

Cr Nicole Johnston

Councillor for Tennyson Ward



14 December 2022

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Brisbane's New Bus Network
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Dear Team

I am writing to make a submission as part of the Brisbane Bus Network Review associated with the Brisbane Metro Project.

For years, the Lord Mayor and Civic Cabinet Chairs have touted the Brisbane Metro as a great project for Brisbane. Sadly, the project has now doubled in cost to some \$1.7billion and it is clear the Lord Mayor's promises that there would be more and better buses for the suburbs were a false and misleading claim.

It is difficult to justify to the public that Council is spending \$1.7billion on a new bus network but people in the inner-south, in Tennyson Ward, are actually getting a worse bus service. That is an unacceptable outcome of the proposed Bus Network Review. As Council is spending at least \$1.7 billion dollars on the Brisbane Metro project it is critical that existing bus users, particularly the elderly and school students who do not drive and rely on public transport, are not worse off. They are under the current draft proposal.

I strongly recommend that Council immediately implements a "better off overall test" (BOOT) as part of any proposed changes to Brisbane's bus network. After spending \$1.7billion dollars of ratepayers' money, no one in Brisbane should be getting a worse bus service as Council is now proposing under these changes.

Brisbane City Council's Tennyson Ward briefing pack acknowledges that only 91% of existing bus users in Tennyson Ward "retain existing travel options or have similar alternatives" under the proposed new network, meaning almost 10% will be worse off and the other 90% see little if any improvements in frequency or hours of operation to their bus services. Just 35% have access to a high frequency BUZ route.

The lack of journey times and timetable information also makes it difficult to assess the usefulness of the revised services.

There is no point having an objective of "reducing inner city busway congesting," ie truncating suburban services and "greater Metro connectivity," if passengers are deterred by slower routes, are forced to make multiple services changes, are dislocated from their destinations in the CBD due to the Mary St spine, and the proposed new services are not actually where people want to go locally, ie to shops, schools and medical precincts in their district.

The decision by the Transport Chair, Councillor Ryan Murphy, to exclude feedback from me as the elected representative for Tennyson Ward is reprehensible and undermines Council's

stated purpose for this review. His petty comments misrepresenting my speech (Appendix 2) during the 1 November 2022 Council meeting were as follows:

“Thanks very much, Chair and I thank all Councillors, except Councillor JOHNSTON, for their contribution to the debate on this item.”

“Councillor JOHNSTON, you said you look forward to participating in this review, well if that’s how you’re going to participate in this review then I don’t look forward to your contributions any further.”

For the Civic Chair running the Bus Network Review to say he will not consider the feedback of a Councillor to a public consultation process demonstrates that Council is not prepared to seriously consider the feedback entrusted to me by the community I represent. It is not my job to simply agree with Council but rather to represent the feedback and views of my residents to Council. Cr Murphy’s comments reflect the worst kind of petty schoolboy politics and do a disservice to his office and role at Council and cause genuine concerns that feedback will not be considered by decision makers.

The issues I raised during the Council meeting are reflected in the submission below.

It is also a concern that Council’s Brisbane Metro team has not responded positively to the genuine feedback from residents calling for the 105 Bus route to continue to include Yeronga West. It is essential that Council actively listens to resident feedback and is prepared constructively respond to rather than simply justifying their changes to those bus users who are adversely impacted (as per Appendix 3).

Based on the clear and strong feedback from residents in Tennyson Ward, I believe the following changes should be made to the proposed draft network proposal.

105

The decision to cut the 105 route and end destinations has been overwhelmingly rejected by the local community I represent. It has been repeatedly described to me as a “lifeline” for the many elderly Yeronga residents that use it to access major shopping services at Indooroopilly.

By removing the loop through Yeronga West, thousands of Yeronga residents will no longer have access to their principal activity centre, Indooroopilly, causing a loss of access to well established work, shopping, medical, school, social and ancillary services.

On 13 December the Lord Mayor unilaterally announced the redesignation of former industrial land in Yeronga to residential but under this proposal the bus service for those residents has been cut. Jamming more and more people into a suburb and cutting their public transport is poor planning and antithetical to the purposes of urban renewal.

Termination of the 105 bus service at the PA Hospital similarly disconnects Yeronga, Fairfield, Tennyson, Graceville and Chelmer residents from major medical services at the Mater Hill medical precinct. Yeronga and Fairfield also form part of the growth corridor with Dutton Park and South Brisbane. Ensuring these areas are linked for work, shopping, school, medical and ancillary services is critical.

