# Moving Byron Public Transport Workshop

| **Date:** 13 November 2023 | **Time:** 1pm | **Venue:** Rm 2 & 3, Community College, Mullumbimby |
|---|---|---|
| **Workshop Lead:** Cr Mark Swivel | | **Minutes:** Shelley Flower |

| **Document attachments:** |
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| Workshop Agenda (E2023/116886) |
| TfNSW Presentation (E2023/119957) |
| Email from Ian Day, Northern Rivers Buslines, received post workshop (E2023/119348) |

| **Present:** | **Moving Byron Advisory Committee Members and Community Representatives**: Cr. Mark Swivel, Cr Peter Westheimer, Cr Cate Coorey, Cr Duncan Dey, Margaret Robertson, Ian Pickles, Basil Cameron, Geoff Meers, David Michie. **Council:** Phil Holloway (until 2.45pm), Sam Frumpui, Shelley Flower, Honey Ayres. **TfNSW:** Vicky Sisson, Chengjun Li (CJ) and Penny Sutton. **Transport Operators:** Jason Pitt and Jason Erickson (Byron Bay Taxis & Limousines), Alexander Bosin (Byron Bay Kombis), Ian Day (Northern Rivers Buslines), Kellie Creighton (Ballina Buslines), Brendan Pender and Gavin Hutchins (Blanches/BVC Bus Services). |
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| No. | Item |
|---|---|
| 1. | **Workshop opened** |
| | • Introduction and acknowledgement of country<br>• Attendee introductions |
| 2. | **TfNSW presentation** (attached) |
| 3. | **Summary of key themes** |
| | a) On-demand services<br> - Recommend trial<br> - Use smaller vehicles, rather than large buses<br> - Open to all operators (uber, taxi, kombis, buses, etc)<br> - Integrate with other transport types<br> - Government support to provide technology platform (app)<br><br>b) Park and ride facilities<br> - Locate outside town centre and near transport facilities (e.g. Cavanbah Centre, rail trail)<br> - Shuttle bus to/from major centres or high use routes (possibly free)<br> - Provision of enhanced PT facilities (e.g. Byron bus interchange, transport hubs, etc)<br><br>c) Review of bus services<br> - Improve services during peak periods (holidays, weekends, etc)<br> - Possibly include airports<br> - Efficient use of existing vehicles (often idle at peak times)<br> - Inter-regional services, particularly to Tweed and Ballina, based off Tier 1 trunk routes (refer email received from Ian Day post workshop)<br> - Provide services for both tourists and locals<br> - Investigate customer needs / undertake travel study with funding support from TfNSW (e.g. 16 Cities program)<br><br>d) Customer support<br> - Improved Trip Planner technology (upgrade expected in Jan 2024)<br> - Phone based customer service<br> - Better communication of information to public<br><br>e) Multi-modal transport<br> - HOV (high occupancy vehicle) traffic lanes<br> - Busways |

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|  | - Storage of bicycles/surfboards on front of buses<br>- Use of rail line and/or Ewingsdale Road<br>- TfNSW e-scooter trial<br><br>f) Constraints<br>- accessible infrastructure (e.g. kerb ramps, footpaths, etc)<br>- bus infrastructure (e.g. pullover bays, timetables, EV charging stations, etc)<br>- poor road quality<br>- vehicle congestion<br>- pedestrian congestion<br>- current low passenger numbers preventing operators expanding services (i.e. no profit)<br>- lack of parking in town centres<br><br>g) Electric Vehicles<br>- Minimal discussion but supported by Byron Bay Kombis<br>- Blanches/BVC have trialled 2 x EV buses in Ballina |
| 4. | **Roundtable discussion summary** |
|  | **Transport Operators**<br><br>Blanches / BVC<br>• 47 buses in fleet<br>• Planning a review of bus services<br>• Missing link between Byron and Tweed shires (e.g. Pottsville, Kingscliff TAFE, Murbah)<br>• Use of transport hubs for transfers and on-demand services in recently completed Coffs Harbour project (included review of school services)<br>• Happy to work with other operators to synchronise services<br>• Accessibility issues at existing bus stops (e.g. Brunswick Heads), particularly mobility impaired elderly residents<br>• Infrastructure missing/insufficient at bus stop locations (e.g. school bus route signage, Pocket School bus turning area warning signage)<br>• Poor rural road quality<br>• Importance of integrating bus services in internet platform as well as phone<br>• Supportive of busways and HOV (high occupancy vehicle) lanes<br>• Noosa has a free shuttle bus for central business area and Council funds additional services during peak periods<br>• Issues with Byron Hospital roundabout and Ewingsdale Road congestion<br>• Byron bus interchange requires improved facilities<br>• Ballina Airport service demand; most passengers want to get to Byron, rather than Gold Coast.<br>• Have trialled 2 x EV buses in Ballina.<br>• Bus routes associated with large developments such as Harvest Estate.<br><br>NR Buslines / Ballina Buslines<br>• 104 buses in fleet between NR Buslines and Ballina Buslines<br>• Cash payment only<br>• Services require review<br>• Better utilisation of existing assets (buses idle during peak periods)<br>• Need to find out what customers want<br>• NR Buslines contracted for school services with public services as an add-on. Currently insufficient demand to increase PT services, would require funding.<br>• Little profit in airport services<br>• Poor rural road quality (e.g. Coolamon Scenic Dr very narrow)<br>• Prefer routes outside of busy congested areas due to delays (e.g. Byron cbd) |

