments**

Several respondents disagreed with the proposal to introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for concession holders as they felt it adds unnecessary complexity and confusion to the ticket buying process.

Fare structure should be as uncomplicated as possible. same fare for all travellers.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

This starts to get into 'too complicated' territory. People only understand discounts off a full price, not a discount off a discounted price. There will be confusion and complaints about what people think they will pay and what they do pay.

Sounds. Complicated. I guess electronic ticketing takes care of the complicated math etc but wow.

Queries or suggestions on cumulative discounts for all concession holders (213 comments)

Calls to extend to other groups, or all users

46 comments

A considerable number of respondents wanted to see the discounts extended to other groups beyond those identified in the proposal. Over half of these comments called for discounts to apply to all users. Specific groups mentioned included Gold Card holders, people living with disabilities and their carers, Total Mobility card holders, and most commonly, commuters.

Should be for concession holders AND the general public.

Cumulative discounts should not be limited to concession or off-peak use.

Again - what about those who do not qualify for concessions such as community services cards but are also having a difficult time and who receive no other benefits. It is not fair to exclude them, especially those who have to do the hard yards and work every day.

This is a great idea, but you should also extend it to Total Mobility Card holders.

Support for free PT

35 comments

A considerable number of respondents suggested that rather than offering cumulative discounts for concession holders, GWRC should make PT free. Some comments were vaguer than others, simply calling for free PT, while others specified that all PT should be free at all times, for all users.

The overall theme among these comments was that offering free PT would bring the greatest benefit – in terms of PT patronage, mitigating climate change, and affordability.

Providing free fares for all would do away with the need for complicated concession calculations, and provide a network that's more efficient, effective, equitable, accessible and cost-effective to run. But in the absence of that, cumulative concessions are positive.

Public transport should be free or at the very least run publicly, not for profit.

This is way too complicated, and I would never trust you with the personal information this mess would rely on. if you make it free for everyone it's also anonymous solving both of those problems.

Tertiary student concessions

32 comments

A moderate number of respondents indicated that they supported offering discounted PT for tertiary students, but argued that the criteria for this should be extended to allow more students to benefit. In particular, these respondents argued that part-time students, out-of-region students (for example, students returning home to the region from studying in Auckland or Otago), and apprentices should all be eligible.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

The tertiary concession should be widened to include ALL tertiary students - not every student living in Wellington is enrolled in Wellington but struggles with poverty all the same.

This is a welcome idea. I'd like to point out that the tertiary requirements are not inclusive for students who are postgraduate and must apply for full time study per semester rather than a full year (making them not recognised as "full time students" for concession until the enrolled second semester of study).

I didn't even realise there were off-peak fares when I was a student, because they didn't affect me at all. If there had been a benefit to me travelling off-peak then I would have more often. There should also be a tertiary month pass, as currently it costs about the same as four tertiary ten trips, rendering the cheaper ten trips pretty much pointless if you are using the trains daily.

Several others argued that tertiary students should receive a greater discount or be able to travel on PT for free as this group is often living on a very low income.

A great idea. My only additional thought is making the tertiary discount match the rest at 50%.

Four respondents argued that having a tertiary concession is unbeneficial. Two of these comments noted that most students will be travelling at peak times and will therefore not benefit from this proposal, while another argued that tertiary students should travel for free at all times as this encourages students to "get out and about in the city in ways which they may not be otherwise able to afford". One final respondent stated:

As a student myself I would prefer a better service first before receiving a small discount.

Issues with PT system and timetabling

12 comments

Several respondents made comments about the way that the PT system functions, including timetabling and ticketing.

A small number of respondents noted that electronic ticketing could help alleviate some of this complexity, though one respondent pointed out that this could be a barrier for some who do not have the time/knowledge/resources to register online to receive the correct discount.

One respondent called for transfers to be allowed on discounted fares:

While you are at it with the cumulative discounts, you need to allow transfers. So if I tag on a bus then a train, it should be one fare to get where I am going.

Children's concessions

28 comments

A considerable number of respondents raised issues they had with the children's concession, or shared suggestions. Around half of these comments were more critical in nature, raising concerns about the relevance of this concession given that most children are in school during most off-peak hours, with a couple of respondents also suggesting that it might encourage children to bunk off school.

School aged children are at school during off peak! So it's really only a weekend discount.

Children aged 5-18 have to travel before 9 am and after 3pm on week days to get to and from school so this will make no difference, just virtue signalling.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Get rid of that for children. They already clog up the buses in the morning, I don't want them clogging up the buses in off peak hours when they all decide to bunk off school at lunchtime.

Several others called for PT to be free for children to encourage this as a habit from a young age or made suggestions about which age groups should receive discounts.

Agree. Think school aged kids should be instead under 18s. Note some older and potentially more needy kids may not be in school but should still be able to get around. Although they may potentially be captured by community service card holders.

Perhaps as well increase the age of children who can travel free from 5 to 10 years old.

Questions and concerns about proposal

12 comments

Several respondents had questions about the reasoning behind the proposal to introduce cumulative discounts for concession holders. A small number of respondents noted that they weren't presented with enough supporting information such as the funding and/or patronage impact to be able to truly see the value in offering cumulative discounts for concession holders.

Whilst it sounds good you have given no idea of the expected uptake of additional PT users. I would support this if you could demonstrate an investment case, ie X% uplift in numbers for \$Y invested.

Has research been done to say what percentage of travellers this would relate to?

Uncertain because unsure if the discounts would be sustainable - how will services be funded?

I like the idea but my current accessibility rate is already quite good and how will maintenance be kept or wages with all this discount.

A couple of respondents suggested that cumulative discounts should be introduced on a trial basis and impacts should be closely tracked.

Comments about the survey process

12 comments

Several respondents made comments relating to the survey process. Most of these comments related to the wording of the information that accompanied the survey, or of survey questions themselves. The overall consensus among these respondents was that the wording around this initiative is overly complex and difficult to understand.

In some instances, respondents gave suggestions as to how wording could be adjusted for clarity.

I agree, although I would caution Metlink that the explanation provided above is very complex and difficult to understand. It should be laid out in a clearer way that just states the absolute discount (and not the cumulative parts).

Cumulative off-peak discounts for ALL fares when using an electronic ticketing system (not just Snapper). Specifying them as a "further" discount isn't as clear as specifying the total discount.

A few respondents noted that they did not understand the survey question and/or information about the cumulative discounts for concession holders.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

The accessibility concession

8 comments

All of these respondents but one expressed disappointment at the Total Mobility card requirement for a concession, arguing that this discriminates against part of a group of people who would benefit from the concession. One comment read:

Why are Total Mobility services excluded from the accessibility concession? I can see no explanation for this and it seems discriminatory.

One final respondent called for accessibility concessions to please include Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.

Increase advertising and promotion

2 comments

Two respondents argued that more needs to be done to ensure that discounts are appropriately advertised so people are aware of them, arguing that this will help get more people on PT.

No comment or other comment

29 comments

Around half these respondents had no further comments to add to this question, while several other comments were made that did not fit into any of the above categories.

Findings from specific groups

Comparisons were made between different groups of respondents. Refer to the description on page 15 for more information on this process.

Where people live

- > Respondents who lived in Porirua City or the ā Coast District were more likely to make the point that this will increase public transport use than those who live in Wellington or Hutt City.

Reasons for travel

- > Apart from respondents who use travel to access essential services being most likely to state that all public transport should be free, there were little difference in opinions expressed on this topic based on reasons why people travel.

Transport mode preferences

- > There was little difference in opinions based on mode preferences, with bus users more likely to state that all public transport should be free.

Metlink should introduce a policy that allows children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian

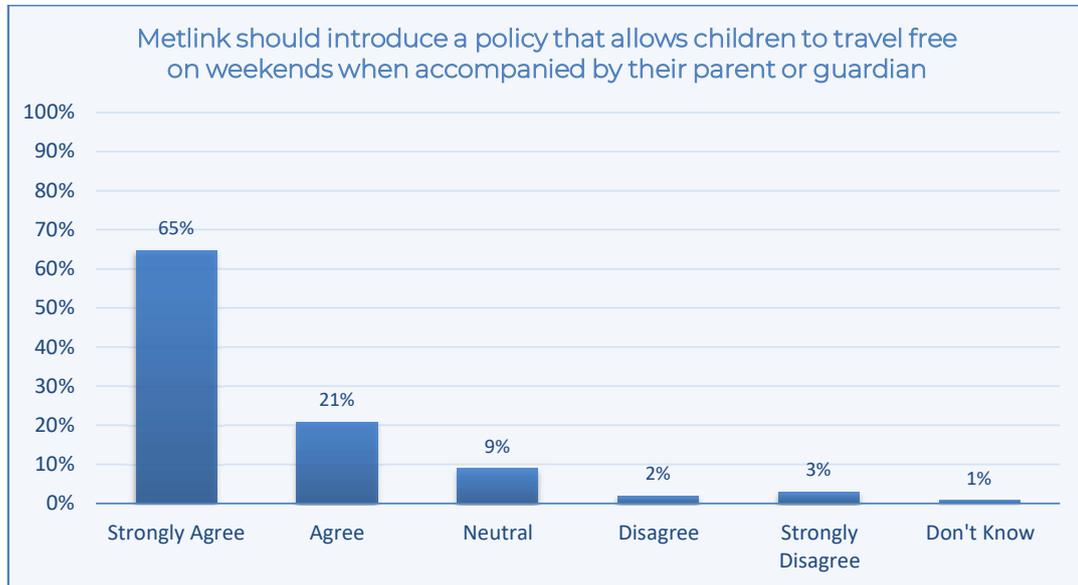
Summary findings

- > There was significantly more agreement (86%) than disagreement (5%), while 9% of respondents were neutral and 1% didn't know.
- > Respondents most frequently offered support for this initiative as they believed it would make family travel more accessible and affordable.
- > A large number of respondents urged that measures be taken to further increase access and affordability. Most often this was by way of extending the initiative to weekdays, to other young people (such as students), and that unaccompanied children should also receive the subsidy.
- > There was broad support for free travel on weekends for children with their parent or guardian on the basis that it would increase the use of PT, which, when expanded on, was thought to have a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits.
- > The small amount of opposition to this initiative was most often expressed in general terms, with concerns around preferential treatment of children and injustice issues for those paying a full fare.
- > A range of suggestions and queries were made, suggesting again broad support for free fares (not just for children) as well as broad support for a well-functioning and reliable PT network.

Level of agreement or disagreement

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: *Metlink should introduce a policy that allows children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian.*

RESPONSE OPTIONS: Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Don't know



Results

Overall, there was significantly more agreement than disagreement with the proposal that Metlink should introduce a policy that allows children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian.

- > **603 (86%) respondents agreed**
 - o 457 (64.7%) strongly agreed
 - o 147 (20.8%) agreed
- > **34 (5%) respondents disagreed**
 - o 13 (1.8%) disagreed
 - o 21 (3%) strongly disagreed
- > **63 (9%) of respondents were neutral**
- > **5 (1%) of respondents didn't know**

Support for allowing children to travel free on weekends with a guardian (399 comments)

Makes family travel easier and more affordable

104 comments

A large number of respondents who supported allowing children to travel free on weekends with a guardian did so on the basis that it would assist families to get out and about and make travel more affordable for families.

Respondents noted that such an initiative would assist families to “get the whole family out”, “encourage parents to get out and about with their kids”, and that it would make PT more accessible for those with no other mode of transport available to them.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Absolutely agree, this would make it easier for families to access public transport and reduce time spent getting onto the bus.

Great idea. Perfect for whānau going to the movies, sports and to visit family.

Some respondents made the point that paying a separate, undiscounted fare for each adult and child can quickly add up and make the cost of using PT too high. Affordability was of great concern to respondents, with several people noting that taking a bus can be more expensive than driving one's own car. Respondents agreed that making PT cheaper would be of great benefit to families with dependents, as evidenced in the simple statement "Makes family travel affordable".

PT becomes expensive for a family when viewed against petrol and parking. If we want to encourage families out of their cars or to give some families a travel option this seems like a great initiative.

Any activity you can do with your kid that you don't have to pay for is a great idea. Very on board.

A subsidy for children on weekends was variously labelled convenient (for families), easier, and, as described above, cheaper.

Support, but could go even further

92 comments

Extend to make PT free all the time (25)

Around a quarter of those respondents who wanted to see the initiative go even further called for children to have access to free PT at all times. While some made the argument that the suggested initiative was too complicated to implement effectively, most offered the opinion that children should be able to travel free on PT.

Children should travel free at all times.

Children should always be able to travel free when accompanied by their parent or guardian, especially those under 12.

Great idea. Children should always be able to travel for free on the weekends...during the week too.

Extend to benefit other groups (25)

A considerable number of people identified other groups they felt deserve free PT at weekends. This most often included youth and parents, but also included: CSC holders, single people, grandparents, tertiary students, and all commuters. One respondent stated: "not just children – make it free for everyone", and other examples include:

Great. Now also make it free for the parents.

Everyone deserves affordable transportation.

Free fares for under-25s at all hours would be better. Teenagers often travel without parents, and we want to normalise PT use among this group.

Some made the point that weekend patronage is relatively low, and that free fares for all at the weekends would be beneficial and would offer more options for those who wish to travel.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Extend to unaccompanied children (24)

A similar number of respondents wanted to see the scheme extended to allow unaccompanied children to travel free; i.e., they did not want to see free PT for children linked to the presence of a fare-paying parent or guardian.

Why when accompanied by adult? Make it free for all under 18s.

Why not on their own too? Encourage kids to get out and about on the weekend.

One submitter called on central government to:

...fully and permanently fund free public transport for students, community service card holders, under 25s, and total mobility card holders and their support people.

Extend to children travelling with other adults/whānau (14)

Several respondents supported the initiative but wanted to see children travel free with any adult so as to include those travelling with whānau, child-minders, grandparents, or other people in their lives. A few felt that proof of guardianship would be problematic, noting that it might be easier to change the wording to allow children “accompanied by an adult”.

This is a great idea - though note that it is difficult to know if a child is with a parent, or another adult who they are linked with. This should be any children with their travelling adult.

Extend to off-peak hours (4)

A small number of respondents supported the initiative but stated they would like to see it expanded to apply at all off-peak times, including during the week.

General support

83 comments

A sizeable number of respondents offered general support for allowing children to travel free on weekends with a guardian. Statements expressed support using the following words and phrases: good idea, great idea, yes please, do it, absolutely!, agree, definitely, and great initiative. Additional statements of a longer nature included the following.

Totally agree this would be great.

Sounds fine but doesn't affect me. A great idea for families travelling for events etc.

Just as Auckland has done, this is a great idea.

A small number of submitters supported **Age Concern Wairarapa**'s positive assessment of “Free travel for children on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian”, each using the same wording. An additional few submitters stated their agreement with the proposal to introduce “family and whānau friendly weekend travel”.

Will increase PT use

75 comments

A substantial number of respondents supported the initiative on the basis that it will increase the use of PT, a point not often expanded on other than to state that the more people that use PT, the better.

Metlink should continue the half price fares to encourage greater usage at all times.

It generates incentive to use public transport.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Additional general comments such as “anything to increase public transport use is good”, and “this is a great way to get people considering PT” were made alongside others in which reductions in the use of personal cars was supported. Respondents supported the use of PT over car use, as evident in comments such as “keep the cars off the road”, and “it might cut down car numbers”.

Brilliant! Get people on public transport for the weekend and away from cars.

It is all part of making public transport the "normal" mode v. Private cars.

WellingtonNZ strongly advocated for this policy, stating that it will reduce the reliance on cars to explore the region and subsequently reduce emissions. They also noted that Wellington’s geography makes it possible to substitute car use for PT and even better access to it will further enable achievement of carbon zero by 2050 goals.

