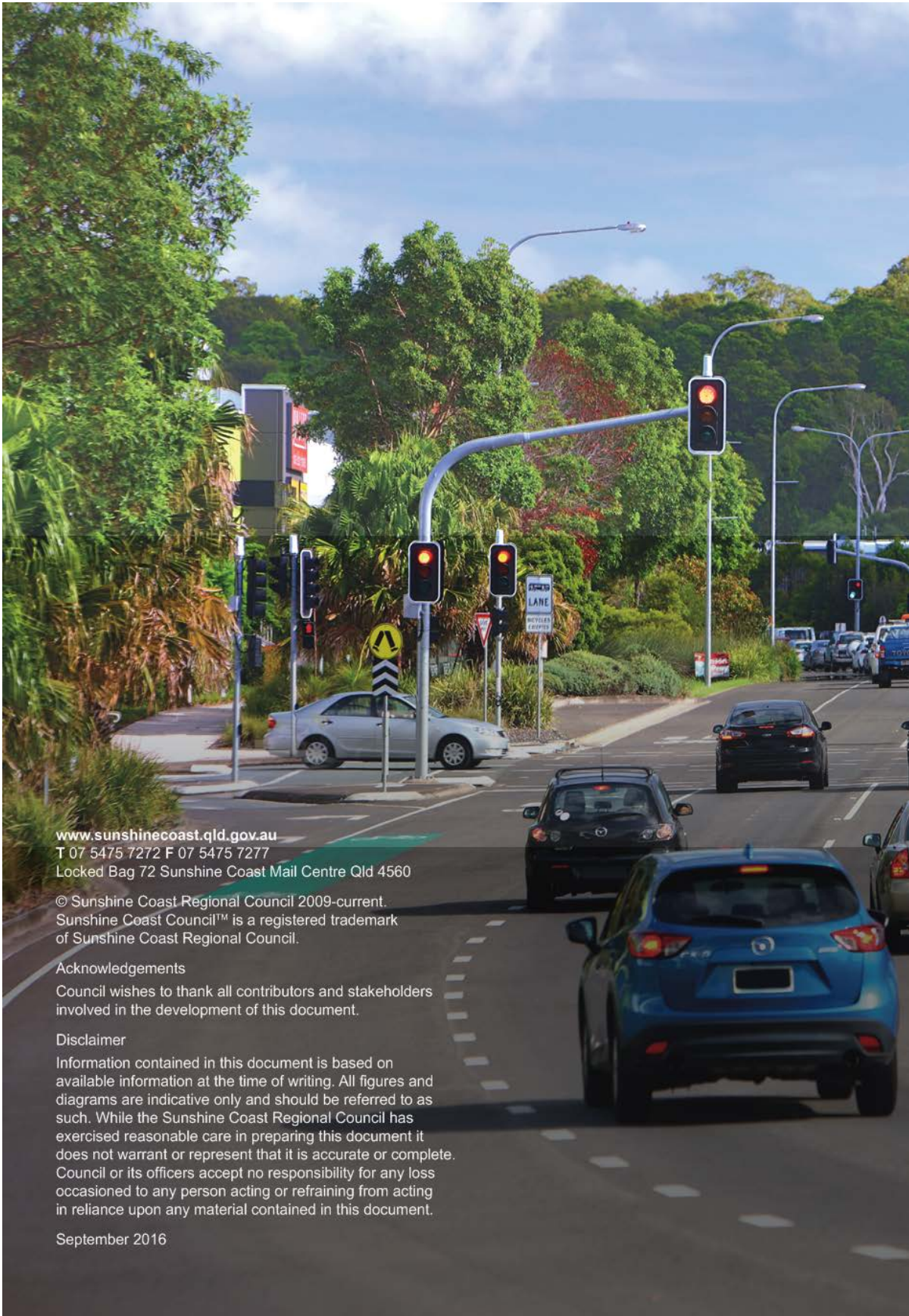




Sunshine Coast Council Transport Levy Annual Report 2015-2016



Your Transport Levy
Your Transport Future



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Acknowledgements

Council wishes to thank all contributors and stakeholders
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September 2016



Table of contents

Message from the Mayor: Your Transport Levy in action	4
Message from Cr Baberowski: Transport Portfolio Councillor	5
Where did your Transport Levy go in 2015/2016?	6
Transport Levy 2015-2016 Program snapshot	
User benefits	7
Service Improvements	7-8
Research, planning and investigations	9
Transport Futures Fund	10
Infrastructure Assessts	11



Message from the Mayor Your Transport Levy in action

Our Sunshine Coast is rapidly becoming Australia's leading smart, healthy, creative and sustainable region.

