Part 2.
Corridor vision and strategies
Repositioning the city
Corridor-wide Urban Design Framework

City building vision

The GCRT project will be a catalyst that generates significant opportunities to reposition the Gold Coast for a more sustainable and competitive future. Action taken to realise these opportunities can contribute to securing the future across a range of scales, from global to local. These include:

> Global: Protecting the planet for future generations
> National: Positioning the Gold Coast as a strong economy in the region and on a national scale
> City and region: Focus transformational growth towards achieving the GCCC Bold Future Vision for the Gold Coast and preserve the lifestyle and natural qualities that make it attractive
> Local places for people: Harness growth to generate positive change in the urban environment and enable a progressive shift towards one of Australia’s most distinctive and vibrant cities

Phase 1 of the GCRT Corridor Study formulated a project vision, as follows:

In 2050 the light rail corridor will contain a diverse and well connected network of sustainable and unique places.

This vision and its complementary set of urban design principles have been used to guide the formulation of strategic ideas for the corridor-wide and precinct urban design frameworks in Phase 2.

Urban Design Principles

> Access and connectivity
> Sense of place and identity
> Public realm
> Land use and activity
> Building character and form
> Social and community

The plan opposite summarises the urban design framework for the Corridor. The framework and suggested application of the key strategies as they apply to each precinct are detailed in Part 5.

Corridor Urban Design Framework - Key Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Key Element</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Progress the concept of the ‘network city’ by reinforcing the Gold Coast’s traditional beachside ‘villages’ into a poly-centric city form, with the greatest development intensity and heights at the key activity centres of Southport, Surfers Paradise, and Broadbeach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Establish major east-west movement corridors as future conduits for rapid public and active transport modes, that preserve road capacity and support TOD outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Recognise, preserve and enhance ‘character’ areas through improved public transport connections and street environments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Target investment and support within key clusters of economic growth to diversify the economic base of the Gold Coast. In this regard, the GCHKP to Southport corridor, Surfers Paradise entertainment precinct and Broadbeach retail and civic heart provide particularly compelling opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Investigate appropriate locations for the establishment of affordable infill residential development to support housing diversity and intensification, boosting housing affordability for key workers and a range of household types.</td>
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<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Create new ‘local community quarters’ within the coastal strip supported by open space and community facilities to attract permanent residents and families back to urban spine – with an emphasis on areas adjoining the cores of Southport, Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Advance an integrated mesh of pedestrian and cycle links - connecting across the Nerang River and canal networks to integrate communities and centres. Priority should be given to improving existing connections (as identified by the Corridor Access and Mobility Strategy - CAMS) and investigating key new links such as linking River Walk, Cavill West Bridge and the Gold Coast Arts Centre, and in Broadbeach creating stronger connections along Surf Parade, linking across the Nerang River to Pacific Fair.</td>
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<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Create “ten great streets” or “green spines” by giving priority to improving the environmental and visual quality of the key movement corridors through the introduction of significant street tree planting and pedestrian facilities.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
These areas are to be the focus for renewal activity and where the tallest buildings and highest order uses are concentrated. Building heights of 15-30 storeys are supported, with some areas of unlimited height.

Medium rise areas

These areas include the frame areas of key city nodes, and the core of lower order centres. High intensity, compact buildings of up to 15 storeys are supported to reduce tower ‘crowding’, shadowing and view impacts.

Low to medium rise areas

These areas aim to accommodate compact lower rise buildings of up to 8 storeys that promote greater building diversity, affordability and better streetscape outcomes.

Low rise and transition areas

These areas support wider renewal and infill and manage the interface between higher density areas. Buildings of up to 3 storeys are supported, with opportunities for fourth floors where appropriate.

Legend

- Study corridor
  - Precinct boundary
  - Gold Coast Rapid Transit route
  - Gold Coast Rapid Transit station
  - Waterway
  - Transit station catchment
  - Potential green bridge crossing
  - Proposed green bridge crossing

- Primary active edge
- Secondary active edge
- Cross block link
- Key vehicular / public
- Key pedestrian / public
- Primary ‘green spine’
- Secondary ‘green spine’
- Public boat parking

- Gold Coast Health & Knowledge Precinct
- Existing open space

Prepared by HASSELL for GCCC
Nine strategic ideas have been devised to reposition the city. The ideas are a translation of the Phase 1 corridor vision and themes into spatially focused strategies that respond to the particular opportunities and circumstances of the Gold Coast and GCRT corridor.

