



Michael Berkman MP
For Maiwar ▲

18 December 2020

Myles Fairbairn
Transport Planning and Operations
Brisbane City Council
Via email: brisbanetransportfuture@brisbane.qld.gov.au

Submission on North West Transport Network Business Case

Dear Mr Fairbairn,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a formal submission on Brisbane City Council's North West Transport Network business case. I appreciate your letter of 2 December 2020 and the briefing provided to my office on 9 December 2020.

I make this submission as the representative of the State electorate of Maiwar, covering Bardon, Auchenflower, Toowong, Taringa, St Lucia, Indooroopilly, Fig Tree Pocket and Mt Coot-tha. Since being elected in 2017 I have been actively engaged with local residents seeking to make our suburbs more accessible by improving public and active transport, and to cut traffic congestion by reducing reliance on private vehicles. I have generally restricted my comments to projects and issues in my electorate.

Public and active transport is a priority

My view is that spending on new public and active transport must be prioritised above spending on new roads. Where possible, existing road space should be reallocated away from street parking and general traffic, and towards bus lanes, bike lanes and wider footpaths.

I strongly support the project team's focus on reducing traffic congestion by reducing reliance on private vehicles. Importantly, the respondents to the first round of consultation agree. The *Strategic assessment key findings* document shows that when asked, "What is the most important way that transport in Brisbane's north-west can be improved?"

- 57% said public transport improvements
- 26% said road improvements
- 11% said bicycle infrastructure improvements
- 3% said parking improvements (I understand these responses were mostly focussed on Park n Ride facilities near public transport)
- 2% said pedestrian infrastructure improvements.

State and local governments must adopt a much stronger focus on ambitious targets to shift mode share from private vehicles to public and active transport, and I will continue advocating for these changes at every opportunity. We face a climate change emergency, and ambitious targets are vital from both a climate change and transport policy perspective. Some congestion is inevitable, so our objective must be

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to move people as efficiently and cheaply as possible, rather than to totally eliminate congestion from the roads.

MetRoad 5

MetRoad 5 is a State-controlled road which traverses Bardon and Toowong in my electorate and includes Frederick Street, Rouen Road, Boundary Road, MacGregor Terrace and Jubilee Terrace.

It is a major thoroughfare, but it is also a local street for many Maiwar residents. Consistent with the feedback you received, as summarised in the *Consultation Report*, much of this corridor is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. It carries significant traffic and generates very high levels of noise, primarily from heavy vehicles.

The Boundary Rd/Rouen Rd/Rainworth Rd roundabout in Bardon is especially dangerous. My office receives an extraordinary volume of correspondence about this roundabout, including frequent reports of near misses with pedestrians including children. More information about [my advocacy on this particular roundabout is here](#).

Based on feedback from local residents I believe the State government should:

- Reduce the speed limit on all or part of MetRoad 5 to 40km/hr. A speed limit review is now underway, and was due to be completed by the end of 2020.
- Improve pedestrian and cycling safety and connectivity along and across MetRoad especially:
 - at the Boundary Rd/Rouen Rd/Rainworth Rd roundabout;
 - along the western side of Rouen Rd near Vimy St; and
 - at the intersection of Frederick St and Birdwood Tce where there is no practical or safe pedestrian crossing at all.
- Dramatically improve bus services in Bardon and Auchenflower (and across Brisbane) so that locals and outside commuters have a real alternative to driving.
- Divert heavy vehicle traffic to Legacy Way via the Toowong tunnel portal to reduce the currently unreasonable noise impacts on local residents.
- Implement safety upgrades at the Toowong roundabout (Frederick St/Milton Rd/Western Freeway) including lower speed limits, clearer lane markings on Miskin St, solid lines on the roundabout and clearer signage.

Western Busway on the M5

I support the creation of what I am calling a “Western Busway” on the M5 corridor (Centenary Highway / Western Freeway) via the addition of dedicated bus lanes.

The State government is already planning to gradually expand the M5 corridor from four lanes to six from Ellen Grove to Toowong, and is about to commence work on an upgrade for the Jindalee Bridge to accommodate that project. It is listed in the [draft South East Queensland Regional Transport Plan \(Metropolitan\)](#) (**draft SEQ RTP**) under action A3.28.

This proposed expansion from four lanes to six, if it proceeds, should be a Western Busway, not extra general traffic lanes.

This crucial project was listed as an immediate “Phase 1” priority in the 2009 [Western Brisbane Transport Network Strategy \(WBTNS\)](#) but was never commenced. Bus priority lanes have apparently been dropped from the draft SEQ RTP without explanation. The Queensland government recently confirmed during

Budget Estimates that no bus priority lanes are currently proposed even after the motorway is expanded. I view this decision as short-sighted and will be contesting it.¹

Bus lanes on Moggill Rd / Coronation Drive from Kenmore to CBD

I support the creation of a fast, frequent and reliable bus corridor from Kenmore to the CBD with bus lanes or transit lanes. This project was also identified as a short-term "Phase 1" priority in the WBTNS as "Western Bus Corridor staged bus lanes", and is also listed in the draft SEQ RTP as action "A3.23 Kenmore to Brisbane bus priority planning".

