



Transport Planning and Operations
Brisbane City Council
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Re: North West Transport network submission

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the various options for the North West Transport network.

Consultation extension

Queensland Walks would like to note the timing of the consultation period for the North West Transport network. This consultation was released in late November 2020, with face to face consultation in December and closes on Monday December 21. Given the timing, and the nature of extraordinary events in 2020, **the scheduling of this consultation closure is prohibitive to many residents and stakeholders. We also have concerns about the process and outcome with the community consultation and especially the data collection for the Stafford community location.**

As such, **Queensland Walks encourages Council to extend the consultation period to allow for residents and stakeholders to be able to get a better understanding of the proposed 5 options, and respond. We recommend that the consultation is extended until March, similar to the Green Bridges consultation extension.**

Submission support

Queensland Walks is a community based organisation which advocates for more walkable places which will mean more Queenslanders walk! Our aim is to improve the conditions and profile of walking in Queensland, support and encourage government, organisations and agencies to improve policy and funding priorities to enhance walking. We continue to promote walking for all ages, all abilities. Our aim is for better policy and planning to make Queensland neighbourhoods more walkable, more liveable for all ages.

Queensland Walks supports the submissions of fellow organisations who form part of the [Queensland Walking Alliance](#), including (but not limited to), Heart Foundation and the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) Queensland, Bicycle Queensland, as well as the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) Queensland, and Outdoors Queensland / Nature Play QLD. **We would like to note that not all organisations are aware of the consultation, or able to submit due to the timing of the pre-Christmas consultation period as discussed.**

Project limitations

Queensland Walks acknowledges that some of the proposed options will rely on a commitment from the State Government ¹ with other parts of the proposed North West transport network needing input from Moreton Bay Regional Council and nearby Moreton residents.

We also note that due to the changing nature and location of the workplace and employment as a result of the pandemic, considerations will need to be made about how this project will adapt to recent and longer term changed travel behaviours and encourage more residents to return to public transport, work in closer proximity to their homes, reduce the burden of disease and reduce transport emissions through the uptake of public and active transport.

Brisbane's vision

We would like to highlight four pillars of the Brisbane Vision 2031 identified in the Transport Plan for Brisbane ² which includes:

- An accessible, connected city
- An active, healthy city
- A clean and green city
- A friendly and safe city

“With our subtropical climate, expansive open space and parklands, and increasing densification of residential neighbourhoods, walking is a major part of how we move around our city.” Transport Plan for Brisbane.

We note that some of the proposed project options do not preserve the vision of the Transport Plan for Brisbane and we implore Council to adhere to the four pillars. We also note *Transport Direction 57* commits Brisbane City Council to ‘Integrate walking and cycling infrastructure to support convenient active travel to and within activity centres including connections to the wider transport networks.’

We would also like to note the *A City for Everyone: Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019 - 2029*³ which acknowledged: ‘Residents shared their personal stories to demonstrate the importance of accessibility in ensuring they can attend community events, access employment and use public transport’ and we encourage that this information is applied to all elements of the project.

“Council will continue to invest in accessible public transport, deliver more comfortable trips and more travel options for everyone. By 2029, Brisbane will be one of the world’s greatest walking and wheeling cities, and residents will have access to smart, sustainable travel choices.” A city for Everyone: Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019 -2029

¹ <https://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Community-and-environment/Planning-for-the-future/Preserved-transport-corridors/North-West-Transport-Corridor>

² https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/20181115_-_transport_plan_for_brisbane_-_strategic_directions.pdf

³ <https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/community-and-safety/community-support/disability-access-and-inclusion/inclusive-brisbane-plan-2019-2029>

Preservation of green space

We would also like to note that the preservation of green space and native habitats is more important than ever, and during and after the election [we collaboratively wrote to Councillors and the Lord Mayors](#) asking for a commitment to green space, pockets parks, intergenerational play spaces and space to walk and ride, and we recommend that any proposal should include significant green space preservation and protection of native habitats. We also note the Bridgeman Downs Neighbourhood Plan, which Queensland Walks has provided input, will be an important part of the green space preservation nearby.

“Walking is a part of most commuter trips. Providing safe and easily understood pedestrian links between public transport services and home, work and other activities will provide an improved whole-of-trip experience.” Transport Plan for Brisbane

An emphasis on public and active transport

Queensland Walks supports the prioritisation of public and active transport options through the North West transport network. We implore Brisbane City Council to consider public and active transport as the lead project, and in all projects across the Brisbane region.

