

STRATEGIC POLICY

PUBLIC TRANSPORT LEVY

<p>Corporate Plan Reference:</p>	<p>6. Accessibility and Connectedness</p> <p>6.1 A transport system that allows ease of movement</p> <p>6.1.2 In partnership with all levels of government, build and maintain a high quality transport network 6.1.4 Work with the community to promote alternatives to the private car by promoting programs such as TravelSmart</p> <p>6.2 Better public transport</p> <p>6.2.1 Agree on and prioritise the principal public transport needs for the region 6.2.2 Continue to work with all stakeholders to secure and progress key public transport corridors 6.2.3 In partnership with state government, deliver a responsive and affordable public transport system, that considers arterial bus and light rail, that links the major activity centres of the region</p>
<p>Endorsed by Council on:</p>	
<p>Policy Owner and Department:</p>	<p>Executive Director, Regional Strategy and Planning</p>

POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a basis for utilising revenue raised through a public transport levy on rateable properties in the Sunshine Coast Regional Council (SCRC).

POLICY OUTCOME

The outcomes of this policy include:

- Utilising public transport levy revenue to fund public transport infrastructure and to support enabling infrastructure that is urgently needed but cannot be provided in a timely manner;
- Allowing Council to influence State Government public transport network investments by providing funding to top up or attract State funding;
- Enabling Council to enter into partnerships with the State Government and private sector interests to jointly fund public transport infrastructure and services;
- Enabling Council to fund public and community transport services; and
- Enabling Council to raise awareness within the community leading to a change of travel behaviour to increase patronage on public transport.

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POLICY SCOPE

This policy: -

- Applies to all existing and future initiatives that are funded with revenue from the Public Transport Levy;
- Applies to all councillors, council staff, contractors and others that are associated with any existing or future public transport levy initiatives;
- Compliments council's vision for the Sunshine Coast to become Australia's most sustainable region; and
- Assists in leveraging investment in projects to improve public transport infrastructure and services that would otherwise need to be deferred and to influence State Government funding priorities.

POLICY STATEMENT

Sunshine Coast Council recognises the importance of public transport in creating a sustainable region, and is committed to the improvement of public transport. This commitment will assist in ensuring that the Sunshine Coast is Australia's most sustainable region.

Currently, responsibility for providing public transport capability (infrastructure and services) for Sunshine Coast residents, businesses and visitors is predominantly with the State Government, with local government providing ancillary support. The State Government, through TransLink, co-ordinate and deliver public transport systems throughout Southeast Queensland outlined in their Strategic Plans.

Some opportunities may also arise through the Commonwealth Government. This suggests that effective strategies and actions, aimed at changing community travel choices and behaviours, resulting in a more sustainable transport system, need to be developed and applied in partnership with the State Government.

To that end, Sunshine Coast Regional Council will need to consider directing resources into activities that have not previously been within the realm of traditional local government, thereby building stronger partnerships with the State through :-

- Policy development;
- Improved advocacy capacity;
- Delivering catalyst and demonstration projects; and
- Directing 'seed funding' to attract improved and earlier public transport investment by the State.

In addition, resources and actions can also be directed to purely local government outcomes.

Much can be achieved through effective land use planning and behavioural change programs to facilitate successful public transport solutions, but these need to be complemented with well directed funding to improve public transport so there are increasingly more attractive options.

Examples of desired aims are:

- Providing improvements to public transport infrastructure, facilities and services, linking to public transport gains. These improvements would otherwise not receive funding in a timely manner;
- Attracting bring-forward funding by TransLink and Queensland Transport Passenger Services for more bus services, particularly for new or extended routes and weekend services, ensuring that residential communities in the hinterland or coast receive at least a basic seven days a week service;
- Attracting State and Commonwealth Government interest and investment in major public transport projects, with a potential funding contribution commitment from Council.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All revenue collected from the Public Transport Levy will be allocated to infrastructure and service improvement projects within the Sunshine Coast Regional Council area in line with the Five Year Program;

All revenue collected will be strictly accounted for separately to ensure that established guidelines governing collection and specific qualifying projects and outcomes are followed. Any subsidy, grant or revenue generated by the application of this funding will also be included in the accounting of the Levy;

A five year program of infrastructure and service improvements will be developed, describing the project, its cost, associated community benefits attaching and a demonstration that it complies with the governing guidelines. This program will be reviewed annually as part of the Budget process.

