

Media Release 4 April 2010

SEQ: North West Corridor - congestion buster

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport commuters has suggested the preserved Trouts road corridor is well suited for heavy rail.

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"The recent growth management summit highlighted the need for Queensland to move to a more connected and convenient public transport system. This means moving more people out of congested roads and tunnels and onto more frequent buses, ferries, and in particular, trains."

"The announcements by the Queensland Government about the Cross River Rail link and the promised still to be delivered 83 400 new seats on trains every week are welcome. Many people in Brisbane can't take advantage of these initiatives though simply because they have no rail service within easy reach of their suburb. Train frequency is also often poor. In particular, residents of the North Western suburbs often find themselves in cars or buses stuck in congestion on Kelvin Grove and Enoggera Roads."

"Rail Back on Track wishes to highlight the preserved Trouts road corridor for a potential new rail line and feeder bus network directly linking the Ferny Grove line at Enoggera to the Caboolture/Sunshine Coast line at Bald Hills. Residents of suburbs such as Everton Park, Stafford Heights, Mc Dowall, Chermside West, Aspley, Bridgeman Downs, Eatons Hill, Albany Creek, Carseldine stand to benefit from such a service (1)."

"Although it has been proposed that this corridor be used for a North Western Freeway potentially connecting to a tunnel, such a solution is straight out of the 1960s Wilbur Smith Plan and would likely involve some form of tunnel tolling (2). We need to move away from such 1960s planning to a more people and TOD-oriented transport network that can facilitate urban decentralisation and mass transit for everyone."

"Its time to get rail back on track!"

Snapshot of a future North Western line:

- * Reliable, high-capacity, rapid public transport link connecting the north-western suburbs through to the central business district. Direct links to the Caboolture, Sunshine Coast and Ferny Grove lines would be present at either end of the line
- * Complement the Ferny Grove rail line by providing additional public transport capacity in the inner north-western suburbs
- * Collect passengers from bus services in the northern suburbs onto trains, and bypass all road traffic and congestion on Enoggera and Kelvin Grove Roads. A dedicated rail link means higher speeds and more capacity than a buses in a bus lane while still allowing access to street stops using feeder buses.

- * Reduce car travel demand on Kelvin Grove Road and Enoggera Road, as well as provide easy connections to any other part of Brisbane via the rail network and the proposed Cross River Rail tunnels.
- * Complements the proposed veloway by allowing bicycles to use the train, something that cannot be done with the bus.
- * Allow safe access for all with a disability compliant, CCTV monitored, safe and high-capacity facility to accomodate future growth in demand
- * Support the construction of TODs and urban renewal at locations along the length of the line; For example the disused warehouse facility on the corner of Stafford & South Pine Roads may be suitable for a TOD development.

References

1. http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/Home/Projects_and_initiatives/Projects/Western_brisbane_transport_network_investigation/Western_brisbane_transport_network_strategy_projects#project_11
2. <http://www.mainroads.qld.gov.au/~media/files/business-and-industry/technical-publications/queensland-roads-technical-journal/march-2009/hobmar0903qldroads.pdf>

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org

Media release 9 August 2012

SEQ: Northwest Bus Petition - Bad service equals bad patronage - you don't say!

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport passengers has called for high-frequency buses for Bulimba, Centenary Suburbs and the Northwest.

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"RAIL Back On Track refers to a petition for more bus services to Albany Creek and Eaton's Hill (1,2). In the two weeks that the petition was live it gained 342 signatures. We think it is time decent services that are actually useful were put on, and we call for the BUZification of the 359 bus to Eatonvale to be included in the roll-out of a large 'Core Frequent Network' and wider Brisbane bus review. Old Northern Road and South Pine Road are fast arterial roads

suitable for high capacity, frequent BUZ service and the whole area is a major gap in the BUZ network."

We quote from the formal response:

"The TransLink's challenge is to fill the gaps in the network while ensuring that services are well patronised, reliable and represent value for money."

"While we understand that money is tight, does this criteria apply with respect to Brisbane City Council's pet project / fiesta of waste Maroon CityGlider bus which duplicates everything and adds nothing new to the wider network?"

"Clearly not!"