They should be read as an extension of the Phase 1 vision and principles which continue to provide the overarching strategic intent and direction for the future shape of the corridor.

In the following pages, each idea is explained in more detail along with case study information and recommendations for future action.

1. Realise a bold future for one of Australia’s most distinctive and vibrant cities
2. Reconnect discrete urban communities
3. Re-engage the city with its blue edges and water rich context
4. Provide greater choice for access and mobility
5. Challenge the trend of traffic dominated streets
6. Streets for people and a greener Gold Coast
7. Design buildings to foster ‘street life’ and distinct character
8. Create genuine communities
9. A resilient and sustainable city
Surfers Paradise beachside markets
Strategy Idea No. 1
Realise a bold future for one Australia’s most distinctive and vibrant cities

Economic principles

High amenity, lifestyle and natural attractions have driven the growth and development on the Gold Coast. These attractions have resulted in strong urban development and tourism industries, which have long underpinned the Gold Coast economic base.

The GCRT presents the Gold Coast with a once-in-a-generation city building opportunity. A ‘network city’ will allow the building of an economic base through industry and sectoral specialisation. Across the Gold Coast a network city will maximise economic, employment, social and environmental multipliers by encouraging ‘key nodes’ of specialisation in optimal locations.

Macropian Australia provided economic input and analysis for this study and recommended that the future development of the Gold Coast around the GCRT corridor be underpinned by a several key economic principles, which are summarised here.

Diversification of the economic base

The Gold Coast economy relies heavily upon the construction and tourism sectors and consumption based activity which has left the city vulnerable to cyclical pressure and global fluctuation. However, as the city continues to diversify its economic and employment base, and put in place initiatives to attract key industries to the region, it has begun to transform into a ‘global city’.

New business and industry activity will generate more of the city’s wealth from productive and knowledge based economic activity. The diversification of the economy is focused on research and development, education and innovation underpinned by skilled labour, investment attraction, export capability and cultural infrastructure.

A key strategic outcome of the City’s Economic Development Strategy is an economy built on a diversified knowledge and strong export base. The GCRT project provides the opportunity to continue to broaden the economic base of the city by reinforcing the city’s activity centres and the development of the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct through the Council’s Pacific Innovation Corridor and Industry Development programs.

The GCRT will improve accessibility for workers, visitors and residents along the corridor and make the key activity centres more attractive for major tenants. There is potential to leverage upon the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct as a Specialist Centre to promote knowledge creation and entrepreneurial activity, health and medical, science and technology, green technologies, research and development and other supportive economic activities.

Create a more affordable and liveable city

The Gold Coast City has some of the most expensive housing in the country and the GCRT project has the potential to alleviate some of the housing pressures by establishing a new higher density residential environment with medium-rise and podium/terrace style developments that cost less to build. This will reduce private vehicle reliance and reduce traffic congestion leveraging upon the GCRT network connectivity.

Modal shift

The measure of success for the GCRT relating to modal shift from private car usage to public transport will be in achieving sustainability targets through reduced car dependence. The Gold Coast has the highest level of multiple-car ownership of any major Australian city, however, for it to be a future global city it must become a sustainable city. The investment in Light Rail public transport infrastructure in the corridor will invariably increase use of public transport by residents of the Gold Coast. This reflects an increase in resident access to multiple public transport modes as well as greater incentive for modal shift away from private motor vehicle usage in response to intensifying traffic congestion. The benefits of increased public transport usage include time and travel cost savings, traffic decongestion, reduced motor vehicle ownership, noise and air pollution reduction and other transport specific benefits light rail will support increased residential densities. Without such a network the scale of development would be impossible due to severe traffic implications.

Network city

The Gold Coast has evolved as a linear multi-nodal city with its principle activity centres being Southport, Robina and a future centre planned at Coomera. The GCRT will allow the city to become more closely integrated with linkages between Southport and the specialist centres of the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct, Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach allowing for increased public transport investment in western connections to Robina/Varity and southern and northern connections. The GCRT will allow the existing polycentric network of the Gold Coast to be harnessed to reinforce specialised clusters of economic activity close to residential communities, reducing the need for car oriented travel. Precincts will be multi-nodal:

- Each centre will provide the standard population consumption services e.g. hairdressers, dry cleaners, and doctors etc. which support the residential and working population.
- But each centre will have a unique competency which complements the other centres and adds value to the economic make up of the city.