Conditional support

25 comments

A considerable number of respondents supported the initiative under certain conditions, such as that multiple children be free with one fare-paying adult. The small number who stated this wanted to ensure that large families are not “left out” of the discount scheme.

An additional small number of respondents reiterated that free travel needs to be tied to a fare-paying adult or guardian, which, though already part of the proposal, was important enough for these respondents to restate in their comments.

If they are YOUNG children, then I see no reason why they should not be with at least 1 of their parents at all times, and if that parent needs to travel into town then I see no issues with the child traveling with them.

A small number of respondents supported the initiative but had concerns about how it would impact the costs of full price fares for adults. They did not want to see fares increase to cover the cost of discounts for other groups.

Sure - but not at the expense of cheaper travel in general for daily commuters.

A couple of respondents made the point that children should or would still need to stand for full fare paying passengers. Two stated that the initiative was good, but that it would not be enough to encourage people out of their cars. Lastly, one person wanted to be able to take their family dog with them on PT.

Economic, social, environmental benefits

20 comments

A moderate number of respondents raised a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits they saw resulting from this initiative. These included the positive social and wellbeing aspects of interacting with one’s city through travelling on PT, for example, being able to “access things out of town including educational things”, attending sports and leisure activities, and having “adventures and experiences”. Additionally, it was observed that use of public transport at a young age will seed this travel habit for life, with resultant environmental and urban wellbeing benefits.

This incentive would encourage more use, and would give more children confidence to ride public transport when they are older.

Economic benefits were anticipated by a small number who stated things like: “this would benefit businesses in the central city”, and “can also boost businesses in the areas families travel to”. Another stated the initiative would encourage them to attend events, stating:

Honestly we say no to lots of Wellington events because travel is too expensive.

Opposition to allowing children to travel free on weekends with a guardian (28 respondents)

General opposition

11 comments

Many of the comments in opposition to this initiative were due to it not offering any personal benefit to the respondent. Indeed, one respondent felt they were being penalised because they do not themselves have children. Another stated:

I was never able to afford to have kids, I shouldn't have to miss out on discounts through uneven fare structures like this for the benefit of those who were able to afford them.

Other general opposition was to the complicated nature of the discounts, that travel is “already cheap”, that the initiative would be making money for private corporations, and that the initiative amounts to “giving away money”.

Children should pay

10 comments

Several respondents felt that children ought to pay a full or discounted fare. Statements ranged from those who noted this group is already entitled to subsidised travel, to those who simply felt that “the child should be charged full price”. A few thought that a 50% subsidy was sufficient.

Children's fares should cost. I don't support them getting free transport.

Additionally, two respondents made the point that a small charge would be useful to both make a contribution towards costs, and to teach children that services aren't free.

Other

7 comments

Half of the remaining opposition to free weekend fares for children was around the impact that children on PT would have on other passengers. One person stated, “kids are noisy”, while another suggested an adults-only or children-only carriage to cater to this.

The remaining small number of comments were concerned about the ability of the network to cope with the increased patronage; capacity was described as insufficient to handle an influx of new passengers.

Trains are usually busy with limited space on weekends as it is changing this would make services even busier and take up seating for paying customers.

Other suggestions and queries (79 respondents)

Make all PT free for cheaper for everyone

22 comments

A moderate number of suggestions were made to the effect that PT should be made free for all, either at certain times, or all the time. Statements such as “all public transport should be free for all”, “everyone travel free all the time?”, and “it should be free for everyone at all times” were made.

Where people specified times they wanted for free travel, this was most often weekends or between 1-7pm.

Weekend patronage is already low. Make it free for everyone on weekends.

In addition, Metlink should focus on bringing the overall cost of fares down in general, particularly through better priced monthly passes. The number of discounts is also quite confusing and may mean people have difficulty knowing how much they will

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

pay. Having said that, anything you can do to make fares cheaper is better than doing nothing.

Queries

21 comments

A moderate number of queries were made as to how the initiative would be implemented, or about what the current situation is for children using PT. A few thought that children already qualified for free PT, and most comments were queries about the ages at which free and discounted travel applied. In fact, the majority of queries were about the age limits for this initiative, as the following comments show.

Depends on age cut off for "children" as drivers will need to police this, which could cause stress at times.

How is it different from what we have now? Children under 5 already travel for free.

I take it the age bracket will be 0-13yrs for the children, 14+ and children can be alone without a guardian. However, there should be a certain number of adults per group of kids...similar to when classes visit a public museum etc.

A couple of suggestions were made that the parent should receive free travel when travelling with a child.

Network reliability

17 comments

Confidence in PT was an issue, with a moderate number questioning the reliability of PT so far as network connectivity and limited or missing services are concerned. A few made the point that weekend services are already limited, and that this would need to improve if increased patronage was the goal.

This is great, but what you really need to do is increase weekend frequency to 20 minutes all day and at least 30 minutes at night rather than the ridiculous hourly timetable that currently kicks in very early at night.

Good idea but frequent bus replacements for trains on weekends may limit the effectiveness of this.

Ticketing and capacity

8 comments

Capacity for both additional passengers, and items such as sports gear and strollers/buggies was of concern to a few people. One person noted that children often come with baggage and that there may be limited space available on weekend services. Another stated that events may cause services to be overrun with passengers, while another questioned the number of seats that additional children would take up.

Seems okay to me, but could be oversubscribed during Matariki and other events, such as the Santa parade. Someone will need to model the unintended consequences of this to ensure capacity can cope.

Ticketing suggestions included flat fares no matter how long the journey (such as is the case in NYC), returning the family pass system, and linking child fares to their parents' Snapper cards to facilitate simple boarding and processing.

No comment

11 comments

Several respondents stated no commenter, n/a, or similar. A few of these were statements to the effect that the respondent did not have children, so this question did not apply to them.

Findings from specific groups

Comparisons were made between different groups of respondents. Refer to the description on page 15 for more information on this process.

Where people live

- > Respondents from Upper Hutt City, Porirua City, and Kāpiti Coast were more likely than those from Wellington City or Hutt City to comment that allowing children to travel free with a parent or guardian on weekends helps to make family travel affordable.
- > Respondents from Wellington City were most likely to suggest that instead of changing child fares, PT should be made cheaper or free for all users.

Reasons for travel

- > While the comments were relatively small in number, (fewer than 20 from each group) respondents who travel to access essential services including health and retail were the group most likely to suggest that the benefit of free weekend travel should be extended to other groups as well as children, including parents, single people, grandparents, commuters, CSC holders, and under 25s.
- > This same group of respondents were also most likely to suggest that PT should be made cheaper or free for all users.

Transport mode preferences

- > Overall, there was little difference in the opinions expressed by those who have different mode preferences.

Metlink should consider including a fare capping discount of 35% on a daily and weekly basis

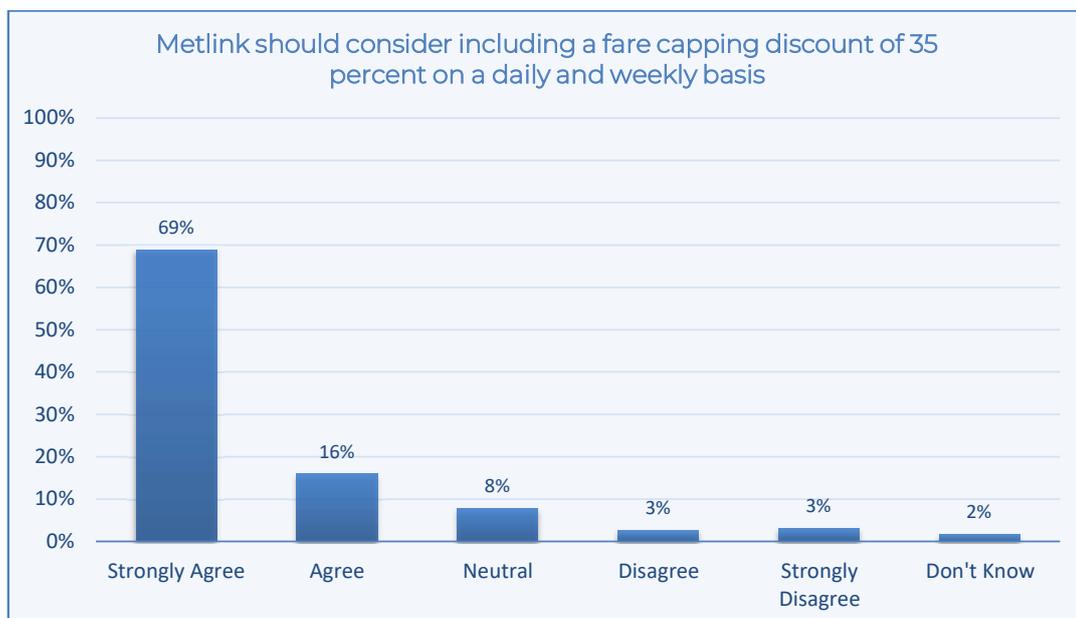
Summary findings

- > There was significantly more agreement (85%) than disagreement (6%), while 8% of respondents were neutral and 2% didn't know.
- > Respondents frequently supported fare capping but felt that GWRC could go further than what is proposed. Respondents felt that rather than a discount, users should be offered free PT once a certain threshold had been met, and some felt that a dollar amount cap would be better than a certain number of trips.
- > Respondents who supported this initiative noted that fare capping is delivered successfully in other parts of New Zealand and the world, so Wellington would benefit from it as well. They also felt that capping fares may lead to more people using PT.
- > The small group of respondents who opposed the initiative felt it will have limited benefits. These respondents argued that as only regular users will benefit from this additional discount, it is unlikely to encourage more people to use public transport, or that the discount is not high enough to be worth implementing.
- > Other comments included calls to simply make PT free for users altogether; questions about the funding and implementation of this initiative; concerns about ticketing; and comments about the overall network.

Level of agreement or disagreement

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: *Metlink should consider including a fare capping discount of 35 percent on a daily and weekly basis*

RESPONSE OPTIONS: Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Don't know



Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Results

Overall, there was significantly more agreement than disagreement with the proposal Metlink should consider including a fare capping discount of 35% on a daily and weekly basis:

- > **597 (85%) respondents agreed overall**
 - o 485 (68.9%) strongly agreed
 - o 112 (15.9%) agreed
- > **40 (6%) respondents disagreed overall**
 - o 18 (2.6%) disagreed
 - o 22 (3.1%) strongly disagreed
- > **55 (8%) of respondents were neutral**
- > **12 (2%) of respondents didn't know**

Support for 35% fare capping discount (378 comments)

Support, but could go even further

137 comments

A large number of respondents supported capping fares generally but felt that this could go further than the 35% discount cap proposed.

Support for free PT after cap threshold met (72)

A substantial number of respondents questioned the legitimacy of calling it a “cap” if you are still required to pay, just at a discounted rate. These respondents argued that after a certain threshold is met (either a dollar amount or a number of journeys), all travel should be free.

I support fare capping, but this doesn't actually sound like a fare cap. The total price per day could still be a lot, and it sounds like you still pay for all your trips just at a discounted rate. Shouldn't a fare cap be a maximum amount you pay per day, or week.

The term fare capping is used in a misleading way here and a true fare cap that applies a 100% discount above a certain fare should be considered.

Isn't fare capping applying a cap?? Discount is ok. For the trains the daily explorer ticket is effectively a fare cap, makes sense to set an actual ceiling on amount paid though across all services.

I would have thought fare-capping was once you've spent a certain amount, you don't have to pay any more money for the day.

A percentage based discount isn't really 'fare capping'. While it's a starting point, I'd rather see a daily/weekly dollar amount cap (e.g., \$60 a week).

Setting a complete dollar cap as opposed to a percentage discount off trips above the threshold was suggested by a substantial number of respondents, who felt that this would make a greater impact than what is proposed and would be far less complicated.

May be more worthwhile having a numerical \$\$ cap. Easier to communicate rather than a percentage which people may struggle with.

I think this should go ahead but in a different form such as a maximum cost that can be spent a day similar to what is the norm in other cities around the world.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

A considerable number of others suggested that travel should be made free once users have made a certain number of journeys. A small number of respondents suggested a specific number of trips they felt would be reasonable, though most simply stated that transport should be free after "a certain number of trips" (such as 8 journeys, as one person suggested).

Should definitely implement what Christchurch has. Unlimited free transfers within 2 hours of first trip, pay for a maximum of 2 trips a day and 10 a week.

This doesn't sound like a fare cap if you're still charging after a certain number of trips? It should be free after X amount. 35% is far too low.

A true fare cap where trips beyond the cut off are free would be preferable.

407 respondents selected this statement on a **Generation Zero** prepared form and provided it as part of their comment, "I believe that if fare-capping is to be implemented it must be simple and must have a maximum cap on the amount an individual can spend on public transport in a day/week."

Support for increasing fare capping discount (30)

A considerable number of respondents felt that offering a discount of 35% as a form of fare cap was not enough, arguing it should be higher. Specific percentage amounts suggested by respondents included 50%, 65%, and 75%. Almost all respondents, however, felt that a discount of at least 50% would be more suitable.

Make it simpler and make it a significant discount. Make it half price after a certain number of journeys.

Agree. but you could go much higher than this. Why stop at 35% if you actually want this policy to be useful and benefit people and do social good? 50-75% at least would be far more beneficial to people. especially considering people i know to be commuting with multiple buses and trains in a day are often at an economic disadvantage already.

Make it 50%. This will make much more sense to people and they will actually know how much they are saving with this fare capping. 35% while a good number is also rather complex and may put people off through confusion and not knowing how much they save.

Other options (19)

Various other options were proposed which respondents felt would be more practical or encourage PT use more than the 35% fare capping discount. Generally, the rationale behind these proposals was that the fare capping discount didn't go far enough to truly incentivise use, or that it was too complex. One person noted that such an incentive discouraged people from working from home.

This is a good idea, but so complex and convoluted I doubt many people will be able to take advantage of it intentionally and therefore change their behaviours.

It's a bit confusing and carries bureaucratic/ongoing costs to fuff about with all these targeted discounts. Why not just have flat discounts or free for all, all the time?

Proposed alternatives included: lowering the price generally, keeping the half-price fares, increasing the transfer window, following a European model and having long-term tickets (e.g., monthly, 3 monthly etc), allowing trips to accumulate discounts without a time limit (i.e., after ten trips over any

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

period, the eleventh is free), or ensuring fare capping worked out cheaper than buying a daily or monthly pass.

A couple of people addressed multi-modal journeys, with one requesting clarity around what would count as one journey if people were swapping between train and bus, and another suggesting:

Metlink should also look at other capping solutions for multi-mode journeys as well as just a percentage discount. Travelling from eastern suburbs north to Kapiti/Porirua or Hutt, or also between Kapiti/Porirua and Hutt areas should have specific caps/reductions to incentivise PT over car use.

Support for daily, weekly, or monthly cap (13)

Several respondents offered their preferences between a daily, weekly or monthly cap. Weekly caps were the most popular option, with respondents noting that daily caps would not have much benefit for commuters.

I feel that a weekly cap would be most beneficial for the community at large.

A similar number of respondents liked the idea of a monthly cap, while two respondents were enthusiastic about introducing a daily cap.

A couple of respondents argued that introducing both a daily and weekly cap would be a good approach.

Out of all initiatives this is the one I'd personally like to see the most! Probably day first, week second. I think the pull to say you know what, I've already done a trip into town and then a friend's, it's easy enough to do a couple more trips around town shopping or take the bus home or out again in the evening. I think this makes a whole lot of sense. Especially the idea of people going home from work more likely to stop off somewhere more often town etc to support local business before then carrying on home.

