



- **1 Expanding the Ipswich Bus Network**

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GROWTH INFRASTRUCTURE AND WASTE COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA

10 FEBRUARY
2022

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ITEM:

SUBJECT: EXPANDING THE IPSWICH BUS NETWORK

AUTHOR: TRANSPORT PLANNER (TRANSPORT PLANNING)

DATE: 8 NOVEMBER 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public Transport services in Ipswich are administered by the TransLink Division of the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads. Nevertheless, Council receives many requests to improve public transport services within Ipswich and in particular the bus services.

In recent years, Council has had very limited success in lobbying the State Government to invest in the expansion of the bus network. This report highlights the state of Ipswich's bus network, benchmarks the Ipswich bus network against other networks within South East Queensland (SEQ), and outlines several considerations for Council moving forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. That a submission for citywide expansion of the bus network be prepared and considered as a potential Regionally Significant Project.**
- B. That Councillors meet with State MPs to discuss new bus services in Redbank Plains, as well as for a new direct bus service linking Ipswich Central and Springfield Central.**
- C. That Council officers work with the State Government to rationalise the existing bus network to achieve net benefits.**
- D. If funding from the State Government is not secured for Council's two (2) expansion priority projects (identified in Recommendation B) by the end of 2022/23 financial year, that Council officers commence investigations into alternative funding options to subsidise the cost of these service changes and prepare a report for Council's consideration.**

RELATED PARTIES

There is no declaration of conflicts of interest regarding this report.

IFUTURE THEME

Vibrant and Growing

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2022**PURPOSE OF REPORT/BACKGROUND****The need for better public transport in Ipswich**

Ipswich needs effective public transport to allow the city to grow and thrive. Public transport is not only a means to relieving traffic congestion, it plays a significant role in supporting the economic success of cities by connecting people to jobs and services, influencing the city's urban form and reducing isolation and social exclusion.

Furthermore, the need for effective public transport is becoming increasingly urgent in Ipswich. The South East Queensland Regional Plan, ShapingSEQ, anticipates a population target of 520,000 people in Ipswich by 2041, over double the current population. ShapingSEQ also provides direction on a greater need to focus on public transport to support this population growth and economic development.

The City of Ipswich Transport Plan (iGO), acknowledges that *"we cannot afford to build our way out of congestion by continually adding more and more road space just for cars"* and that there needs to be significant shift to more sustainable transport modes. Consequently, iGO sets an aspirational public transport mode share target of 11% by approximately 2031 (refer to Table 1 below).

Based on data provided in the 2018 Queensland Household Travel Survey, the mode share for public transport in Ipswich has been drifting further away from the target set within iGO (refer to Table 1 below).

Table 1: Household Travel Survey Comparison with iGO Mode Share Targets

	Household Travel Survey			iGO Mode Share Target
	2011	2017	2018	
Ipswich Population (rounded)	167,000	208,500	218,000	435,000
Private Vehicle Mode Share	86%	87.6%	88.4%	75%
Public Transport Mode Share	6.3%*	6.7%*	5.4%*	11%

Source: iGO Annual Report Card 2019-2020

*Figures also include Taxi and Rideshare

The iGO Public Transport Advocacy and Action Plan (iGO PTAAP) was adopted at Council's Ordinary Meeting on 20 August 2019. iGO PTAAP, a child Strategy of iGO, has been used by Council to:

- Provide consistent, evidence-based messaging about the public transport priorities for Ipswich;
- Raise awareness of the urgent need for more investment in public transport in Ipswich and for Council to provide support for this where possible; and
- Assist with the development and maintenance of partnerships with key public transport stakeholders.

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A survey was undertaken as part of the development of iGO PTAAP to determine the satisfaction of residents on using the public transport network in Ipswich. Within this survey, 36% of respondents were 'unhappy' or 'very unhappy' with the state of the public transport network and 32% of residents were 'neutral'.

When asked about the factors that prevent residents from using public transport more often, the most popular response was 'It takes too long', followed by 'It's not convenient or easy to use', 'There are no stops / stations near my home or travel destination', and 'It's too expensive'.

The Ipswich Bus Network

The Ipswich bus network is largely designed for local travel needs within communities, connecting residents with activity centres. The network also provides connections to train stations along the Ipswich and Springfield Lines, which are currently the only 'trunk' public transport connections to the Brisbane Central Business District (CBD). There are no bus routes which connect the Ipswich Local Government Area (LGA) to the Brisbane CBD.

As of June 2021, there were 18 urban bus routes providing connections to destinations within the Ipswich LGA. Three (3) of these bus routes also provide connections to destinations outside of the LGA (Somerset Region, City of Brisbane and City of Logan).

Most of the bus services within the Ipswich LGA operate between 6am and 7pm on weekdays, and 8am and 5pm on weekends. The majority of bus routes operate on hourly frequencies during the day, increasing to half-hourly during peak periods.

The Ipswich LGA forms part of TransLink's Western Bus Region. Bus patronage within the Western Bus Region has been stagnant over the last decade, contrary to the large population growth experienced within the Ipswich LGA. Additionally, the number of urban bus routes within the Ipswich LGA has also decreased over the last decade (refer to Table 2 page over).

Investment in bus services has also been modest over the last decade. As identified in Table 3 (page over), there was very little spending between the 2011-12 and 2017-18 financial years (remaining steady at approximately \$18-19 million per annum). Recent investment has occurred; however, this is unlikely to reverse the declining patronage in the short term, largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the stagnation of the bus network due to years of underinvestment.

A comprehensive list of historic bus service changes within the Western Bus Region can be found in Attachment 1 of this report.

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2022**Table 2 –Western Bus Region Statistics**

	Population (Ipswich LGA)	Bus Patronage (Western Region)	No. Urban Bus Routes (Western Region)
2006	142K	Not publicly available	20
2012	178K	1.66 million trips (11/12 FY)	19
2013	184K	1.83 million trips (12/13 FY)	15
2019	222K	1.81 million trips (18/19FY)	16
2020	230K	1.57 million trips (19/20 FY)	18

Sources: Rail Back on Track, TMR, Profile ID

Table 3 – Western Region Bus Service Contract Spends

Financial Year	Agency	Bus Service Contract Spend (Western Region) *	% Change from previous FY
2010-11	TransLink Transit Authority	\$16,350,000.00	8.4%
2011-12	TransLink Transit Authority	\$18,380,000.00	11.0%
2012-13	TTA/ TMR	\$19,522,936.00	5.9%
2013-14	TMR	\$19,477,552.00	-0.2%
2014-15	TMR	\$18,963,776.00	-2.7%
2015-16	TMR	\$18,709,574.00	-1.4%
2016-17	TMR	\$18,795,088.00	0.5%
2017-18	TMR	\$18,755,853.00	-0.2%
2018-19	TMR	\$24,478,212.00	23.4%
2019-20	TMR	\$24,398,679.00	-0.3%

Source: Derived from TMR data

*Service contract spends include both urban and school bus services

Benchmarking Ipswich against other TransLink Regions

A comparison has been made between the Ipswich/Western Bus Region and other regions within SEQ (refer to Table 4 page over). It is acknowledged that there are some limitations with the contents of Table 4 (overlap with service contracts, regions etc), however it still provides a sound representation as to where investment in the bus network lies within SEQ.

