

OC230718

11 September 2023

Michael Brenndorfer
fyi-request-23419-83dc7e4e@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Michael,

I refer to your email dated 14 August 2023 that was transferred to Te Manatū Waka Ministry of Transport, requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*“- Did Waka Kotahi undertake consultation with the disability community/disability advocacy groups and/or with the Ministry of Disabled People while making a decision to not include Total Mobility card holders in the extension of half price fares for public transport?
- If so, can you please send through the responses provided which guided Waka Kotahi to exclude Total Mobility card holders from the half price fares scheme for public transport.
- can you please send through relevant documents or information which highlights the rationale Waka Kotahi relied upon when making the decision to exclude Total Mobility card holders from the half price fares for public transport scheme”*

No documents fall directly within scope of your request, however, I have enclosed the Budget 23 Community Connect extension initiative document. This details the scope of the budget bid that provides half price Total Mobility services. Certain information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act which protects the privacy of natural persons. I note that where documents refer to half price Total Mobility fares, they are referring to fares for half price Total Mobility services.

Cabinet agreed to provide permanent half price Total Mobility fares when considering the next steps after the provision of fuel tax reductions and universal half price fares. The Community Connect budget initiative is the mechanism that provides funding for this decision. Due to Budget sensitivity and time constraints, consultation for the development of the Budget 23 bid was limited.

Public transport authorities (typically regional councils) are responsible for operating their public transport network, which includes setting fares. Some public transport authorities have chosen to use Total Mobility eligibility as a criteria to offer their own accessible concessions. The provision of government funding for Community Connect does not prevent public transport authorities from implementing further concessions.

It is also worth noting that the Total Mobility scheme is currently under review and expected to be completed in late 2024. The review will investigate how Total Mobility can be improved to create better outcomes for disabled people which will include assessing the affordability of the scheme for users. This review will be undertaken in parallel to monitoring of the Community Connect scheme since it's launch on 1 July 2023. You can find more about the

Total Mobility review at: www.transport.govt.nz/area-of-interest/strategy-and-direction/total-mobility-scheme/

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

The Ministry publishes our Official Information Act responses and the information contained in our reply to you may be published on the Ministry website. Before publishing we will remove any personal or identifiable information.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Skinner', written in a cursive style.

Matt Skinner
Manager, Mobility and Safety