Calls to require fewer trips per week to reach cap (10)

Several respondents suggested that the number of trips required to reach the cap threshold should be reduced from 8, with 6 being the most commonly suggested number.

Your boundaries are too high. They do not help people who try to work at home 1 more day a week - we all know the work style will change. I think you should kick in the discount after say 5, rather than 8.

The cap must be brought in lower. Most people only take two trips a day.

Calls to consider the number of transfers taken (2)

Two respondents discussed the need to consider those who are required to take more complicated routes involving multiple transfers, noting that this is currently very costly for some.

Something I struggle with is the number of separate fares you have to pay. Bus to train station. Train to town then bus to uni from town. It all adds up. Simplifying this process and reducing the cost really needs to occur.

General support

70 comments

A substantial number of respondents offered general support for the proposal to introduce a fare capping discount of 35% on a daily and weekly basis. These comments were mostly general in nature, with "yes", "agree", and "great idea" being typical responses.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Praise for an effective, supported solution

35 comments

A moderate number of respondents were supportive of introducing a fare cap, as they'd seen it done successfully overseas in other New Zealand cities. Christchurch and London were the two most commonly given examples of places where fare capping is used, though around half of these comments simply stated that implementing fare capping would bring Wellington up to the standard of many places around the world who have been using this system for many years now.

Yes absolutely, have seen this work in Melbourne.

Absolutely agree, already a commonplace in other developed nations and capital cities around the world and should be introduced here as well. Would be the common-sense choice.

Having moved from Europe I'm shocked this hasn't been implemented yet.

Several others simply praised the proposal to introduce fare capping, arguing that it is a welcome change that will positively influence people's attitudes towards using PT, and make it a more affordable option.

YESSSSSS!! I've been asking you guys for this for ages. I would love to see fare capping brought to welly! Do it. Do it tomorrow please!

As someone who takes the train twice daily, five days a week, I would greatly appreciate this as it would reduce my travel costs significantly, and money is already tight.

I like this idea too ... it's the same as the many customer reward schemes that popular businesses use (e.g. free 6th coffee, free 10th movie) that is very commonplace. It could encourage people to think about that next bus journey and how it builds towards a reward.

This proposal was supported by **WellingtonNZ** on the grounds that fare capping makes public transport more attractive to domestic and international visitors, which will increase use of services. They also observed:

This aligns with WellingtonNZ's goal of developing and accessing tourism experiences for visitors to our city who wish to connect with our diverse range of tourism experiences in a sustainable way.

Support initiatives that will increase PT use

58 comments

A substantial number of respondents felt that introducing a fare capping discount would increase PT use. As a result, these respondents felt that traffic congestion and carbon emissions would both be reduced, and people would save money.

This sounds great, it would make me more inclined to get the bus.

It's giving incentive to commuters not to take their car etc.

This would help heavy public transport users to decrease their cost of transport and would encourage people to use public transport more consistently as their costs decrease the more they use the network.

*Yes, let's reward people for choosing to use public transport regularly.
Great initiative for wider climate goals.*

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

A couple of people noted the initiative would encourage weekend travel, with one recommending weekend services be implemented along the Melling Line to further encourage patronage.

Initiative supports frequent PT users

27 comments

A considerable number of respondents were pleased that this initiative would reward those who frequently travel on PT, particularly commuters.

This could be beneficial for commuters or other heavy users of the public transport network, especially if the half price fare initiative currently in place is not extended/adopted for the longer term.

I love this idea. Rewarding people for using the bus more regularly. The more you use it the more you save.

Other support

21 comments

Several respondents made various suggestions that they felt should either accompany or replace the proposed initiative. These included introducing it with a trial period, capping fares “at the same price as petrol”, that it should depend on the overall length of the journey taken; that government employees should be eligible for a discount; or simply that the continuation of half-price fares would be a better solution.

A small number of others noted that it would be important to ensure the system was implemented in a way that benefited everyone. For example, it was noted that shift workers who do not work a standard week may not benefit as much as those who travel 5 days a week. Other points raised included ensuring it didn't increase the cost of normal tickets or create too big a differential for less frequent users, and ensuring discounted travellers could also access the fare cap.

This should be calculated at full fare price. So a discounted traveller has an equitable chance of reaching the cap during the period.

A few others requested clarity around how it would be funded or how the fare capping discount would sit alongside 10-trip tickets or monthly passes. The **Kāpiti District Council** raised this concern stating:

Council is concerned people that currently buy ten trip and monthly tickets should not be disadvantaged by these new proposals.

A couple of people warned against making the system too complex, with one noting:

Would need to be easy to understand for budgeting though.

Initiative supports people on lower incomes

5 comments

Five respondents supported fare capping as it will help make PT more affordable and accessible for those on lower incomes. One person noted the following potential benefits for people with a disability or chronic illness:

For many monthly fares are unaffordable but this option encourages multiple trips with is particularly important for accessibility. Many people with a range of disabilities or chronic illness to not meet the strict criteria of existing concessions or cannot afford the associated fees. This would significantly affect such people's ability to access health, well-being and social aspects of society. It would increase access for those already able to access a concession or those who choose to walk in the winter rain because of the accumulated costs of choosing public transport (or not having other options).

Opposition to 35% fare capping discount (30 comments)

Concerns fare capping discount is not useful

15 comments

A moderate number of respondents opposed the proposal to introduce a fare capping discount of 35%, arguing that this will have little benefit. These respondents argue that as only regular users will benefit from this additional discount, it is unlikely to encourage more people to use PT, or that the discount is not high enough to be worth implementing.

Would not likely provide any benefits to the majority of users and those that do use busses/trains more than two trips a day and/or eight trips would likely be using a pass in which case the discount would not apply to them.

Seems like this would only apply to people who already use public transport on the regular, and doesn't sound like an incentive for casual users to keep taking trips everyday just so that they might have a further discount later in the day/week. They should feel like they are able to travel on good fares any day, not conditional to requirements listed above.

Fare capping is just that - a cap as in a limit. A complicated discounting scheme for frequent usage doesn't seem appealing or encourage public transport usage outside of commuting.

Concerns system is too complicated

9 comments

Several respondents opposed this initiative as they felt that it is too complicated and this complexity would act as an additional barrier.

The number of discounts is also quite confusing and may mean people have difficulty knowing how much they will pay.

These types of fares make our already complicated ticketing even more complicated and more confusing to visitors and non-regular users. It makes it hard for people to know what ticket they should be getting, and discourages people from using the public transport system. We need a simple ticketing system which is plain and easy for everyone to understand, especially if they are a visitor or not a regular public transport user.

Other opposition

6 comments

A small number of other comments were made, expressing opposition to this proposal. These ranged from simple statements like "don't do it", to assertions that users should be paying full fares for the service.

Queries or suggestions on 35% fare capping discount (130 comments)

Support for free PT

28 comments

Making all PT free instead of offering various discounts, including the proposed 35% fare capping discount, was a solution favoured by a considerable number of respondents. The respondents argued that free PT would result in greater PT patronage, lower carbon emissions, reduce traffic congestion, and overall lead to a more effective PT system.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Make public transport free, if we want to really get people out of cars and onto public transport so we can reduce greenhouse emissions then make all public transport free, carrot not stick please.

In my opinion, public transport, at least on the regional level, should ACTUALLY be a public service, meaning fully taxpayer-funded, free to use for the individual, and not required to make a profit. It's been successfully done overseas and would ACTUALLY be equitable, affordable, and cut down heaps on confusion, administration, and traffic congestion through private transport.

Alternative approach

24 comments

A moderate number of respondents suggested alternative approaches that could be taken instead of the fare capping discount proposed. Several of these suggestions were based on existing systems around the world or in other New Zealand cities, including Christchurch, London, Adelaide, and Australia generally.

Should definitely implement what Christchurch has. Unlimited free transfers within 2 hours of first trip, pay for a maximum of 2 trips a day and 10 a week.

It would also be good to consider removing zones and everyone pays the same price. This has been successfully done all around the world. A good example is the system in Adelaide.

Good idea but like London one where you spend is maxed for the day.

Several respondents made other suggestions. A submission from **CCS Disability Action Wellington** recommended that GWRC introduce a payment option for fare capping that does not require full payment at the commencement of a period. Other suggestions included: introducing a 'one free transfer within a 60-minute period' scheme instead of a fare cap; implementing better weekly/monthly passes instead of a cap; applying a cap across different modes of transport; simply reducing overall price of PT;

A proper zone transfer system would negate the need for this policy. If I buy zone 1-11 on the train I can transfer to an inner city bus service or within a time limit on a single ticket.

Questions or concerns about the proposal

20 comments

A moderate number of respondents had questions or concerns about this proposal, which ranged from questions about how this change would be funded, to questions about the implementation of this discount and eligibility criteria.

Would such a discount apply if 2 or more modes of public transport are used in a single day such as train/bus/cross-harbour ferry OR train/bus/cable-car!

Will this give you more than the current discount offered by purchasing the monthly pass. If not then you will have lots of unhappy people who may not use the public transport.

Concerns about ticketing

17 comments

A moderate number of respondents made comments about ticketing and the implementation of the fare capping discount. Around half of these comments suggested that Snapper must be able to be used on trains as soon as possible to make using PT easier, and that discounts must be applied digitally.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Please run a system of ticketing that doesn't require cash on the train! Stations are now almost all closed so pre-buying tickets is inconvenient/difficult. Train tickets not linking with buses seems absurd. Let's just have one system for all public transport.

A few other respondents made calls to make it more straightforward when transferring between different modes of PT, for example from bus to train.

Concerns about network function and reliability 10 comments

Several respondents made comments about issues with reliability and timetabling, with respondents suggesting that in order for these (and other) fare proposals to be of value, issues with the network must be addressed first.

I think it's a good idea, but again, go back to previous comment about timetables. Not much ability to ride multiple times in one day when the trains are so infrequent - weekdays AND weekends.

Sounds like a good idea but a regular, reliable bus and train service would be even better.

Comments about exclusion of certain groups 3 comments

A few respondents discussed situations or groups who are excluded from this discount, these included: people who work less than 4 days away from home and are therefore unlikely to reach the cap threshold, and Total Mobility users.

Other comments or no comment 20 comments

Nine respondents had no further comments to add, while several other comments were made that did not fit into any of the above categories.

Findings from specific groups

Comparisons were made between different groups of respondents. Refer to the description on page 15 for more information on this process.

Where people live

- > Respondents from Porirua City were most likely to express general support for introducing a fare capping discount of 35%.
- > Those from the Kāpiti Coast District were the least likely to argue for implementing a total cap on travel and offering additional travel free once a threshold has been met (either by a dollar limit, or after a certain number of trips).
- > The proportion of respondents from Upper Hutt City who made comments in support of this initiative because they believed it would increase PT use was smaller than from other areas.

Reasons for travel

- > There were no significant differences between comments made by respondents who used PT for different reasons.

Transport mode preferences

- > A slightly larger proportion of rail than bus users made comments in support of a dollar fair cap.

Metlink should consider introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region

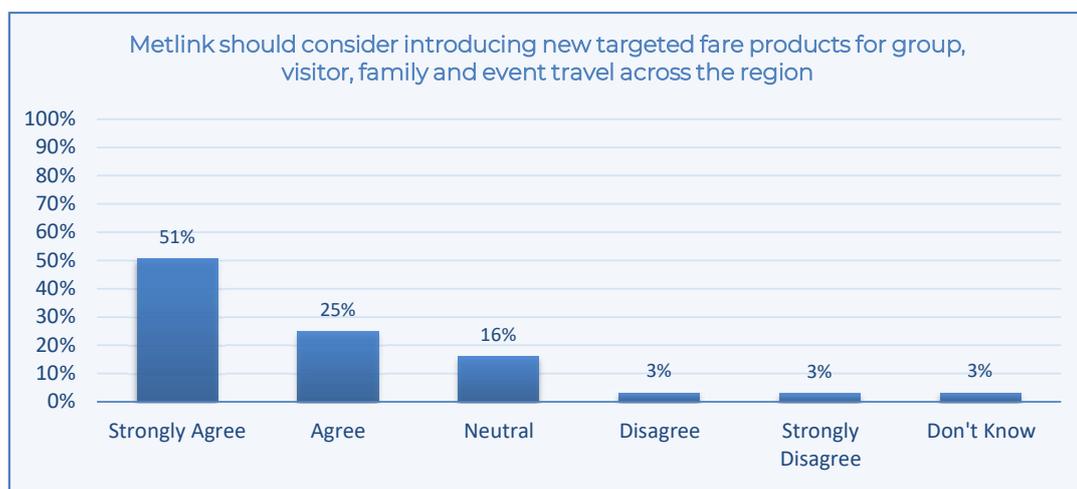
Summary findings

- > There was significantly more agreement (76%) than disagreement (6%), while 16% of respondents were neutral and 3% didn't know.
- > A high proportion of respondents were positive about this initiative, while also providing specific comments or suggestions on additional concessions.
- > Concessions for events and groups were the most commonly discussed. It was frequently proposed that transport fares be included within event ticketing prices. While fewer in number, there was also support for family and other group concessions, with arguments made that it should be easier and cheaper for a group to take public transport than it is to share a personal vehicle.
- > Tourism concessions were also frequently suggested, with a three-day pass popular. A commonly made point was that the system needs to be simple to access and understand. Greater simplicity was also sought for all users, not just tourists, with people suggesting enhanced Snapper capability as a mechanism to achieve this.
- > Regional travel concessions and connectivity across modes were also supported.
- > The respondents who were negative toward these initiatives (less than 10%) did so on various grounds, including that locals should be prioritised over tourists, and that a simple approach was better than complex targeted fares.
- > Again, other queries and suggestions about this approach included calls for all public transport to be free, as well as suggestions to improve transport infrastructure and the network. One group of respondents felt they needed more detailed information before they could provide an informed opinion.

Level of agreement or disagreement

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: *Metlink should consider introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region*

RESPONSE OPTIONS: Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Don't know



Results

Overall, there was significantly more agreement than disagreement with the proposal Metlink should consider introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region:

- > **527 (75%) respondents agreed overall**
 - o 354 (50.6%) strongly agreed
 - o 173 (24.7%) agreed
- > **41 (6%) respondents disagreed overall**
 - o 21 (3%) disagreed
 - o 20 (2.9%) strongly disagreed
- > **111 (16%) of respondents were neutral**
- > **21 (3%) of respondents didn't know**

Support for introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region (355 respondents)

General Support

31 comments

A considerable number of respondents offered general support for the initiative to consider introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region. These comments were mostly general in nature, with "great idea", "Clearly this needs to be done.", "Sounds good", "This makes sense to do", and other similar comments being made.

415 respondents selected this statement on a **Generation Zero** prepared form and provided it as part of their comment: "I believe that providing free fares for target groups is fundamental in addressing transport equity in the greater Wellington region."

Concessions for events and groups

72 comments

A substantial number of respondents focused on proposed concessions for events and group travel. These comments were supportive of a concession fare to support groups and families travel to specific events or days out. A number of consistent points were made, which are discussed below.

Include transport fares in event ticket prices (40)

Incorporating PT fares into the admission price of events hosted in Wellington and around the region was valued by half the respondents in this group. Other variations on this approach were having special event transport provided, with some stating that this transport should be free. The majority of these respondents made slightly different points focused on the same outcome, which was to increase transport provision and reduce costs for people travelling to events. These were some of the different points that were made:

Working with event-organisers (particularly those at the stadium) to include PT in the ticket could be particularly effective.

Maybe if you buy a ticket to an event at Te Papa (for example), it could include a discounted transport option as well.

GW should also work with regional sporting bodies to coordinate improved and targeted services to weekly sports events and competitions.