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- On-demand service would work well in Mullumbimby
- Base route planning between other regions, like Ballina and Tweed, on Tier 1 trunk routes.  Refer email from Ian Day received after workshop (E2023/119348).

Byron Bay Taxis and Limousines
- 20 cars in fleet
- Tourist numbers $2.2m inflated.  Actually $1.6m?
- Important to service locals as well as tourists (suggest tourist tax)
- Worker parking concerns in Byron Arts & Industrial Estate.  Possible solutions could be a worker shuttle bus from a park'n'ride facility located outside of town (e.g. previous Cav Centre trial or near to rail trail)
- Locals use taxi to get between Ocean Shores and Byron Bay but complain about cost
- Interested in being involved in providing on-demand services
- On-demand services best option for small regional areas and could incorporate a range of vehicle types (e.g. shuttle bus, taxis, uber, etc).  Open up to anyone who would like to participate.
- Recommend government provide online platform and start with a trial
- Already have apps and phone service set up
- Already involved in providing accessible transport services to schools and medical venues
- Pedestrian traffic congestion an issue in Byron, especially between Police Station and Jonson st roundabout

Byron Bay Kombis
- Would like to include EV scope in discussions
- EV limited to 180-200km route length
- High cost to convert 10 – 20 seat vehicles to EV.  Interested in funding opportunities.
- Lack of charging infrastructure
- Keen to be involved in high use routes within Byron Bay (e.g. CBD to lighthouse) as he has experience with this type of service

**Moving Byron Advisory Committee Members**

Cr Swivel
- Importance of integrating bus services into internet (apps/website).  Bus operators noted that recent bus upgrades will mean better integration with NSW Trip Planner from Jan 2024.
- Park'n'ride facilities adjacent to bus facilities
- Integration between different service types (e.g. buses to taxis)

Cr Westheimer
- Weekend, school and airport services a priority
- Use rail line for rail services
- Trial service on high use route, such as Byron CBD to Lighthouse and return

Cr Coorey
- Use Old Pacific Highway as busway?  TfNSW advised that upgrades would be required to use as busway.
- Funding support available from TfNSW?

Cr Dey
- Need to have the services in place in order for passenger demand to increase
- Park'n'ride facilities adjacent to bus facilities (e.g. west end of Ewingsdale Rd, Cav Centre - remove pine trees on west side to create more parking)

