

# Sunshine Coast rail and public transport

Project updates

November 2023



## Sunshine Coast Public Transport

TMR is leading a detailed business case for an enhanced public transport connection between Maroochydore and the Sunshine Coast University Hospital at Birtinya (Stage 1), with a possible extension to Caloundra (Stage 2).

The project aims to provide greater travel choices for short, local trips throughout the Sunshine Coast. It would also help ease congestion and improve the efficiency of the broader transport network through reduced car dependence.

### Interchange and station locations

A total of 18 stations are proposed within Stage 1 of the project area. Station locations for Stage 2 will be determined as part of future planning.

Locations have been determined through careful consideration of:

- proximity to key destinations and attractions
- spacing between other stations and interchanges
- average vehicle operating speeds
- end-to-end journey times
- forecast growth
- passenger demand and trip purpose
- efficiency of the broader transport network.

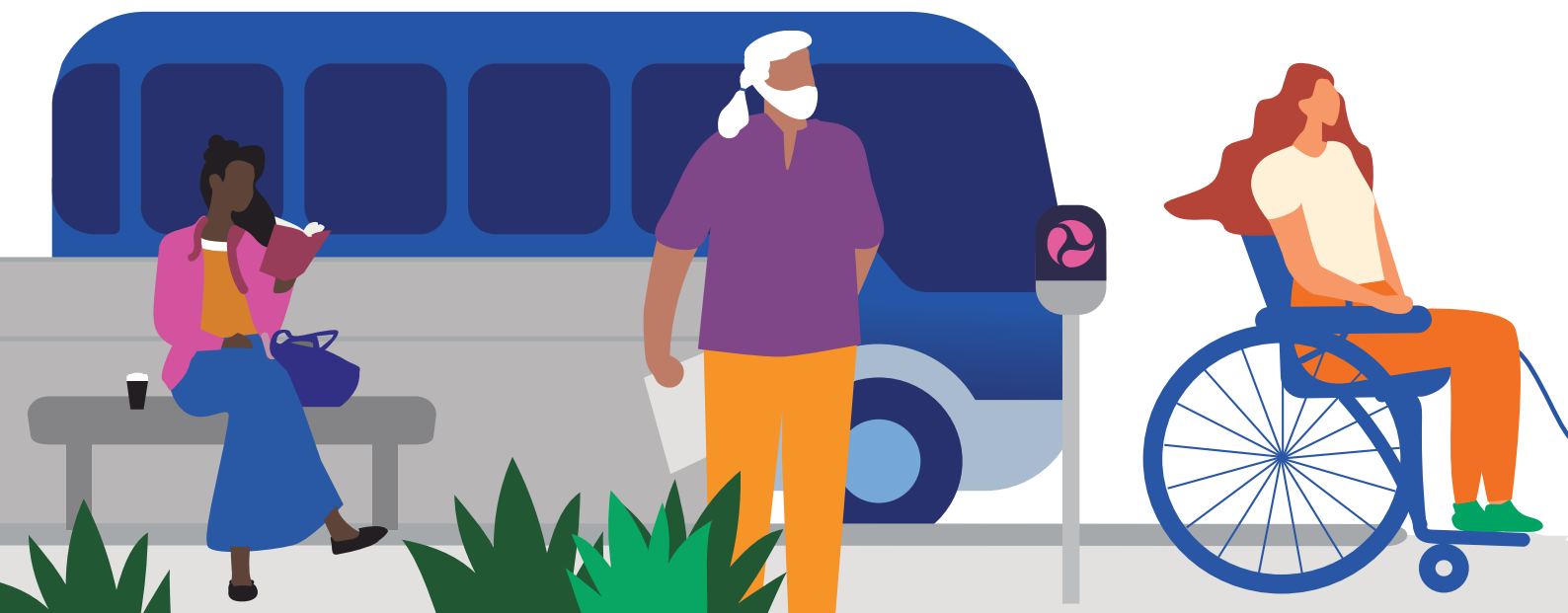
### Station types

**Interchange stations** provide for high patronage in mixed use areas with high pedestrian activity. Interchange stations can be major or minor and provide for connections with heavy rail (Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line) and/or high frequency local bus services.

**Standard stations** provide for low to medium patronage near residential areas or community facilities. They are mainly accessed by pedestrians and bike riders.