If you have events such as Matariki, etc. maybe that having special fares could help promote the use of public transport.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

A similar number of respondents focused on the transport issues associated with events more broadly. These comments generally advocated for improving the effectiveness and quality of PT during events, and the reduction in costs. This was a simple comment identifying the issue.

Event travel is a huge problem in Wellington - take a look at the recent Matariki transport problems.

Other specific points focused on: the need for improvement of the specific services provided for events; changes to assist those travelling from around the region such as Wairarapa; that options need to be simple and understandable for visitors to the region, particularly those visiting for a particular event; people should not be denied use of event travel based on method of payment, particularly cash; and greater publicity of event ticketing is needed.

The following is a comment which offered a solution for visitors.

Visitors want something easy to buy e.g. on new airport bus for a day or 3 days for example. Events - when I had to take a train it was great having a return trip. Having a pass that can be bought that includes all transport options e.g. bus and train would make it easy to encourage use all day rather just to go to the event and home. I have family who drive to events like sports as it's cheaper to pay for parking than the return train trip.

WellingtonNZ were in support of targeted travel products to events.

Concessions for family groups (19)

A moderate number of respondents discussed concessions for family groups. Respondents noted that for large family groups it's often cheaper to take a private vehicle, and supported more cost-effective PT for family groups.

This would make it a lot more fun for family days out when relatives or friends come from all over to visit.

Specifically for group and family travel and for multi-stage travel. To encourage public transport over carpooling. Group/family discounts would be really great when currently the combined individual tickets add up to be more expensive than splitting petrol/parking costs. If there could be some calculations done to look at the cost of 4 people driving vs. 4 people catching a bus or a train and basing the discounts off of that I think that would be a great approach.

A couple of respondents wanted to be able to use their Snapper card to pay for their visitors, while one respondent pointed out that family concession travel around the region would be useful.

I think there could be other options available such as group passes for families doing day trips to the Wairarapa and Kapiti or to Wellington from the regions.

Group concessions (13)

A moderate number of respondents discussed concessions for groups more generally, not just family groups. These comments were generally similar in nature, with a desire for it to be cheaper for groups of people to be able to travel together, rather than taking a car.

This would be a fantastic addition - especially if it makes it cheaper to travel as a group on public transport compared to jumping in a car together.

One respondent stated this should be applicable for school or sports groups.

Concessions for tourists

68 comments

A substantial number of respondents focused on proposed concessions for tourists and visitors. Overall, the comments argued travel for tourists should be easier and cheaper, as this would support greater tourism activity with subsequent economic and social benefits. Comments fell into a few discrete topics which are discussed below.

Make public transport suitable for tourists (20)

A moderate number of succinct comments felt there was a need for PT to be made suitable for tourists, and they supported the proposed focus on this area.

This could be good for visitors/tourists, as long as public transport actually goes where a visitor/tourist would want to go, with reasonable timetables.

A few respondents mentioned the good experiences they have had overseas and felt that the Wellington region should replicate this.

Yes I've used specific visitor targeted travel discounts in overseas cities and it definitely helps people to get out and about and explore the area they are in

WellingtonNZ made the point below, as well as specifically mentioning that this will improve travel for those visiting Tākina and other regional product offerings.

This step is vital to create clear and streamlined options for visitors to get to and between Wellington attractions around the CBD and wider region. Current products are focussed to a core commuter user group however more visitors can be encouraged to use public transport through the right product and information provision. This has been clearly evidenced by the early success of the Airport Express.

Passes available for tourists (26)

A considerable number of respondents focused on passes provided for tourists, most commonly discussing the length of time passes are usable for. A number of options were suggested, from one day to a week. The most common suggestion was for a three-day pass, with just under half of the respondents proposing this.

It might be more useful to visitors and tourists to have other options like a 3 day pass and 5 day pass. They won't necessarily care about weekends and may not be here for one. Also we want more people to visit attractions next on weekdays when there are fewer crowds.

Simplicity for tourists (14)

Several respondents focused on the need for whatever is provided for tourists to be easily understood and administered. Some raised the current complexity of Wellington travel, and others on their experiences as a tourist themselves, reflecting that often the system provided is not always easily understood by new users.

The public transport system in Wellington is currently quite confusing for visitors and so simplicity should be a key objective of a visitor fare

These schemes are often thwarted by "administrative boundaries" invisible to ordinary travellers or potential passengers.

Some specific points were made regarding how ease-of-use can be achieved: tickets that are easy to buy and use; pre-loaded tickets that can be fully refunded (such as in South Korea); setting up a daily limit on fares equal to the cost of a day pass; don't use time restrictions, "if a day pass make it all

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

day"; make any payment card (credit, debit) useable, and avoid throw-away specific cards; conversely, one respondents suggested providing a disposable Snapper.

Tourist passes should be easy to buy: mobile app, train terminal, airport, ferry terminal. Integrate it with access to paid attractions.

Link to specific attractions (8)

Several respondents suggested aligning transport products with specific tourism attractions or places, both ensuring tourists could access these or suggesting bundling travel tickets with price discounts. A variety of specific places or attractions were suggested, including Kāpiti, South Coast, Upper Hutt, Te Papa, The Zoo; Zealandia, the cable car, Matiu/Somes, The Beehive, Weta, Michael Fowler, Douse, go-karts.

A visitor ticket could give a discount to targeted attractions across all transit types (e.g. Zealandia, cable car, Matiu/Somes).

... the current options are lacking and expensive. I do believe that a larger range of options for tourists/visitors would increase their exploring other areas within the region. Eg. Kapiti, South Coast, Upper Hutt.

Snapper use and challenges

30 comments

A considerable number of respondents discussed the use of Snapper, with an overall focus on how its use could be improved.

A moderate number of respondents were focused on the current rigidity of Snapper and how this could be overcome. A small number of respondents wanted the capability to pay for visitors or others with one Snapper card, avoiding the need for Snapper purchases to be made for temporary use. Several respondents wanted greater payment flexibility, in particular the ability to pay with any credit or debit card, Apple Watch or phone. In particular, this flexibility was sought for occasional users. These were a couple of typical comments:

...links through to being able to use a flexible range of devices (phone, apple watch, Eftpos card etc.) that, in the backend, can keep track of the trips made as part of the all-day, all-week etc. type of pass.

My main issue is having to keep a spare Snapper for visiting friends/ family to use. They aren't necessarily tourists, but still need to get around. I would like the option of paying by debit card, as I did in London in 2016.

Several respondents were generally supportive of Snapper but sought functionality improvements for this payment method. They expected it to be able to automatically calculate the cheapest fare for users, and wanted it useable on all PT.

Don't make it too complicated. Just sell Snapper that calculate rolling discounts that REWARD kilometers traveled. Like a "Metlink Miles". This should extend to all intercity bus or train, including Cook Strait ferry and so called "tourist" trains to AKL and CHCH.

Yes! I've made use of the explorer day pass previously to go to Upper Hutt because at the time it was cheaper than purchasing train tickets and then also paying for bus fare. It's a great option. I wish I could get it through the snapper mobile app or in more locations though. And same goes for any other targeted fares you might introduce.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Simplified administration for all**27 comments**

Similar to the comments made above regarding simplicity for tourists, a moderate number of respondents sought simplicity for local users also. The sentiment in these two comments was frequently repeated:

Agree, but again I think there is a risk of over-complicating fare structures.

I think simplicity in the overall ticketing system is something to strive for.

This comment explained how the user shouldn't need to calculate the cheapest fare for each trip, this should happen automatically.

I agree but I think they should almost automatically apply - like a fare cap. People shouldn't have to think about which bundle to buy - the most efficient or lowest price should just apply to them once they start scanning on to public transport.

International and national examples**19 comments**

A variety of different examples of best practice from around the world and New Zealand were identified. Often respondents stated they have appreciated what was offered overseas or suggested replicating what is done overseas.

Again, see what other cities round the world do. Many ideas there. Including contactless tap on payment for any bank card.

While most people generally stated "overseas", other places held up as examples included: London (3), Sydney (2), Auckland (2), other cities in New Zealand (1), Berlin (1), Japan (1), Vienna (1).

Improvements for all travellers**19 comments**

A moderate number of respondents made relatively short comments expressing the opinion that either prices should not go up for regular users to compensate for these proposed discounts, or that discounts should be for everyone. These were a couple of representative comments:

Yes sure, none of these are bad ideas I just worry it will make regular prices shoot up.

Repurpose initiatives like this and give a standard discount to all customers

Support - but any offers should be available to all - not just visitors.

Might be better value to be targeting frequent travellers onto public transport, rather than one off travellers.

Increase public transport use**19 comments**

A moderate number of respondents made short supportive comments stating that the outcome of these changes would result in more public transport use.

Anything that encourages public transport is good.

Any measure which incentivises public transport is great given the benefits of reducing dependence on fossil fuels, reducing congestion, strain on infrastructure etc.

Concessions for regional travel**17 comments**

A moderate number of respondents focused on their desire for concessions to be provided for them to travel to the greater Wellington region and beyond. A couple of comments stated that concessions should be all day to provide enough time for people to travel these distances and

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

experience the destination. Some respondents highlighted that facilitating wider travel would benefit the regional economy.

This would be great if the trains ran on a weekend and to places like the Wairarapa more regularly.

We need more services to regional parks so people have choice in where they go also day trips to the Wairarapa or Kapiti from Wellington with PT.

Yes! There should be more offerings for these sorts of things, particularly for travel outside of the Hutt Valley/Wellington and further north. Travel up to Martinborough, Masterton or even Porirua can be a lot of work if you're somewhere quite far out, and so providing heavily discounted fare products will help people shift away from using private vehicles to travel those distances and also promote people to travel further out into the region to spend their money.

Connectivity across modes

13 comments

Several respondents suggested multi-modal ticketing bundles, particularly to allow people to travel across trains and buses with ease.

A pass that can be used across buses and trains would be great, especially if the price was lower than current options.

If you are wanting to encourage visitors, family groups and event travel to use public transport, where possible, multi-modal products would simplify things so for example, Wellington heritage week or International Festival of the Arts where events are scattered throughout the region, they can use bus and train with ease without the hassle of traffic or parking of a car.

Airport concession

7 comments

A small number of respondents felt an airport concession would be beneficial.

I think this is a good idea. However, you need to sort out some basics first like a bus to the airport so this becomes an attractive option to visitors who arrive in the region by air.

WellingtonNZ supported the Airport Express and identified it as a catalyst to connect visitors to the city and PT network.

Positive social and economic outcomes

5 comments

A small number of people emphasised that the initiatives would bring social and economic benefits, as well as environmental. They felt encouraging access to events would enhance community wellbeing and support businesses.

This is necessary if we want businesses to thrive when it's too expensive to drive.

Lowering the cost of accessing events for groups, families and visitors would encourage people to participate in events held in their area as well as the greater region. I think this would have a positive impact on the wider community and not just public transport users.

Other generally supportive comments

28 comments

A moderate number of respondents made comments covering a broad range of topics. These included:

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

A couple of respondents wanted concessions extended to Total Mobility users.

Concessions need to apply to these. Currently, a day pass cannot be discounted. As a total mobility card holder, I have to know exactly which trips I'll be taking in order to pre-purchase train tickets. That doesn't work for showing family around.

A couple of respondents wanted concessions extended to Gold Cards; another four respondents made the point that these fares should not have limited time restrictions, including off-peak times; and other two suggested hop-on, hop-off travel without additional cost.

Other one-off points referring to potential improvements were: fares should be flexible to cover individuals, multiple group sizes and different group combinations; a tertiary monthly ticket option; one payment with limitless travel; one weekend a month free to encourage people to get back into the city without using cars; a range of concessions is needed to meet unique user needs; unlimited travel should be available in shorter time periods; and travel inside a zone should be free

Other supportive statements were: improvements will lead to goodwill and greater use, changes would help staff to identify visitors, and a couple of respondents supported greater choice.

Kāpiti District Council were generally supportive, and also stated:

The threshold that is applied to group and family travel will also impact on take up and it is suggested that options are consulted upon once these are available. The definition of family may also be relevant, for example, if this is mum, dad and one or two children on a weekend then the family product would need to be cheaper than that for two full fare paying adults.

...Any events fare products should also apply to events across the region, and it would be useful to consult with Local Authorities involved in supporting major events to ensure that these are all captured, for example the Kāpiti Women's Triathlon and Kāpiti Food Fair.

Opposition to introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family, and event travel across the region (24 respondents)

Locals first

11 comments

Several respondents expressed the opinion that local users should be prioritised over visitors and that they should not subsidise visitor use, or that locals should be able to access the same discounts.

Visitors shouldn't pay less than locals for the same services.

No all commuters should be able to enjoy discounts.

Need for a simple, straightforward system

10 comments

Several responses objected to the proposed changes on the grounds that they were too complex. These comments echoed ideas made in supportive comments regarding the need for a straightforward system (discussed above), but these respondents explicitly rejected the proposed changes as unworkable. Most of these comments were quite short, but these two comments provide more detailed analysis and opinions:

No, a well-designed electronic fare system shouldn't need special case products. Using Snapper or the National Ticketing Solution should always automatically give you the best value for your journeys, without you having to think in advance about getting a

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

special pass added. If there's an Explorer like pass integrated into Snapper, surely a good fare-capping system would do the same thing, for example.

Honestly just set up your charging structure, this is over complicating it. Have a monthly offering that incentivises repeat use and a weekly offering that is also value for money. Make it all digital so that people can use their phone to pick the offering of choice and scan a barcode on train entry. Turn your ticket sellers into people who only deal with cash customers, and check barcodes to ensure that people have paid. The system you are proposing currently does not make things simple to understand, how will anyone know what the correct fare is with multiple layered discounts. If the conductor gets it wrong can people challenge that without a manual of fares to refer to. I understand what you are trying to do here, but you are forgetting that this is public transport, simple and compelling offerings are the fundamental behind everything.

Other comments

3 comments

A couple of respondents stated that the current fares are fine and no change was needed, and one respondent stated that the Explorer Pass is too expensive.

Queries or suggestions on introducing new targeted fare products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region (62 respondents)

All public transport should be free

22 comments

A moderate number of respondents recommended that all PT should be free. Some just made that simple statement, while others went further and described the positive benefits that would come from that approach, including the reduction in car usage relieving congestion and minimising emissions; a simpler PT system; and supporting people on low incomes.

The following is one of the more detailed comments:

Make public transport free, if we want to really get people out of cars and onto public transport so we can reduce greenhouse emissions then make all public transport free, carrot not stick please. Also build more bus lanes over cycle lanes and buses move more people and need to be priority over cycling.

Improve transport infrastructure and network

16 comments

A moderate number of respondents discussed improvements to the PT system that they felt needed to accompany any fare changes. These included extending the bus and train services and timetable to better support events, especially late-night events, while others highlighted that commuters needed to be able to rely on more regular services.

Event travel would be particularly good, but in conjunction with better services to accommodate late night events.

Core travellers are commuters. Other groups are a bonus but reliability of services is essential for commuters. Currently reliability is absent.

A small number of respondents sought greater capacity; three of these comments wanted better services to Wairarapa and Johnsonville and one wanted more train capacity on weekends.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Two other related points were that PT should work well regardless of events, and quality destination management would assist PT for visitors.

Queries and requests for more information 13 comments

Several respondents raised questions or wanted clarification on particular points, some stating that they would need this information prior to them expressing an opinion.

Around half of these respondents requested additional specific information from GWRC on this proposal. This include aspects such as how it would be paid for, can the changes be modelled, and what the scale of the demand for visitor products is.

I generally agree but I am concerned that the GWRC has not provided any supporting information such as the funding and/or patronage impact. Without this information it is impossible to judge the real value of this change.