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2022**Table 4 –Comparison of SEQ bus networks (as of June 2020)**

	Brisbane	Gold Coast	Sunshine Coast / Noosa	Moreton Bay (Northern)	Logan (Southern)	Redlands (Eastern)	Ipswich (Western)
Number of urban bus routes	≈233*	56	30	48	47	35	18
Bus Service Contract Spend (19/20 FY)^	\$328.7 M*	\$94.6 M	\$54.5 M	\$60.6 M**	\$49.1 M***	\$27.9 M**	\$24.4 M
Population (June 2020) ERP	1,272,999	635,191	393,069	479,639	341,985	160,331	229,845
Bus Service Contract Spend (per resident)	\$258.21	\$148.86	\$138.58	\$126.42	\$143.68	\$173.98	\$106.15

Source: Derived from TMR, Profile ID & Rail Back on Track

^Service contract spends include both urban and school bus services

*Figure includes only services operated by Transport for Brisbane

** Figure does not include services operated by Transport for Brisbane

*** Figure does not include services operated by Surfside Buslines or Transport for Brisbane

It should also be noted that the Brisbane City Council, City of Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast Regional Council and Noosa Shire Council all contribute financially in some capacity to bus services.

As identified in Table 4, Ipswich (Western Region) has the smallest bus service contract spend by the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR), correlating with the lowest number of urban bus routes. In comparison, Redlands (Eastern Region) has a much smaller population but has higher bus service contract and almost double the number of urban bus routes (the spend specified in Table 3 for the Eastern Region, excludes services operated by Transport for Brisbane).

Whilst TransLink typically use 'contract areas' for comparison, rather than Local Government Areas (LGA), if the bus service contracts were divided into per capita spends, it works out that Ipswich has the lowest spend per capita in SEQ (refer to Table 4).

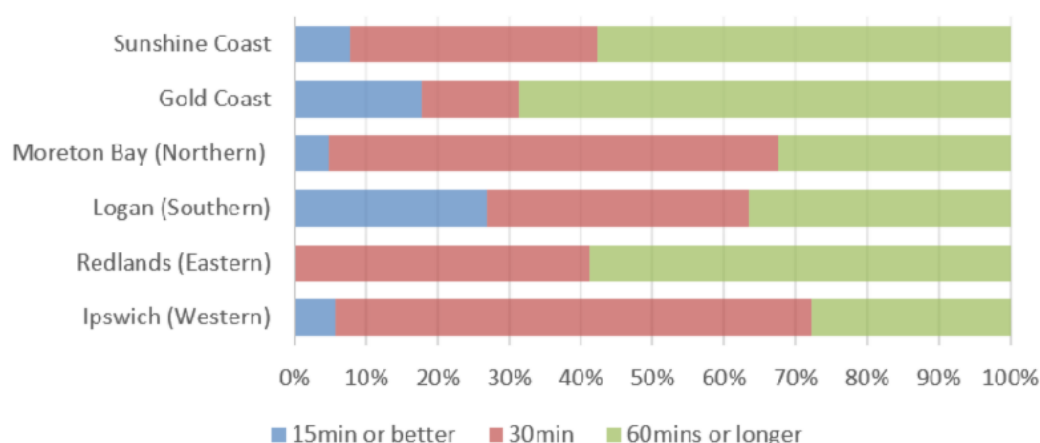
Since 2013, there has also been a net decrease in the number of routes within the Western Region (refer to Table 5 below). Whereas all other regions (excluding the Eastern Region) have experienced growth in the number of bus routes, particularly in Moreton Bay and the Gold Coast, aligning with other major public transport infrastructure projects such as the Redcliffe Peninsula Line and Stages 1 and 2 of the Gold Coast Light Rail.

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2022**Table 5 – Net Change in Urban Bus Routes (2013 to 2020) by TransLink Region**

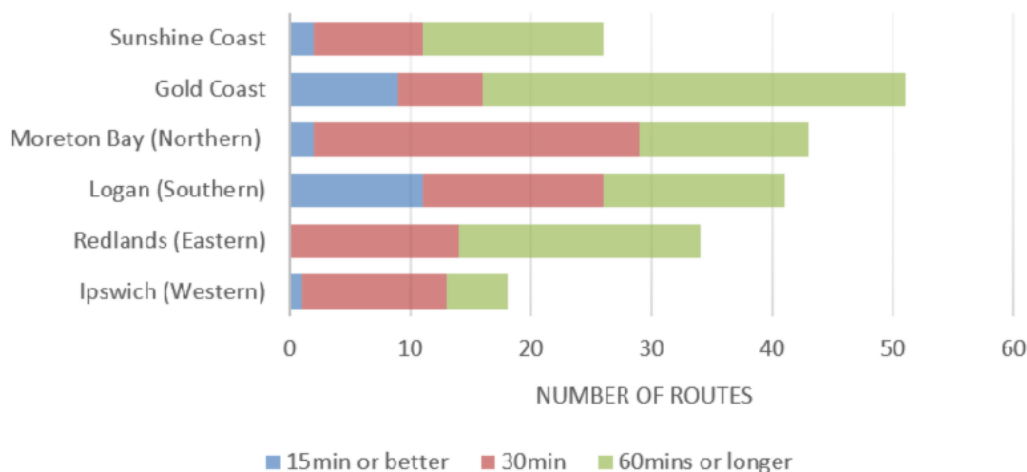
LGA	Number of Urban Bus Routes (2013)	Number of Urban Bus Routes (2020)	Net change (between 2013 & 2020)
Ipswich (Western Region)	19	18	-1
Redlands (Eastern Region)	36	35	-1
Logan (Southern Region)	42	47	+5
Sunshine Coast	27	30	+3
Gold Coast	50	56	+6
Moreton Bay (Northern Region)	37	48	+11

Sources: TMR & Rail Back on Track

It is acknowledged that the Western Region fairs favourably against other regions when it comes to peak frequencies. The Ipswich LGA has the highest percentage of bus services operating at 30-minute headways or better during the peak periods (refer to Figure 1). However, the key factor differentiating the Western Region and others is the lack of services (as identified in Figure 2 page over) and investment.

Figure 1: Peak frequency type as % of all urban bus routes (2021)

Source: Derived from TMR data

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Source: Derived from TMR data

Network Expansion (2011 to Present)

Whilst population within the City of Ipswich has grown by 38% since 2011, expansion of the bus network has been very limited over this period. Over the last decade, the bus network has expanded to Ripley, South Ripley and Spring Mountain, with peak and off-peak services no greater than hourly in these locations (refer to Table 6 below).