Recommendation – the Yeronga West loop needs to be re-established as part of 105 route. The 105 should be extended to the Mater Hill medical precinct via the busway retaining Indooroopilly Shoppingtown as the end destination. The frequency of the 105 should be increased from an hourly service during the daytime off peak and on Saturdays.

106

Since the last bus review there has been significant population growth in the centenary suburbs, Oxley and Corinda, via new residential estates and a major retirement village along the 106 route.

Recommendation - the frequency of the 106 bus service should be increased to provide between connectivity within the south-western suburbs to Indooroopilly, the principal activity centre for residents in this district.

107

Changes to the 107 route to the City combined with the changes to the 105 compound the problems in proposed bus network changes for Yeronga Residents. Neither service provides a direct bus link into South Brisbane to the hospital and knowledge precinct for Yeronga residents. This corridor forms part of Council's designated "growth area" under the Dutton Park - Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan so failing to provide a frequent and direct bus service to support a high growth spine identified in *City Plan 2014* seems short-sighted.

Annerley Bus Routes

The numerous changes to bus services through Annerley will adversely impact on bus patrons. Residents have advised me that they currently have the option of up to nine routes to access the inner southside which will be effectively reduced to two due to the route cuts and truncations. Nor has any consideration been given to bus rail connections for bus to cross river rail services.

The reduction in off-peak services through Annerley with no guarantee that the frequency of the new and combined routes (the P109 is a useful service along Ipswich Rd but see Annerley Residents can be up to 1km away from the main road) will compensate for the loss is unclear and problematic.

The 112 and 113 services do not effectively connect to the Annerley Junction Shopping precinct a key destination for Annerley residents that has been effectively cut.

The truncation and redirection of the 112 and 113 to the Greenslopes Bus Station combined with the cut to the 114 severely reduces the ability of Annerley residents to access their local shops, South Bank and hospital precinct at the PA Hospital, as well as the loss of a direct services to the City.

Whilst the 116 has been retained, the route changes through surface streets in South Brisbane rather than the busway will increase travel time and disconnect patrons from the South Brisbane/Southbank employment and recreational precinct.

The intersection of Waterton St, Ipswich Rd and Venner Rd is currently not fully controlled by traffic lights, has poor visibility and no dedicated turning lanes and arrows. Routing more bus services through this intersection without upgrading the intersection is reckless and will put lives at risk. The intersection should be upgraded before these new routes come into use in 2024.

Recommendation – the proposed Annerley bus routes should be reconfigured to retain necessary connections to the Annerley Junction Shopping Precinct, as well as the PA/Mater Hospitals and South Brisbane precinct and consider more effective rail connections to Cross River Rail. TO support the rerouted services the intersection of Venner Rd/Ipswich Rd and Waterton St should be upgraded.

192

Extension of the 192 to Yeerongpilly via UQ and Yeronga is supported and usefully connects an inner southside corridor. There are historically poor bus services to UQ from the southside where many UQ staff and students live. This is a good start but more needs to be done.

Recommendation - this service should be increased in frequency to provide evening services until 9pm and increased Saturday services. Alternatively, the service should be converted to a designated BUZ route.

General

The end destination for bus services in Yeerongpilly needs to be reconsidered. The terminus should be located near the South Regional Business Centre to provide lift access to Yeerongpilly station facilitating better integration between bus and rail services.

The displacement of numerous bus services from the busway through Dutton Park and South Brisbane is disappointing and will result in adverse travel times to existing bus patrons who do not use the Metro services. It seems like Council is treating suburban services as second class by displacing while prioritising the metro services through the dedicated busways. The outcome of spending \$1.7billion to remove existing bus services from using the dedicated busways does not seem like value for money.

The lack of information about suburban bus stop upgrades needed to support the plan is problematic. Many suburban stops have no shelters and should be upgraded to provide shade and shelter to customers.

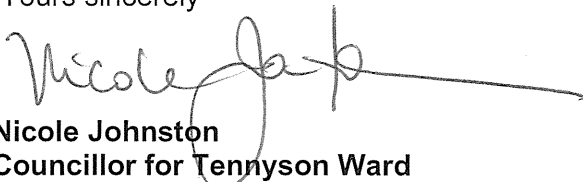
The Fairfield Rd Yeronga Rail Station bus stop needs to be upgraded with a shelter and indented bus bays to reduce congestion along Fairfield Rd.