Basil Cameron

| No. | Item |
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|  | • Separate local service, rather than single operator providing both local and regional services<br>• Use rail line for rail services<br>• Insufficient road space for active transport, bus infrastructure needed<br>• DCP should be amended to include road infrastructure requirements as per Council's RASP document and allow a funding reserve for public and active transport.<br>• Use public transport to improve parking availability and road congestion<br>• Local services should stop in main streets, not on periphery as it's too far for mobility impaired people to walk. Use interchange for regional services, not local services<br><br>Ian Pickles<br>• Bicycle/surfboard storage on front of buses. Bus operators supportive. Prams and wheelchairs will need to be inside bus.<br><br>**TfNSW**<br>• Will investigate if Byron can be included in next round of 16 Cities Program<br>• Investigating federal funding for a travel study to include Byron and inter-regional connections<br>• Investigate possible development of a Northern Rivers Regional Transport Plan (would include Tweed, Ballina, etc)<br>• School services double as public services<br>• Ewingsdale Rd corridor duplication allows for multi-modal travel<br>• Byron Bus interchange a good asset<br>• Consider all options for rail line, rather than just railway (e.g. use as a busway)<br>• Use smaller vehicles for on-demand services as they can navigate poor quality roads better than large buses<br>• VIC uses taxis for on-demand services<br>• E-scooter hire trial currently underway in Newcastle (located at trip end facilities). Any Council can apply for this trial. Vicky to send details.<br>• Will review if any incentives available to EV operators<br>• Will follow up outcomes from "BusBot" EV trials in Coffs Harbour and Armidale |
| 5. | **Actions** |
|  | **TfNSW:**<br>a) Can Byron be included in the next round of the 16 Cities Program?<br>b) Confirm if TfNSW can undertake travel study which includes Byron and inter-regional connections<br>c) Will TfNSW develop a Northern Rivers Regional Transport Plan (including Tweed, Ballina, etc)?<br>d) Provide details of e-scooter hire trial currently underway in Newcastle (located at trip end facilities)<br>e) Confirm if incentives are available to EV operators (e.g. to assist with cost of EV conversion)<br>f) Advise outcomes from "BusBot" EV trials in Coffs Harbour and Armidale<br><br>**Council:**<br>a) Distribute workshop summary to all invitees |
|  | **Workshop closed at 4pm** |

Acknowledgement
of country

# Moving Byron Public Transport workshop

**Introductions**

Cr. Mark Swivel

Judd Cornwall, Traffic Engineer, Byron Shire Council

Shelley Flower, Road Safety Officer, Byron Shire Council

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# Agenda

12:45pm Registration

1:00pm    Introductions

1:15pm    TfNSW presentation of public transport plans/strategies/projects, current trials, future directions and funding opportunities.

1:30pm    **Session 1 - Services connecting towns within Byron Shire**

Roundtable discussion with all attendees to understand the following:

- Current and future services ( for example, school, public, private, on-demand)
- Constraints and opportunities such as accessibility, safety, capacity/frequency, network changes, on-demand services, active transport, Net Zero emissions targets.

2:45pm    **Break and afternoon tea**

3:00pm    **Session 2 - Services connecting Byron Shire with other regions**

Roundtable discussion with all attendees to understand the following:

- Current and future services (for example, public, private)
- Constraints and opportunities (for example, accessibility, safety, capacity/frequency, network changes, infrastructure, active transport, Net Zero emissions targets, state run bus network)

3:45pm    Summary of outcomes and next steps

4:00pm    Close

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# Transport for NSW

- public transport plans/strategies/projects

- current trials,

- future directions

- funding opportunities

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# Session 1 - Services connecting towns within Byron Shire

- Current and future services (e.g. school, public, private, on-demand)

- Constraints and opportunities such as:

  - accessibility,
  - safety,
  - capacity/frequency,
  - network changes,
  - on-demand services,
  - active transport,
  - Net Zero emissions targets.

**2.45 to 3pm - Break and afternoon tea**

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SHIRE
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# Session 2 - Services connecting Byron Shire with other regions

- Current and future services (e.g. public, private)

- Constraints and opportunities such as:
    - accessibility,
    - safety,
    - capacity/frequency,
    - network changes,
    - infrastructure,
    - active transport,
    - Net Zero emissions targets,
    - state run bus network

**3:45pm - Summary of outcomes and next steps**

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# Thank you for coming along

# and participating!

**BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL**

# Background Information

**On-demand services and technology**

On-demand services pick up and drop off from locations that the customer specifies for an agreed rate.

- On-demand public transport services have been trialed in several NSW regions, including the Northern Rivers in  Alstonville/Wollongbar, Chilcotts Grass and Goonellabah - TfNSW On Demand

- On-demand services have also been trialed on the Gold Coast - Translink app

**Net Zero emissions targets**

TfNSW

have a program to transition all diesel and natural gas public transport buses to zero emission technology by 2050.