Table 6 – Network Expansion within the Ipswich LGA since 2011

Route	Year of Implementation	Detail
531 Yamanto to Springfield Central, via Ripley	2019	Service implemented in January 2019. Service is jointly funded between Economic Development Queensland (EDQ) and TransLink. Weekday Peak: Hourly Weekday off-peak: Two Hourly Saturday: No Service Sunday: No Service
533 Spring Mountain Loop	2020	Service implemented in January 2020. Change made in conjunction with the introduction of the 527 & 528 (page over). Weekday Peak: Hourly Weekday off-peak: Hourly Saturday: Two-hourly Sunday: Two-hourly

Source: Derived from TMR data

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2022**Service Improvements (2011 to Present)**

Over the last decade, only 8 bus routes in the City of Ipswich have experienced improvements to routing or frequency (refer to Table 7 below). Ten of the existing 18 bus routes have experienced no changes to frequency or coverage since 2011. Route 529 (Ipswich Central to Toogoolawah) has not experienced a substantial service improvement since at least 2008.

Table 7 – Service improvements since 2011 within the Ipswich LGA

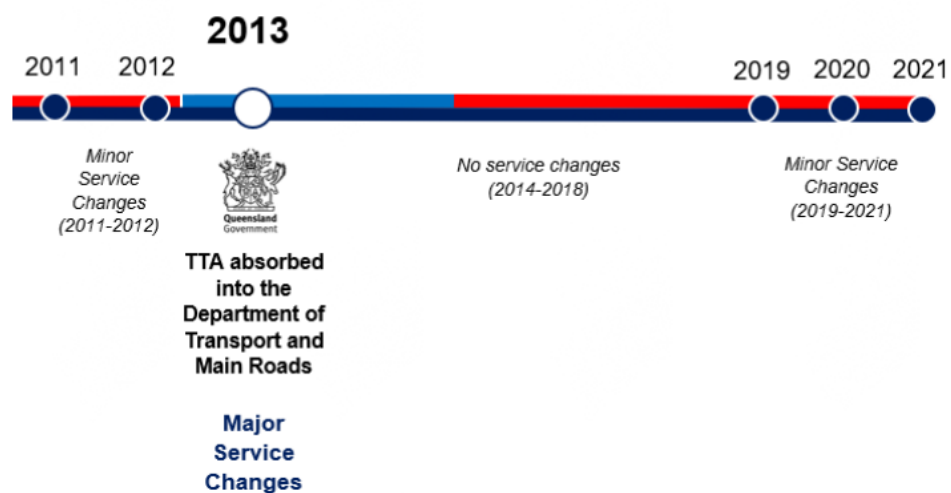
Route	Year of Implementation	Detail
514 Tivoli to Booval Fair	2011	Route 514 replaces the previous 505 & 510 services in 2011. Terminus shifted from Booval Train Station to Booval Fair in 2013. No changes to frequency since 2011.
500 Ipswich Central to Goodna	2013	Reinstatement of half hourly peak frequency (weekday) in 2013. This is consistent with the peak frequency from 2005 (introduction of service) which was downgraded to hourly in 2010.
506 Ipswich Central to Leichhardt	2013	Absorbs previous 516 service (One Mile Loop). Improvement of off-peak frequency (weekday) from hourly to half-hourly in 2013 for 506. This change has little improvement as two 'hourly' services have been combined to form a single half-hourly service.
512 Brassall to Riverlink	2013	Absorbs parts of the previous 513 service (Woodend Loop). No changes to frequency.
515 Brassall to Yamanto/Willowbank	2013	Absorbs previous 508 service (Yamanto to Willowbank). No changes to frequency.
527 Springfield Central to Goodna	2020	Replaces previous 522 service, reducing travel time. Frequencies remain consistent with previous 522 service.
528 Springfield Central to Springfield Station	2020	Replaces previous 522 service, reducing travel time. Frequencies remain consistent with previous 522 service.
531 Yamanto to Springfield Central, via Ripley	2021 (Future)	TransLink have advised that two-hourly Saturday services will be introduced in the 2021/22 FY. Service is jointly funded between Economic Development Queensland (EDQ) and TransLink.

Source: Derived from TMR data

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Figure 3 highlights the key events impacting the Western Bus Region since 2011. As identified in Figure 3, the last Major Service Change came in 2013 in the form of a whole of network review. Following the major network review, there was a long barren period of investment by the State Government, whereby the Western Bus Region did not receive a bus service change until 2019.

Figure 3 – Key events and service changes affecting the Western Bus Region (2011 to present)



Source: Derived from TMR data

FUTURE NETWORK EXPANSION

Action 2.1 of the iGO Public Transport Action Plan (iGO PTAAP) identifies the need for Council to advocate to the State Government to undertake a full bus network review, as outlined below:

"Council will advocate for and collaborate with the State Government to undertake a full network review in the short term to include:

- *Early introduction of services to new development areas (full time services, as well as on demand services);*
- *Consideration of the existing and future land use patterns in Ipswich, including the planned role of major centres and designated infill and greenfield growth areas;*
- *A review of the existing declared bus service contract areas and expansion to include locations not currently serviced in the short and medium term;*
- *Increases in the frequency, span of operating hours and directness of bus routes;*
- *Modal access planning for rail stations and major bus stations;*
- *Consideration of movement of people within Ipswich, as well as on the regional network; and*
- *Consideration of logical next steps for the bus network's continued development."*

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TransLink have advised Council that there will be no new bus service changes in the 2021/22 financial year aside from minor changes to the 531 service (jointly funded by TransLink EDQ – refer to Table 6).

Whilst the bus network is in need of significant overhaul, it is unlikely that any wholesome changes will be made until at least the 2024/25 FY (subject to funding), once the State Government have completed a Transport and Mobility Study for the City of Ipswich. This particular study is a \$400,000 election promise by the Labor Government and will be undertaken over two financial years (between 2022/23 & 2023/24). The study will be delivered by TMR's Transport Strategy and Planning team which typically works in the 5 to 20 year planning horizon (i.e. medium to long term planning).

Although a commitment to review the medium to long term public transport network is supported by Council officers, there has been no such commitment by the State Government in the short term to make improvements to the existing bus network. TransLink officers have advised Council officers that any short-term expansion of the bus network in Ipswich will need to be cost-neutral or will need to be funded directly by Council.

Officers of Council and Translink have recently discussed and negotiated a priority list of projects, as part of TransLink's 5-year service plan. However, these projects are subject to limited funding and are in competition with proposals from other LGAs. The challenge to fund new service changes within Ipswich is also made difficult by TransLink's single year funding cycle and obligation to fund committed service changes (i.e. service changes with joint funding).