Queensland Walks does not support the extension of the road network, nor supports widening of existing road networks. Queensland Walks encourages the use of existing road networks to provide dedicated public and active transport networks with a particular focus on walkable neighbourhoods, and providing connections for the first and last ‘mile’. Queensland Walks believes that providing more roads and vehicle parking accomplishes the following:

- Encourages people to drive, rather than seek alternatives which involve walking
- Creates a less friendly environment for walking (through emissions, noise, and safety concerns)
- And will provide little, if any, relief from congestion in the short and longer term.

“Active transport currently accounts for a relatively low portion of the city's and region's transport demand. However, walking and cycling are more prevalent in areas with good active transport infrastructure...” Transport Plan for Brisbane.

Residents overwhelmingly supported improvements to public and active transport during the course of the initial Business Case consultation, with 56%

(online) and 64% (in person) respondents saying the most important way to improve the North West is through public transport improvements, and 12 and 9% for cycling respectively.

We note the very low number of respondents who reported a need for pedestrian⁴ improvements, and we can assume that this may indicate:

- Survey design question deficiencies, data collation constraints
- Respondents considering commuter travel only, not local travel within the +/- 5 km or ‘last mile’
- timing of the consultation
- latent demand in this area, and the need for localised pedestrian improvements such as connect footpaths, safer crossings, and the urgency of footpath maintenance in this area particularly in the post war suburbs in the North West with aging infrastructure

⁴ Queensland Walks defines walking as all people of all ages and abilities who move either by walking, or with the use of a mobility device, aid or wheelchair, and considers that designing our cities and suburbs for our most vulnerable walker or Vulnerable Road User (VRU) is essential for healthy, accessible and inclusive city.

- Residents who enjoy walking recreationally however are not able to partake in ‘functional’ walking (to transport, to school, to local business) due to pedestrian infrastructure deficiencies. We know that walking is the most popular form of recreation, and all residents will need to walk at some time and some point in their journey (e.g. first and ‘last mile’)
- that residents expect that good footpath infrastructure and walkability should be incorporated into every Brisbane City Council project.

Shaded, high-quality footpaths to encourage more people to walk

Queensland Walks would expect that any of the options include high quality footpaths for walking incorporating shade elements throughout. We would anticipate these to be a minimum of 1.5m or wider footpaths with consistent shade and places to rest where appropriate. People are increasingly desiring shade to make walking more comfortable and attractive, and reduce risk to skin damage^{5 6}.

While we acknowledge that the images and cross sections are meant to be illustrative only, we have concerns about the lack of separation between people walking and wheeling. Many paths in Brisbane that are popular with walkers and riders already experience issues with insufficient space and conflicts. We anticipate that the increasing uptake of e-mobility across our city shows cause and demand for separation between slower and faster moving pathway users. Providing quality space and separation now is easier and cheaper than having to upgrade infrastructure later.

Queensland Walks would also like to draw attention to the demand on the road network during peak school drop off and pick up times, whereby little attention has been given in the proposal options to managing this traffic and providing options for reducing car use, encouraging families to actively travel through behaviour change programs such as Active School Travel.

Lastly, Queensland Walks supports increased public transport access and services as:

- Public Transport provides mobility for people who rely on public transport to navigate their city, who do not own a car or have a licence
- Public transport trips always involve a walking component and therefore improve health and wellbeing
- They allow for people who like to walk to access longer-distance destinations
- They provide and encourage an alternative transport option to the car.

Project proposals

Road ideas

With transport-related air pollutants estimated to kill more people than the road toll every year⁷ we encourage Brisbane City Council to reduce the construction of new roads or widening of existing

“Road network:

- **Provide safe, liveable, shady and connected local streets with low traffic speeds and with priority for pedestrians and cyclists.**
 - **Adopt suburban road hierarchy plans that manage separation of local and through-traffic movement.”**
- Transport Plan for Brisbane**

⁵ <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/protect-your-skin/seek-shade>

⁶ <https://subtropicalcities.com/2018/02/14/hot-in-the-suburbs-want-more-walkable-streets-more-trees-please/>

⁷ Australian State of the Environment Committee, State of the Environment 2011 (SoE 2011), Independent report to the Australian Government Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and

roads, and provide more options for residents to use public and active transport, and choose walking as an option for those shorter trips to the shops, local business, schools and public transport.

Queensland Walks supports an upgrade to Gympie Road to accommodate for a dedicated and separated busway similar to the Southern busway.