The key precincts should provide a comprehensive range of services which contribute to the economic diversity of the city. They should be primarily complementary with core competencies or sectors/industries of comparative advantage with immediate supply chain industries in proximity.

- Residential
- Employment networks
- Services and retail
- Education and training
- Community and cultural facilities

Integrated land use and transport

“We can make significant structural differences to the productive capacity of our cities through more effective integration of land use and infrastructure, and build on the competitive advantages of our cities through agglomeration and high accessibility.”

Our Cities, Our Future - Department of Infrastructure & Transport, Commonwealth of Australia 2011

Prepared by HASSELL for GCCC
Strategy Idea No. 1

Realise a bold future for one Australia’s most distinctive and vibrant cities

City form

The form of growth will be critical in defining the future character, identity and image of the Gold Coast. Perpetuating the trend of high rise towers dominating the coastal strip would have a lasting and detrimental impact on future urban quality and liveability.

City form scenarios

In the earlier stages of this study, built form scenarios were developed to test the potential implications of growth in the corridor. The three simple 3D models illustrated opposite were prepared to reflect different options for accommodating preliminary assumptions about population and employment growth. (More recent projections for growth are outlined in Part 1.)

Each option aimed to accommodate around 40-50,000 new dwellings and nearly 45,000 new job, with one third of these being knowledge based, within the corridor. The floor area required to support this growth target was estimated to be around 5 million sqm, based on typical floor area allocations for dwellings and typical floor space provision for each worker. To enable an easy comparison by stakeholders, the options sought to illustrate the different city form scenarios with 300 new buildings (equivalent to around 15 new buildings per year throughout the 20 year planning horizon for the study).

A need for greater diversity

The options highlighted the significant extent of growth projected for the corridor, and clearly illustrated that accommodating this growth in high rise buildings alone could lead to overcrowding and destruction of the amenity that presently makes the coastal strip an attractive place to live and visit - such as sunny beaches and ocean views.

Currently, typical Gold Coast development corresponds to one of two extremes - either high rise towers or lower building forms, with very little in between. More diverse building forms would spread the density and help manage the negative impacts evident in the uniform height scenario in particular. More diverse building forms would also offer greater accommodation choice.

Consideration of these scenarios lead to the conclusion that a hybrid of the poly-centric and consolidated options would be preferred. This is illustrated overleaf.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City form directions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The analysis and stakeholder feedback confirmed that a hybrid approach should be developed to achieve the desired form and liveability objectives for the city and corridor. Key directions include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Focus density around centres to reinforce a poly-centric approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; Avoid a “forest of towers” outcome which would impact on views etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; Need to diversify range of building forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; Consider higher densities along key east-west corridors</td>
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Uniform height

Uniform scenario with the arrangement of up to 300 buildings at a consistent height of 25 storeys across corridor and frame

Poly-centric form

Poly-centric scenario delivering 300 buildings at a range of heights focused around existing centres

Consolidated focus

Consolidated centre scenario showing how a range of building heights could be organised to reinforce one of the major centres in the corridor (in this case, Surfers Paradise)
Can we accommodate growth without a ‘forest of towers’ that diminish views, breezes and the character that people love about the Gold Coast?

Case study - Broadbeach skyline

Are views forever...?

Jupiters Casino, opened in 1986, was designed to maximise views to the beach and foreshore. Its premium rooms command views from generous terraces to the north east and south east. Today, development in Broadbeach has obscured those views, so that now the casino’s premium rooms, without generous terraces, are those that face west over the canal network, towards the hinterland.

* Can we accommodate growth without a ‘forest of towers’ that diminish views, breezes and the character that people love about the Gold Coast?