Given the difficulties with obtaining funding for new bus services, it is suggested that Council first consider the following points in the short term:

- 1. *Re-focus Council's engagement with the State Government***
- 2. *Explore opportunities to rationalise the bus network***

If 1 and 2 do not achieve their intended outcomes by securing funding for Council's expansion priority projects, it is suggested that Council consider the following:

- 3. *Investigate alternative funding opportunities***

Detail on points is outlined below.

Re-focus Council's engagement with the State Government

Over the last 5 years, Council's engagement with the State Government on improvements to the bus network has been limited to interactions between Council and TransLink at an officer level. Whilst TransLink and Council have a strong relationship at an officer level, this has not correlated with investment in new bus services.

Given the limited success in securing investment in new bus services, Council needs to reconsider its approach to engagement with the State Government. It is recommended that

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Council take a more coordinated approach with its engagement with the State Government, by maintaining its strong relationship at an officer level, but by also involving Council's elected officials and positively involving members of the community who are passionate about seeing change.

The disconnect between the Ipswich community and TransLink was evident during the 2013 SEQ Bus Network Review, whereby only 12 responses were provided by members of the community. As identified in Table 8 (below), this is significantly lower than all other TransLink regions.

TransLink officers often mention that community feedback (through TransLink's customer feedback webpage) is an important consideration for when they review funding submissions for potential bus service changes. Plainly, service changes are less likely to be considered required if they don't have community feedback to support the change.

Table 8 – Number of community responses (by Region) as part of the 2013 SEQ Bus Network Review

Brisbane	Gold Coast	Sunshine Coast / Noosa	Moreton Bay (Northern)	Logan (Southern)	Redlands (Eastern)	Ipswich (Western)
1418	64	81	70	218	151	12

Source: Derived from TMR data

Recommendations A and B of this report outlines a two-stepped approach to engagement with the State Government.

- That a submission for citywide expansion of the bus network be prepared and considered as a Regionally Significant Project. This has the potential to achieve a more targeted and consistent approach to advocacy.
- That Councillors engage in the immediate term with the State Government on the two (2) identified priority expansion projects (which are detailed further on page 14 of this report).

Explore opportunities to rationalise the bus network

As previously mentioned, TransLink have stated that any short-term expansion of the bus network will need to be self-funded or cost neutral.

Whilst there are a number of cost-neutral opportunities that Council could consider, this approach will likely generate winners and losers as existing services may need to be altered or discontinued in order to fund other services that are deemed a higher priority. TransLink have also advised there is no guarantee that cost savings from a discontinued service will be reinvested back into Ipswich and that new proposals will need to go through the usual submission process and compete for funding against other proposals.

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Given the risks associated with removing existing routes, it would be in Council's best interest to work with TransLink to look at rationalising existing routes or reducing the frequency of existing routes with low patronage to generate cost savings for initiatives that are a higher priority.

Investigate alternative funding opportunities

Council have not previously explored this option, as public transport has historically been seen as a responsibility of the State Government. However, several Councils within SEQ are currently subsidising services within their jurisdiction. As of June 2021, Brisbane City Council, Sunshine Coast Council, Noosa Shire Council and City of Gold Coast were all subsidising public transport services in some capacity.

Table 9 – Public Transport subsidies (by Local Government entity)

Brisbane City Council	\$144.8 Million (2021/22 Budget)¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$144.8 M towards subsidising public transport services
City of Gold Coast	\$2.3 Million (2021/22 Budget)² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1.3 M towards free travel for seniors and veterans \$1.3 M towards service improvements in Northern Gold Coast
Sunshine Coast Council	\$0.32 Million (2019/20 Transport Levy Annual Report)³ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded through a Transport Levy \$0.32 M was allocated towards bus service improvements in 19/20 FY
Noosa Shire Council	\$0.20 - \$0.30 Million (spend in 2020/21 FY)⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded through a Sustainable Transport Levy Includes free Christmas and Easter holiday bus services and 'Go Noosa' loop bus

¹<https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020-06/20200615-Annual-Plan-and-Budget.pdf>

²<https://new.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/Council-region/Future-plans-budget/Annual-Plan-City-Budget/Annual-Plan>

³https://d1j8a4bqwzee3.cloudfront.net/~media/Corporate/Documents/Built%20Infrastructure/200181A_Transport%20Levy_201920_Annual%20Report_www%20final.pdf?la=en

⁴<https://www.noosa.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/2277/2020-07-07-s-o-agenda-item-1-attachment-1-go-noosa-initiatives-evaluation>

Action 4.2 of iGO PTAAP identifies the need for Council to investigate the feasibility of using alternative funding mechanisms to improve the public transport network within the city.

"Council will investigate the feasibility of alternative funding mechanisms for public transport improvements with guidance from the State Government, to demonstrate its commitment to better public transport in Ipswich. This could consider using a portion of Council's parking revenue for public transport improvements"

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An opportunity to consider alternative funding avenues does lie within the City of Ipswich Parking Pricing Strategy, whereby a recommendation of the Report to the June 2020 General Purposes Committee was for Council officers to commence investigations into the alternative use of parking revenue for the purpose of sustainable transport initiatives (including public transport) but not prior to the 2021-2022 Financial Year.

Council could look to invest into an existing or new urban service operated by TransLink or alternatively Council could look to partner with an organisation such as West Moreton Health whom are part way through a 3-month trial of a free CBD Shuttle Bus (Figure 4 below). This is an initiative that Council could look to support and build upon using alternative funding mechanisms such as parking revenue.

This also aligns with iGO Action P12 which states the following:

“If required, open the Limestone Park car park to commuters and if feasible introduce a shuttle bus between the park and the Ipswich City Centre (possibility in conjunction with the Ipswich Hospital bus)”



Figure 4 – West Moreton Health CBD Shuttle Bus (August 2021)

COUNCIL'S EXPANSION PRIORITIES

Whilst there are many parts of Ipswich (such as Deebing Heights, Karalee, parts of the Ripley Valley and Collingwood Park) that are without an adequate public transport option, Council's two biggest expansion priorities are as follows:

1. An expansion of the bus network within Redbank Plains (south of Redbank Plains Road)
2. A trunk bus connection between Ipswich Central and Springfield Central

These two (2) 'expansion' priorities have scored the highest on TransLink and Council's priority list of projects and should be the focus of Council's short-term engagement with the State Government.

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One of the priorities within the Queensland Government's Draft 10 Year Plan for Queensland Passenger Transport is that passenger transport is "*responsive to changing community needs*". Redbank Plains is in need of enhanced public transport services given its lack of existing public transport coverage (unchanged since 2010) and rapidly growing population. The residential population within Redbank Plains has risen from approximately 15,375 in 2011, to approximately 24,166 in 2020 (ABS Estimated Resident Population), an increase of 57% over the last decade. Figure 6 (page over) visualises some of the expansion experienced within Redbank Plains since 2010.

iGO PTAAP also identifies Redbank Plains as a suburb with a population that has a higher proportion of 'reliant/captive' public transport users and socio-economic disadvantage.