The other half of these comments made more generic statements, with some of these questions seemingly rhetorical. Questions included demands as to why some people should miss out on these proposals, while others questioned if the benefits would be returned or how dishonest behaviour would be avoided.

Why should people who don't have families be left out all the time? Is this discrimination?

Publicity and promotion 4 comments

A small number of respondents felt that promotion and education about current fare options was more important than changing them.

Current offerings represent reasonable value. Better promotion of available products would be a better use of resources.

Alternative solutions 3 comments

A small number of alternative solutions were suggested by respondents. These included: the new system calculating refunds for those who don't travel as much on monthly cards because they are working from home more; that it's more important to reduce fares for students; a fare cap would be better; and, a cheap fare provided through Mt Victoria tunnel.

About the process and no comment 26 comments

A small number of respondents made comments on the engagement process. Two comments made inferred that the engagement material was too complex. One respondent suggested that the engagement promotion should use more traditional channels and another suggested a business advisor should be consulted.

A moderate number of respondents (22) stated they had no comment to make.

Findings from specific groups

Comparisons were made between different groups of respondents. Refer to the description on page 15 for more information on this process.

Where people live

- > There were no significant differences in the number of comments made by respondents from different parts of the Wellington Region on this topic.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Reasons for travel

- > Respondents who use PT to access essential services including health and retail were most likely to
- > The same group also made more comments suggesting that instead of introducing new fares for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region, all PT should be made free.

Transport mode preferences

- > Bus users were slightly more likely to express support than rail users for including public transport fares with event tickets and making all public transport free.

Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure

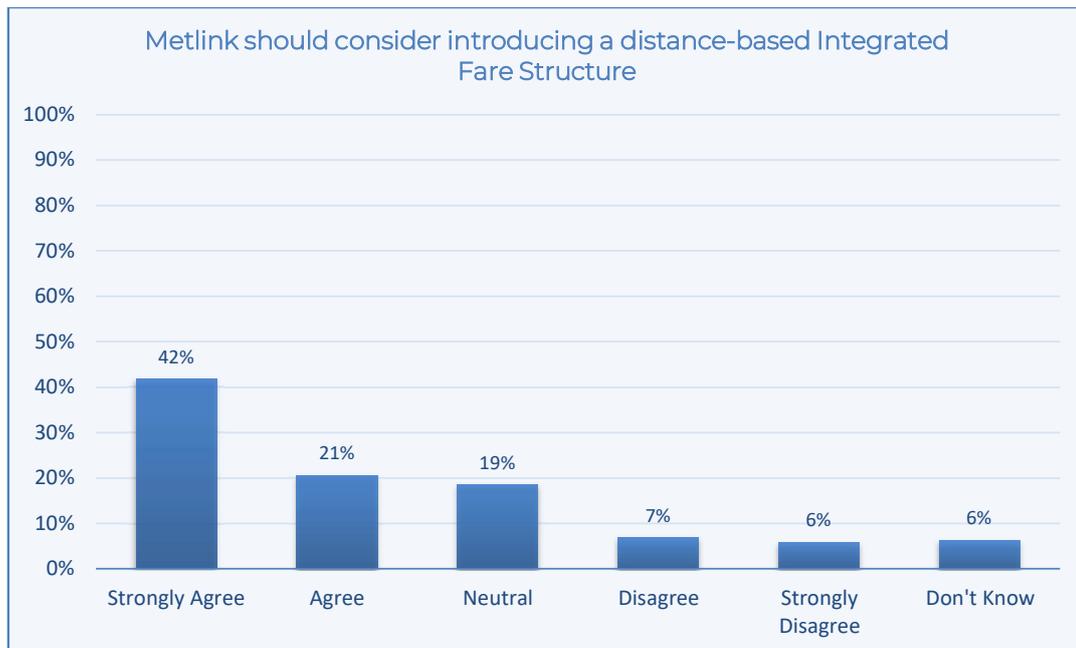
Summary findings

- > While around two-thirds of respondents agreed that Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure, support was often tempered with critiques of the navigability of the current system. This can be interpreted as strong support for a simpler and fairer system in which fares do not compound over a single journey that happens to cross zones.
- > The one fifth of respondents who were neutral on this initiative indicated a high degree of apprehension about how the initiative will be implemented, and comments reinforced there was some confusion over exactly what it will mean for various journey types.
- > Support was conditional from a considerable number of respondents on their resultant fares being cheaper for their particular journeys; these included indirect journeys that are not consistent with typical commuter journeys.
- > Opposition from a proportionally small group of respondents was primarily based on the fears that the system will be too complicated. Additional fears include that a distance model may be more expensive and/or disincentivise PT use. This was particularly the case for short trips.

Level of agreement or disagreement

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: *Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based Integrated Fare Structure*

RESPONSE OPTIONS: Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Don't know



Results

Overall, there was significantly more agreement than disagreement with the proposal Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based Integrated Fare Structure:

- > **434 (62%) respondents agreed overall**
 - o 291 (41.8%) strongly agreed
 - o 143 (20.5%) agreed
- > **41 (6%) respondents disagreed overall**
 - o 48 (6.9%) disagreed
 - o 41 (5.9%) strongly disagreed
- > **129 (19%) of respondents were neutral**
- > **44 (6%) of respondents didn't know**

Support for introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure
(320 comments)

Support the initiative but offer a critique

247 comments

Distance-based fares are fairer (60)

A substantial number of respondents supported this initiative on the basis that it appeared to make some journeys more equitable in terms of price than the current system.

Several respondents cited instances of needing to use indirect routes to access the places they want to go, and therefore having to pay high costs even though the overall distances were relatively short.

Fully support this initiative. Happy to hear it has been taken in consideration indirect journeys not to be penalised as the result of having no direct public transport routes.

I like the idea of a distance structure. The specific example given of Porirua to the Hutt Valley has been an absolute mess for me to try and navigate, and I think a system that acknowledges I've fundamentally taken a U-turn would be great.

This feels like the biggest and best change suggested. I never use public transport to go visit my friends in the Hutt, because it's twice as expensive a journey despite us actually not being that far away from each other (as the crow flies) and an inconvenient one to boot.

The respondent quoted above went on to state that they would use PT more often if the fare structure changed.

Multi-modal public transport use (35)

The ability to interchange between trains and buses was described as a welcome outcome by a considerable number of respondents. This was expressed variously in the form of complaints about the current costs and inconvenience of mode switching between trains and buses, and praise for the ways in which this initiative might streamline the process.

Good to streamline transport pricing across transport modes, especially train and bus. E.g., taking train into Wellington CBD, bus within CBD, bus to/from station could be priced as a package, and encourage people working in one end of the CBD to dine/shop in the other end.

A proper zone system is needed. I pay 1 to 11 zones for monthly train travel. I'm then expected to pay again for the connecting bus from the Railway Station to work within zone 2.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Some respondents referred to being penalised, or having to “pay twice” when switching between PT modes, noting that this can discourage use of PT. Although most respondents cited bus and rail in their comments about multi-modal use, the ferry system was also noted in this context.

The transfer window of 30-minutes was described as narrow by one respondent, who wanted to see this broadened to allow more transfers with the one fare.

Current zone system not straightforward (34)

People reported having difficulty navigating the zones while keeping costs down, and generally noted that the current zone system is unfair or does not reflect the short distance as the crow flies of their journey. Around half these comments were examples offered by respondents of difficult journeys involving crossing zones, fare changes across zones, and general difficulties and injustices with the current zone system.

The zone system here in the Hutt is perverse. To get from Naenae to Waterloo you have to pay for two zones while if you travel from Waterloo to Petone you only have to pay for one zone. This is unfair and provides another disincentive to use public transport.

Several respondents suggested that the number of zones should be reduced, better integrated, expanded (so that there are fewer, but larger zones), or combined.

It sounds fairer in theory, but also more difficult to implement. What about just halving the number of fare zones and making them all cheaper?

Also having less zones, merging some of these locations would immediately benefit a lot of people.

Fourteen zones were considered too many by some, and a few made the suggestion that 3 or 4 zones would be an optimal number. A couple of respondents suggested they currently ‘work the system’ to avoid excess cross-zone journeys, and that this makes travel more difficult and frustrating.

Long distance fares will be cheaper (34)

Respondents wanted to ensure that any changes to fare structures based on distance would increase affordability. There was fear that those living further out from Wellington City would be subject to higher PT costs, and that this may disproportionately impact on lower income people who have moved away from the city due to high housing costs and high cost of living.

I would want to make sure that customers in Wairarapa aren't penalised by having a distance-based fare structure, as while it is further, there are less options and could create a cost burden.

Typically, it is poorer people who have to travel further- those who are disadvantaged by distance fees.

Ensuring it is easy to use and affordable for all ranges of trips will be important. As many people working in Wellington have to move further out of the city due to rising rent costs, housing shortages and more, we can't have their commute costs high too just because they've had to move away.

General comments were made hypothesizing about whether the introduction of a distance-based integrated fare structure would result in lower process for them, considering their journey start and end points. (E.g., Linden to Seaview; Kāpiti to Hutt Valley; from Waterloo, Petone, or Waikanae; “north of Wellington”; and, the Wairarapa).

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

I currently live in Wellington but am moving to Ōtaki. It will be cheaper for two of us to drive in to Wellington city than catching the train. Any initiatives to encourage us to leave the car at Waikanae will be appreciated.

If it reduces costs for longer distance travellers, excellent.

Examples from other cities (27)

A considerable number of respondents cited PT systems in other cities as examples to strive to emulate. These examples were viewed as highly functioning, fair, or easily used. London was held as an example for its travel card, its nationalised ticketing system, and its PT system allowing the use of credit or debit cards (or other contactless payments).

Other international cities including San Francisco's BART system, Hong Kong, Vancouver, and Austria were offered as examples for flexible and easy to use systems.

I recently read about the Klimaticket in Austria. Where a 1-year ticket for all public transport is EUR 1095 and one for Salzburg region is EUR 365. Imagine a Wellington Region ticket, valid for 12 months that only cost NZD 625. I wonder what that would do to the behaviour of people when it comes to using public transport.

Auckland, Christchurch, and Australian cities (Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane) were cited a small number of times each. Auckland's system was deemed to work well, with overall lower costs over longer distances. The PT system in Christchurch was admired for its flat fares and low number of zones.

Please look at the Melbourne system where almost every trip is equal cost. It needs to be overall a simpler and cheaper system. Rail needs to be notably easier and cheaper for work time commuters over a vehicle.

Oppose increasing some/any fares (26)

A considerable number of respondents explicitly stated that, although they support the initiative, their support was conditional on fares not increasing to cover the costs of a restructure. Short phrases such as "only if it makes it cheaper" and "I don't want this to increase my fares" were made alongside more detailed examples, shown below.

Care must be taken to ensure the benefits of the aforementioned discounts are not eroded by any extra costs incurred by a new fare system.

I just don't want you to increase fares, using a 're-structure' such as that described above, as a disguise to increase fares.

Snapper and ticketing (25)

Snapper was supported by the majority of those who discussed it as the payment system for PT in Wellington. The ability for all PT to be integrated through Snapper was called for; this was seen as making the use of PT more accessible and more attractive for passengers.

Great idea. As above, people shouldn't have to think too much about their trip. They should just be able to scan on and the pricing be worked out at the most efficient rate for their circumstances and then be capped for the day/week/month.

Automated systems which calculate the cheapest option were supported, as were contactless credit card or debit card payments that attract the same discounts Snapper cards do.

For electronic ticketing this would work well, the Metlink explorer day pass, should automatically be activated if that is cheaper than a number of individual trips.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

No flag fall or fixed start fee (11)

There were several comments about flag fall rates (fixed start fees), most of which called for no, or a small flag fall rate. These comments reiterated the broad concern respondents have about the expense of PT.

I think if a flag-fall fee is added, it should be kept small. Making a short trip across Wellington CBD shouldn't be prohibitively expensive, considering the alternative might be a >20 minute walk in the rain.

Most of the comments on this topic were about shorter journeys, and the ways in which passengers might be discouraged from using PT for short journeys.

Other critiques (4)

A small number of respondents addressed the issue of parking, suggesting it was necessary at train stations (free of charge) to encourage PT use, while one person described the provision of parking as an oversubscribed system that encourages car use over PT.

General support**50 comments**

A considerable number of respondents offered general statements in support of a distance-based integrated fare structure. Two-thirds of the general comments in support of the initiative were statements with general positive sentiment such as "agree with this", "much fairer", "great idea", and "like the approach".

Any extra concessions and discounts would be excellent.

I'm surprised this hasn't been implemented already.

Several noted that the initiative appears to be simple, fair or just, or that it appears fairer than the current system. One respondent felt that the distance-based integrated fare structure "just makes sense".

WellingtonNZ considered this proposal from the perspective of visitors to the region and made the point below as well as stating that it may increase the length of time people stay and better connects visitors with locals, as well as encouraging greater exploration of the regions by public transport rather than by car.

Exploring beyond the immediate CBD can be daunting to visitors without a car. Getting to Wellington Zoo, Weta Workshop, the South Coast beaches and marine reserve, Makara Peak, trail heads and other parts of the region such as Kāpiti and Wairarapa can be confusing. Consideration needs to be made around how visitors access the public transport network to these and other attractions.

Will increase public transport use**15 comments**

Several respondents stated that this system would encourage people to use PT, or that PT as a public good ought to be readily available and accessible. The ease with which passengers could use this proposed system was deemed likely to encourage use.

This is more fair to the consumer and incentivises them to use public transport more.

This has the potential to encourage mode shift as it makes end to end journeys more seamless.

Opposition to introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure (64 comments)

Proposed system is too complicated

27 comments

A considerable number of respondents disagreed that Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure on the basis that it appears complicated. Comments routinely expressed this, using phrases such as “too complicated”, “you are really complicating things”, and “I think this is over-complicating matters”.

One respondent used the word convoluted to describe the initiative, and another stated it would be “more complex than zones”.

Several suggestions were made from those who opposed the initiative in support of making all PT cheaper (or free, which is discussed under its own heading), and removing the ‘tap off’ aspect of Snapper use.

It runs the risk of being too complicated, too expensive and too inconvenient for the very riders you would expect to target, that is, those who take long trips.

Time based, not distance. It's been working in Christchurch for 20 years. Seriously, get with the times. Tap on, all trips covered for two hours. Tap on again after that, all trips covered for the rest of the day. Tap on twice a day for five days, the next two are free. Simple. Everyone understands. Everyone knows what they're getting. Longer trips take more time, so you get a distance system without the complication of one.

Anticipated consequences of an over-complicated system included reduced use of PT generally, increased costs to the provider, and the potential for these increased costs to be passed on to the consumer. Respondents consistently expressed frustration at the thought of using a complicated system, with one person stating “it’s a bus, not a spaceship”. This was part of an argument both against the proposed initiative, and in support of free PT for all.

General opposition

20 comments

The distance-based integrated fare structure was mostly criticised based on the perception that it would penalise those taking short trips. Such an initiative was feared to discourage PT use due to shorter distances attracting disproportionately larger fees.

One respondent stated they didn’t think the system “would be workable”, offering no further discussion, and another wanted to see “better discounts for shorter journeys” to encourage more users for short period travel.

Charging by distance will make trips from the Wairapara and Waikanae a lot more expensive by comparison to trips within Wgtn City.

It would cost me more to get the train to and from work therefore encouraging me to drive to a cheaper train station than walk like I currently do.

One respondent wanted to see higher prices for longer commutes, arguing that this would encourage central living; another argued that this initiative could encourage commuters to drive to “better stations for cheaper (train) fares” and cause car parking pressure.