Jupiters Casino - today’s ocean view room outlook

Jupiters Casino - hinterland view room outlook is now considered ‘premium’

Realise a bold future for one of Australia’s most distinctive and vibrant cities

GOAL Positively plan for growth and harness opportunities created by GCRT to realise a more vibrant and prosperous future for the Gold Coast

Recommendations

> Reinforce distinctive Gold Coast lifestyle ‘drawcards’ including subtropical climate, access to beaches, waterways, scenic rim and iconic high rise beachfront
> Recognise and harness ‘corridors of opportunity’ that are rich in catalyst sites and offer long term city building and future expansion opportunities
> Strengthen poly-centric form of the city and establish excellent public and green transit linkages to realise aspiration for a ‘network city’
> Capitalise on opportunities created by GCRT for transit orientated development and sustainable infill regeneration to ease pressure on scarce greenfield land
Strategy Idea No. 1
Realise a bold future for one Australia’s most distinctive and vibrant cities

City form

Three key growth nodes are proposed at Broadbeach, Surfers and Southport, complemented by a growth corridor from the Southport CBD to GCHKP. Consolidated growth is consolidated within Main Beach, with a focus on mid-rise infill/renewal within Florida Gardens.

Preferred City structure
Illustration of how a variety of building forms could be accommodated within a hybrid poly-centric/consolidated scenario
Existing height controls across the corridor are preserved, with higher quality, compact and urban building forms encouraged through introduction of higher plot ratio entitlements and code provisions.

**Surfers Paradise transit and growth corridor**

Improve east-west public transport connectivity into the heart of Surfers Paradise, to catalyse growth, improve accessibility and encourage long term city expansion.

**Queen Street East renewal**

Harness GCRT surplus land sites to catalyse renewal and provide an active focus at the southern end of Scarborough Street.

**Residential community focus**

Increase community access to natural amenity along the Smith Street and Loder Creek corridors, and encourage the diversification of housing typologies to drive affordability and variety.

**Southport transit and growth corridor**

Encourage intensification of residential uses along the Queen Street alignment of the light rail route to provide housing diversity and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) objectives and accommodation options for key health and knowledge workers.

**Reconnect the Coastal Core to the city**

Capitalise on the natural assets of the Coastal Core to reintegrate this isolated open space resource back into the city.

**Engaging the Broadwater**

Reduce severance caused by Marine Parade and improve integration with Broadwater Parklands as a key public amenity and driver for future growth.

**Reinforcing Southport**

Reinforce the role and function of Southport as the Principal Activity Centre, business district and transport hub for the Gold Coast.

**Health and Knowledge Precinct**

Support the ongoing refinement of planning for the health and knowledge precinct, and opportunities associated with the Commonwealth Games athletes’ village.
A disintegrated city
At present, an extensive waterway network with few crossings, coupled with busy car orientated streets, creates barriers and a mosaic of disconnected precincts. Those connections that do exist are indirect, difficult to navigate, and of generally limited quality for any journey other than by private car.

While difficult to achieve with the existing road network and pattern of development, opportunities to create a finer grained mesh of connections supporting more direct and convenient movement must be realised. An increase in the number of east-west connections and improved access from the coastal strip to areas west of the waterway network will be important.

The resultant significantly shorter and more direct walking and cycle trips, combined with more frequent public transport services and better modal integration, will encourage fewer car trips and ease congestion on the limited number of through vehicle routes.

Opportunities should be explored to disperse vehicle movement across the existing east-west connections to ease pressure at key intersections and reduce the severance caused by busy north-south routes.

A mosaic of disconnected precincts
The urban fabric of the Gold Coast is fragmented by busy roads and an extensive network of waterways.

To realise a sustainable future for the Gold Coast, existing streets, public spaces and waterways must be improved and integrated more completely in order to improve the quality of connections between precincts.

GCRT as the backbone for transit
The establishment of the Gold Coast Rapid Transit system will provide a strong “backbone” for the strengthening of existing public transport. Key east-west routes intersecting with the GCRT route will feed into and support rapid public transport.

Upgrade existing non-compliant bridge connections
Early priority is needed to improve the accessibility and safety of existing bridge connections, particularly:
- Nerang River at Southport,
- Chevron Island linking to Thomas Drive and Slatyer Avenue, and
- Isle of Capri at Via Roma.

A dozen new bridges create links
A key manoeuvre in the creation of a truly walkable city will be the establishment of a “green” pedestrian bridge network. Spanning the city, this network will connect the key activity areas and attractions of the coast with residential catchments west of the Nerang River, increasing accessibility and public engagement with the “blue edges” of the Gold Coast.