The expansion of the bus network within Redbank Plains has been listed as a 'high priority' project by both Council and TransLink and is identified in TransLink's 5-year Public Transport Service Plan. This priority was put up at the last service change submission process (for the 21/22 FY) by TransLink and was unsuccessful in securing funding.

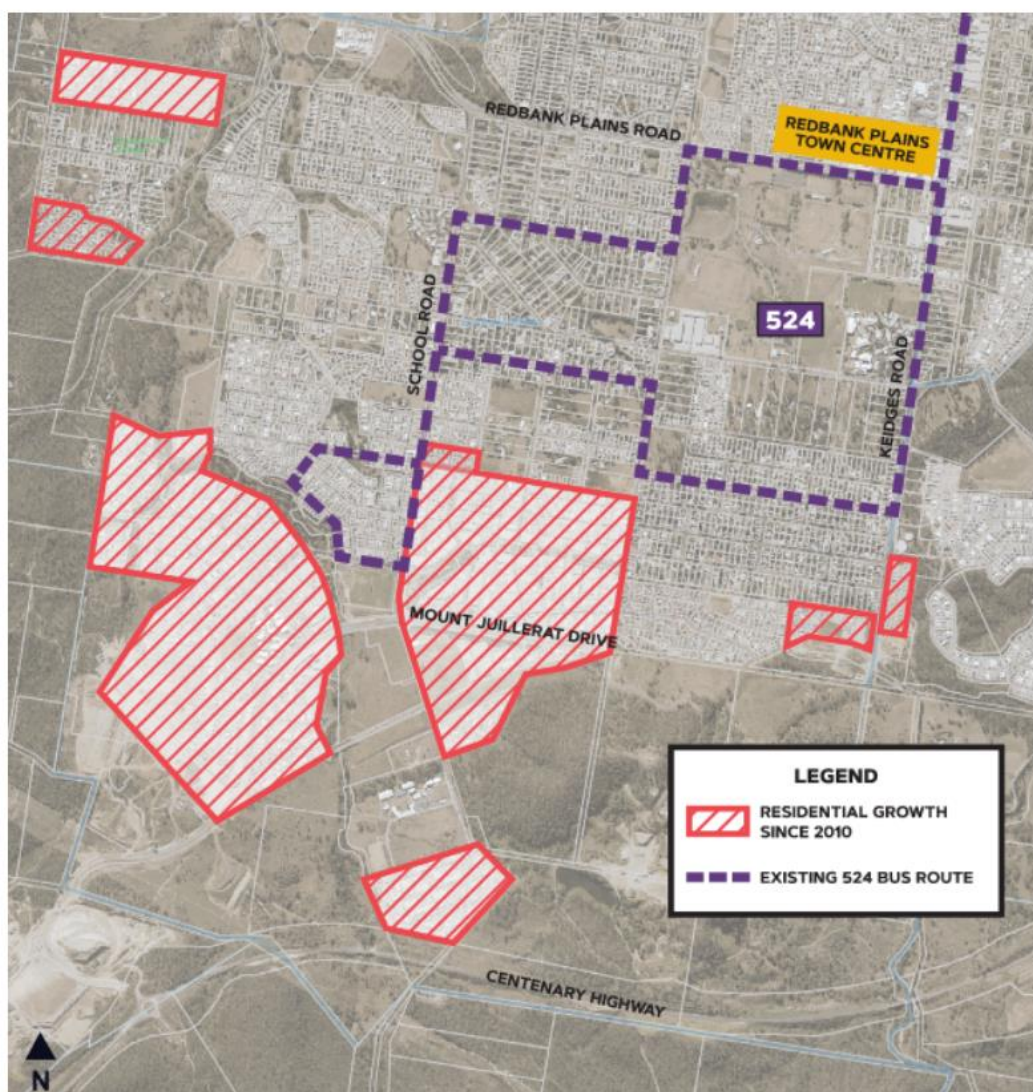
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Figure 5 – Residential expansion in Redbank Plains since 2010

A trunk bus connection between Ipswich Central and Springfield Central

There is currently no single seat public transport connection between the city's two (2) Principal Regional Activity Centres, Ipswich Central and Springfield Central. To make this journey currently, there are following travel options:

- Car travel (approximate travel time of 25-30 minutes - outside of the peak hours)
- Train travel with an interchange at Darra Station (minimum travel time of 47 minutes)
- Bus travel (travel time between 1-2 hours depending on connections and time of day)
 - via Yamanto (515 & 531)
 - via Goodna (500 & 527)
 - via Redbank Plaza (500 & 526)

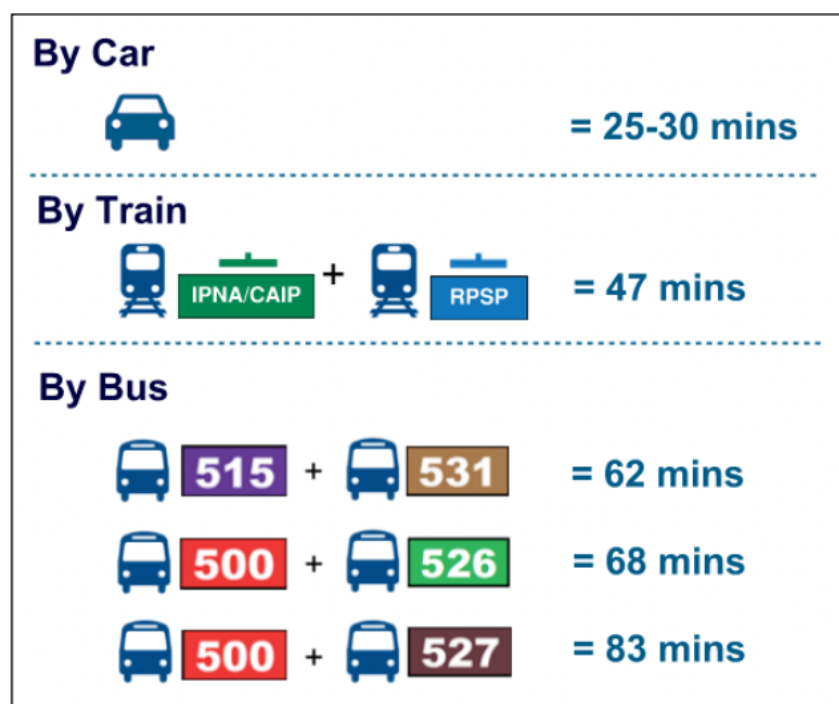


Figure 6 – Current journey times (off peak) between Ipswich Central (Bell Street) and Springfield Central Station

Not to be confused with the Ipswich to Springfield Public Transport Corridor Study (I2S Corridor), iGO identifies a corridor between Ipswich Central and Springfield Central via Redbank Plains as a 'high frequency bus service connection'. This connection (refer to Figure 8 page over) is also identified within the *South East Queensland Regional Transport Plan* as a 'frequent bus link' and partly as a 'bus priority corridor'.