The fare structure should remain based on zones for simplicity, with consideration given to how east-west or other ‘indirect’ journeys are charged. Journeys should be charged from zone of first boarding to zone of last disembarkment regardless of the number of changes.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Prefer current or simplified zone system

17 comments

Several respondents approved of the current system, while a small number preferred a simplified zone structure to what is proposed.

Supporters of the current zones system labelled it fair, less complex, easier, or less confusing than what is proposed. Those who expanded on their opinion felt that the charging structure for this initiative was difficult to calculate, and therefore less predictable for passengers (many of whom, it was suggested, would prefer prior knowledge of exactly how much their journey will cost for planning purposes).

I think a distance based fare structure would be more complex than zones. It would make it harder to predict the cost of a journey without using an online tool. E.g., I know any bus within Wellington City is within zones 1 - 3, so therefore I already know how much I should be charged for a given journey.

Too confusing compared to a zone based system.

One respondent stated that the “zones work fine” and another thought that the zone structure “works well” but wanted to see further information so that the resulting system is “what’s best for customers”.

A small number of respondents reported that a simplified zone system would work well, often suggesting reducing the number of zones (again, to 3 or 4).

I disagree. I think a simpler zone based system would be better. Reduce the number of zones. Auckland did a good job with their reduction in zones and the natural geographic divisions in Wellington could provide logical zone boundaries.

Queries or suggestions around introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure (191 comments)

Respondents commonly offered suggestions as to how the proposed initiative could be rolled out, or how a reliable and connected network would look. The vast majority of comments were from those who indicated support, strong support, or neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposed initiative.

A simple and easy to use system is preferable

39 comments

A considerable number of respondents supported the initiative but urged that any PT pricing structure needs to be simple to use or, similarly, stated that any new system should not be too complicated.

Around half of the comments expressed the fear that this initiative sounds too complex, stating things like “it sounds more complicated than it should be”, and “this sounds confusing”.

It sounds like another idea that's too hard to understand. I prefer the idea of a fare cap. It's easier to understand.

This seems initially quite confusing. I think people like to have upfront costs?

Sounds way more complicated than the current system. Want to see some examples first. What other cities use this system?

The other half of comments expressed a similar sentiment using phrases such as “it needs to be simpler”, “not sure if you could make this easy to use”, and “agree, but make it easier to understand”.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Provided the systems were easy to use and understand, and there are fail safes in place, it could work.

Make all public transport free or much cheaper

37 comments

A considerable number of respondents made the point that all PT should be free. Such comments came from both those who agreed and who disagreed with introducing a distance-based integrated fare structure.

Free PT was deemed a simple and effective way to avoid complicated fare structures, and free or considerable cheaper PT was thought an effective way to encourage PT use.

Respondents were often succinct in their comments, stating things like “it should be free”, “free transport is simple”, and “should be free for everyone”, while the following comments offer more elaboration:

Public transport is essential infrastructure and should be free or at the very least run publicly, not for profit.

Yes. It should be simple and integrated. Consider making all public transport free. This the simplest and will get the most people out of their cars which cause congestion and ill health.

Don't need zones if you make it free. Making it free will encourage people to take longer journeys which will be more environmentally friendly.

Alternative approaches

35 comments

Two-thirds of the comments discussed under this heading were in support of a flat fee or fare capping for journeys. Fare capping was thought to be a simple way to ensure consumer confidence in PT journey planning for costs. Again, many comments referenced the concept of simplicity and the importance of non-complicated fares structures, as the following examples show.

Still confusing and cumbersome. Why not just a flat low ticket price no matter what?...or free?

Are there not other ways around the identified problems, such as daily fare caps.

I'm thinking in relation to my experiences in London with the travelcards, which provided very good value, and are now embedded in their ticketing system through fare capping.

Several respondents suggested time-based fares, such as a two-hour free transfer system (as in Christchurch) or, more broadly, indicating support simply for “time-based ticketing”. Similarly, a few people supported a maximum daily charge, both to keep costs down and keep things simple.

Some countries use a time-based system - this can be a proxy for indirect travel? So for example cap charge at one hour? Indirect travel could take longer?

Queries or questions

33 comments

The majority of comments in which a query or question was raised sought more information about the initiative. Respondents called for more detail about how it would be implemented, as well as for examples of how other countries/cities operate fare structures, and called for more research into the ways in which commuters might be impacted by the proposed changes.

Several specific queries were made, including the following.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

I would love to know more about how distances might be 'rounded' or 'quantized'; for example, I have two routes from Karori and that drop me in the Wellington CBD a few blocks apart - say Ghuznee St and Manners St. One of these will be a couple of hundred meters further from my house, as the crow flies - will I be charged more for that journey?

I would need to know more information about the distance based fare structure but I think it is a good idea and could increase the usage of public transport.

It would be useful to know what the likely/your desired fixed ("flag-fall fee") and variable (per km fee) charges would be. Without this it is hard to evaluate your proposal.

A small number expressed reticence about how the initiative would work, making statements such as “sounds difficult to do”, and “not sure about this”. Additionally, those who have monthly passes covering multiple zones wondered how the initiative applied to them.

A couple of respondents wanted to see further consultation.

Reliability, capacity, and scheduling

16 comments

A moderate number of respondents expressed concerns about issues with delayed services, services running at or over capacity, timetabling, indiscriminate ticketing, or scarcity of services at certain times (such as the weekend).

Ferry services were described as “just horrible” by one person, and several respondents described full carriages, and bus replacement services that are uncomfortable, inconvenient, and time consuming.

There was consensus that the end goal for GWRC should be an efficient and reliable PT network.

One thing that's not in this survey is compensation to customers for delayed services or cancelled services. Why isn't that part of the review?

Other or no comment

28 comments

Several respondents had issues with the questions as asked in this consultation, labelling this one long, complex, and/or difficult to understand.

Remaining comments were on a range of topics from a call to have adults-only carriages, to points made that older people may not have access to phone apps that are designed to make PT use simpler, and that COVID-19 has impacted on people’s earning capacity and mental health (the broader point here being that this consultation has not come at a useful time for them). Several respondents offered no comment, or stated that this issue did not apply to them.

Findings from specific groups

Comparisons were made between different groups of respondents. Refer to the description on page 15 for more information on this process.

Where people live

- > There no significant differences in the proportions of comments made by respondents who lived in different parts of the Wellington region.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Reasons for travel

- > There were few differences in the feedback received from groups who use PT for different purposes, though those who use it to access essential services made the most comments calling for all public transport to be free for all users.

Transport mode preferences

- > There were few differences in the proportions of comments made by bus and rail users on the topics in this section. Rail users were slightly more likely to express general support.

Other comments

The majority of the comments analysed and discussed in this section are from submissions made via the Generation Zero website where members of the public were able to select any number of pre-written statements as personal key priorities, and could then provide an additional comment if they chose.

The points which focused on the questions asked in the engagement have been presented in relevant places in the body of the report. Other submissions made by individuals or organisations are included in discussion where relevant, and are named (and bolded) when from organisations.

Summary findings

- > The greatest number of comments offered by submitters, all submitted via the 'additional comments' field of the Generation Zero website portal, were about climate change and the need for better and cheaper PT to combat the worst effect of climate change. Emissions reduction was a key goal for this group.
- > Free public transport was supported in substantial numbers of Generation Zero additional comments, sometimes for climate change and environmental reasons and sometime for social good reasons. Free PT was deemed
- > Free or discounted student travel was supported by a considerable number of Generation Zero and Victoria University of Wellington submitters.
- > Other groups facing financial hardship were also said to benefit from free PT, this included CSC holders, people with disabilities, children, and the elderly.
- > Broad social and economic benefits of PT use were discussed and such benefits were said to have positive impacts at a community wide level.

Generation Zero feedback

Over 400 respondents submitted feedback via a form contained on the Generation Zero website. The numbers below show how many Generation Zero respondents indicated support for each statement. Their 'additional comments' are discussed below, by topic heading.

418 respondents selected the statement: "...and making all total mobility services free for total mobility card holders".

416 respondents selected the statement: "I support the inclusion of all total mobility services in the proposed concessions".

415 respondents selected the statement: "I support free public transport for school age children at all times".

414 respondents selected the statement: "I expect Greater Wellington Regional Council to express leadership on our journey to net zero by promoting mode shift in transport, I believe this must start with our target groups".

414 respondents selected the statement: "I support disability justice and climate justice trainings for all councillors, to ensure that their transport decisions are informed and just".

396 respondents selected the statement: "I support Greater Wellington Regional Council making public transport free for under-25's, Community Service Card holders and tertiary students".

Enable more travel

139 comments

Free public transport (53)

A substantial number of **Generation Zero** respondents called for free PT as part of the solution to a range of issues. These issues have been discussed elsewhere, however these comments highlight the benefits that removing all costs to PT could have.

Beneficiaries of free PT included: people on a low income (students, children, older people, people with disabilities, part time workers, people with children, and under 25s); the environment; and, the community at large. One respondent stated that when well-off people elect to access free PT, this will indicate a successful PT system.

I also think free fares are a success if they get rich people using public transport, as well as the groups identified above.

Many of the comments were broad statements simply calling for free PT:

I personally think these services should be free for everyone.

Without free or accessible public transport, it means accessing essential and public services like school, supermarkets, libraries, doctors could be too difficult and be overlooked.

Several of these comments indicated that free travel for students was of particular concern to them; note that student travel is discussed below.

Student travel (38)

A considerable number of responses, almost all from **Generation Zero**, called for more accessible PT for tertiary students, with many noting their low incomes cannot stand up to the high accommodation and food costs they face.

Personal transport is becoming unattainable for many students who had to move outside the city in order to afford rent in this housing crisis. The message of reducing personal transport has been spread and continues to be heard, so free public transport will encourage a higher rate of public transport use.

As a student we operate on a budget and because rent and many other things are becoming even more costly, it would be really beneficial to have free public transport to get around, to uni, and it would be much safer at night to have it available.

In their capacity as tertiary student representatives, **Victoria University of Wellington** states that:

The University has joined the Free Fares campaign and are encouraging central government to make public transport free for students (along with Community Services Card holders and Under-25s).

Some noted the disproportionate negative impacts that students face in the event of price increases and made the point that alleviating transport costs would substantially lighten the burden for this group.

Cheaper fares reduce hardship (19)

A moderate number of **Generation Zero** respondents commented that having tight financial margins means mandatory transport costs can come at the expense of other needs (including food) or that it can exclude people from using public transport.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Groups mentioned as experiencing hardship included those on a low income who perhaps do not qualify for assistance or subsidies, or other disadvantaged groups.

Many lower-income people who are not eligible for the CSS would benefit immensely from ongoing cheaper fares, and these fares would further incentivise PT use.

Being able to go places is a fundamental human right and should be accessible for all people. Taking steps towards this is great, but please continue to work towards a more equitable service for all.

An additional submitter was in favour of addressing transport disadvantage for the following groups:

- > People who require a number of trips to access work;
- > People who require long trips to access work;
- > People with children;
- > Car-less people;
- > Low income people; and
- > People with mobility and other health issues.

People with disabilities (16)

People with disabilities were cited by a moderate number of **Generation Zero** respondents (and a few others) as in need of free PT. While a few focused on Total Mobility and called for this service to be subject to significant discounts (or made free), most respondents discussed the need for people with disabilities to have barriers to PT reduced or removed where possible.

The truest measure of how enriching, accessible and dignifying our society is, is how meets the needs of those who are most vulnerable. Free public transport for the poor, disabled, and students will greatly enable our access to essential services, connection to friends and family, and inclusion in education, recreation and cultural events.

Children/elderly people (9)

Vulnerable groups such as the elderly and children were also raised as groups who would benefit from free PT. In some cases, the identification of such groups was secondary to a broader goal, such as reducing emissions, but the overall sentiment was most often to target groups in need.

Very important especially for the elderly.

I want to stop climate change by having more people use buses. Especially kids.

Elderly people were said to benefit greatly from use of the Super Gold Card travel discounts, and this initiative was supported.

General/other comments (5)

Remaining comments included a few calls for travel to be made easier for people (including one suggestion to make a cash fare available by way of a gold coin), and a comment in support of a maximum fare cap to simplify journeys.

Anticipated benefits from PT use

111 comments

Climate change and sustainability (65)

A substantial number of **Generation Zero** respondents made comments about PT's potential to reduce the impacts of climate change. All comments were submitted via the Generation Zero website and were offered as 'additional comments' to those that they selected as their key priorities (which are summarised in the text box above).

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

Comments advocated for increased PT uptake as an efficient way to reduce emissions. Respondents wanted to see reduced dependence on fossil fuels, a reduction in carbon footprints/carbon emissions, and also cited zero emissions as a vital goal.

I am a car owner but try to limit my use of it to protect the climate. Buses are my primary mode of transport for getting around Wellington. Keeping fares low and investing in public transport will mean that low-income Wellingtonians like me will be incentivised to keep using public transport as a sustainable option.

It is evident that Climate action and equitable justice for all our communities goes hand in hand, as such, we need a transport system that recognises this and a council that acts accordingly.

In the face of the climate crisis, it is imperative that the GWRC acts boldly without reservation. Public transport is one of the best ways to reduce emissions, and improve accessibility within the region.

Many comments passionately advocated for local and regional governments to increase their efforts to prioritise PT as a sustainable solution to mitigate climate change.

Social and economic benefits (30)

The social and economic benefits of increased PT use were described by a considerable number of respondents, the vast majority of which were again from **Generation Zero**. Respondents spoke of reducing inequality and making PT accessible for those who need it most. Several raised the issue of increasing living costs and the financial difficulties faced by growing numbers in the community.

There's a cost of living crisis and growing, serious, unacceptable inequities in our society. Free transport for vulnerable groups is such an important way to relieve financial pressure and enable participation in society.

Families are struggling. This is better for the environment and reducing our carbon foot print.

Many of the comments listed a range of community-wide benefits, suggesting these are linked and that solutions to a range of issues can be found in cheaper or free PT.

This is how we solve our energy crisis, congestion crisis, climate crisis and equity crisis. It not only makes good economic productivity sense (you can't work while you're driving) but it is a moral imperative to ensure that all people can afford to get to work and school in these challenging times.

It was important to a number of respondents that people be able to get to work and school, and that elderly or disabled people be able to get out in their communities and interact with as few barriers as possible.

Wellington NZ submitted in support of the initiative to target those who need it most with respect to affordable travel.

Reduce congestion (10)

Several **Generation Zero** respondents cited reduced road congestion as a community-wide benefit from increased PT use. This was noted as bringing both environmental and broader benefits.

Free public transport would also reduce the number of cars on the road. This would make costly projects such as widening roads or tunnels unnecessary.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

General increased use of PT (5)

Initiatives that encourage the use of PT were broadly supported by a small number of **Generation Zero** respondents, for no stated reason other than that PT was a good alternative to cars. Encouraging people to use PT was deemed implicitly to be beneficial.

Please, please. It's so important to encourage a modal shift and this is such an important change!

Overall fare system improvement

17 comments

Note that submissions discussed under this heading are from local and regional councils, organisations (bar Generation Zero), and individual submitters.

The moderate number of comments on this topic were in support of reducing or simplifying fares so that PT users can enjoy a streamlined fees system that will encourage rather than discourage PT use.

A new fare system was supported in which PT was made attractive and enticing; this meant affordable, easy to use and understand, capped for certain periods, free for certain population segments, free on public holidays, and a reduction in barriers (such as removing the 'tag off' function for Snapper cards use).

Kāpiti Coast District Council offered broad support, stating:

Council supports many of the proposals in the Fares Review 2022 since it has been advocating for reduced fares, particularly for the transport disadvantaged, and for measures to encourage mode shift and address climate change for some time.

They went on to state their support for accessing central government funding to encourage mode shift; they also noted that local outlets will need to be sourced where passengers can purchase and load electronic tickets if a smooth transition from paper to electronic ticketing is to be made.