We are already the 10th largest city in Australia and will become the ninth in the next few years.

Our challenge during this exciting time in our history is to ensure our future Sunshine Coast not only retains the features that make it such a great place to live and work, but also keeps up with the demands that a larger population creates.

The annual Transport Levy, contributed to by all ratepayers, plays a vital role in meeting the needs of today's residents, but also in meeting our needs into the future.

It should not be viewed as a cost. It is an investment in our community – today and tomorrow.

The levy allows us to investigate future transport options, undertake important long-term planning and helps to fill some of the particular gaps that exist in our region's transport needs.

In the past 12 months, we have seen some great examples of the Transport Levy in action.

Council is progressing its investigations into a Light Rail solution, which has already been recognised with state and national awards.

A preferred route between Caloundra and Maroochydore has now been endorsed and consultants are working on more detailed concept designs and costings which will help inform future decisions.

In the past 12 months, Council has also been able to upgrade bus stops to meet the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act compliance (including 24 new shelters), educate tens of thousands of locals and visitors on public transport options, advocate for real-time information screens at key transport hubs and continue to provide improved and accessible services via Council Link and Flexilink.

Hinterland residents were very happy that the trial Hinterland Connect bus service, which had been part-funded by the levy since 2007, is now a permanent addition to the QConnect network.

Locals took advantage of the opportunity to show it was a valued and viable route.

I have only scratched the surface. There is much more that our Transport Levy delivers for our community and this report shares some of the highlights from the last year.

Cr Mark Jamieson
Mayor



As we focus on becoming Australia's most sustainable region, the spotlight is on the region's current, emerging and long-term transport needs.

Our challenge is to focus on strategic transport network improvements to the Sunshine Coast while still dealing with today's needs. The Transport Levy allows the Sunshine Coast to pursue a transport strategy that will preserve and enhance our region's enviable lifestyle.

The Transport Levy helps to adapt policies into actions by funding trial service improvements, bus stop upgrades to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act, undertake research, planning and investigations. Increasing travel choice and reducing the reliance on the private car are the

keys to achieving a more sustainable transport network. The levy also contributes to the Transport Futures Fund for projects such as Sunshine Coast Light Rail, which is an important component to help secure the Coast's transport future.

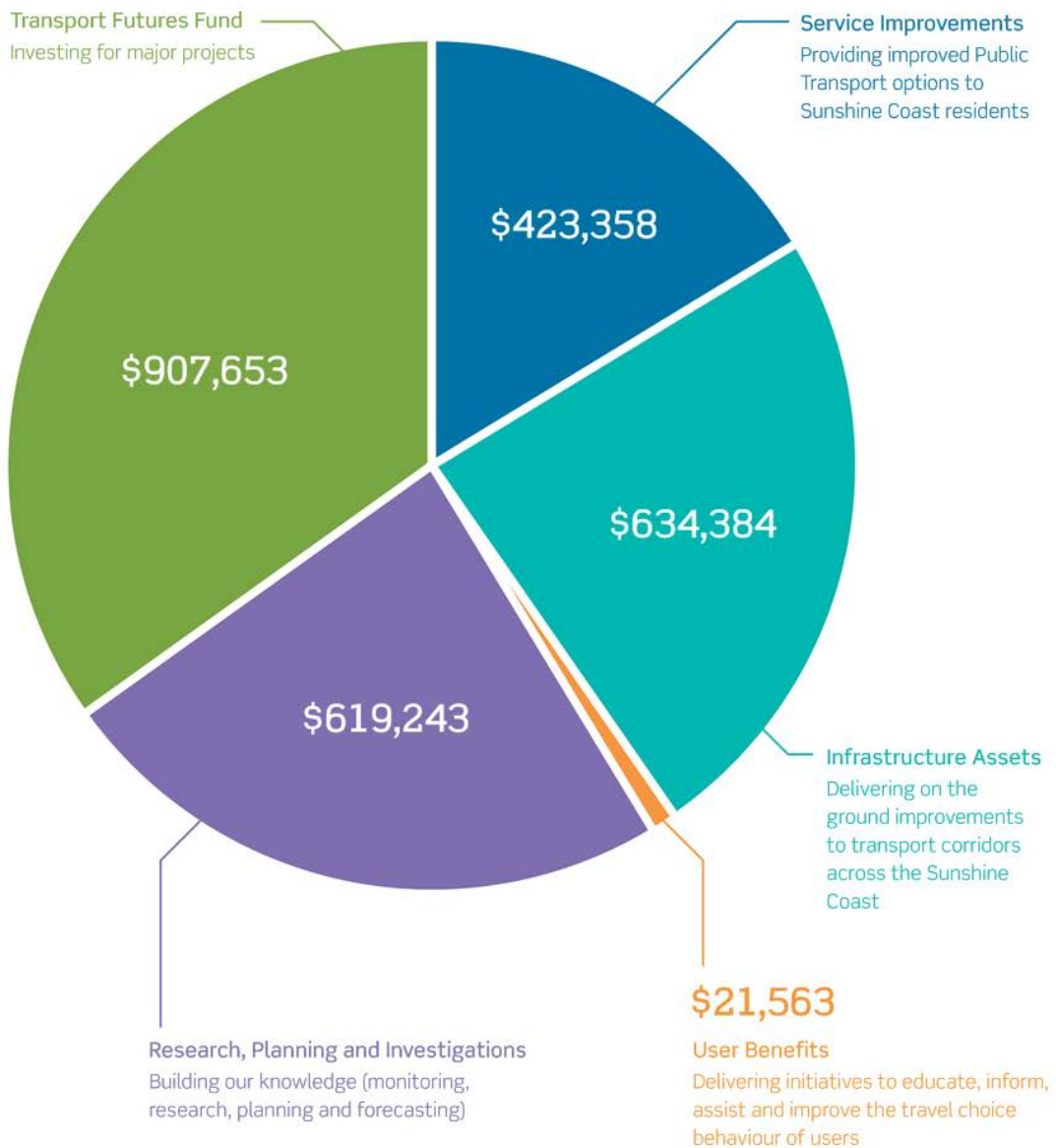
Our region still faces major challenges including congestion, securing major infrastructure funding and preparing for the impacts of technological changes. The Transport Levy program is working toward the goals identified in Council's Sustainable Transport Strategy 2011-2031, which positions us to take advantage of new approaches and technologies to meet those challenges.

