

Fairfield City Plan Top 10 Priorities Issue Paper

Priority 7 - Better Public Transport

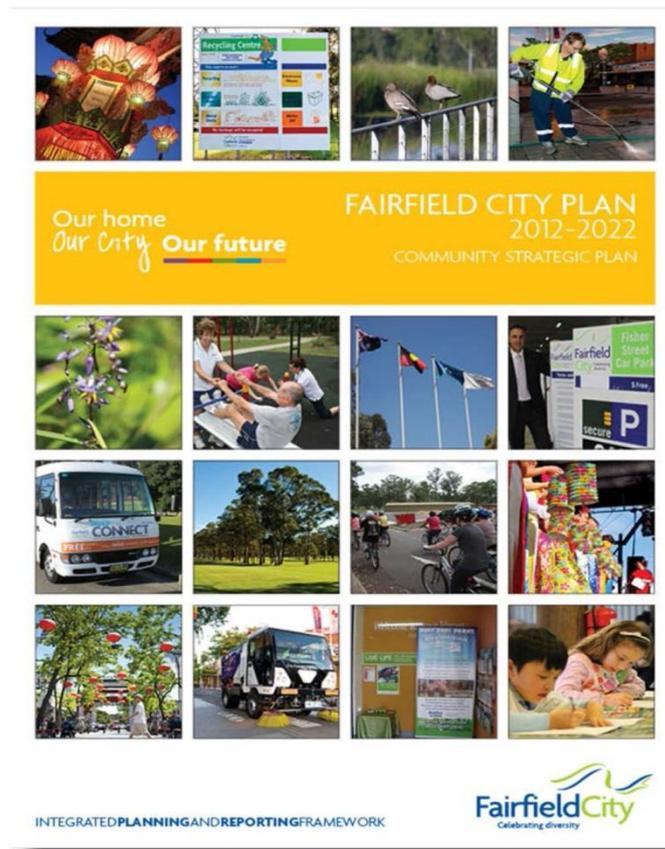


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INTRODUCTION

The Fairfield City Plan 2012-2022 is a compilation of the local community's vision, goals and priorities for Fairfield City over the next 10 years. It is important to stress that the City Plan is not the Council's plan – it belongs to the community and it summarises their views on what is important to them for the future of our City.

We all have an important role to play in delivering the future outcomes identified in the City Plan – all levels of government (Federal, State and Council), organisations, institutions, and agencies as well as every local resident and business operator.

The community came together in 2010 and again in 2012 to share their ideas about the future, and the City Plan includes a summary of that feedback in "The Top 10 Things We Would Like to See in Fairfield City by 2022".

Priority number 7 on that list is **better public transport**.

CITY PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES

The City Plan defines Goal 3 – Our City is Accessible (in Theme 2 – Places & Infrastructure) as:

Our City has affordable, accessible and integrated means for getting around that connects people with their destinations.

- 3.1 *Public transport, footpaths, cycleways and roads are accessible, safe, efficient, convenient, reliable and affordable and connect people with where they want to go*
- 3.2 *Effective traffic management that deals with congestion and safety*
- 3.3 *There is adequate parking*
- 3.4 *There is good integration between different modes of transport*

The City Plan identifies the following related strategies for achieving these goals –

- Provide cost effective lighting for attractive, vibrant and safe public spaces and streets
- Develop effective stakeholder partnerships, advocacy and funding opportunities to respond to local needs
- Provide buildings, infrastructure and facilities to support employment areas
- Provide affordable, accessible, convenient and safe public transport (rail, bus, taxis, Tway etc) and end of trip facilities (bike parking and lockers) for better integration of different means of transport
- Plan, provide and promote safe, convenient and accessible walkways and cycleways
- Integrate the development of land and transport means to better connect employment, education, health, town centres and entertainment areas
- Ensure trains and buses connect

As we prepare to update the City Plan, it is timely to look back at what has changed with community safety over the last 4 years and to look forward and seek to clarify the community's future priorities.

OUTLINE OF PRIORITY (DEFINITION)

Residents use public transport for a range of different purposes, including journey to work, to school, shopping trips, and to reach various destinations such as recreation activities, medical appointments, visit friends etc.

While trains and buses are the principal forms of public transport, a broader definition also includes community buses, cycling, walking and taxis.

Good public transport is supported by a range of civil infrastructure, facilities, services and management, including

- good roads
- easy access to stations and bus stops
- interchanges
- bus shelters
- traffic control
- commuter parking
- land use controls
- footpaths
- cycleways
- signage
- timetabling
- affordable fares
- bus route design etc.

An emerging form of transport that is gaining popularity in inner Sydney but is not yet available in Fairfield City, is car share schemes.