**Active transport**

- Active transport promotes the use of non-motorised forms of transport such as walking, cycling, scooters. TfNSW Active Transport Strategy
- For this workshop we want to consider incorporating active transport with non-active transport (i.e. multi-modal trips) through ideas such as:
  - end of trip facilities (such as bike stands, toilets, water fountains, etc)
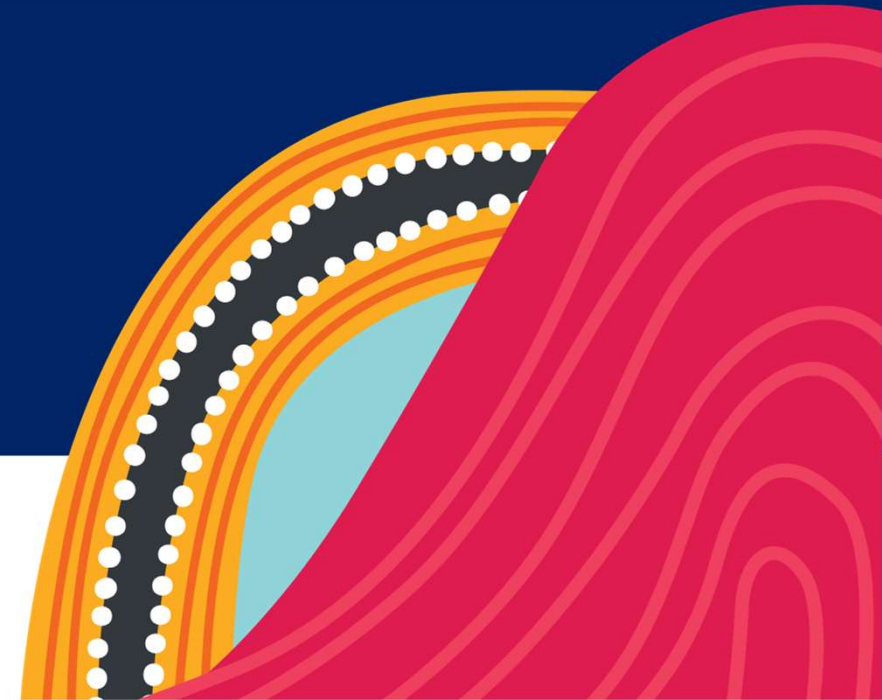  - stations with bike share
  - buses that can carry bikes

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# Byron Shire Council
## Public Transport Workshop

Chengjun Li – Director Transport Services Planning
Vicky Sisson – Director Planning North

NSW
GOVERNMENT

transport.nsw.gov.au
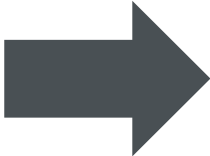
Acknowledgement of Country

Transport pays respect to Elders past and present, and recognises and celebrates the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

# 01

## Public Transport Planning Principles

# The information needed to plan services



Problem definition / Needs

- Travel Pattern Data (TCB / Ticketing)
- Field observations
- Existing network performance
- Community consultation (Have Your Say)
- Demographics
- Internal and external stakeholder engagement
- Council and State Gov't Strategies
- Customer interviews
- Land-use
- Travel to Work / Household Travel Survey

- Where do people travel to
- At what time
- For what purpose
- How much demand
- Cross-validation
- Benefits

# Modes, Characteristics, & service levels



**Tier 3** networks within Regional Cities, Strategic Centres and some Centres

**Tier 1** connections between Regional Cities and Strategic Centres, including Centres along their route

**Tier 2** connections between Centres and their nearest Regional City or Strategic Centre

- The Service and Product Offering needs to be tailored to the customer and community context