Cr Baberowski
Transport Portfolio Councillor

Where did your Transport Levy go in 2015/2016?

Transport Levy in 2015/2016:
\$20 per annum
per rateable property

Total revenue 2015/2016:
\$2,606,201
(plus \$220,591 in external grants)





User benefits

Your Transport Levy funds help provide the Public Transport Guide to the Sunshine Coast, ensuring that residents and visitors have easy access to public transport information, Flexilink and Council Link information, timetables and service routes.

The 2015/16 Levy funds were used to promote the TransLink 'App' and 'Journey Planner' through manned displays at events such as the student open day at the University of Sunshine Coast.

The 'MyTransLink App' allows you to:

- Follow your bus and train while on-board to see upcoming stops and remaining journey time.
- Set an audio or visual stop alert for your destination stop.
- Set your favourite service to get up-to-date notification and updates.
- See the next services departing from your stop with real-time information.
- Find nearby stops, stations or terminals.
- Plan your bus and train journey using the journey planner.



TransLink's Journey Planner allows you to find out what public transport can be used to take you from your starting point to your destination. The Journey Planner also provides information on walking distance for each trip, the modes of travel and associated fares.

Service improvements

Your Transport Levy funds help to provide alternative public transport options to a number of Sunshine Coast residents.

Flexilink Services

Flexilink is a pre-booked scheduled service that provides links to existing public transport networks. It operates six days per week, providing three return services per day.

The 2015/16 Transport Levy funded the Conondale to Maleny (via Witta) Flexilink Service and the Peachester to Beerwah Flexilink Service. The Flexilink services will continue to be delivered by Suncoast Cabs after they were awarded the tender to continue to deliver the two Flexilink Services for 2016/17.





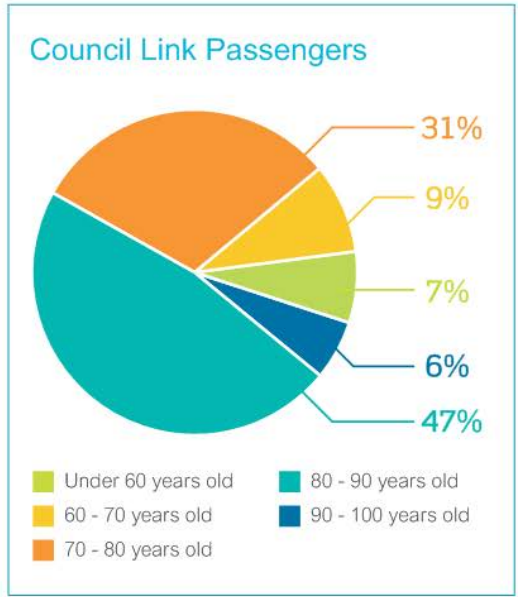
Council Link Program

The Council Link Program was funded by the Transport Levy in 2015/16 and is delivered by ComLink. The program provides an essential service by improving community connectedness and reducing social isolation.