Bus ideas

Queensland Walks believes that providing a wider network for people to be able to walk to a quality public transport service is imperative.

We recommend that busways connect to the Northern Busway, and have right of way so that they are not slowed down by on-road vehicles and thus provide a quicker and more reliable service.

Rail ideas

Queensland Walks supports increased public transport such as rail, however encourages Council to work with State Government to propose solutions that will not sever communities, and implement green bridges and overpass options a regular interval. We note that this proposal will need significant funding, and support from State Government.

Multi-modal transport corridor ideas

Queensland Walks does not support this proposal as it increases private vehicle network. We note that the illustration and cross section on this proposal does not appear to provide sufficient width for both cycling and walking. It also seems to provide rather limited access, with few options to enter and leave the path, or for local resident to cross over and between the corridor. This does not appear to conform to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines and would not be a welcoming place to walk for most residents.

Local transport network ideas

Queensland Walks is very cautious about this option. We understand that “intersection improvements” will lead to a loss of service for people walking by:

- adding turning lanes, making crossings wider and more difficult for less mobile and vision impaired pedestrians
- increasing the need to make multiple crossings (not signalised on all four legs of an intersection) and thus increasing risks to Vulnerable Road Users
- Increasing the waiting times at signalised crossings, and thus increasing the risk of sun exposure⁸, exposure to road trauma⁹ and [exposure to toxic emissions](#)¹⁰
- adding the number of times someone must wait (on traffic islands, pedestrian refuge, mid-road and at slip lanes)
- providing slip lanes without priority pedestrian provisions and whereby drivers rarely give way to pedestrians, regardless of the road rules.

[Roadway design has generally catered for the needs of motorized traffic, neglecting the needs of pedestrians.](#) 6. Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety Queensland (CARRS-Q)

Communities, 2011; Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics, Health Impacts of Transport Emissions in Australia: Economic Costs, Working Paper 63, Commonwealth of Australia, 2005.

⁸ <https://queenslandwalks.org.au/cool-and-covered/>

⁹ <https://research.qut.edu.au/carrsq/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/2017/05/Pedestrian-Safety-screen.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/dec/16/girls-death-contributed-to-by-air-pollution-coroner-rules-in-landmark-case>

Rather than providing more Park 'n' Ride facilities, Queensland Walks proposes that Brisbane City Council invest in inclusive pedestrian infrastructure, with a [Whole Journey approach](#)¹¹ making it easier and more pleasant to walk to public transport as is well-set out in the Transport Plan for Brisbane. This would include:

- frequent and easy road crossings
- footpaths leading to train stations and bus stops
- Inclusive design with investment in whole journey infrastructure and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance
- a comprehensive shade program along these footpaths.

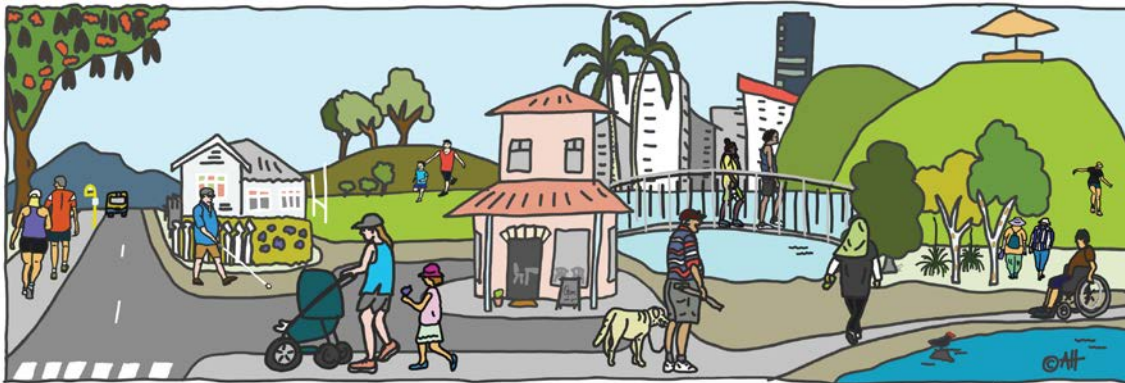
Once again, we thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the various options for the North West Transport network. We have best responded to the proposed project given the short time-frame.

Yours in health and walking,



Anna Campbell

Executive Officer, on behalf of the [Queensland Walks Board](#)



¹¹ <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/transport/disabilities/whole-journey/guide/1-introduction.aspx>