Timetabling issues were brought up an issue for Super GoldCard holders, for whom reduced fares were not often able to be accessed on certain routes due to a lack of services at those times.

Carterton District Council submitted on this point, as did **South Wairarapa District Council** (SWDC), who stated a preference that:

... free fares should be extended to those who travel with a SuperGold Card both peak and off-peak times. Currently this is the system in Auckland (after 9am) funded by Auckland Transport.

SWDC added that some Gold Card holders, although eligible, do not have a Community Services Card, and therefore would not be able to access the 50% travel discount.

The Gold Card was said by one individual submitter to act as a lifeline of sorts for some in the community, whose use of PT would otherwise not occur. They cited several social, economic, and environmental benefits from its use, which was praised for its simplicity of use for holders.

Disability Action Wellington advocating for Total Mobility (TM) Card Holders recommended that, in addition to TM, consider implementing a system for GP sign off, of a permanent impairment. They went on to note that "While recognising the difficulty of implementing such a process it would provide a more equitable concession".

Affordable public transport has a positive impact on people that are marginalized by poverty, loneliness and social isolation. Structuring fares at half price for all people would be the first choice. While services still need to be paid for, keeping public transport simple and attractive would eliminate a vast amount of work and product, releasing dollars that could be applied to services.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

They went on to add that a national ticketing system, while beneficial, could pose problems for those not digitally proficient or internet accessible.

A small number of individual submitters offered their support for the submission of **Age Concern**, in which GWRC was applauded for encouraging stronger use of PT, and in which support was offered for the CSC holder discount and greater regional connectivity.

Pōneke Collective for PT Equity submitted the following support for free fares for younger people.

We strongly advocate for free public transport for all children regardless of whether or not they are accompanied by a parent or guardian. This would produce positive benefits for teenagers particularly.

Lastly, **WellingtonNZ** called for “fast track actions to enable the delivery of the NEXT nationwide integrated ticketing solution”.

Service improvements

17 comments

Note that submissions discussed under this heading are mostly from organisations (including a few from Generation Zero), and individual submitters.

General services (10)

A small number of which were in support of an **Age Concern** submission calling for “appropriate timetabling and reliability” particularly on the Wairarapa line, and particularly at weekends. Older people were said to be disadvantaged by lack of services.

The three **Generation Zero** submitters anticipated that cheaper fares would lead to greater usage which would in turn result in improved services. This was the ideal path according to this group.

CCS Disability Action Wellington recommended that mobility parking spaces be a “primary consideration at all major transport hubs” to further increase the use of PT by those with disabilities.

One submitter wanted to see large buses on off-peak routes replaced with smaller ones, perhaps operating more frequently. They stated they are “truly grateful for the service”.

Network management and other (7)

A series of disparate comments were made about aspects of the network that could be improved, these included requests to: pay drivers better/well; promote walking/cycling; electrify the trains past Waikanae; ensure there is capacity in the network; and to place the bus network into public ownership and have all buses run on a 10–15-minute frequency rotation.

Remaining comments included a call for buses/trains to make accommodations for bikes and scooters (to allow mode-shift transportation options), and one comment from a passenger frustrated with drivers and passengers not understanding their mask exemption.

Bus drivers drive straight past me because I have no mask, they frown and yell, even though I wear my exemption on a lanyard and show them. It is traumatising and I am so tired of it.

Attachment 2 to Report 22.315

This report has been prepared by:

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Global Research
Turning Information into Insight



Greater Wellington
Te Pane Matua Taiao



Help us shape the future of public transport fares

Āwhinatia mai mātou ki te tārai i te
anamata mō ngā utu waka tūmatanui

Future Fares Review 2022

Te Arotake Utu ā-Anamata 2022

Public consultation: 17 June - 15 July 2022



metlink.org.nz | 0800 801 700

Chair's message

He Kupu nā te Tiamana

Public Transport in the Wellington Region is changing, and we'd like your help on how it might look in the future.



We have exciting developments planned across our network. These include the rollout of Snapper on our rail network and the introduction of the National Ticketing Solution. These will make public transport easier to access and will also improve the types of fares we can offer.

As part of a recent review of our fares structure, Greater Wellington has identified opportunities to improve how we price our fares, including the discounts and concessions we offer, the types of fares products, and how we structure our fares system. We believe the fares initiatives we're hoping to introduce will help us achieve our strategic objective of an 'efficient, accessible and low-carbon public transport network'. This will offer greater choice and flexibility for journey planning, fares and fare payment options.

In this fares consultation, we'll ask for your feedback on specific initiatives related to the concessions and discounts we offer. We'd also like your thoughts on new types of ticketing and pass products we're looking to introduce for group and visitor travel. Finally, we want to introduce you to, and get your thoughts on, a new Integrated Fare Structure. We're considering introducing this to implement the proposed National Ticketing Solution. This new structure will determine how overall journey costs will change with distance travelled, and will treat journeys across both our bus, rail and potentially ferry network as a single fare.

The initiatives we're considering introducing during this review have been designed to achieve four key outcomes. These outcomes align with Greater Wellington's values as a Regional Council, and with the policies we adopted in 2021 in our Regional Public Transport Plan.



Affordability of travel, with an emphasis of targeting those who may need it most



Modeshift - encouraging greater public transport uptake, with a focus on growth outside peak travel periods



Fairness in price an individual pays relative to distance travelled



Simplicity - making fares easier to use and understand

Your feedback on this fares review consultation will help Greater Wellington decide on the short-term fares-related initiatives we should adopt as well as longer term changes that may require further planning, funding and development to deliver. Your contribution will also help us consider our approach to the planning and implementation in the medium-term of other initiatives we're currently considering.

We look forward to hearing from you during the consultation period and welcome the opportunity to discuss our proposals with you during one of the digital engagement sessions the Metlink team are holding in early July 2022. We also welcome the opportunity to hear more from you on your submission. You can speak to your submission in person at the public hearings we'll be holding on the 3-4 August 2022.

This is an exciting time for public transport in our region. With the support of all our central and local government partners, our operators and our communities, we can continue to make informed decisions on public transport and keep our extraordinary region thriving, connected, and resilient.

Daran Ponter
 Greater Wellington Regional Council Chair

Context for this review & public consultation

Te horopaki mō tēnei arotake me te whakapāpātanga tūmatanui

Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) adopted Te Mahere Waka Whenua Tūmatanui o te Rohe o Pōneke Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan 2021-2031 (RPTP) on 29 June 2021. The RPTP guides the design and delivery of public transport services, information and infrastructure in the Wellington region.

The RPTP sets out a series of policies for Ko ngā utu me te tahua Fares and Funding under the policy objective: 'A fares and ticketing system that attracts and retains customers and balances user contribution with public funding'. Specific fares policies include:



Participating in an integrated ticketing solution that supports integration of fares and the public transport network



Applying a consistent fare structure and pricing approach that recognises the wider benefits and costs of public transport



Providing concession fares to targeted groups to increase access to affordable services for those who are most dependent on public transport



Providing incentives to encourage more frequent use of public transport, more off-peak travel and greater use of electronic ticketing

During public consultation on the draft RTP in February and March 2021, and public hearings the following April, Greater Wellington received many submissions on the topic of fares. And while we received a lot of public support for the introduction of a simplified and more efficient ticketing system across our network, a number of people called for the cost of public transport to be reduced - to make it a more accessible and attractive option for more people.

Since the RTP was adopted, the New Zealand Government has announced a range of initiatives to promote public transport usage, to help us achieve our country's climate change goals and make public transport more affordable for more people. One key initiative in Budget 2022 is the provision by the Crown of targeted funding to Public Transport Authorities, to provide half-price fares for holders of Community Service Cards from 1 September 2022.

After some years of having a dual ticketing system on the Wellington public transport network, one being Snapper on buses and the other being a paper-based ticketing system on rail, Greater Wellington's Public Transport Authority Metlink is currently rolling out electronic ticketing through Snapper on the metropolitan rail network. Once this work is completed in late 2022, we'll be able to implement a more consistent range of fares, concessions and ticketing products across the network. We'll also introduce an integrated ticketing system through the Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency-led National Ticketing Solution.



Before Greater Wellington adopts its new approach to fares and ticketing on our public transport network, we'd like to give our residents, customers, community groups and businesses the opportunity to give us feedback on three focus areas for this Fares Review:



Specific new concessions and discounts



New types of ticketing and fares products you might want to buy



How the overall journey costs will change across the region with distance travelled through introduction of a new Integrated Fare Structure

Over the following pages, we'll outline our specific proposals and ask for your thoughts and opinions on these. We'll outline how you can provide your feedback to us, including opportunity to make a public submission to our elected members, and the opportunity to participate in a series of digital engagement events where you can discuss our proposals with Greater Wellington officers and councillors from Greater Wellington, and our city and district council partners.



Specific new concessions and discounts

Ngā utu hou e hāngai ana me nga whakahekenga utu

Through our recent review of the current fares structure, Greater Wellington identified three issues associated with the concessions and discounts we currently provide. These were:



That we can contribute more to social good through increasing our targeted concessions for groups, including Community Services Card holders



That our current off-peak discounts were relatively modest in comparison with other public transport authorities internationally



That current concession groups don't receive off-peak discounts, potentially limiting off-peak travel behaviour in the region

This fares review introduces opportunities for Greater Wellington to:



Introduce a Community Services Card concession



Increase off-peak discounts to encourage more frequent use of public transport including more off-peak travel



Introduce cumulative discounts off-peak for all concession holders

Implementing the Government's half-price discount initiative for holders of Community Services Cards

The Land Transport Management Act 2003 (s.120) gives regional councils such as Greater Wellington the responsibility for adopting policies on fares and the means for setting and reviewing those fares through its RPTP. In our RPTP, Greater Wellington has adopted the specific action to 'work with central government on national concession schemes including initiatives to enable cross regional concession schemes, and provide concessions to Community Services Card holders'.

In Budget 2022, the government announced the provision by the Crown of targeted funding to public transport authorities, to provide half-price fares for holders of Community Service Cards from 1 September 2022. On 16 June 2022, Greater Wellington adopted a policy to support and implement the government's initiative through establishing a new concession for Community Services Card holders. This will see Community Services Card holders in our region receive half-price fares for peak and off-peak travel. It will also make transport services more accessible and affordable, and will contribute to increased social equity and mobility in our region.

Although the new Community Services Card concession has been adopted by Greater Wellington, we're still keen to receive your feedback on this important initiative. Please give us your comments.

Q1: Please give us your comments on Greater Wellington's adoption of the Government's Community Services Card half-price fares initiative.

Increasing the general off-peak discount for all public transport users

The RPTP defines off-peak as 'weekdays between 9am and 3pm, after 6.30 pm and all-day weekends and public holidays'. Greater Wellington currently provides a 25 percent off-peak discount to encourage more public transport travel, which contributes to our climate change and mode shift goals.

As part of this fares review, Greater Wellington has the opportunity to increase this off-peak discount from 25 to 35 percent. Please consider the following statement and give us your feedback.

Q2: Metlink should increase the off-peak travel discount from 25 to 35 percent to encourage greater off-peak usage.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Comment:

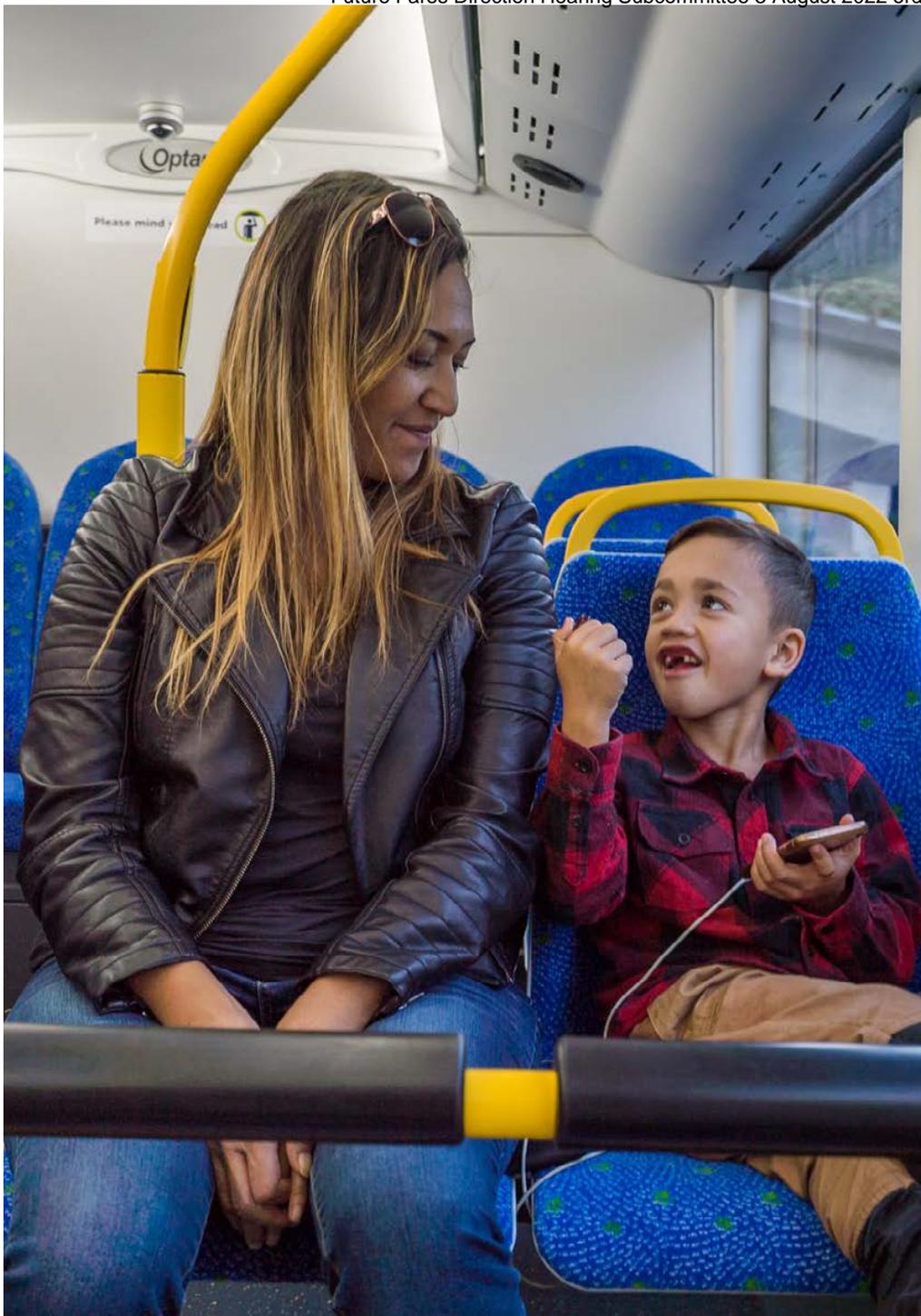
Introducing cumulative discounts off-peak for all concession holders

Currently, Greater Wellington offers targeted concessions for three groups of customers, and is preparing a new concession for Community Services Card holders:

Children: School-aged children get a 50 percent discount on the adult fare on all Metlink services. In addition, children under 5 years old travel for free anytime on Metlink buses, trains, and ferries, as long as they travel with another passenger who is at least 10 years old.

Accessibility: Members of Blind Low Vision NZ and Total Mobility cardholders are eligible to a 50 percent discount on adult fares when using Snapper cards, 10-trip train tickets, and all ferry tickets. Carers can travel with the concession-holder for free, as long as they accompany the holder for the entire journey.