- A typical approach is to 'Tier' the services to connect customers and place

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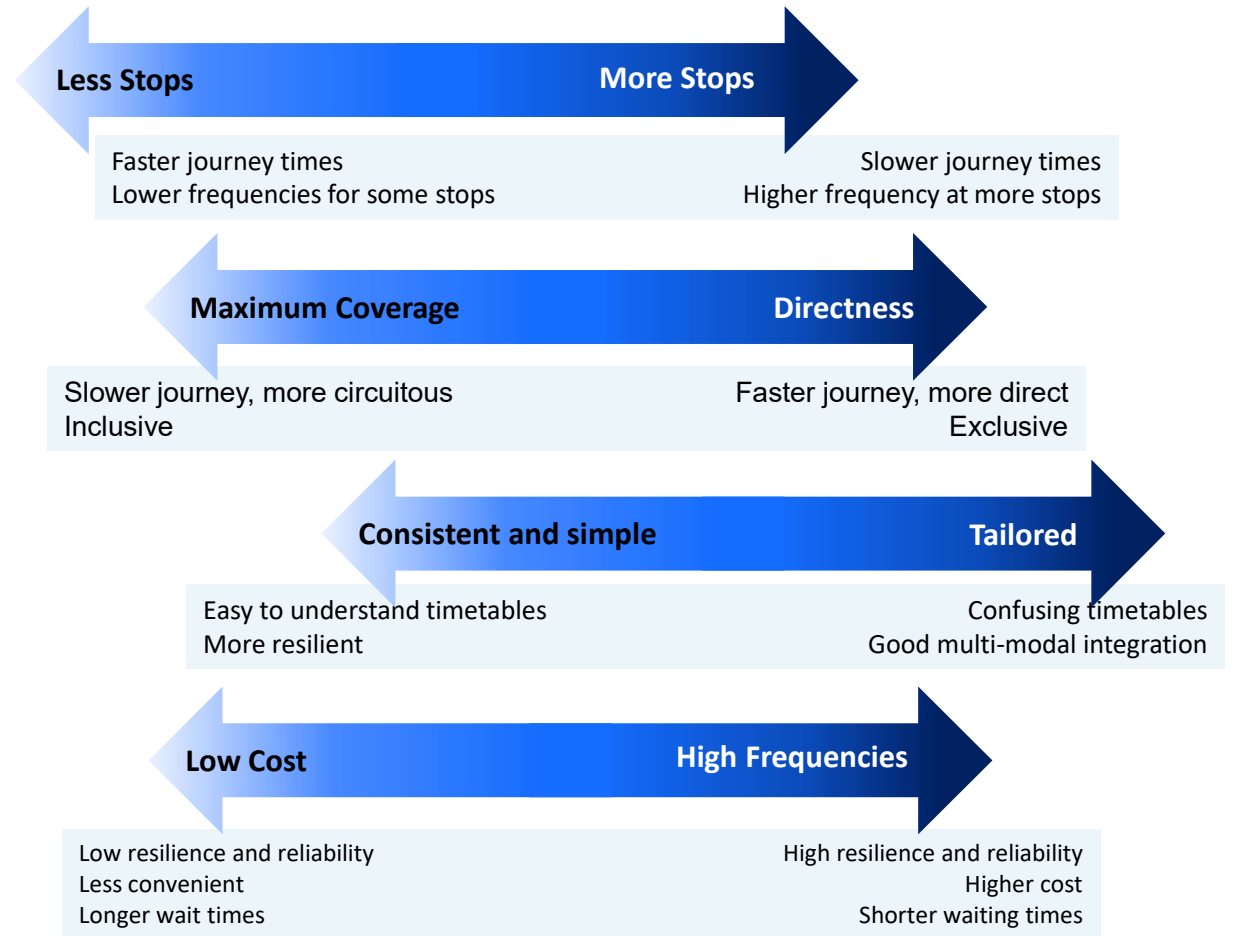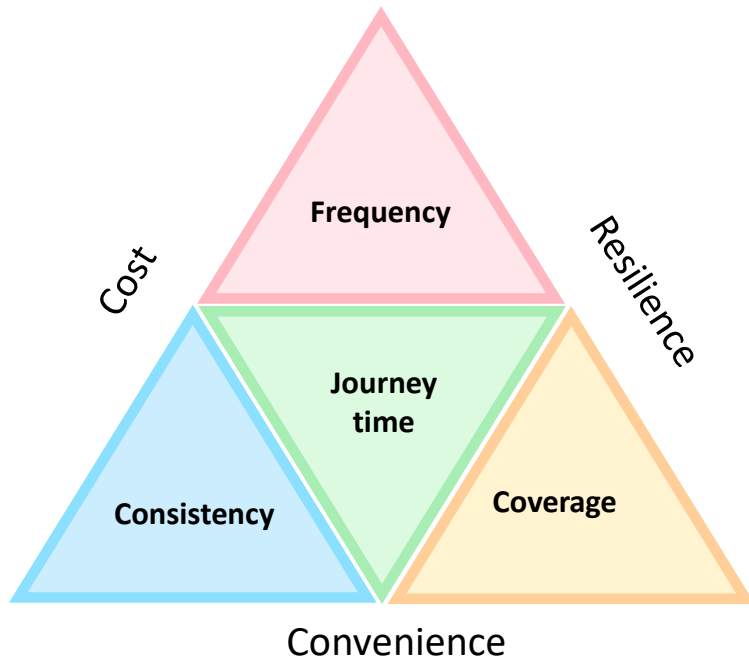
# Service Planning Trade Offs