Boosting economic performance in a Network City
Like national economies, cities rely on building an economic base through industry and sectoral specialisation. Across the Gold Coast a ‘network city’ will maximise economic, employment, social and environmental multipliers by encouraging key nodes of specialisation in optimal locations.

Optimal performance from a network city relies upon efficient movement of people and labour on timely, efficient and accessible movement networks, and a degree of competitiveness between nodes with a strong level of synergy and cohesion that creates regional, nationally prominent employment hubs combined with liveable residential options.
GOAL Reconnect the fragmented mosaic of urban communities

RECOMMENDATIONS

> Create an active transport network where walking and cycle trips can be shorter and more direct than car based trips without diminishing the functionality of the road network
> Investigate the potential for a ‘green bridge’ building programme to release opportunities for a comprehensive network of walking and cycling connections
> Increase the quality and function of east-west pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes
> Improve quality of north and south routes and manage the “barrier effect” of busy intersections
> Establish rapid district and local bus routes, fed by improved pedestrian and cycle links, to support the role and function of GCRT

More east-west connections

Current city-wide movement patterns favour north-south arterial routes. To create a more accessible city, east-west routes must support active (walking and cycling) and public transport corridors to connect residents with key destinations across the city.

Higher quality north-south links

North-south routes provide efficient linkages for private transport users between the north and south of the city, but have an adverse impact on the edges of their corridors. Improving the quality of these north-south linkages by upgrading intersections and crossings, providing public transport, and enhanced street environments, would assist greatly in relinking the disconnected precincts of the Gold Coast.

Priority bus network to support GCRT

The GCRT, a poly-centric city form, business activity and broader economic objectives, would all be supported by provision of fast, direct and frequent bus network links between key activity centres. Priority buses are proposed within the draft ‘Connecting SEQ’ document.

Interchanges for modal integration

The establishment of key locations for modal interchange will provide better transport integration, including end of trip facilities and bicycle parking for cyclists. The possibility also exists to establish tourist and rapid ferry networks, which if realised would further enhance the Gold Coast’s image as a coastal metropolis, and support the diversification of modal choice.
Strategy Idea No. 3
Re-engage the city with its blue edges and water rich context

A latent canal city?
The Gold Coast’s commanding position on the coastline has driven an ocean orientated built form and lifestyle, and has in part, defined its globally recognised image. In this context, the significant network of canals and natural waterways that permeate the coastal strip have been significantly under-utilised and overlooked as one of the city’s defining elements.

Internationally, canal cities are regarded amongst the world’s most engaging and memorable urban landscapes. Opportunities exist for the Gold Coast to harness this special, water rich landscape to broaden the appeal and depth of the city’s character.

Priority should be given to improving access to the waterway network and boosting the quality and function of waterfront public spaces. With more water edges than Venice and Amsterdam combined and only a fraction of the crossings, the waterway network on the Gold Coast is a barrier to convenient walking and cycle trips. Opportunities should be explored for the delivery of additional water crossings, as well as longer term opportunities for waterfront promenades connecting key city precincts, centres and communities.

A city of under-appreciated waterfronts
Over 60% of the city’s water edges are privatised, and the public edges that do exist are often occupied by busy roads and isolated fragments of the open space network.

The beach front is well loved and readily accessible by The Esplanade and the east-west avenues but the Nerang River and canal network are difficult to access. Where public access exists, the spaces are typically neglected and under-utilised.

Opportunities exist for more waterfront buildings and public spaces to enhance the city’s relationship to its water-rich landscape context. In the medium and longer term, possibilities exist to unlock currently privatised water edges in key locations for publicly accessible walkways and active promenades.
Case study - Attributes of selected canal cities

Gold Coast
Population 505,000
Area 1,402 sq km
Canals and waterways 700 km

3 Bridges /1km²

Hamburg
Population 1,783,000 (City)
Density 2,362 people/sq km
Canals and waterways 80 km

20 Bridges /1km²

Copenhagen
Population 539,000 (city)
Area 89 sq km
Canals and waterways 14 km

17 Bridges /1km²

Amsterdam
Population 780,152
Area 219 sq km (63 sq km of water)
Canals and waterways 75 km

54 Bridges /1km²

Venice
Population 270,000 (117 islands)
Area 414 sq km
Canals and waterways 38 km

90 Bridges /1km²

Desperate to connect
While the Gold Coast has the most expansive waterway network of selected world ‘canal cities’, a lack of frequent connections and bridges means that waterways divide the city more than they bring it together.