A new trunk bus connection between Ipswich Central and Springfield Central has been listed as a 'high priority' project by both Council and TransLink and is identified in TransLink's 5-year Public Transport Service Plan. Such a connection would achieve the following:

- **Stronger linkage between the City's Principal Regional Activity Centres** – including greater access to employment and services
- **A single seat journey** - customers would no longer need to interchange or cross a Translink fare zone
- **Reduced carbon emissions and traffic congestion** – potential reduction of the number of vehicles on the road
- **Travel time savings** - compared to existing public transport alternatives
- **More travel choices** - a new direct service would provide a viable travel alternative to the car

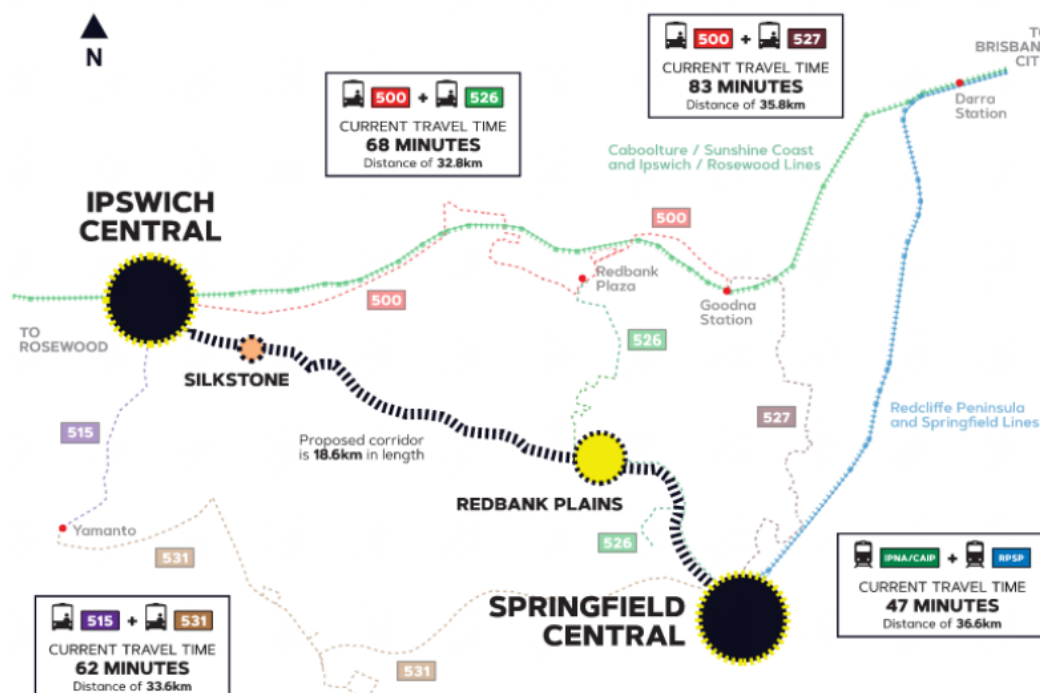
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Figure 7 – Indicative Trunk Bus Corridor between Ipswich Central and Springfield Central, in comparison to current public transport offerings

LEGAL/POLICY BASIS

This report and its recommendations are consistent with the following legislative provisions:
Not Applicable

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

If future investment in the bus network from the State Government is not forthcoming, bus patronage in Ipswich may continue to decrease. On the current trajectory whereby investment in the bus network has not kept up with residential growth, the public transport mode share within Ipswich will continue to decline, shifting further away from the 11% mode share target identified in iGO.

The risk of not servicing growth areas with public transport options is that these communities establish habits/patterns of car usage, which is difficult to break once established, leading to greater congestion on roads, pollution as well as various social-economic issues.

Of the considerations outlined previously, TransLink/TMR may be cautious about supporting cost neutral projects due to the potential for community backlash. Removing services or decreasing the frequency of existing bus services to fund 'higher priority' bus services generates winners and losers, which may not be supported politically by the State Government.

GROWTH INFRASTRUCTURE AND WASTE COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA10 FEBRUARY
2022**HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS	
OTHER DECISION	
(a) What is the Act/Decision being made?	<p>Recommendation A states that a submission for citywide expansion of the bus network be prepared and considered as a potential Regionally Significant Project.</p> <p>Recommendation B states that the Councillors meet with State MPs to discuss new bus services in Redbank Plains, as well as for a new direct bus service linking Ipswich Central and Springfield Central.</p> <p>Recommendation C states Council officers work with the State Government to rationalise the existing bus network to achieve net benefits.</p> <p>Recommendation D states if funding from the State Government is not secured for Council's two (2) expansion priority projects (identified in Recommendation B) by the end of 2022/23 financial year, that Council officers commence investigations into alternative funding options to subsidise the cost of these service changes and prepare a report for Council's consideration.</p>
(b) What human rights are affected?	No. The proposed decisions are at a high level and so there is no immediate impact on human rights.
(c) How are the human rights limited?	
(d) Is there a good reason for limiting the relevant rights? Is the limitation fair and reasonable?	
(e) Conclusion	The decision is consistent with human rights.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The report has outlined three (3) considerations for Council moving forward, all of which have no immediate financial implications to Council.

The option to investigate alternative funding opportunities may have future financial implications if supported by Council, however any decision on this would be subject to an additional report for Council's consideration.

GROWTH INFRASTRUCTURE AND WASTE COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA10 FEBRUARY
2022**COMMUNITY AND OTHER CONSULTATION**

There were no internal/external consultation activities associated with the development of this report. However, it is the intention of this report for the broader community to have a greater say and influence on the Ipswich bus network as part of Council's advocacy works in line with the recommendations of this report.

CONCLUSION

The expansion of the bus network within Ipswich has not kept up with the population growth experienced within the city, with the number of bus routes and bus patronage lower than what it was a decade ago. Investment by TransLink within the Western Bus Region is significantly less than other regions within SEQ.

There are challenges and difficulties of obtaining funding by TransLink for new services and therefore Council may consider several approaches regarding the Western Bus Region, including a change in how Council engages with the State Government, exploring cost-neutral opportunities and alternative funding opportunities.

Council officers have identified two (2) priority projects which is suggested to be the focus of Council's short-term advocacy works, and investment decision making.