**The needs of each area are different and the process of meeting those needs will involve trade offs.**

Less Stops → More Stops

Faster journey times / Lower frequencies for some stops — Slower journey times / Higher frequency at more stops

Maximum Coverage → Directness

Slower journey, more circuitous / Inclusive — Faster journey, more direct / Exclusive

Consistent and simple → Tailored

Easy to understand timetables / More resilient — Confusing timetables / Good multi-modal integration

Low Cost → High Frequencies

Low resilience and reliability / Less convenient / Longer wait times — High resilience and reliability / Higher cost / Shorter waiting times

Cost

Resilience

Frequency

Journey time

Consistency

Coverage

Convenience

# Current Network

# Integrated Transport Planning work

- Model of working in *partnership* with Councils, noting planning work can focus around a 'theme' with Byron having both a strong tourism and events pull, as well as a dispersed and diverse residential population.

- Transport has commenced work in partnership with Byron Council looking at ways to address movement of people in and around the area, including how we can increase opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport.

- We also need to understand needs relating to public transport accessibility, in order to develop potential plans for investing in various servicing frameworks applicable to the Byron community needs

# Congestion

## How do we address the Ewingsdale Road issue...

**Problem** – Capacity constraints along Ewingsdale Road resulting in significant congestion at interchange - at times resulting in 1km queues on highway. Exacerbated by lack of appropriate alternative travel choices?

**Options** – Includes duplicating corridor to provide greater capacity.

Need to think Multi-modal – Acknowledgement of need to provide greater travel choice.

- What would bus priority look like along here?

- How would we connect to other modes?



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# On-demand service examples

# Some On-Demand models

Note that there are other on-demand models

## 1. Point-to-hub

Examples are Woopi Connect (Woolgoolga) and B-Conx (Goonellabah and Alstonville), Buses pick up anywhere in the service area to a hub, and is designed to connect with core route services to a major centre.

(Both examples also operate as point-to-point services)