The service currently:

- transports people door to door from 85 suburbs across the region.
- transports eligible passengers to their nearest identified shopping precinct or library.
- services different suburbs one day per week, Tuesday to Thursday.

Eligible passengers include people aged 60 and over, people with a disability or mobility impairment (DSP concession card holders) and carers and minors accompanying eligible people (carers card or companion card holders).



12,322

Council Link

Supported by Sunshine Coast Council

Council Link trips were undertaken in 2015/16.

In 2015/16, Council Link serviced

85

suburbs across the Sunshine Coast and travelled

82,365km

Council Link feedback survey undertaken in 2015/16 indicated that

96%

of passengers surveyed were very likely to recommend the Council Link service to others

87%

of passengers surveyed gave the Council Link program an overall rating of excellent



Research, planning and investigations

In 2015/16, the Transport Levy continued to support the preparation of the feasibility and business case for the Sunshine Coast Light Rail Project.

This included identifying a preferred route between Maroochydore and Caloundra for further investigation, appointing consultants to undertake a concept engineering design and costing and working with Council to develop a land use strategy for the coastal corridor.

The levy has also supported the preparation of data for light rail scenarios to be tested in the strategic transport model - Sunshine Coast Integrated Multi Modal Model. This model is expected to give a reliable indication of the likely volume of light rail patronage and the transport network opportunities and constraints.

The Sunshine Coast Light Rail Project team continues to provide strategic input into the planning of the coastal corridor to ensure areas can accommodate future light rail. Considerable effort has been applied in ensuring compatibility with other relevant State and Council major projects

such as the Mooloolaba River Interchange project, Coast Connect, Caloundra and Mooloolaba Master Plans. The Sunshine Coast Light Rail Project has received a number of national and State awards for the 'Sunshine Coast Light Rail - Shaping Our Future' document including:

- winning the Policies, Programs and Concepts Large Scale category at the Planning Institute of Australia Urban Design Awards.
- a commendation for the Best Planning Ideas – Large Project Award at the National Awards for Planning Excellence 2016.
- winning the State Urban Design Award at the Architecture awards (Karl Langer Award for Urban Design).

In 2015/16, the Transport Levy contributed \$557,767 to the Light Rail Feasibility Study.

In 2015/16, Transport Levy funding was utilised to undertake data collection and analysis and also provided input to service planning improvements for the Sunshine Coast including the hospital site at Birtinya and Nambour and surrounding area.



Transport Futures Fund

The Transport Futures Fund enables Council to fund strategically beneficial transport outcomes for the Sunshine Coast, where such funding would not otherwise be available. The Transport Futures Fund is not intended to replace the funding of projects, which can realistically be delivered through the use of existing capital programs, revenues and mechanisms for effective land use planning.

The Transport Futures Fund is focussed on achieving major, long-term, multi-modal infrastructure outcomes and strategies such as:

- Major transport projects
- Major transport corridors – protection or acquisition
- Light Rail contribution (and potential precursors)
- Bring forward of major transport elements
- Futures Fund accumulation

The initial focus of the Transport Futures Fund is the Sunshine Coast Light Rail Project.

Over a number of years the Transport Futures Fund enables a sizeable contribution from Council to attract much greater commitments from the State and Federal governments. This strategy proved successful for the Gold Coast in achieving the Gold Coast Light Rail and it is considered the best way for this Council to achieve the Sunshine Coast Light Rail. The Transport Levy is essential to achieving this goal.





Infrastructure assets

Investment from the Transport Levy in 2015/16 contributed \$634,384 and attracted an additional \$220,591 in external funding to upgrading bus stop infrastructure across the Sunshine Coast.

These bus stop improvements benefit all users and more importantly, ensure compliance with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* Federal Government targets.

Local governments are responsible for meeting accessibility compliance for infrastructure within

their control, which includes bus stops on both local and state controlled roads, with a few exceptions. Funding from the Transport Levy greatly assists Council in working toward the next target of 90% compliance by December 2017.

In the 2015/16 financial year, the Transport Levy funded the delivery of 39 bus stop upgrades throughout the Sunshine Coast. As part of these upgrades, 24 new shelters were installed.



