

11 May 2022

Peter Mersi
Chief Executive
Ministry of Transport
3 Queens Wharf
Wellington

Tēnā koe Peter

Thank you to you and your team for engaging with Greater Wellington on the proposed introduction of a Government funded Community Services Card (CSC) public transport concession which is likely to be announced as part of the Budget next week.

We believe that the Greater Wellington Councillors are likely to be very supportive of a Government initiative to fund public transport concessions for CSC holders. Indeed, this type of concession opportunity has recently been discussed with Council in the context of a recent fare review and they were strongly supportive.

In the event that the funding of this concession is confirmed, and subject to our Council approving its inclusion in Greater Wellington's fare policy, we are committed to introducing this concession as soon as it is practically able to be implemented. For rail and bus, this needs to be done through our ticketing provider Snapper, and for ferry services, this needs to be done through East by West.

In the context of this commitment, and based on an initial high level feasibility assessment, Snapper has advised that the earliest possible date of a CSC concession introduction for Wellington rail and bus would be early-mid December 2022. This timing reflects the need to build and test a portal which enables the concession to be applied on the CSC holder's Snapper card. This timing is however reliant on:

- card supply not being delayed by global supply chain issues;
- timely provision of access to the API data by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD); and
- no other unforeseen circumstances arising in the build and test process or in the wider roll out of Snapper on the rail network.

We would request that the Minister is made aware of the importance of ensuring any concession introduction date mentioned in the Budget is able to be practically achieved by Greater Wellington given the dynamics that may play out for our front-line staff which can create safety issues. To avoid this increased safety risk, we would suggest that the announcement could be framed in terms of being implemented as soon as practical by PTAs, recognising that each PTA will have unique circumstances and different ticketing systems.

It is also important that the concession for rail and bus in Greater Wellington is limited to those using Snapper (rather than paying cash onboard). The alternative, which in our view is highly undesirable from a privacy perspective, would be that CSC cards would need to be checked by rail and bus staff for anyone paying by cash onboard – in many cases this would need to be done in front of other passengers.

The simple mechanism to avoid the above issue for our ferry services would be to introduce Snapper validators onboard the ferry. This can be implemented by Greater Wellington but would require Waka Kotahi funding approval.

We would also need support by MSD on the implementation of the concession to ensure it reaches those most in need. This would include assistance with physically distributing Snapper cards to CSC holders and registering their cards online (such as setting up help stations in WINZ offices).

We trust the above will assist the Ministry of Transport in providing advice to the Minister on the timing of any CSC concession introduction. We look forward to working with you and your team to introduce this initiative which we believe will have a positive impact on Greater Wellington's transport disadvantaged community.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Nigel Corry
Te Tumu Whakarae | Chief Executive

cc Nicole Rosie, Chief Executive Waka Kotahi