The general truncation of southside services in the City, with limited options to Fortitude Valley is also short-sighted.

In the 2012-2013 Bus Review Brisbane City Council lobbied the State Government to cut bus services in Tennyson Ward including the 101, 102 and 104. These services experienced reduction in frequency and truncations. While this review does not propose any further changes, consideration should be given to extending 101 or 102 to Corinda and increasing the daytime frequency of the 104 service between Corinda and the PA hospital to 30mins to restore the services cut a decade ago.

Generally, residents feel the Bus Network Review is a lost opportunity to better integrate bus and rail services.

Yours sincerely



Nicole Johnston
Councillor for Tennyson Ward

Cc Mark Bailey, Member for Miller and Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Appendix 1 - 105 and 106 Bus Petitions

Appendix 2 - Cr Johnston speech extract council minutes 1 November 2022.

Appendix 3 – Brisbane Metro response re 105 Bus route changes

Tennyson Ward Office

From: Brisbane Metro
Sent: Friday, 18 November 2022 4:03 PM
To:
Cc: Tennyson Ward Office;
Subject: Re: BRISBANE BUS SERVICES

Categories: Saved in Act

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your emails and for your interest in Brisbane's New Bus Network particularly in relation to the Yeronga area.

We appreciate your feedback regarding the connection provided by the current Route 105 between Yeronga and Indooroopilly. I can confirm that extensive customer patronage data analysis has been undertaken to understand travel patterns across the Brisbane network, and this has indicated that the existing connection between Indooroopilly and Yeronga has very low passenger demand. With this in mind, Brisbane City Council has tried to create the best possible network which balances the needs of customers, but this unfortunately means there have been changes, including Route 105 no longer directly connecting to Indooroopilly.

I can advise Brisbane's New Bus Network will still provide the opportunity for you to make the journey between Yeronga and Indooroopilly however, this includes a transfer. For this journey you would need to catch Route 105 – Indooroopilly to PA Hospital station, then transfer to Route 107 – Yeerongpilly to City or Route 192 – Yeerongpilly to City via UQ and West End at Fairfield Road stops.

We appreciate that a transfer is inconvenient for some people however, the planning has been undertaken sensitively to ensure that this occurs as a same-stop connection to reduce the impact on those transferring.

Route 107 will provide a dedicated connection from Yeronga to the city. I can confirm that you will benefit from this route when travelling to the inner city and busway as there will be a faster journey time by not having to travel through the traffic congestion on Walter Taylor Bridge.

Brisbane's New Bus Network will also introduce new all-day services to Cansdale Street Route 192 will operate all-day on Cansdale Street providing you with new connections from The Village to the Fairfield Gardens shopping centre. I can also confirm that Route 192 will service the bus stop you identified in your email.

Brisbane's New Bus Network proposes the following new connections between Yeronga and:

- The University of Queensland
- West End
- Yeerongpilly Green
- Queensland Tennis Centre

In relation to travel from Yeronga and the Mater Hospital, I can advise that the passengers travelling between Yeronga and the Mater Hospital will maintain access by using 192 – Yeerongpilly to City via UQ and West End and then transferring to a high-frequency M2 service (UQ to RBWH at UQ Lakes station).

made to go underground, given the state of some of the businesses who are struggling with that cut and cover methodology. It's a very difficult thing to have to continue to trade when you have construction occurring outside your business for several years, so I think we were very justified in that decision.

Auckland are also in the process of contemplating light rail, which we went through a number of years ago, Chair, when ultimately we decided on the Brisbane Metro solution. It was great to return the favour this week, Mr Chair, with Brisbane currently hosting a delegation from New Zealand. Just this morning I was out at the Eagle Farm depot, taking the delegation through the Metro vehicle and that includes many representatives from both Auckland and Wellington and the various government agencies that fund national land transport in New Zealand.

Yesterday I was privileged to present at a summit with the delegates, sharing with them some of the transport projects that we have underway here in Brisbane. There were conversations and exchanges around city planning, economic development, transport, parks and gardens and of course housing affordability. Let me just say, Mr Chair, they were very impressed with the vision and the innovation that we have here in Brisbane and the commitment the LORD MAYOR has to improving our transport network and the political courage that he has taken to take the city in this direction with a network review and a new form of transport. But most importantly, it's great to see knowledge sharing and productive discussions that can come out of some of these now getting on in the years Sister City relationships between Brisbane and Auckland. Long may it be the case and I'll leave further debate to the Chamber.