Key opportunities exist to establish more connections to reintegrate the places and communities of the Gold Coast.
Strategy Idea No. 3
Re-engage the city with its blue edges and water rich context

The beach as a unifying element
The beach is one of the largest and most well connected open spaces in the corridor, linking with a number of significant centres and other public spaces. The Esplanade is an under-utilised opportunity to boost the range of activities on the beachfront and strengthen the interface between the city and its greatest asset. Where continuous public access along the beach is not possible, east-west streets along the coast are spaced closely enough to provide frequent public access and opportunities to celebrate the beach. Particular opportunities exist to reinforce beach access points from station approach streets, including potential for beach plaza areas with complementary ground floor uses that provide places for people to meet, get a drink, an ice cream or find a place out of the sun to relax.

More crossings are needed
With more water edges than Venice and Amsterdam combined but only a fraction of the crossings, the Gold Coast waterways are a barrier to convenient walking and cycle trips.
Only 8 routes connect over the Nerang River and canal network to the coastal strip along the entire 9 km long study corridor.
The distance between connections makes walking and cycling indirect and an unattractive alternative to travelling by car.
A strong case exists for more connections, particularly pedestrian and cycle routes that can directly link communities and centres.
Green bridges as community focus
New ‘green bridge’ connections will not only provide new links to support sustainable transport, but will also create opportunities to establish pockets of waterfront open space with potential for boat parking and fine grained local uses like cafes.

However, residents may fear how new bridge connections could affect their privacy or change their part of the city, and in particular may oppose the introduction of new through routes, even if only for pedestrians and cyclists. This will present significant challenges for establishing new connections between communities.

Good community engagement along with detailed investigation of feasibility and community appetite for the connection would be required in each case.

**Case study - Iconic structures vs pragmatic connections**

A different paradigm could amplify impact...

*$333,000,000

Iconic bridge – Kurilpa Bridge, Brisbane

$1,200,000,000

‘Workhorse’ bridge – Smaller, cheaper, pragmatically driven and located

Adjacent buildings designed to present well to public spaces and provide surveillance from upper levels
Strategy Idea No. 3

Re-engage the city with its blue edges and water rich context

A new dimension in the movement network?

Currently, the Gold Coast’s waterways network disintegrates the urban fabric more than it binds it together, but as other global canal cities have demonstrated, the blue network can perform a key function in the city’s movement network. Passenger and tourist ferry services, as well as provision for private boat movements, can provide a wider choice of modes and greater diversity of passenger experience.

The waterway network is one of the Gold Coast’s most distinctive landscape elements and any opportunity to embrace it in the day to day life of the city is worthy of special attention.

An extensive waterway network with potential for ferry network

The Gold Coast’s waterways network is extraordinary in its extent and permeates a significant area of the urbanised coastal strip. While weirs limit access all the way to Robina and Varsity Lakes, the network remains navigable to major centres including Surfers Paradise, Southport, Broadbeach and through the Broadwater to Coomera and the Southern Bay Islands. Opportunities could be explored for the establishment of a limited, potentially rapid, ferry service between select locations subject to investigations regarding allowable speeds for larger craft.

Notional rapid ferry network linking key centres
Waterways – barrier or conduit?

With more than one boat registered for every six households on the Gold Coast opportunities may exist to harness the waterway network to enable greater private boat use as an alternative mode of transport. Provision of boat parking at select locations could facilitate a limited movement network particularly well suited to leisure journeys.

There is 1 boat for every 6 households on the Gold Coast

Source: 2006 Census and 2009 QLD Transport Boat Registration Data

Private boat parking
Provision for short term boat parking at selected locations could unlock the potential of the canal and waterway network for private boat owners. Greater use of boats would enhance the vibrancy of the Gold Coast’s waterway network and its broader appeal as a destination.

Emerging proposals for the Isle of Capri centre have made allowance for short term boat parking in redevelopment plans.

