



CON-X-ION
COACH CHARTERS

Airport Shuttle Transfers
Brisbane, Gold Coast,
Sunshine Coast & Mackay
BOOK ONLINE
WWW.CON-X-ION.COM



World-class public transit

Transport the key for Gold Coast to claim true international status

THE Gold Coast's claim as an international city will only become a reality when a world-class public transit system is successfully up-and-running according to a development research organisation.

The Queensland Development Research Institute (QDRI) says the Gold Coast's increasing traffic woes and lack of coordinated public transit are emerging as real issues stifling the city's growth into a true international destination.

QDRI director, Darren McLean, says the Gold Coast already shares a number of key attributes with many other international cities, however a cohesive and efficient public transit network is not one of them.

"The Gold Coast has the same world-class infrastructure found in many other well-known cities such as an international airport, five-star hotels, plenty of green space, strong local media as well as a thriving economy," Mr McLean says.

"When you look at similar sized cities such as Honolulu in the U.S. and even Zurich in Switzerland, we have just as much, if not more to offer.

"However they eclipse us with extensive and punctual public transit systems which are recognised by anyone who has influence or an



PROPOSED rapid transport.

opinion about a city as a key element of a truly international destination."

Mr McLean says a lot can be said about a city that develops a world-class and effective public transit system.

"Honolulu, with a population of 380,000, is a smaller city than the Gold Coast yet has one of the best bus networks in America and has recently purchased 40 environmentally friendly buses equipped

with GPS systems which will cut fuel costs by over 20 percent," Mr McLean says.

"In Zurich, which has a population of just 347,000, public transit is plentiful and punctual with some 160,000 people using it every day. There are 100 kilometres of tram-lines and there is a free bike scheme.

"Both these cities can effectively and efficiently move their permanent and visitor population around and

have embraced the added benefits of clean, safe and reliable public transit."

While the Gold Coast's public transit infrastructure will receive a much needed boost with a new rapid transit system to commence construction next year, the QDRI says a number of issues still need to be resolved to ensure the project delivers a world-class system.

"The proposed Rapid Transit project will link the Gold Coast rail

line at Helensvale to Broadbeach, the Gold Coast Airport, and ultimately to Coolangatta town centre, and as such follows the north-south spine of the city," Mr McLean says.

"However routes connecting major east-west arterials, such as the Nerang Broadbeach Road from Pacific Fair to the new Carrara Stadium and Nerang Railway Station, are also crucial to consider.

"For the long-term benefit of the city we must develop effective transit systems in both directions and encourage development around our major public transit nodes."

The QDRI has recently funded a \$500,000 grant to develop a new urban design and planning vision based around transit-oriented developments.

The project will review the State Government's South-East Regional Plan and the Gold Coast City Council's Planning Scheme to provide a blueprint for future urban planning to help relieve the Gold Coast's traffic and transit woes.

The project, focussed on Nerang, will engage Griffith University's School of Environment and partner with the Gold Coast City Council and other peak bodies like the UDIA and Property Council of Australia.

Integration for rapid transport system 'a must'

Bob Janssen President Nerang Chamber of Commerce

IF ALL goes to plan, by the time stage one of the proposed Rapid Transport System (RTS) is completed in 2012, there will be an additional 85000 people living in our city and Gold Coast Tourism will have increased visitors by at least two million. Most of these visitors will patronize our coastal strip's tourism precincts during their holiday. With an industry rate of one worker catering for nine tourists it becomes clear that a rapid transport system is not only necessary but also long overdue.

What will determine the viability of this system are usage and the impact on traffic flow and business.

The high concentration of tourists

who will flock to areas such as Southport, Surfers Paradise, Broadbeach and points in between will surely benefit. The worrying downside is the impact on traffic flow with the system taking up a minimum of 24 meters of road space where two traffic lanes are included; this increases to 34 meters where stations are opposite one another.

Integration of rapid transport with our traffic system is a major sticking point with the city's business community. Traffic flow and parking are already serious problems for the majority who travel from outlying areas and work in our tourist precincts. Housing affordability will force more workers to travel even further as our city grows and housing prices increase.

Creating traffic free zones has

been one solution put forward but this does not address the central issue. How do we as a city move workers from the West, North and South in and out of the tourism precincts without creating crippling gridlock in areas already under extreme pressure?

Translink's role in planning the RTS has come under severe criticism for what was seen to be a lack of genuine or effective consultation. Fortunately consultation through frank and at times passionate dialogue has improved. Various business groups have joined together forming a taskforce to present a coordinated and cohesive approach so that a range of issues can be resolved and the project moved forward.

What has come out of talks so far is that Translink's brief is essentially limited to the delivery of the RTS with little influence in the management of existing or future traffic flow. Only the Minister, John Mickel can change or expand this brief. A written request by the taskforce for a meeting with the Minister to discuss these issues has had no response to date other than acknowledgment of the correspondence.

One possible solution to looming traffic gridlock that has received limited attention is the use of secure park and ride stations that could be located at key junctions along an upgraded M1. Linkage from these stations to the RTS by express transport using dedicated lanes would alleviate high traffic concen-

trations in the tourism precincts. To implement this plan there must be a high degree of cooperation between council and state in freeing up land and possibly seeking public private partnerships in the construction and management of these stations.

The increase of parking fees in the tourism precincts is inevitable if only to encourage private enterprise to construct parking stations, for council to do the same, costs would have to be met by a user pay system. Implementation of a viable public transport system is critical to our city that continues to come under pressure due to unprecedented growth. The RTS in principle offers a solution but it cannot be considered in isolation and must be integrated into an overall traffic management plan.

HOW **COST EFFECTIVELY**
DOES YOUR MARKETING REACH YOUR CUSTOMERS?

MAXIMISE YOUR INVESTMENT WITH A SOUND MARKETING STRATEGY!

CONTACT BASTIAN CRAFT, "WHERE EXPERIENCE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE"



BASTIANCRAFT
BUSINESS HAS TWO FUNCTIONS:
MARKETING & INNOVATION.

CONTACT BRETT CRAFT DIRECTLY
0423 202 717
BRETT@BASTIANCRAFT.COM

ms959c