### Station character

TMR aims for the stations to balance the function of public transport with placemaking elements that complement the Sunshine Coast character and lifestyle that everyone knows and enjoys. Stations will include design elements that showcase local identity through art, history, storytelling, landscaping and streetscaping, while also providing consistent and familiar features that support accessibility and wayfinding.



## Vehicle options

In 2021, Sunshine Coast Council (SCC) endorsed its Mass Transit Options Analysis Report, which considered five options for an enhanced public transport connection, including:

- bus rapid transit
- light rail
- wireless light rail
- trackless tram
- quality bus corridor.

## Narrowing down options

TMR undertook an analysis of all of SCC's options and assessed each against a set of criteria. The criteria considered factors including:

- transport outcomes
- operations integration
- employment and economic development
- public amenity and social impact
- climate change and sustainability.

This process was undertaken in line with Infrastructure Australia guidelines.

## Options under investigation

As a result of the process, two options have been progressed for further investigation.



### Bus rapid transit

Bus rapid transit vehicles run on rubber wheels on the road surface within dedicated lanes.



### Light rail

Light rail vehicles operate on a fixed track and are typically driven electrically with power being drawn from an overhead electric line.

Bus rapid transit and light rail share the same goal of transporting a large number of passengers to key destinations, in a sustainable and accessible way.

## The key to a future solution

In order to provide a public transport solution that accommodates the needs and growing population of the Sunshine Coast, a dedicated 'right-of-way' needs to be provided and protected.

A right-of-way provides an exclusive separated route from the other road traffic, for the sole use of public transport.

For passengers, a right-of-way ensures greater reliability through services being able to turn up regardless of traffic conditions or congestion, leading to improved frequency, resulting in greater punctuality.

## Next steps to identifying a preferred option

Further detailed assessments for each option are continuing to be undertaken, to help identify a preferred mode. Community feedback, obtained previously and through this consultation, will be considered as part of this process.



Scan for more information about these projects





## Direct Sunshine Coast Line

TMR is planning for the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line – a proposed new 37 kilometre passenger rail line connecting the Sunshine Coast community between Beerwah, Caloundra and Maroochydore to Moreton Bay, Brisbane and beyond.

This new rail line is proposed to tie into the existing North Coast Line, north of Beerwah Station. This means that trains operating on the proposed Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line would continue to the Brisbane CBD and beyond, without passengers needing to transfer at Beerwah.

### Project update

TMR is undertaking a detailed business case for the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line. This builds on planning completed in 2001 by the Caboolture to Maroochydore Corridor Study (CAMCOS). As part of that planning, a corridor (route) was determined and land preserved (protected from development).

The business case includes a review of the preserved corridor to refine the alignment and station locations, a detailed analysis of design, risks,

financials, economics, environmental impacts, community impacts and utilities.

Following these investigations, and consultation undertaken in mid-2023, TMR has progressed the rail station designs and proposed refinements to the rail corridor.

### Revised corridor

The Caboolture to Maroochydore Corridor Study (CAMCOS) corridor was preserved (protected from development) in 2001. This corridor included provision for a single-track rail line, designed to rail standards in 2001. Rail planning and policies have changed since 2001. This has driven a need to review the CAMCOS corridor alignment while undertaking the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line business case.

The alignment review aims to:

- update the alignment to protect for two tracks designed to current Queensland Rail standards, including provision for maintenance and operations

- confirm station locations that allow for the design of accessible facilities and cater to forecast demand (including space for park ‘n’ rides, bus interchanges and kiss ‘n’ rides)
- reduce curves to enable operational efficiencies, increase rail speeds and decrease travel time, minimise environmental, cultural heritage and social/community impacts
- To remove any risk of possible collisions and reduce any impacts to the road network, this project will not create any new level crossings.

View the map for details of the proposed refinements (see right).

### Station designs

As part of the business case, TMR has progressed concept designs for the rail stations, including platforms, buildings, park ‘n’ ride/kiss ‘n’ ride locations and street access for motorists, pedestrians and bike riders.



# Proposed corridor refinements

**1 Maroochydore**  
 Rail track remains west of Sunshine Motorway, before crossing motorway south of Maroochy Boulevard. Meets rail technical standards, minimises operational noise, environmental and flooding impacts.