ATTACHMENTS AND CONFIDENTIAL BACKGROUND PAPERS

1.	Bus Service Changes (2005 to 2021)
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James MacArthur

TRANSPORT PLANNER (TRANSPORT PLANNING)

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Mary Torres

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY AND PLANNING MANAGER

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Tony Dileo

MANAGER, INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Sean Madigan

ACTING GENERAL MANAGER - INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

GROWTH INFRASTRUCTURE AND WASTE COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA

10 FEBRUARY
2022

“Together, we proudly enhance the quality of life for our community”

ATTACHMENT 1

Bus Service Changes within Ipswich LGA (2005 to 2021)

Route No.	Route Detail	Years of Operation																		
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021		
463	Goodna to Forest Lake	C																		
500	Ipswich Central to Goodna	C																		
501	Ipswich Central to Goodna		C				D													
502	Ipswich Central to Bundamba	C																		
503	Ipswich Central to Bundamba (via Eastern Heights)	C																		
504	Ipswich Central to Brassall (via North Ipswich)	C					D													
505	Ipswich Central to Moores Pocket	C					D													
506	Ipswich Central to Leichhardt/One Mile	C																		
507	Ipswich to Brassall (via Sadliers Crossing)	C					D													
508	Ipswich Central to Willowbank / Amberley	C								D										
509	Ipswich Central to Yamanto	C																		
510	Ipswich to Bundamba (via North Booval)	C					D													
511	Redbank to Goodna (via Redbank Plains)	C					D													
512	Ipswich Central to Brassall						C													
513	Woodend Loop						C			D										
514	Tivoli to Booval Fair							C												
515	Brassall to Yamanto/Willowbank			C																
516	One Mile Loop	C								D										
517	Ipswich Central to Brassall (via West Ipswich)	C					D													
520	Springfield Central to Goodna			C		D														
521	Redbank to Goodna (via Redbank Plains)	C					D													
522	Springfield Central to Goodna	C															D			
523	Goodna loop (via Bellbird Park)		C				D													
524	Goodna to Redbank Plains						C													
525	Collingwood Park Loop						C													
526	Springfield Central to Redbank						C													
527	Ipswich Central to Brassall	C					D													
527	Springfield Central to Goodna																C			
528	Springfield Central to Springfield																C			
529	Ipswich Central to Toogoolawah	C																		
530	Goodna to Springfield Central (via Bellbird Park)	C								D										
531	Yamanto to Springfield Central (via Ripley)															C				
533	Spring Mountain Loop																C			
534	Springfield Central to Browns Plains			C																
535	Springfield Central to Richlands Train Station									C	D									

NO SERVICE
CHANGES
BETWEEN
2014 & 2018

C Commencement of New Bus Route

D Bus Route Discontinued

EXPANSION OF THE IPSWICH BUS NETWORK

James MacArthur

Transport Planner (Infrastructure and Environment Department)





Expansion of the Ipswich Bus Network

- The need for better public transport in Ipswich
- The Ipswich bus network by numbers
- Benchmarking against TransLink regions
- Suggested steps forward
- Priority projects
- Summary

The need for better public transport in Ipswich

The mode share for public transport in Ipswich has been drifting further away from the mode share targets set within iGO

	Household Travel Survey			iGO Mode Share Target
	2011	2017	2018	
Ipswich Population (rounded)	167,000	208,500	218,000	435,000
Private Vehicle Mode Share	86%	87.6%	88.4%	75%
Public Transport Mode Share	6.3%*	6.7%*	5.4%*	11%

**Figures also include Taxi and Rideshare*

iGO Public Transport Advocacy and Action Plan Survey

36% of respondents were 'unhappy' or 'very unhappy' with the state of the public transport network

32% of respondents were 'neutral' with the state of the public transport network

Barriers include:

- **Convenience**
- **Travel time**
- **Cost**



The Ipswich Bus Network (Western Bus Region) by numbers

18

urban **bus services**
currently operate

1

high frequency bus route
(15min or greater frequency)

8

years have passed since
the last major bus network
review

1.57

million trips occurred in
the 19/20 FY

Over the last decade

Population has grown 38%

Bus network funding has grown only 33%

Net decline in bus routes

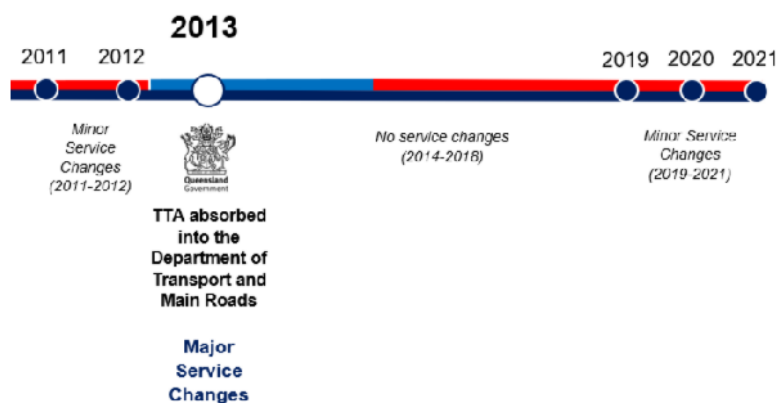
*19 services in 2012, compared to 18 services
in 2021*

2 expansion bus routes

*531 Yamanto to Springfield Ctl (via Ripley)
533 Spring Mountain Loop*

The Ipswich Bus Network (Western Bus Region) by numbers

- *Last major service change in 2013 (8 years ago)*
- *No investment between 2014 and 2018 (no new service or service improvements)*
- *Fewer urban bus routes in 2020, compared to 2006*
- *Bus patronage has been on the decline since 2013*



Source: Derived from TMR data

Year	Population (Ipswich LGA)	Bus Patronage (Western Region)	No. Urban Bus Routes (Western Region)
2006	142K	Not publicly available	20
2012	178K	1.66 million trips (11/12 FY)	19
2013	184K	1.83 million trips (12/13 FY)	15
2019	222K	1.81 million trips (18/19FY)	16
2020	230K	1.57 million trips (19/20 FY)	18

Sources: Rail Back on Track, TMR, Profile ID

Benchmarking against TransLink Regions

- *Western Region has the fewest number of urban bus routes and the smallest spend per resident*

	Brisbane	Gold Coast	Sunshine Coast / Noosa	Moreton Bay (Northern)	Logan (Southern)	Redlands (Eastern)	Ipswich (Western)
Number of urban bus routes	≈233*	56	30	48	47	35	18
Bus Service Contract Spend (19/20 FY)^	\$328.7 M*	\$94.6 M	\$54.5 M	\$60.6 M**	\$49.1 M***	\$27.9 M**	\$24.4 M
Population (June 2020) ERP	1,272,999	635,191	393,069	479,639	341,985	160,331	229,845
Bus Service Contract Spend (per resident)	\$258.21	\$148.86	\$138.58	\$126.42	\$143.68	\$173.98	\$106.15

[^]Service contract spends include both urban and school bus services

*Figure includes only services operated by Transport for Brisbane

** Figure does not include services operated by Transport for Brisbane

*** Figure does not include services operated by Surfside Buslines or Transport

Sources: Rail Back on Track, TMR, Profile ID



Suggested steps forward

- *Given the lack of recent investment by the State Government for new expansion services, the following steps should be considered:*

1.