Tertiary students: Eligible full-time tertiary students receive a 25 percent discount on peak adult Snapper fares. Off-peak fares are already discounted when using Snapper, so there is currently no further discount to off-peak fares when using a tertiary concession. Tertiary students can currently purchase a tertiary 10-trip ticket for peak travel on rail services. There is no further discount when using a tertiary concession for off-peak rail services.



Community Services Card holders: This is a new concession which will be available from 1 September 2022, and will see Community Services Card holders receive a 50 percent discount on peak and off-peak travel.

As part of this fares review, Greater Wellington is considering introducing a system of cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders. This will result in:



A further 35 percent discount to the current fares for off-peak travel for school-aged children when using Snapper



A further 35 percent discount to the current fares for off-peak travel for accessibility concession holders (excluding Total Mobility services) when using Snapper



A further 35 percent discount to the current fares for off-peak travel for eligible tertiary students on off-peak services when using Snapper



A 50 percent discount for on-peak travel for Community Services Card holders as well as a further 35% off the on-peak fare for off-peak travel when using Snapper

How will this impact on concession holders in practice? Here are four scenarios that illustrate how the proposed cumulative discounts will work for some of our customers. The scenarios are based on Metlink fares prior to the introduction of the Government's temporary half-price fares scheme, which ends on 31 August 2022.

Scenario one: Alice is 14-years old. She currently uses public transport to travel by bus during peak from her home in Upper Hutt (Zone 7) to her school in Taita (Zone 5). She currently pays \$1.90 for each of these journeys. Alice is a keen sportswoman and uses public transport to travel to her netball games at the weekend which are usually held at her school grounds in Taita. She currently pays \$1.90 for each of these weekend (off-peak) journeys.

Under the new Metlink cumulative discount policy, Alice will continue to pay \$1.90 for her trips to school during peak. However, for her weekend travel for netball, the cumulative discount policy will mean she will now only have to pay \$1.23 (35% off \$1.90) for these journeys.

Scenario two: Te Aroha is a member of Blind Low Vision NZ. Te Aroha (and her faithful service dog Macey) currently uses public transport to travel by train at different times of the day from her home in Tawa (Zone 4) to visit friends and family in Waikan  (Zone 10). She currently pays \$3.76 for each of these journeys when using an accessibility concession ten-trip ticket.

Under the new Metlink cumulative discount policy, Te Aroha will continue to pay \$3.76 for her trips during peak. However, for her weekend travel to visit family and friends, the cumulative discount policy will mean she will now only have to pay \$1.88 for these off-peak journeys (and Macey continues to travel with her for free).

Scenario three: Kainoa is a commerce student at university. He uses public transport to travel at peak by bus from his home in Porirua (Zone 5) to his lectures in Wellington (Zone 1). He currently pays \$3.91 for each of these journeys when using a tertiary concession. Kainoa is also guitarist in a musical collective and uses public transport to travel to jam sessions in the Wellington CBD in the evenings and weekends. He currently pays \$3.91 for each of these off-peak journeys.

Under the new Metlink cumulative discount policy, Kainoa will continue to pay \$3.91 for his trips to Wellington City during peak. However, for his evening and weekend travel to jam with his mates, the cumulative discount policy will mean he will now only have to pay \$2.54 (35% off \$3.91) for these off-peak journeys.

Scenario four: William is a Community Services Card holder. He lives in Petone (Zone 4) and is a part-time volunteer for an animal rescue centre in Stokes Valley (Zone 6). William does not currently receive any concessionary discounts and currently pays the full adult fare of \$3.80 each way for his trips by bus to and from Stokes Valley.

Under the new Community Services Card concession, William will pay \$1.90 (50% off the regular adult fare) for these trips at peak. In addition, under the new Metlink cumulative discount policy, William will pay \$1.24 (35% off \$1.90) for these trips to and from Stokes Valley during the off-peak periods.

Please consider the following statement and give us your opinion and comments.

Q3: Metlink should introduce cumulative off-peak discounts for all concession holders.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Comment:

Introducing family and wh nau-friendly weekend travel

Greater Wellington wants to encourage family travel by public transport at weekends. Before we can introduce bundled travel products for families and visitors (Question 6 in this review), we're considering introducing a policy for free weekend travel for children when accompanied by their parent or guardian. The specific policy is:



Children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian

Please consider the following statement and give us your opinion and comments.

Q4: Metlink should introduce a policy that allows children to travel free on weekends when accompanied by their parent or guardian.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Comment:



Specific new discounts - Longer-term initiatives

Ngā whakahekenga utu hou e hāngai ana - ngā kaupapa paetawhiti

Introducing fare capping

'Fare capping' is a longer-term initiative we're considering as we introduce electronic ticketing across the Metlink network, and prepare for implementation of the National Ticketing Solution. Fare capping is a concept used widely across the world to encourage greater use of public transport. After a set number of journeys daily or weekly, a significant discount is applied for the rest of your journeys on that day or for that week.

As part of our planning towards implementation of the National Ticketing Solution, Greater Wellington are considering the introduction of some form of fare capping to support our strategic objectives of mode shift, equity and fairness and network efficiency. Two initiatives we'd like your feedback on are implementation of:



A daily discount offering a 35 percent discount after two journeys per day. This will be on top of any concession and discounts in place



A weekly discount offering a 35 percent discount after eight journeys in a calendar week. This will be on top of any concession and discounts in place but will not include the daily fare capping discount

Please note that the introduction of the longer-term discount will be conditional upon funding and may be gradually introduced over time.

Please consider the following statement and give us your opinion and comments.

Q5: Metlink should consider including a fare capping discount of 35 percent on a daily and weekly basis.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Comment:

New types of ticketing and fares products you might want to buy

Through our recent review of the current fares structure, Greater Wellington identified gaps in the fares products we currently provide for group travel across our network, and for visitors to our diverse and beautiful region. We currently have limited 'bundled' product offerings for group and family travel on our network.

For visitors and tourists, we currently offer the Metlink Explorer day pass. This offers unlimited travel for one calendar day on Metlink buses and trains weekdays after 9am, and anytime on weekends and public holidays.

We think we can build on this through the development of new fares products, to encourage uptake of environmentally-friendly transport options for families, visitors and for event travel. Metlink is working closely with [WellingtonNZ](#), the region's economic development, events and promotions agency to develop and promote these types of new fares products.

Before we develop new fares products we would like to use this consultation opportunity to hear your thoughts on what sort of products you would see as the most useful. In particular what type of targeted fares that might appeal to families, visitors or for travel to and from major events. Please consider the following statement and give us your opinion and comments.

Q6: Metlink should consider introducing new targeted fares products for group, visitor, family and event travel across the region.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Comment:

How overall journey costs will change across the region with distance travelled through the introduction of a new Integrated Fare Structure

Greater Wellington's current fare structure is based on a 14 zone system, which divides the region into concentric zones for the purposes of setting fares from one part of the region to another. You can learn more about the [current zone structure](#) through the Metlink website.

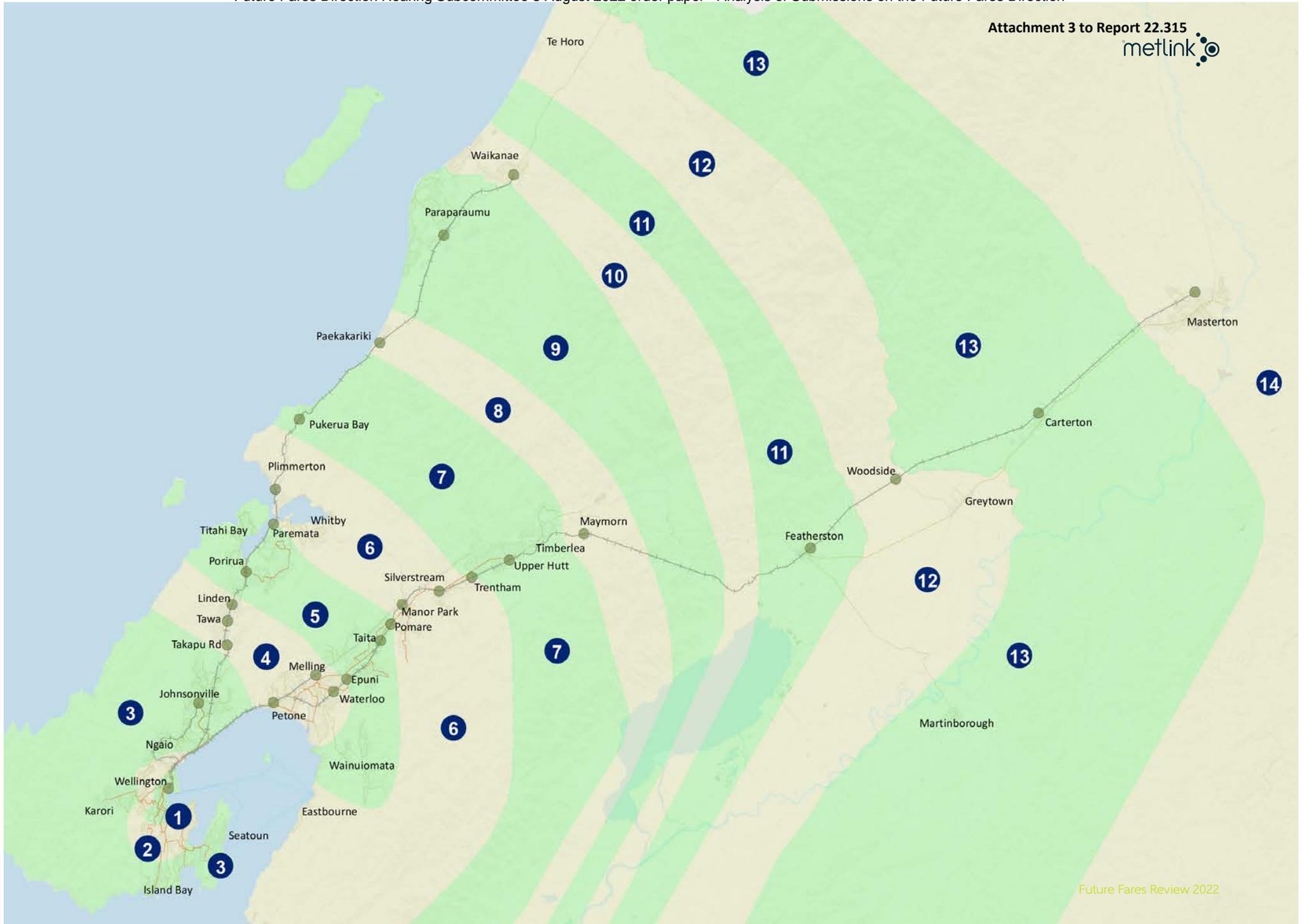
Currently you must pay a separate fare for each journey across the bus, train or ferry network. Fully 'integrated fares' would look to charge users a single fare based on any combination of bus, train and ferry journeys they may choose to take. One option would be to extend the current 14 zone system. Doing this will require considerable planning and development and before we choose this option, we would like your feedback on whether there might be a better way of designing an integrated fare structure.

While the current zone-based fares system has served us well to date, we also recognise, through your previous feedback and our own fares review insights, that there are issues with the current system which need to be addressed.

These are:

Fairness: That journeys that cross that same number of boundaries can often vary greatly in distance travelled yet the cost will be the same due to the location of fare boundaries.

Penalising Indirect Travel Routes: That the current zone-based system does not provide incentives to use public transport for journeys that require more indirect trips (eg, east to west, from Porirua to the Hutt Valley).





Parking and infrastructure issues: That the current zone-based system can create inequities and cause parking congestion and bus stop crowding (or poor usage) either side of a fare zone boundaries as customers look to avoid additional zones cost.

Incentivisation for longer journeys: That the current system provides relatively cheap short-distance travel, but also creates relatively more expensive long-distance travel when benchmarked globally.

Over the coming three years, as we prepare for the introduction of integrated fares through the National Ticketing Solution, we believe we can address these issues through introduction of a distance-based Integrated Fare Structure. This could create an arrangement similar to a 'taxi fare', with two key components:

1. a 'flag-fall' fee, plus
2. a distance-based charge per kilometre travelled between departure and destination points. This distance travelled could be calculated on a "as the crow flies" basis, meaning the geographic distance travelled (not the distance travelled by the bus or train if the route is indirect).

This system would be supported by journey-planning apps and tools to enable customers to price and plan their public transport trips.

From research to date we recognise that the introduction of a distance-based system may take time for our customers to get familiar with and comfortable using, we believe it could bring a significant number of benefits including:

- Increasing our ability to provide more equitable fares for journeys of the same length
- Ensuring that indirect journeys are not penalised as the result of having no direct public transport routes
- Removing inequities, including parking issues that are sometimes caused by the current zone boundaries
- Increasing Greater Wellington's flexibility for changing fares

The distance-based Integrated Fare Structure would not see the removal of current and proposed new concessions and discounts.

Please provide your opinion and comments to the following proposal. We also welcome any comments you have on the current zone-based system and how this might be improved or simplified.

Q7: Metlink should consider introducing a distance-based Integrated Fare Structure.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Comment:

Some other information we'd appreciate when making your submission

Please let us know if you wish to speak directly to your submission at the public hearings. These will be held between 3-4 August 2022 at Greater Wellington Council Chambers, 100 Cuba Street, Te Aro, Wellington.

Q8: Would you like to make a public submission to our hearings committee?

- I do not wish to make a public submission
 I do wish to make a public submission

My contact information to arrange a public submission spot:

Tel:

Email:

To help us better understand your perspective throughout the submission process, we'd appreciate if you can provide us with some additional information about you.

Q9: Where in the region is your primary dwelling located?

- Wellington City Porirua City
 Hutt City Kāpiti Coast District
 Upper Hutt City Carterton District
 South Wairarapa District Masterton District
 Other part of New Zealand I do not currently reside in New Zealand

Q10: What mode of public transport do you mainly use?

(i.e. normally three times a week or more)

- Mainly bus Mainly ferry
 Mainly rail I do not regularly use public transport

Q11: What do you use public transport for? Tick all that apply.

- To commute for employment and education
 To access essential services including health and retail
 For leisure and lifestyle purposes
 For other purposes
 I do not regularly use public transport

Comment:



How you can have your say

Your feedback is important to us. So please share your views and help us guide Greater Wellington and the Metlink team on this fares review. If it's convenient for you, please make your submission through the [Greater Wellington Have Your Say](#) website. Otherwise, you can make submissions by emailing us at futurefares@gw.govt.nz or post to:

Metlink Fares Review 2022
Greater Wellington Regional Council
PO Box 11646
Wellington 6011

Consultation closes 5pm Friday 15 July 2020. The information you provide as part of your submission will only be used for the purpose of making a decision on the proposals introduced during this consultation period. Any personal information you provide when submitting to this review will only be used:

- For the purpose/s you provide that information
- For other reasons permitted by the Privacy Act 2020 (eg, with your consent, for a directly-related purpose, or where the law permits or requires this use).

A full Privacy Statement can be viewed [here](#).

Digital engagement sessions will be held online. Here you can discuss our proposals with Greater Wellington officers and councillors from Greater Wellington, as well as our city and district council partners. These online sessions have proven popular during the COVID-19 pandemic, and community feedback has told us they provide an accessible and interactive way to meet with our councillors and officers. You can register for these sessions through the [Eventfinda](#) website and do not need to download any software or applications to participate.

Date	Time	Location
Wednesday 29 June 2022	12midday to 1.30 pm	Virtual
Saturday 2 July 2022	9am - 10.30 am	Virtual
Tuesday 5 July 2022	3pm - 4.30 pm	Virtual
Thursday 7 July 2022	6pm - 7.30 pm	Virtual
Saturday 9 July 2022	9am - 10.30 pm	Virtual

We look forward to hearing your feedback on these exciting proposals.