Chair:

Thank you.

Is there any further debate?

Councillor JOHNSTON.

Councillor JOHNSTON:

Yes, thank you, Mr Chair. I rise to speak on the Brisbane new bus network. This is the second review of Council bus routes—the word is routes—that I have seen undertaken by Council. Like in 2011-12, Council is promising one thing but delivering something else completely. For years now the LORD MAYOR and the Transport Chair have been saying publicly that there will be more buses for the suburbs and that there'll be better buses for the suburbs. They've said it over and over and over again. The Transport Chair has pooh-poohed what I've said about bus services being cut and truncated—no, no, she doesn't know what she's talking about. Well, the bus network review shows very clearly how Council is putting a knife through bus services in the southern suburbs of Brisbane.

In Council's own information pack that they provided to my office they openly admit that only 91% of residents in Tennyson Ward will get the same or a similar service. Almost 10% of residents are going to be worse off under this bus network review that has been proposed by Councillor MURPHY and LORD MAYOR, Adrian SCHRINNER. Ten per cent of residents will be worse off. They're not getting a better bus service; they're getting worse off. The other 91% are getting the same or similar, so the public promises of better bus services for the suburbs is just a mirage.

Pretty much I think they're believing their own publicity, because what they are actually doing in the suburbs is very different to what they say they are doing. In my ward there are multiple services that are being cut or truncated. This means there are less services going into the city and it impacts residents in almost all areas. There will be no direct service any longer between Yeronga and Indooroopilly, which is the principal activity centre for residents who live in Yeronga. Their only option will be to go to the city or to change buses somewhere on the side of the road where Council won't put in a bus shelter because it's only a local bus stop and they'll have to stand in the heat and the rain on the side of Fairfield Road. Guess who these people mainly are? The elderly, the elderly. They are extremely concerned.

There are no new bus routes proposed in Tennyson Ward. There are no services at all in some areas at night or on weekends. It's 1.4 kilometres for some people in Oxley to walk to the local train station when there is no bus service on the weekend. Or—Councillor STRUNK, you'll appreciate this—they can walk further out over the Ipswich Motorway, past the Bunnings at Oxley and that's 1.1 kilometres for those Oxley residents to get to a bus service. Now Council's standard of service is, my understanding is 400 metres and that's clearly not being met.

There are no upgrades proposed to bus stop infrastructure, particularly on Ipswich Road, so Ipswich Road is going to carry more buses that are coming from other parts of Brisbane and they're going to transit through Annerley Junction. So I asked the transport planners what improvements are you going to make to the footpaths which are as old as the hills? Council won't fix those. Are you going to build better bus indents? What are you going to do? Oh, no, Councillor, that's not part of the scope of the project. So there's no new infrastructure to support the changes that Council's talking about, other than where they want it in the inner city, where they're spending billions of dollars. Remember this was a \$944 million project that's now costing \$1.7 billion, that's what they admit to today and it's likely to be a lot more. So as a result of the LNP's signature transport project, the cost of the project has almost doubled.

Residents in my ward are getting a worse bus service and they're not getting any new infrastructure to upgrade areas where there will be more buses transiting through, such as Ipswich Road which, as Councillor WINES wants to ignore, has about 100 accidents per year on Ipswich Road. Brisbane City Council won't invest any money into that road, but over at Indooroopilly, sure, there's a few crashes there, they'll spent hundreds of millions of dollars. So it just shows pretty clearly the priorities of this LNP Administration. What they have said is completely false and their own information reveals that. I feel very sorry for the residents who have to deal with the consequences of this.

There is really only—apart from the cuts and truncations, there's really only one sort of change, which is the extension of the 192 into Yeronga, but that's a circuitous route into the city for those residents and their direct route has been truncated now at the Cultural Centre, I think, yes, the Cultural Centre. So it's swings and roundabouts out here, but the fact that Council can't say that my residents, none of them are getting a better bus service, they're getting the same or similar or worse, I think that reflects very poorly on Council. I know my residents are extremely upset, they have been emailing and writing to Council. They're not playing the stupid games that Council wants to play, they're real people who have serious concerns about the impact of buses in their lives and these are schoolchildren and mainly the elderly.

