

From the Office of the Chairperson

22 August 2023

via Email: [insert address here]

Tēnā koe [insert name here]

As we move closer to the election in October, it is beholden on individuals and organisations to make their case for investment and action. Here is ours: for the sake of New Zealand's economy and emission reduction goals, Otago Regional Council is passionate about effective public transport in Queenstown Lakes.

Yet, we can't do this alone. Why? Because population-related funding is not sufficient to address the need, especially because Queenstown is a Tier 2 urban area and can't access the public transport funding available to Tier 1 councils.

Queenstown is the jewel of New Zealand's tourism crown. This is no surprise to anyone who has experienced its spectacular alpine landscapes, activities and nightlife. If you have been to Queenstown Lakes recently, you are not alone. In January 2023, locals numbered 40,000, unique international visitors 95,000 and unique domestic visitors 145,000. Not surprisingly, moving these visitors around the district is a huge challenge.

There is a significant climate opportunity too. Queenstown Lakes is aiming to be a carbon zero visitor economy by 2030. The Queenstown Lakes regenerative tourism plan is centred around people and place and sets out to ensure that everyone can enjoy this place for years to come.

Working with Queenstown Lakes District Council, we have made significant investment to improve access, simplify and reduce fares and collaboratively plan for the future of public transport in Queenstown Lakes. However, we still have a way to go. The simple truth is that investment to date is insufficient to meet the demands of Queenstown Lakes' existing and planned communities or support modal shift towards public transport. What we need is for future governments to trust us and to keep up the investment, so we can continue transforming our region for the better. This includes accessing public transport funding available to Tier 1 councils.

We continue to work with Queenstown Lakes District Council on this important issue. We would appreciate your support.

Yours sincerely



Gretchen Robertson
Chairperson

For our future