Moggill Rd / High St is the main road corridor running through my electorate, servicing almost every major activity centre and carrying bus routes for every suburb, but it has no public transport priority and no safe cycling infrastructure. This inadequate situation forces local residents to rely on private vehicles rather than take advantage of our existing public transport services.

Unfortunately, Brisbane City Council ignored this urgent and clearly identified priority when planning the proposed Indooroopilly roundabout upgrade at Coonan St/Moggill Rd which fails to include any bus priority or safe, separated bike lanes.

No new urban motorways

I do not support any new urban motorways. In a context of a climate emergency and stagnant public transport mode share, such projects are a wasteful and harmful distraction.

By encouraging more people to drive, new motorways make traffic congestion worse, not better. Impacts on local residents along the corridor and at entry/exit points are unacceptable and make these politically un-viable for governments to pursue. The project team should not waste its time justifying these projects.

There are multiple proposed urban motorways in the *Ideas - Roads* document. In particular I do not support:

- A new urban motorway on the North West Transport Corridor,
- Any new road tunnels on the west side, including under Bardon and Toowong.

The claimed benefits of road widening and new urban motorways in the *Ideas - Roads* document include "relieve pressure on North West Brisbane Traffic Network" and "improve local and regional travel times", but in my view these are not supported by evidence or experience.

Public and active transport improvements

The priority must be to create a public and active transport network that makes it possible for local residents to shift away from reliance on private vehicles.

Bus network review for "turn up and go" services

A high priority should be the Brisbane bus network review which is proposed to come into effect when Cross River Rail and Brisbane Metro commence. It is currently listed in the SEQ RTP - "A3.03 Brisbane bus network service planning" - as a short term priority.

¹ Queensland Parliament Budget Estimates, 11 December 2020. Page 27 of proof transcript, available here: <https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/TRC/2020/Estimates2020/trns-ph-11Dec2020.pdf>

The timeframes for this review must be urgently clarified and well-publicised. It is vital the review enjoys the support of the State government, Brisbane City Council and the public, but it must also come with more funding to expand services rather than simply reallocate them.

The objective of the review should be to create **“turn up and go” bus services on every major road corridor** in Brisbane. This would include routes along corridors including Moggill Rd, Milton Rd, Swann Rd, Sir Fred Schonell Drive, Stanley Tce, Birdwood Tce, MetRoad 5 and others.

I am hopeful the review can create better cross-suburban bus links as well as feeder bus services to take advantage of the high-quality Ipswich/Springfield train line.

Support for new train line

I support further planning work towards a new train line linking the Ferny Grove line with the Sunshine Coast line via the North West Transport Corridor, and eventually with Cross River Rail via a tunnel. This is an ambitious project, but would create a valuable cross-suburban link.

Better links with Indooroopilly and St Lucia

Key links between and around major activity centres Indooroopilly and St Lucia require urgent improvements. These include:

- The 427, 428 and 432 services from Indooroopilly to UQ and St Lucia are infrequent, unreliable and much slower than equivalent trips by car.
- There is currently no direct bus to Fig Tree Pocket, with the 430 and 445 services travelling via Kenmore or missing key activity centres in Indooroopilly.
- Sir Fred Schonell Drive in St Lucia is a significant bottleneck for bus traffic between Toowong and UQ. This last part of the journey to Brisbane’s second largest trip-generator is a major impediment to shifting more students away from private vehicle use. I have previously called for a corridor study along Sir Fred Schonell Drive to explore the possibility of reallocating existing road space to bus lanes or safe, separated bike lanes.

Fixing the missing link in the Western Bikeway at Sylvan Rd

This is a long-overdue project which would dramatically improve the value of the Western Bikeway and assist in shifting away from reliance on private vehicles. Safe, physically separated bike lanes on Sylvan Rd would create an unbroken active transport corridor from Fig Tree Pocket to the CBD.

Bus services from Bardon to Toowong

I support and have been campaigning for a new high frequency bus between Bardon, Paddington, Mt Coot-tha and Toowong.

Locals in Bardon and parts of Paddington do not have an easy way to catch the bus to Toowong, St Lucia or the Ipswich train line, even though they live very close by. Connections to the city are also relatively slow and infrequent, especially outside peak hour.

Parts of this route are currently serviced by the Great Circle Line, but residents report that that service is so infrequent and unreliable as to be almost useless. One example of this is that it does not run at all on Sundays.

Non-government and non-catchment schools

My electorate is home to several large private schools and a non-catchment public school. These generate particularly high levels of traffic congestion because a much higher proportion of students cannot easily take public transport to school. These include Brisbane Boys College, St Peters Lutheran College, Stuarholme, Brigidine College and Queensland Academy for Science, Mathematics and Technology.

The project team should consider where broader public transport improvements can help more families at these schools shift away from reliance on private vehicles.

To discuss this submission or any of the issues raised here in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact my office on 07 3737 4100.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Berkman', with a stylized, flowing script.

Michael Berkman MP