Re-engage the city with its blue edges and water rich context

 GOAL Embrace the special water-rich landscape as a defining feature and part of daily city life

RECOMMENDATIONS
> Boost the quality of The Esplanade to strengthen its presence and role as an interface between the city and beach
> Strengthen ‘moments of celebration’ where east-west streets terminate on the beach, particularly on streets with direct access to GCRT stations
> Explore opportunities for the delivery of additional water crossings and waterfront promenades connecting key city precincts, centres and communities
> Investigate feasibility of passenger and tourist ferry services to provide a wider choice of transportation modes and greater diversity of passenger experience
> Harness the waterway network to enable more private boat use
Strategy Idea No. 4
Provide greater choice for access and mobility

‘Placing a priority on non-car transportation systems and networks, such as public transport and active transport, is an important step in achieving better productivity, sustainability and liveability objectives.’

Our Cities, Our Future, Department of Infrastructure and Transport Commonwealth of Australia 2011

A city of chronic car reliance

Existing travel patterns on the Gold Coast demonstrate a heavy reliance on the private car as the way to move around the city. Alternative modes are available but limited provision for walking and cycling, and lower frequency public transport services, make journeys by car a compelling option.

With road congestion rising, public transport is recognised as a critical driver for sustaining growth and economic performance in the city and region. In this context, the Queensland Government and Gold Coast City Council transport strategies place the GCRT project at the heart of plans for an expanded public transport network. The Gold Coast City Council’s Bold Future Corporate Plan sets a target to achieve 7% of all trips on public transport by 2014.

To realise the aspiration for a more sustainable transit future, public transport must compete with the private car in each of the key areas that influence journey choice - cost, convenience, speed and experience. While light rail offers distinct advantages to offer a real alternative to the private car, it must operate as part of an integrated broader movement network.

Connectivity is the lifeblood of the city

‘How efficiently our cities connect people, knowledge, businesses and markets...directly impacts upon the economic performance of our urban and regional areas and their ability to contribute to national productivity growth.’

Our Cities, Our Future Department of Infrastructure and Transport Commonwealth of Australia 2011

Modes of travel to work

Gold Coast 2006
- Motor vehicle 75.6%
- Train/tram 0.2%
- Bus/ferry 1.6%
- Walk/cycle 4.0%
- Multiple modes 0.9%

Brisbane 2006
- Motor vehicle 63.8%
- Train/tram 5.5%
- Bus/ferry 6.5%
- Walk/cycle 4.3%
- Multiple modes 4.2%

Melbourne 2006
- Motor vehicle 67.0%
- Train/tram 7.5%
- Bus/ferry 1.0%
- Walk/cycle 4.3%
- Multiple modes 4.3%

Sydney 2006
- Motor vehicle 60.6%
- Train/tram 8.4%
- Bus/ferry 5.3%
- Walk/cycle 4.9%
- Multiple modes 5.3%
A cycle supportive city

Key opportunities exist for the Gold Coast as a cycle city. Already, it is faster and more convenient to cycle through Surfers Paradise than it is to drive. Its low lying and generally flat land form supports easy and comfortable cycling. The linear configuration of the city means the beach and most of the urban areas east of Olsen Avenue and the highway could be reached comfortable in 10-15 minutes. The existing cycle route network is limited, but a comprehensive programme of upgrades and new connections is underway to remedy poor quality routes and the numerous missing links.

Access for all

Ensure universal access to the public realm, including public buildings, open space and transport connections.

A pedestrian friendly city

All journeys are a ‘door to door’ experience. In addition, to the provision of more opportunities for walking, how pleasant, accessible, interesting, convenient, safe and comfortable the walk to the shop, station or bus stop is, will be a factor in a person’s decision to walk instead of drive, or use public transport over private. This means that beyond the design and quality of the stations and rolling stock, the way people get to and from stations is one of the most important elements in the travel experience.

It is critical that approaches to stations are shady and provide weather protection for comfort in the subtropical climate. Station entries should be positioned in locations where a variety of other appropriate uses and activities promote casual surveillance and a safer journey.

Opportunities exist to develop stations to collocate and integrate with day to day amenities and services (such as convenience shopping) to reduce the need for ongoing trips. In this context, urban design and place making play a crucial role in enhancing station walk-up and improving the overall attractiveness of the public transport system.