"The letter goes on to assert that their analysis *'indicates that the services are currently not operating at capacity or at benchmark levels to trigger consideration for additional services.'* Given that the frequency of the 359 is hourly, does it not seem extremely unreasonable to require a full bus load of people (68 people) to wait at a bus stop for a bus that only appears once an hour before triggering an upgrade? Could it be that the poor patronage is actually due to worst class frequency, and not 'demand'? Brisbane Transport's own data shows that patronage increases of 100% can be achieved when frequency is improved (3).

"The residents of the northwestern suburbs are not alone in their dissatisfaction and want for proper, useful services - the residents of the Centenary Suburbs in Brisbane's west and the long-suffering residents of Bulimba are also in public transport service 'no-go' zones."

"We sympathise with the residents of the Northwestern Suburbs, who have been let down yet again!"

"As RAIL Back On Track has always said, services must be frequent, bottom line. We again call on the Minister for Transport to cut all funding for the Maroon CityGlider and re-direct that funding to decent services in areas such as Bulimba, Centenary and the northwest suburbs."

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>

References:

1. Eaton's Hill E-Petition response <http://railbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=8910.0>
2. Bus services in Albany Creek and Eatons Hill <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/work-of-assembly/petitions/closed-e-petitions>
3. BUZ Routes, Frequency and Reliability - the winning formula <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/6058>

Note:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohring_effect

"The Mohring effect is the observation that, if the frequency of a transit service (e.g., buses per hour) increases with demand, then a rise in demand shortens the waiting times of passengers at stops and stations. Because waiting time forms part of the costs of transportation, the Mohring effect implies increasing returns to scale for scheduled urban transport services."

Media Release 3 September 2009

SEQ: Go west and stall!

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport commuters has called for further improvements for Public Transport users in the Western Suburbs of Brisbane.

Robert Dow, spokesperson for RAIL Back On Track said:

"Route 444 has been singled out by many as the worst bus route in Brisbane (1)."

"Media has also highlighted the sheer amount of congestion in the western region, with cars crawling at speeds around 6km/hour (2). This further highlights the need for improvements for Public Transport in the Western Suburbs of Brisbane to encourage citizens to make the change."

"All options should be considered, such as bus lanes, improved railway services and rail shuttle buses or even perhaps a Western Busway."

"North, South, Eastern parts of Brisbane have a busway, and yet residents in the Western Suburbs have to endure bulk congestion on Moggill Road, Milton Road or on Coronation Drive. Toowong really needs a seamless interchange between bus and rail services."

"Encouraging patrons to park and ride at Chelmer station would avoid the need for many to cross the river at Indooroopilly. Better still provide station buses so that pressure on the roads is relieved (3)."

"With planning for the Northern Link Tunnel going ahead, this would be an ideal time to ensure that future provision for public bus and cycling facilities were improved in this region."

"There is a public transport stalemate at present. Rhetoric is not being matched by action. More rail services must be added immediately to the Ipswich line to provide capacity for change and help relieve this congestion nightmare. Time to move forwards!"

References:

1. <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,25980625-952,00.html>
2. <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/life-in-the-slow-lane-of-brisbanes-most-agonising-kilometres-20090901-f6uy.html>
3. <http://backontrack.org/mbs/index.php?topic=532.0>

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org

Media release 6th October 2010

Rail Revolution: Use Trouts road corridor to escape North West congestion by rail

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport commuters has highlighted the importance of the Trouts Road corridor for rail.

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"The recent RACQ Travel Time survey (1) confirms that some of the worst congestion is the North Western suburbs. For example, Wardell Street, Enoggera, recorded traffic speeds of just 8.6 km/hour. Sicklefield Road, Enoggera, was even worse, with speeds of 4.9 km/hour, just a bit faster than walking pace."

"The Trouts Road Rail line, which featured in the connecting SEQ 2031 draft plan will be an invaluable piece of public infrastructure to residents of the North West because it will allow people in the North West to escape the mess of congestion on the roads."

"To maximise the benefits of Rail as widely as possible, RAIL Back on Track suggests that high standard bus and cycling interchanges be built with rail. Furthermore, wider station spacing would allow higher average speeds for faster journeys." (2)

"A 'world-class' bus rapid transit feeder bus network to rail generally would allow for seamless interchange. In this way, people could access the benefits of rail from street stops in low-density suburban areas many kilometres from the stations in much the same way that buses round up passengers in the suburbs and feed into the busway system."