Re-focus Council's
engagement with the
State Government

2.

Explore opportunities to
rationalise the bus
network

3.

Investigate alternative
funding opportunities

Re-focus Council's engagement with the State Government

1.

Re-focus Council's
engagement with the
State Government

CURRENT ENGAGEMENT

- *Engagement between Council officers and TransLink officers.
This has not correlated with state investment*

PROPOSED ENGAGEMENT

- *Engagement between Council officers and TransLink officers continues to occur*
- *That Councillors engage with State Government on the two (2) priority expansion projects*
- *That a submission for citywide expansion of the bus network be prepared and considered as a Regionally Significant Project*
- *Consideration as to how best facilitate community engagement*

Explore opportunities to rationalise the bus network

2.

Explore opportunities to rationalise the bus network

- *TransLink have advised that short-term expansion of the bus network will need to be self-funded or cost neutral*
- *There are a number of cost-neutral opportunities that could be explored to enhance the network*
- *The challenge with this approach is the generation of 'winners' and 'losers' as existing services may need to be altered in order to fund other services deemed a higher priority*

Investigate alternative funding opportunities

3.

Investigate alternative funding opportunities

- *Many Local Governments are subsidising public transport services in some capacity*
- *Council could look to invest into an existing or new urban service operated by TransLink or alternatively Council could look to partner with an organisation such as West Moreton Health*

Public Transport subsidies (by Local Government entity)

Brisbane City Council	\$144.8 Million (2021/22 Budget)¹ • \$144.8 M towards subsidising public transport services
City of Gold Coast	\$2.3 Million (2021/22 Budget)² • \$1.3 M towards free travel for seniors and veterans • \$1.3 M towards service improvements in Northern Gold Coast
Sunshine Coast Council	\$0.32 Million (2019/20 Transport Levy Annual Report)³ • Funded through a Transport Levy • \$0.32 M was allocated towards bus service improvements in 19/20 FY
Noosa Shire Council	\$0.20 - \$0.30 Million (spend in 2020/21 FY)⁴ • Funded through a Sustainable Transport Levy • Includes free Christmas and Easter holiday bus services and 'Go Noosa' loop bus

Priority Project 1

Improved coverage within Redbank Plains

- *Further expansion of the bus network is needed within Redbank Plains (south of Redbank Plains Road) to cater for the large residential population growth experienced over the last decade (57% growth).*
- *Expansion of the bus network could be in the form of new service or enhancements to an existing service.*
- *There has been no improvements (expansion or improved frequencies) to the existing 524 bus service since 2010*

What are some of the potential benefits associated with the expansion of the bus network in Redbank Plains?



Improved accessibility

Greater access to employment, education and social services



Reduced carbon emissions and traffic congestion

Reduces the number of vehicles on the road



More travel choices

A new service could provide a viable travel alternative to the car for many residents



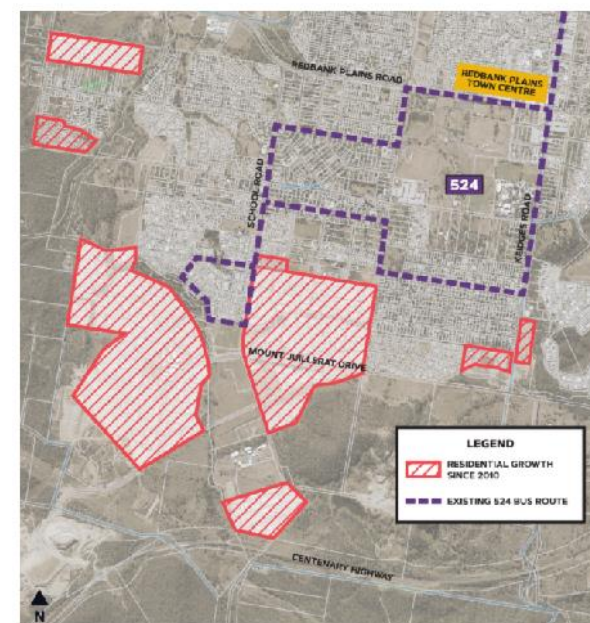
Less reliance on the car

Households may not require a second car if there are viable public transport alternatives



Improved liveability

Quality of life improves for those who don't have access to a car



Residential expansion in Redbank Plains since 2010

Priority Project 2

Ipswich Central to Springfield trunk bus connection

- A direct bus connection between Ipswich Central and Springfield Central (via Redbank Plains)
- Not to be confused with the I2S
- Route is identified in iGO and SEQ Regional Transport Plan

What are some of the benefits of this connection?



A single seat journey
Customers would no longer need to interchange or cross a Translink fare zone



Reduced carbon emissions and traffic congestion
Reduces the number of vehicles on the road



Travel time savings
Compared to public transport alternatives

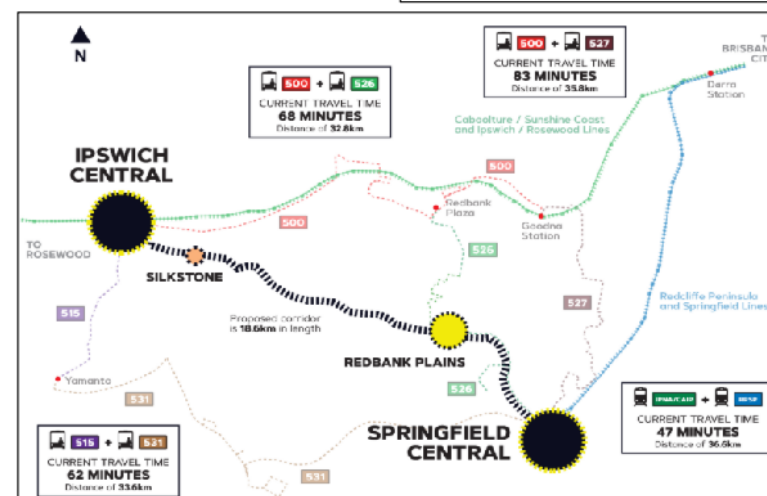


More travel choices
A new direct service would provide a viable travel alternative to the car



Stronger links between centres
Greater access to employment and services

By Car	
	= 25-30 mins
By Train	
IPHA/CAIP + RPSP	= 47 mins
By Bus	
515 + 531	= 62 mins
500 + 526	= 68 mins
500 + 527	= 83 mins



Summary

- *The expansion of the bus network within Ipswich has not kept up with the population growth, with the number of bus routes and bus patronage lower than what it was a decade ago.*
- *Investment by TransLink within the Western Bus Region is significantly less than other regions within SEQ.*
- *There are challenges and difficulties of obtaining funding by TransLink for new services and therefore Council may consider several approaches, including a change in how Council engages with the State Government, exploring cost-neutral opportunities and alternative funding opportunities.*
- *Two (2) priority projects have been suggested to be the focus of Council's short-term advocacy works*

