

Living Streets Aotearoa



Submission from Living Streets Aotearoa

on

Review of the SuperGold free travel on off-peak public transport services

Organisation: Living Streets Aotearoa
Contact person: Daphne Bell, Executive member
Address: 42 Woodland Drive, Hamilton
Email: dbell@wave.co.nz
Phone: 07 854 5555 Mobile: 021 341 767
Date: 23 April 2010

About Living Streets Aotearoa

Living Streets Aotearoa is New Zealand's national walking and pedestrian organisation, providing a positive voice for people on foot, and working to promote walking friendly planning and development around the country. Our vision is "More people choosing to walk more often and enjoying public places".

The objectives of Living Streets Aotearoa are:

- to promote walking as a healthy, environmentally-friendly and universal means of transport and recreation
- to promote the social and economic benefits of pedestrian-friendly communities
- to work for improved access and conditions for walkers, pedestrians and runners including walking surfaces, traffic flows, speed and safety
- to advocate for greater representation of pedestrian concerns in national, regional and urban land use and transport planning.

There are local Living Streets walking action groups in towns and cities around the country working to make city and suburban centres in their areas more walking-friendly.

For more information, please see: www.livingstreets.org.nz

REVIEW OF THE SUPERGOLD CARD FREE TRAVEL ON OFF-PEAK PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES

To: Dave Watson
New Zealand Transport Agency
Private Bag 6995
44 Victoria Street
WELLINGTON 6141

Living Streets Aotearoa (LSA) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) on the consultation document “Options to Change the SuperGold Card Free Off-Peak Public Transport Travel Scheme”.

Living Streets Aotearoa is New Zealand’s national walking and pedestrian advocacy organisation. As almost all passenger transport journeys begin and end on foot, good pedestrian facilities are part of a successful integrated transport mix. If communities are walking-friendly, people are more likely to take public transport rather than the car. For public transport users, walking to and from the bus, train or ferry as part of everyday life brings health and environmental benefits. We therefore support passenger transport policies and planning which contribute to these benefits. We consider that the SuperGold scheme does so.

We make the following specific comments on the consultation document:

- Living Streets Aotearoa was strongly in favour of the introduction of the centrally-funded SuperGold Card system and supports its continuation.
- We have seen the strong level of community support throughout the country for concessionary travel off-peak for those on limited incomes and would like to see this benefit continue.
- Using SuperGold cards can make a significant difference to many elderly people’s ability to access facilities and services. This has a positive impact on their quality of life. Therefore the review of the card should not focus solely on costs.
- LSA understands that some commercial services, such as the Waiheke Island ferry, are over-represented in cost per trip terms, with 2% of trips requiring 11% of all nationally available SuperGold funds. Addressing this issue, however, should not impact on the balance of the scheme.
- We note that the payments for administration, if removed, would provide an additional \$810,384 to the fund. This figure comprises \$337,227 (41.6%) allocated to regional council administration and \$473,157 (58.4%) allocated to NZTA administration.
- We do not support other options listed, such as reducing the reimbursement rate, capping reimbursement payments, or changing the services that are eligible. We consider that the definition of the hours of off-peak services should be consistent throughout the country.
- The consultation document suggests that there is evidence of some fraud occurring within the SuperGold card system. LSA therefore recommends that practical measures be taken to reduce the misuse of the cards. This would further increase funds available for legitimate use of the system.

LSA trusts that the points made in this submission are helpful to the New Zealand Transport Agency when considering all submissions to the review of the SuperGold scheme.

LSA **does not wish to be heard** in support of this submission if the New Zealand Transport Agency holds hearings on this issue.