**2 Buderim-Mooloolaba Interchange**  
 Rail track underpasses under Mooloolaba Road minimises impacts to the local road network. Helps reduce noise and visual amenity impacts.

**3 Mooloolah River crossing (Parrearra to Mountain Creek)**  
 Rail track moves west minimising environmental, cultural heritage and flooding impacts. Aligns rail corridor, the Mooloolah River Interchange project and active transport facilities in a smaller footprint to mitigate environmental impacts.

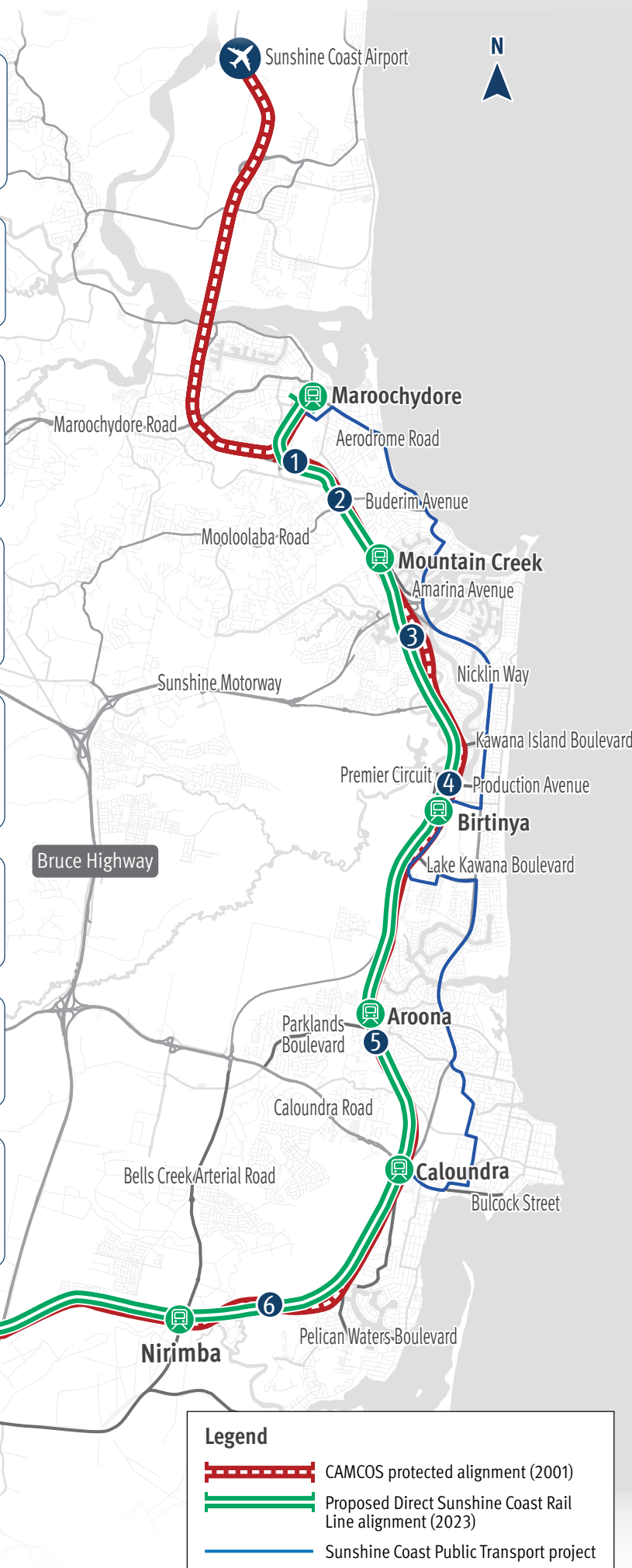
**4 Birtinya**  
 Rail track to cross under Kawana Motorway between Birtinya and Mountain Creek stations. Better accommodates the rail line with the Mooloolah River Interchange project.

**5 Little Mountain**  
 1.1km tunnel between Caloundra and Aroona stations minimises environmental, cultural heritage and social impacts. Enables community facilities on Sugar Bag Road to remain.




**6 Pelican Waters**  
 Rail track shifts west to reduce noise and vibration impacts. Straighter alignment allows for higher speeds and reduces travel time.