"Indeed, this is what Perth, and places overseas like Toronto are already doing." (2)(3)(4)

"An idea to consider would be combining the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast ExpressLink

trains into a single service, running through the Cross River Rail subway and then into a tunnel under Enoggera Road to emerge into the Trouts Road Corridor, bringing the benefits of 9-car trains and the potential for even faster, and more direct journeys to this suburban congestion hotspot." (5)

"Further investment in rail is required in order to allow the rail system to be converted to full metro-style operation in the future, to stimulate transit oriented development, to allow all residents to escape congestion on roads, and to decisively break with the 'car-first, people second' ideology that has dominated transport decisions in Brisbane since the 1960s."

"Train frequency in south-east Queensland is at worlds worst practice (6). The failure to properly utilise the network we already have is compounding congestion issues. The Rail Revolution cannot come soon enough!

References:

1. RACQ Travel time survey, http://www.racq.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/57729/Travel_Time_2010.pdf
2. The Challenge of Expanding Perth's Rail System, Public Transport Authority of WA <http://rtsa.com.au/assets/2009/06/rtsa240408peter-martinovich-pres.pdf>
3. Viva (bus rapid transit) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viva_%28bus_rapid_transit%29
4. <http://www.ptua.org.au/myths/parkride.shtml>
5. Trouts Road Corridor <http://railbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=3625.0>
6. SEQ: Poor train frequency is penny wise but pound foolish <http://railbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=4505.0>

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org

Media release 24 January 2012

SEQ: Core Frequent Network: Get Rail Back On Track!

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web-based community support group for rail and public transport, and an advocate for public transport passengers, calls for an election

policy on decent frequency and service span for rail. It's time to get Rail Back on Track!

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"Public transport is only useful if it is coming soon. If hundreds of millions of dollars have been expended on a new busway or railway for the service, but the service is not coming soon, then it is not useful."

"All day core frequency and a decent span of hours, especially on rail, are central to having a decent transport system (1)."

"Consider what you would do if it took half an hour for your car to start moving after turning the ignition key. Unacceptable waiting time - and yet this is what tens of thousands of daily rail passengers are asked to accept at most Queensland Rail stations across South East Queensland - services every 30 minutes or worse out of peak times. Even Perth has got rid of this type of archaic service standard years ago! Why haven't we?"

"For a fraction of the cost of big ticket infrastructure, Brisbane could be covered in rapid, frequent bus and rail services running every 15 minutes from at least 5 am - 9 pm, 7 days. On buses, frequent services to Bulimba (BUZ 230), The Centenary Suburbs (BUZ 400), The Northwestern Suburbs (BUZ 359) and the Great Circle Line are priorities. On rail, the Ferny Grove, Cleveland, Ipswich/Richlands/Caboolture lines are priorities."

"Overwhelming, members have indicated that frequency improvements, are the main game, not ticketing policies that are just more of the same! Public transport is only useful if it is coming soon!"

"It is a myth that we have to wait for big ticket, multi-billion dollar construction projects that take decades to deliver before we can get improvements to bus and train service frequency. There are many parts of the bus and rail network that can have more services now, very cheaply with little or no new infrastructure."

"Fare increases must be balanced by increases in service frequency, all modes."

"As RAIL Back on Track has always said, services must be frequent, bottom line!"

References

1. Building a Core Frequent Network <http://railbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=5173.0>

Note: Unfortunate examples of this 'high cost, low frequency' phenomenon are the Richlands rail line which only runs two trains per hour but cost millions and millions of dollars, Ferny Grove-Keperra duplication (where are the new services?) and we suspect, the Kippa-Ring line which will probably run at a very unattractive anti-public transport frequency of just two trains per hour in the off-peak. Proper frequency would fulfill the actual intended purpose of paying for construction of that infrastructure in the first place.

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>

Media release 25 March 2012

SEQ: Public & Active Transport Issues in SEQ for New Governments 101

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport passengers has said the election of the LNP Government is an opportunity for public and active transport renewal (1).

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"First and foremost, we appreciate the LNP's commitments to a Core Frequency Policy for trains, in particular the Ferny Grove Line, and the consideration for integration of Go Card with CityCycle. Everything is new in transport - new transport minister, new CEO of TransLink and new Government. We hope that this is a chance for renewal.