Now it's also very clear that Council does not understand that schoolchildren in my ward don't use school buses. Some do, but most children in my ward rely on public buses to take them to their homes. A lot of them go to private schools and there are not buses available for them. It is very concerning that there are no services at certain times of the day for these students. It is very concerning that the 192 does not have services after about six o'clock, seven o'clock in the evening and there are no services at all on weekends. So the one new bus service that the officers proudly told me about doesn't run on Saturday to take—the purpose of it, I was told, was to take the retirement village community at Yeronga up to Fairfield Shopping Centre. But if they want to shop on Saturday or Sunday, they still can't because there is no bus service.

It is just shocking how poorly this has been organised. It is distressing to see the reduction of services and Council's attempt to cut the ward connections, east-west connections that are so critically valuable. People who live in Yeronga or Fairfield and Yeerongpilly and Tennyson, those residents have doctors, hairdressers, shops, children go to schools, they have all their services in Indooroopilly because that's where the buses go. Now Council's

taking that away, they'll have to stand on the side of Fairfield Road in the rain or the heat, basically to swap buses to get them over to Indooroopilly. They don't know what those connections will look like, will it be an hour, will it be half an hour, we don't know.

There are also residents on Annerley Road who are being disadvantaged by these changes and the truncations and redirections of bus services through Annerley. So Council has not got this right. It's pretty clear to me, based on the feedback from the officers who came to my office, that they're not interested in the changes. So I sadly think the fix is in. They very clearly told me that changing or, for example, getting the bus service back to Indooroopilly was outside of the scope of the project. Looking at extra services on weekends was outside of the scope of the project.

So if they've made up their minds, this is going to be a very poor outcome for Council. My residents are in good faith putting forward their views, they are contributing to the bus network review, as I will be. But I can say now Council has failed to listen to our community about extending the 196 bus route into Yeronga. That's what we have campaigned for, for a decade that I have been here. There have been multiple petitions in this place to do that and Council has indicated it would look at extending the 196 bus service in the last petition we did a few years ago and has failed to do so—just didn't do it.

It is very disappointing to see the adverse outcomes that Council has designed as part of their new network review. When Council proudly says that 91% of residents get the same or a similar service and 10% will be worse off, that's a bad outcome for the community and the LNP need to pull their heads in.

Chair:

Any further debate?

Councillor SRIRANGANATHAN.

Councillor SRIRANGANATHAN: Thanks, Chair, I rise to speak on the bus network review. I'm going to be looking forward to seeing the results of the submissions and the feedback from the public that come through. I think some residents are rightly disappointed that it's not a more holistic review. There are lots of parts of the city that aren't really seeing much change at all, but I do understand the justifications for why the Council is focusing primarily on some of those southern bus routes that will be replaced by Metro vehicles running along the busway. I also have some sympathy with the Council Administration in that if they want to be improving services, they ideally would be getting a bit more funding in from the State Government. I think there's probably a fair bit of responsibility on the shoulders of the Transport Minister and Queensland Labor for not adequately funding Brisbane's public transport network.

I will just reiterate for the record that I would really like to see the 192 service operating on weekends and weeknights and I thank Councillor MURPHY for at least getting us some costings so that we understand the sorts of figures we're talking about. Councillor JOHNSTON, in case you're interested, based on the new route that's proposed for the 192, at a minimum it would cost about an extra \$600,000 for the service to run until 9pm on weekdays and half-hourly on Saturdays and Sundays, 7am to 7pm. So we're talking about \$600,000, potentially a little bit more with the incidental costs, but let's say \$600,000, \$700,000 in order for the 192—that's per year, in order for the 192 to run a bit later on weekdays.

We don't know what the revenue is from ticket revenue, this is a new route or an extension to the route, so it's hard to say exactly how much take-up there'd be particularly from the Tennyson Ward. But it's not a huge amount of money and I would think that either the Council or the State Government could cough up an extra \$600,000 to ensure that a big chunk of their inner southside has a bus service that runs at night and on weekends. Even Highgate Hill in my ward, which you'd think is pretty close to the inner city, it's actually very poorly served by buses and on weekends there's not much on offer. In fact even the stretch of Montague Road where all the new high-density development has gone in, there's a major Woolworths shopping