**7 Beerwah East**  
 Rail track straightened through the Beerwah East area. Allows faster speeds and reduces travel time.

**8 Beerwah**  
 Rail track connects into existing North Coast Line north of Beerwah station. Modern rail standards require changes. This also reduces environmental impacts.



**Legend**

-  CAMCOS protected alignment (2001)
-  Proposed Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line alignment (2023)
-  Sunshine Coast Public Transport project

## Bus service improvements

As part of planning for the Sunshine Coast Public Transport and Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line projects, we're looking to introduce new bus routes, additional trips and longer operating hours to continue to improve connections between stations, key destinations and areas across the Sunshine Coast.

This improved bus network will connect the community to stations and stops for the North Coast Line, the Sunshine Coast Public Transport project and Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line.

We'll provide convenient connections to major centres and popular destinations, including:

- University of the Sunshine Coast
- Sunshine Coast University Hospital
- Nambour, Landsborough and the wider Sunshine Coast hinterland
- Sunshine Coast Airport
- North to Yandina, Cooroy, Coolumb and Noosa.

The benefits of improved public transport infrastructure and services on the coastal and centre corridors will extend to the broader region.

### Planning future bus connections across the Coast

Translink undertakes a rigorous process when planning and reviewing networks. Using previous customer feedback and go card data to understand travel patterns, key destinations and surrounding infrastructure projects, we're working towards creating a network that best meets the needs of the majority of the community while still providing value for money.

#### Sustainable travel

Reliable public transport provides more sustainable travel options for communities, reducing emissions by reducing cars on the roads.

The Queensland Government has a target to reach zero net emissions by 2050.

Low-carbon infrastructure and transport systems will help to achieve this.



# Public transport strategies

The Sunshine Coast's transport task is growing. In response, TMR is developing and implementing solutions to ensure we continue to move people and goods safely and efficiently into the future.

Public transport plays a key part in the multi-modal solution for the Sunshine Coast. Development of the right solutions in the right areas will facilitate access to employment, education, social services and recreational opportunities for everyone. It will drive economic growth by supporting productive and successful businesses and will ensure that the Sunshine Coast remains an attractive place to live, work and visit.

## Southern Sunshine Coast Public Transport Strategy

A public transport strategy has been developed for the rapidly growing southern Sunshine Coast which sets a vision to 2041 to create a public transport network that is inclusive, connected, safe and accessible, and provides a reliable travel experience for the community.

The Southern Sunshine Coast Public Transport Strategy consists of several key corridors and connections, these being:

- **Western corridor** – an inter-regional freight and passenger line, connecting coastal Queensland between Brisbane and Cairns.
- **Centre corridor** – to enable medium and longer distance trips connecting the economic centres of the Sunshine Coast and delivers a fast, reliable and direct link to the western corridor at Beerwah.
- **Coastal corridor** – to enable local, intra-regional travel with access to key coastal tourism, health and business precincts to the centre corridor.
- **Key connectors** – trips to and between major centres and areas of strategic importance that are not directly connected by the western, centre or coastal corridors.

## Northern Sunshine Coast Public Transport Strategy

TMR is beginning work on the Northern Sunshine Coast Public Transport Strategy in partnership with Sunshine Coast and Noosa Councils. The Strategy will set out the department's vision for a future public transport system for the northern Sunshine Coast area that all levels of government can work towards.

Everyone is invited to provide early input to the strategy's development by telling us about the local public transport challenges and opportunities, as well as your ideas and priorities.



Scan the QR code to view information and provide feedback





### LEGEND

- Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line
- - - Proposed extension
- Sunshine Coast Public Transport
- Kawana Motorway
- Sunshine Motorway, Mooloolah River Interchange Upgrade
- Bells Creek Arterial Road extension
- Sunshine Motorway, Pacific Paradise to Coolum
- Caloundra Road, Kawana Way Link Road and Bells Creek Arterial Road intersection
- = Beerburrum to Nambour Rail Upgrade (Stage 1)



Scan for more information



Faster and reliable journey times



Removing congestion from the road network



Connecting Brisbane to the growing Sunshine Coast region



More accessible, inclusive and sustainable travel options



A legacy project shaping the future of travel in SEQ

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