Activities for which revenue from the levy can be used include:

- Supporting Department of Transport and Main Roads Passenger Transport Division and TransLink public transport services through improvements to kerbside infrastructure and public transport interchanges infrastructure;
- Entering into partnerships with TransLink to bring forward service improvements, trial possible services or provide services in areas not planned to be covered by funding;
- Provision of flexible Public Transport services to meet community needs;
- Entering into partnerships with Department of Transport and Main Roads Passenger Transport Division to fund public transport services outside the TransLink contract area;
- Investing in works that have a genuine multi modal outcome, with significant benefit/s to public transport capability, including bus and transit priority measures on Council roads and green links to provide penetration through developed areas;
- Strategies and actions to improve public transport for specific events;
- Take advantage of other public transport benefited activities by supporting issues such as roll out of real time information, education material, etc;
- Advancing beneficial investigations to bring forward beneficial public transport outcomes on the Sunshine Coast;
- Generally, investments in public transport operational or capital programs to improve public transport and increases patronage on the Sunshine Coast.

Activities for which revenue from the levy cannot be used include:

- Funding should not be directed towards maintenance costs for public transport infrastructure;
- Funding should not be directed towards employing long term resources to specifically plan and develop projects to be implemented through the Public Transport Levy revenue;
- Funding should not be applied to initiatives that could be identified as funding 'business as usual' activities by TransLink and the Department of Transport and Main Roads Passenger Transport Division which would be normally required if the Levy was not in place. This also includes:
 - the matching of new services, or the improvement of existing services, with known development or specific milestones;
 - the ability to procure improvement through other mechanisms; and
 - the improvement is of a minor change or an operationally necessary matter.

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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Council as a Local Government is not tasked with managing or operating public transport. This is legislated as a State responsibility.

Council to set and monitor the Public Transport Levy Policy and associated activities.

Mayor to establish a relationship with the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and the Assistant Minister for Public Transport.

Relevant staff to establish and maintain a working relationship with relevant officers of State transport agencies and public transport providers.

Implementation responsibility

The Five Year Program of improvements and its annual review will be developed through the Regional Strategy and Planning Department and Infrastructure Services Department, with implementation occurring through either of these Departments, as appropriate.

Implementation guidelines

Projects considered as candidates for funding under the Public Transport Levy will be listed for consideration as a part of developing and reviewing the five year program. In general, projects should conform with the broad categories listed under sections 5 and 6 of this policy. However any improvement project may be considered for funding subject to it meeting the objectives and principles of this policy.

The status of the Levy will be reported periodically to the Strategy and Planning Committee and progress on projects monitored by the Transport Community Group.

A program will be developed and periodically reviewed in consultation with Council, State government and the community to ensure the transport needs of the Sunshine Coast Community are being best served by the proposed program of improvements.

Five year program of infrastructure and services improvements

- Attached to budget papers/submissions
- Reviewed annually as part of the Council budget cycle or as directed

Communications

Communicated through Council website and community newsletters.

Review of this policy

Reviewed in line with all policies upon the election of a new Council every four years.

MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS

Improved integration of public transport planning in land use planning.

Regular planning opportunities between Council and State transport agencies in relation to:

- short and longer term service improvements, and
- programming of infrastructure requirements into the future to match milestone points.

Progression of the near term design and delivery of public transport infrastructure on the Sunshine Coast.

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Improvements to public transport services in terms of route alignment, coverage of residential areas, frequency, etc.

Meeting the requirements of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 which sets the following timelines by which all bus stops are required to comply:

- 31 Dec 2007 – 25% of bus stops,
- 31 Dec 2012 – 55% of bus stops,
- 31 Dec 2107 – 90% of bus stops, and
- 31 Dec 2022 – 100% of bus stops.

Increased use of public transport on the Sunshine Coast.

DEFINITIONS

Transport Community Group – A group of community members and organisational representatives which provide feedback to initiatives from a community stand point.

TransLink Transit Authority - plans, integrates and manages all public transport services (rail bus and ferries) in South East Queensland within the TransLink Contract Service Area. It also manages the school bus services within its contract service area for the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Department of Transport and Main Roads, Passenger Transport Division – plans, integrates and manages qconnect services, other services (including ferries) and school bus services beyond the TransLink Contract Service Area. It also regulates and manages taxi services, limousine services and other public transport.

Business as usual – describes all activities which would normally have occurred or required

RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

Legislation

- *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994*
- *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Regulation 2005*
- *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Standard 2010*
- *Transport Operations (TransLink Transit Authority) Act 2008*
- *Transport Operations (TransLink Transit Authority) Regulation 2008*
- *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

Standards

TransLink – Public Transport Infrastructure Manual 2007

Internal Documents (include)

- *Sustainable Transport Strategy 2011*
- Public Transport Management Plan (under development)
- 5 Year Public Transport Levy Program;

Version control:

Version	Reason/ Trigger	Change (Y/N)	Endorsed/ Reviewed by	Date
1.1	Updated Template used		Council	28 May 2012
	Eg. Review			