



the performance of buses and speed their progress across congested areas.

“Busways” are systems of bus stations connected by dedicated rights-of-way for buses only. They give buses the flexibility to continue their journey on the road system after exiting the busway. Busway development is also capable of being staged to allow the construction of bus stations in new housing or commercial areas, with initial bus connections running either in mixed traffic, or on bus lanes or transit lanes. As passenger demand and congestion increase, the busway can be completed.

The *Brisbane Busway Plan* initially conceived by the Brisbane City Council has been broadened into the SEQ Regional Busway Network, encompassing at least 75 km of dedicated busways and around 65 stations. This system can build on the already strong role of buses in the regional transport system and provide the necessary improvements to system capacity and travel times in a cost-effective way. The links in the busway network have been chosen for corridors not served by rail. Feeder bus services will serve both busway and rail stations, with local buses also having the option of being able to use the busway. (See map on page 44.)

Investment in the busway infrastructure will need to be supported by bus priority measures on arterial roads and in the inner city.

ACTIONS:

- KA 5.4 Establish bus rapid transit system
- KA 5.5 Continue bus stop and bus priority improvement program
- SIG 5.6 Develop SEQ Regional Busway Network
- KA 5.7 Develop inner city transit plans for Brisbane and Key Centres
- A 5.8 Improve enforcement of bus and transit lanes

Passenger rail services



Passenger rail will have a major role to play in attracting more passengers to its existing network and expanding catchments through some network extensions. The Citytrain system has a high passenger capacity and can meet high demands during peak times at lower average costs than other modes, but rail is expensive to expand and is expensive to operate during off-peak times. It requires the support of land use policies to concentrate residential and commercial development within an easy walk of railway stations to provide cost-effective services. Feeder buses must also play a greater role in bringing passengers outside the immediate rail catchment to stations. Rail, bus services and busways will play complementary roles in expanding the coverage of public transport and collectively providing the capacity to meet the IRTP public transport targets.

The IRTP proposes significant improvements in service levels on the existing suburban network, to build on the already strong tradition of rail use in the metropolitan area. This includes balancing longer distance express services from outer suburban areas with upgraded inner urban rail services, to capitalise on the ability of rail to attract passengers out of cars.

Possible extensions of the Brisbane suburban passenger rail system are also envisaged where new rail services would:

- support the development of agreed major housing and commercial development areas;
- prove a cost-effective means of meeting the future public transport task; and
- influence land use, locational choice and car ownership in new areas.

The at-grade intersections at Yeerongpilly and Corinda, and the Merivale Bridge between South Brisbane and Roma St stations, are potential choke points in the rail network. With the increased service frequency and service coverage recommended in the IRTP, it may be necessary to identify alignments and preserve opportunities for intersection improvements and an additional river crossing.

The extension of inter-urban rail services, from Landsborough to Maroochydore and from Robina to the NSW border, would play an important role in supporting the ongoing development of the “Key” employment centres adopted under the *Regional Framework for Growth Management*.

Investigations of the feasibility of such railway extensions need to be completed, and transport corridors identified and protected to enable future urban development to support the provision of mass public transport services.

Planning for new inter-urban rail services must have regard to the ability of such services to target the major local travel market. This suggests that high speed inter-urban express services and local suburban rail services may need to operate in the one corridor. For example, the longer term possibility of local passenger rail services on the Gold Coast line south from Coomera, would increase the value of rail in meeting public transport targets. Additional stations and tracks, partially funded in association with new urban development, would be needed to support combined operations.

ACTIONS:

- KA 5.9 Establish rail service agreements
- A 5.10 Review Citytrain timetable and upgrade inner city services
- KA 5.11 Provide infrastructure and trains to improve rail frequency
- A 5.12 Continuously develop railway fare structures
- A 5.13 Investigate and remove constraints in the existing rail system and investigate the need for Inner City Rail second river crossing
- A 5.14 Investigate opportunities for high-speed inter-urban rail





Light rail opportunities

Throughout the consultation process, many people have suggested the introduction of light rail systems such as those found in Europe and more recently, the United States. These are based on modern electric rail technology and operate either on-street or in a dedicated right-of-way. The optimal length of a light rail system is about 10 - 15 km, although many systems are shorter. The maximum speed is about 80 km/h which limits the effective operation of light rail over long distances.

A common feature of successful light rail projects is their integration with an urban development strategy to concentrate passenger demands along the route.

A light rail project was investigated by Brisbane City Council in 1992 to connect the New Farm area to the Valley and Brisbane CBD as part of the urban renewal project. However this was subsequently found to be too expensive to build and operate relative to the likely passenger demand, and a bus solution was chosen.

A new light rail system is being developed in Sydney. This is a private sector consortium with some government financial assistance for land and infrastructure.

It will serve a short, very high capacity passenger demand corridor linking the new casino residential, hotel and entertainment precinct to Darling Harbour and Central Station. There could be similar opportunities for private sector involvement to bring light rail to Queensland in the Brisbane Central Activity District area, or in the Gold and Sunshine Coast tourist precincts.

ACTION:

A 5.15 Ensure that light rail options are evaluated under actions 5.1 and 5.2.

Ferries

The success of the recently introduced CityCat services on the Brisbane River demonstrate that a fast, comfortable and highly visible public transport system has the potential to attract patronage. Further patronage increases would be possible with land use support and improved connections to ferry terminals. The IRTP supports continued improvements to the Brisbane River Ferry services.

Waterways on the Gold Coast offer an opportunity to establish a commuter ferry network as part of an integrated passenger system.

A ferry plan will be developed and implemented for the Moreton Bay islands that is consistent with Strategic Plans and the outcomes of the current islands development plan process.

ACTIONS:

- A 5.16 Continue to increase speed and frequency of ferry services on the Brisbane River
- A 5.17 Investigate ferry network for Gold Coast waterways
- A 5.18 Develop and implement a ferry plan for Moreton Bay Islands

Taxi transport

Taxis account for about 26 000 trips out of the 6 million motorised trips in the region each day. They are a relatively small but important element of the transport system. The use of multi hire (ride-sharing) and maxi taxi vehicles is already seeing an expansion of the taxi business into new types of travel, especially for groups.

The taxi industry will play an important role in expanding service innovations into new markets so the public is offered a range of travel choices and fares. In combination with other service providers, an increasingly flexible taxi service will help achieve better overall public transport services.

On demand or “personal public transport” services

As an extension of the current increases in flexibility of bus and taxi services, the IRTP supports the development, in consultation with the taxi and bus industry, of innovative ride-sharing systems which maximise passenger accessibility and convenience. Key features of such services would include:

- multi hire taxi and taxi bus services with pricing structures between that of single hire taxis and buses; and
- integration of timetables for scheduled services with multi hire and single hire taxi dispatch systems so an intending passenger is offered a range of choices depending on the available travel time and desired fare payment.

These services would more closely match the flexibility and convenience of car travel, giving service providers a means to provide a realistic alternative at an affordable rate. Supporting these services with high occupancy vehicle lanes would further increase their ability to compete with the car.

On demand public transport is also able to pick up and set down passengers close to the door, satisfying important personal security concerns, especially for night time travel.

Through a better match of transport services and technology, the installation of widespread electronic call points across the public transport network would allow the passenger to get information on the desired service, and summon a ride.