"New Governments set the tone in the first term. We believe that quite a lot can be done on the Public and Active Transport front, quickly and cheaply. The basic core issues are Frequency, Integration and Fares.

"The first priority is frequency - services must be frequent, bottom line. Public transport's main product is freedom to move around and that will only happen if services are coming soon and are frequent. We call this minimum basic network 'The Core Frequent Network'. Rolling this out is cheap and rapid to do because it requires no new infrastructure. Public Transport 'blackout zones' in the inner east, centenary suburbs and northwestern suburbs need to be dealt with as a matter of urgency. There should also be a map at busway and rail stations and on all timetables showing this minimum basic 'Core Frequent Network' of services (2).

"The second priority is integration - Go Card and CityCycle needs to be integrated into TransLink. Buses also need to connect to trains.

"The third priority is fares - the next fare rises should be limited to 7.5% as promised, and consideration given to removing the remaining paper tickets as a matter of priority, as soon as possible.

"Congratulations to the new transport minister, new government and new CEO of TransLink.

"We would also like to extend our appreciation to Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, former Transport Minister, for her work in bringing upgrades and new services to fruition.

"It is time to get rail 'Back on Track!

References:

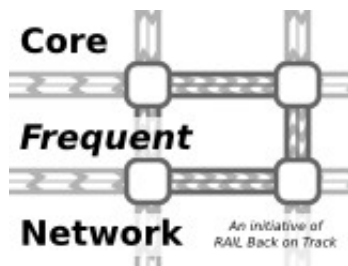
1. <http://railbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=7975.0>
2. Building a Core Frequent Network <http://railbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=5173.0>

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>

Media release 26 February 2012

SEQ: Core Frequent Network: The Northwest Corridor



RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport passengers has called for service improvements to the Northwest Corridor.

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"RAIL Back On Track has noted the state member for Everton, Murray Wyatt MP, is circulating a petition calling for more frequent bus services in the northwest corridor. We have long argued that the fastest, cheapest way to improve the public transport system in Brisbane is a targeted, selective boost of services to create a Core Frequent Network covering Brisbane with a network of selective trunk, high-capacity, high-frequency, traffic-prioritised workhorse rail, ferry and bus routes (1, 2)."

"Suburbs on the northwest corridor are a service poor region in the BUZ network. We believe that BUZification of either the 350 Everton Park or 359 Albany Creek/Eatons Hill and replacement of the Great Circle line in this area with a new, faster, more direct bus line from Indooroopilly to Brookside shopping centre direct via South Pine and Old Northern Road is required."

"This would allow other non-BUZ services to be converted into frequent feeder services feeding Enoggera rail interchange, connect with increased frequency Ferny Grove line trains, and also allow a generalised frequency boost to buses in the northwest corridor. Better

frequency directly stimulates patronage. Using connections rather than direct services gives high frequency to more people for the same fixed budget."

"In the long term, high car use will be tackled by clawing back market share from cars by making it easier for people to dispense with car ownership altogether - that is to own fewer or no cars. And for that to happen, the focus must be taken off peak-hour services and put on all day frequent services such as Bus Upgrade Zones (BUZ) and Train Upgrade Zones (TUZ) and the Core Frequent Network."

"RAIL Back On Track has welcomed the LNP proposed policy announcement of increased train frequency - 15 minutes on the Ferny Grove line weekdays between the peaks, however without frequent weekend and evening services, people will still need to own cars, and thus will not be easier for people to dispense with car ownership altogether and thus more likely to use them in peak hour (3, 4)."

"Focus on the core!"

References:

1. Building a Core Frequent Network <http://railbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=5173.0>

2. Fight for more buses - Murray Watt MP http://www.murraywattmp.com/01_cms/details.asp?ID=75

3. LNP Plan means no need for timetables <http://lnp.org.au/news/leader-of-the-lnp/lnp-train-plan-means-no-need-for-timetables>

4. Jarrett Walker (Audio) - Transit Isn't Just for Peak Periods—It Needs to Be There All Day <http://www.infrastructureusa.org/guest-on-the-infra-blog-jarrett-walker-author-human-transit-how-clearer-thinking-about-public-transit-can-enrich-our-communities-and-our-lives/>

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>