## 2. Point-to-point

An example is Moree where the town route services were replaced completely by on-demand bus services. The service is self contained and picks up anywhere in the service area to any destination in the service area. There is no predefined hub because there are no core route services to connect to.
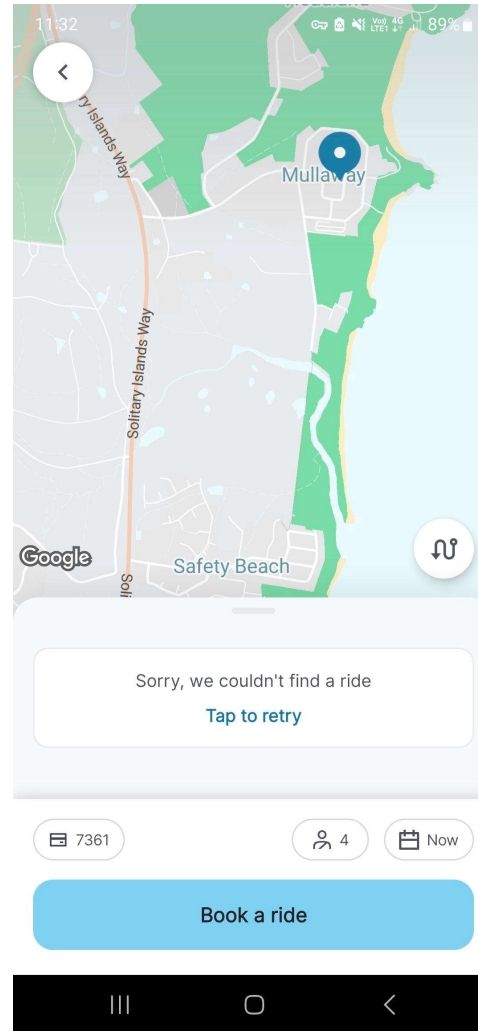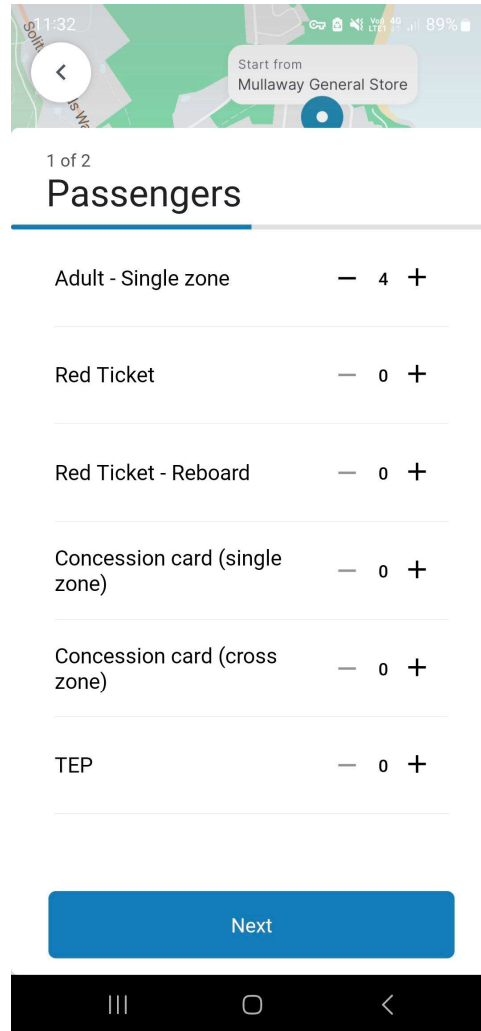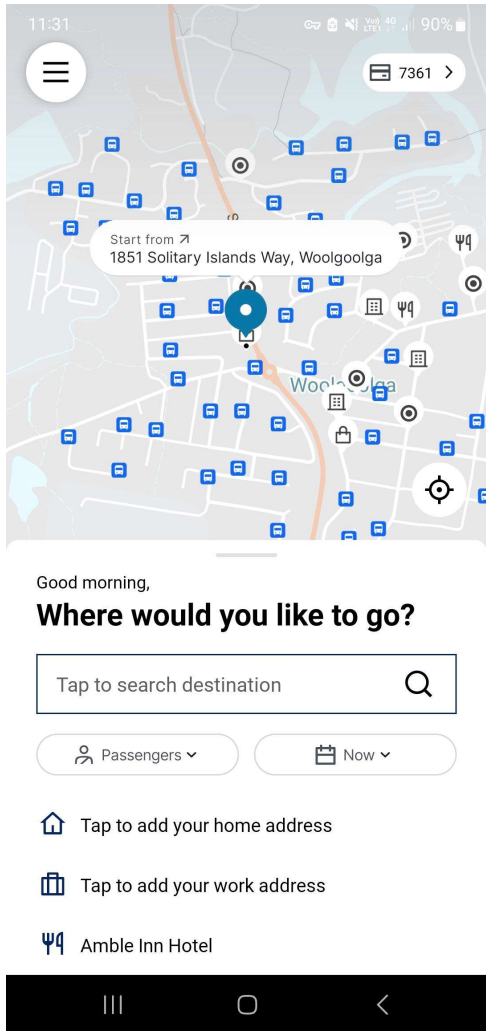




Moree map is not an official service area map
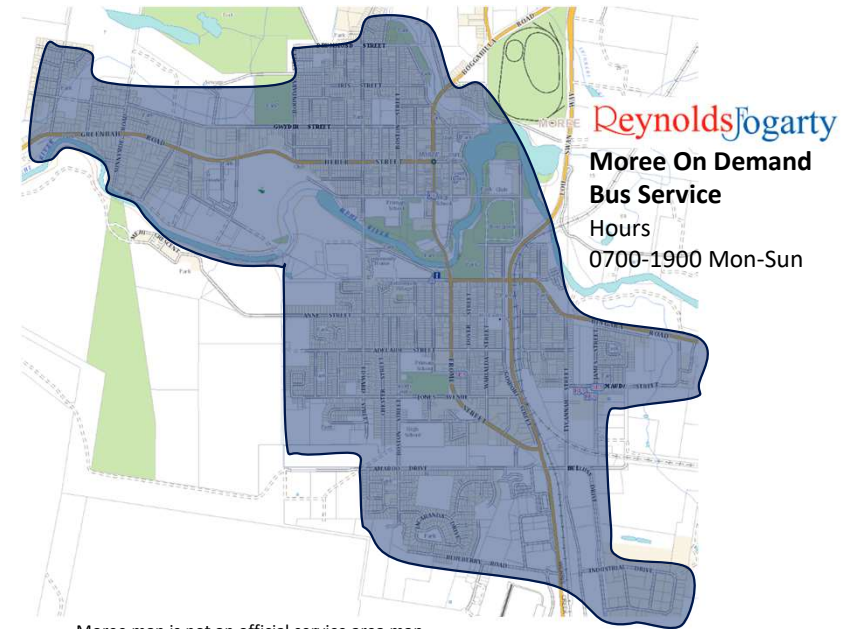
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# Expanded on-demand in the Northern Beaches