Short trip advantage in the urban spine

The car may be the mode of choice for getting to the urban spine, but it soon loses its advantage and appeal. Cyclists can outpace cars, and for short trips walking is a competitive option.

Case study - Speed of travel compared

Driving vs walking...

One person took a journey through Surfers Paradise from Main Beach to Remembrance Drive, using three different travel modes. Here are the results. Distance 1800 m.

Walking 25 mins. Average 4.3 km/hr.

Cycling 7 mins 8 secs. Average 15.1 km/hr.

Driving 5 mins 49 secs + Parking and walk to destination 5 mins. (Inter peak). Average 9.8 km/hr (18 km/hr drive time only).

The car is not always the fastest or most enjoyable modal choice
Harnessing east-west routes

The current transport function of the eight east-west routes has evolved to reflect the particular physical constraints and strategic network connections unique to each. Opportunities exist to recognise the attributes of these routes and designate specialised roles in a future integrated transport network. Four of the east-west routes - Hooker Boulevard, Via Roma, Queen Street and Smith Street - naturally perform a more significant role in the vehicle network. Due to lack of wider connectivity and limitations of current and future infrastructure constraints, the remaining routes perform a much lower function in the network. These routes are Nerang Street, Thomas Drive, Monaco Street, and T.E. Peters Drive.

Opportunities exist to improve the function of the overall network through the development of an integrated transport strategy, with particular emphasis on the role and function of key east-west routes as ‘key route - all modes’ or ‘active transit priority’. Specialised roles for east-west links

While preserving existing network capacity, recognise the inherent opportunities and constraints of each east-west link and designate a specialised future role in the network to encourage more sustainable travel choices.

Strategy Idea No. 4
Provide greater choice for access and mobility

Potential future east-west connections
Transport choice has real benefits

If the future transport network can make a second car per household a luxury and not a necessity, the average Gold Coast family could save more than half its weekly rent in avoided costs.

Limited modal choice

Within the study corridor there is a limited range of modes available to support journey choice. This lack of options forces more travel by car.

![Transport mode Availability]

- Walking ✓
- Cycling ✓
- Driving
- Bus
- Rail
- Subway X
- Light rail X
- Ferry

(GCRT proposed)

A public transport city

The closer integration of employment, residential and other uses in a polycentric city model helps reduce travel demand, but overall economic performance and social cohesion of the city will rely on there being excellent connections between key centres and the communities they serve. Frequent, convenient and speedy connections are critical to maintaining access between specialist activity areas and providing a comparable level of synergy and agglomeration to city centre environments where physical proximity is inherent.

For the Gold Coast to become ‘a city connecting people and places’, with strengthened economic growth and a broader economic base, high quality and frequent public transport connections must be realised.

Opportunities exist for the establishment of rapid district and local bus routes, fed by improved active transport links, to support the role and function of GCRT and better link activity centres. Particular opportunities include Southport – Nerang Road, Via Roma and Salerno Drive and Hooker Boulevard.

It will be critical for the future bus network to integrate seamlessly with GCRT to enable efficient interchange and the development of a truly networked public transport system. Opportunities exist to create key interchanges at major centres including the GCHKP, Southport central area, Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach. Attention should be given to opportunities that limits the impact of the future bus network on the capacity of currently busy roads and congested intersections within the coastal core.

Transport choice has real benefits

If the future transport network can make a second car per household a luxury and not a necessity, the average Gold Coast family could save more than half its weekly rent in avoided costs.

Provide greater choice for access and mobility

GOAL A city with a truly integrated movement system that provides choice

RECOMMENDATIONS

> Reinforce GCRT as the backbone of a new accessibility paradigm
> Establish integrated city wide public transport network including new east-west rapid bus corridors and key intermodal interchange points to support convenient access between inland centres and communities and the coastal strip
> Improve existing walking connections and provide new links to support direct and convenient access to activity centres and in particular GCRT stations and public transport nodes
> Improve quality of existing streets and spaces to improve journey experience and attractiveness of the public transport system
> Remedy key missing links and expand the cycle network to foster the Gold Coast as a leading cycle city

Prepared by HASSELL for GCCC