# Road-testing On-Demand...

# 03

## Active Transport

# Beyond Public Transport – First and Last Mile



**First-Mile**

**Last-Mile**

# Rail Trail

## Reuse of existing assets

- **Northern Rivers Rail Trail:**

- **Connects Tweed –Byron – Lismore - Casino**

- **What might integrating services look like with an Active Transport spine?**



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# Wollongong and Newcastle e-scooters

Trials around sustainable mobility devices.

- 12 – months trial began on Friday 29 September in Wollongong & mid December in Newcastle.

- Enables riders 16 years and older to hop on an e-scooter on eligible roads and shared paths around these key regional cities.

- These provide options for integrating with public transport, widening the areas of accessibility to major public service stops.



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# 03

## Broader Regional Planning – Public Transport Focus

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## Flower, Shelley

**From:** Ian Day <iday@nrbuslines.com.au>
**Sent:** Tuesday, 14 November 2023 1:16 PM
**To:** Flower, Shelley
**Subject:** FW: Moving Bryon Model for improvement of services
**Attachments:** 14112023121503-0001.pdf

Hi Shelly

Firstly thank you for inviting me yesterday.

Attached is an idea I shared with Transport for NSW for the Byron area that is very achievable.

In designing bus routes it is important to have a trunk route(Tier 1) to work off, Ballina to Pottsville can be covered over one hour so the perfect Trunk route. Other Tier 2 buses would have to meet the trunk route for interchange and Bangalow provides this perfect opportunity.

The following is an example of how it could work with a 10am Interchange point.

The four bus routes would be:

1. Ballina to Pottsville via Bangalow & Ocean Shores 2. Ballina to Byron then Bangalow via Bangalow Rd.
3. Byron to Mullumbimby / Brunswick Head / Ocean Shores 4. Lismore to Bangalow then Mullumbimby

The idea is to run the main trunk route in both directions every 1.5 hours from both directions E.g. Starting in:

Bus A. Ballina 9.35 to Bangalow for 10am then onto Pottsville via Ocean Shores arrive 10.40 Bus B. Pottsville 9.15 to Ocean Shores 9.35 to Bangalow 10am then onto Ballina for 10.25 Bus C. Leaves Ballina at 9am to Byron for 9.35 then leave 9.40 to Bangalow for 10am Bus D Leaves Byron at 8.35 to Mullumbimby for 9am then Brunswick for 09.15 Ocean Shores 09.30 (Meets with Trunk Route to Other areas) Bus E leaves Ocean Shores at 9.35 to Brunswick 9.50 then to Mullumbimby 10.05 Byron at 10.30 for start of next trip at 10.35 Bus F Leaves Lismore at 9.25 to Bangalow for 10am meet other buses then takes transfers to Mullumbimby for 10.25 Returns to Lismore at 10.35 from Mullumbimby back to Bangalow for 11am meet next trunk route.


This is only a summary of options but this idea will ensure.
Ballina is connected with Pottsville & Mullumbimby direct Byron is connected to Trunk Route at Bangalow to Lismore Byron is connected to Mullumbimby / Brunswick & Ocean Shores Ocean Shore can get to Brunswick. Trunk route to Bangalow thus Lismore & Ballina Mullumbimby is regularly connected to Bangalow thus Lismore / Ballina Mullumbimby is directly serviced to Byron and to Brunswick Ocean Shores thus connected to Trunk route to Pottsville.

More work is required but if you have any questions I am happy to explain to your team.

Hope this helps with your future planning?

Ian



Ian Day | Depot Manager

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# Plan to Improve Services Pottsville to Ballina

# November 2023