OVERVIEW OF PRIORITY IN FAIRFIELD

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ROADS

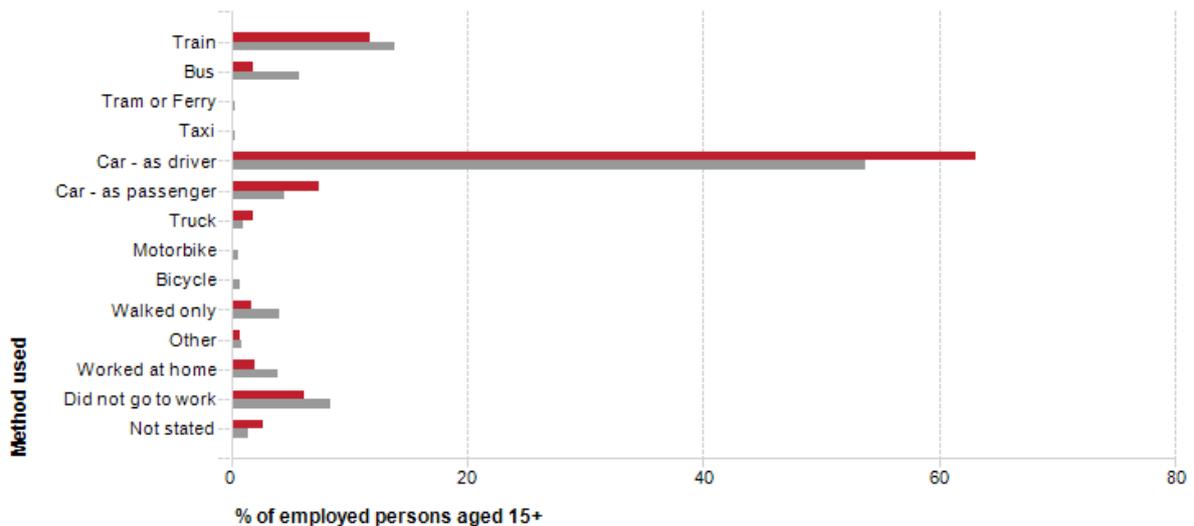
The NSW State Government is the primary provider of public transport. Fairfield City is served by the T2 Airport, Inner West & South Line, T3 Bankstown Line and T5 Cumberland rail lines in the east, the Liverpool-Parramatta T-Way travels through the centre of the City and private bus routes traverse most of the City. Local bus services are also provided by Fairfield City Council (City Connect) and by a number of clubs in the City.

Information is available from the latest census (2011) on the journey to work. As shown in the graph below, the vast majority of Fairfield City residents travel to work by car. About 13.6% of our residents take the train or bus to work compared to 19.6% in Greater Sydney. The percentage of our residents using public transport has increased from 12.6% in 2006.

Method of travel to work, 2011

Total employed persons

■ Fairfield City ■ Greater Sydney



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 (Enumerated data)
Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.

.id
the population experts

Some of the factors that may deter Fairfield City residents from using public transport are

- cost
- poor accessibility to train stations without lifts
- lack of commuter parking near stations
- lack of bus services to the Smithfield-Wetherill Park industrial area
- lack of multi-lingual information about public transport
- poor timetable connections between buses and trains

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

As mentioned above the NSW State Government is the primary provider of public transport. Fairfield City Council plays a supporting role along with other stakeholders including clubs and private bus companies.

WHAT HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED OVER PAST FOUR YEARS?

NSW STATE GOVERNMENT

The NSW State Government's priorities are identified in *NSW 2021* and *South Western Sydney Regional Action Plan*. The priorities related to better public transport are -

NSW 2021

Return Quality Services

***Provide the best transport, health, education, policing, justice and family services, with a focus on the customer**

- Reduce travel times
- Grow patronage on public transport
- Improve customer experience with transport services
- Improve road safety

***Renovate Infrastructure**

- Build the infrastructure that makes a difference to both our economy and people's lives

South Western Sydney Regional Action Plan

***Improve integrated regional transport**

- Develop long term integrated transport strategies for South Western Sydney
- Provide accessible public transport services supported by quality infrastructure
- Upgrade roads and bridges and improve road safety
- Support active transport (walk and cycle)

***Priority actions**

- Fairfield Transport Interchange Upgrade
- Canley Vale Station Upgrade
- Corridor Study – including Victoria Street Wetherill Park
- Cycle Facilities

The State Government has also released *NSW Making It Happen* which identifies State and Premier's priorities.

STATE PRIORITIES

→ **Ensure on-time running for public transport**

Maintain or improve reliability of public transport services over the next four years

Public transport services in Sydney are crucial in getting customers to their destinations.

Although Sydney is undergoing a large amount of infrastructure construction, we are working to ensure that public transport services continue to run on time. The Government is also improving integration across public transport services, updating timetables and providing clear information to get people to their destinations on time.

PREMIER'S PRIORITIES

→ **Building Infrastructure**

Key infrastructure projects to be delivered on time and on budget across the State. Our growing population continues to place pressure on our existing infrastructure. Over the next 15 years, NSW will require infrastructure to support 40% more train trips, 30% more car trips and 31% more households. This government has an ambitious infrastructure investment program to address these needs. It will ensure NSW residents have the best transport, water, education, health, sports and arts infrastructure. Construction has already begun and we will ensure our infrastructure agenda is delivered not just on time, but on budget as well.

TRANSPORT FOR NSW

The NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan was released in December 2012 and some of the major actions proposed in relation to public transport that impact Fairfield City are summarised below.

- Commencement of integrated electronic ticketing system (Opal)
- Investment in interchanges under the Transport Access Program, assessing future priorities for car parks, facilities and interchange upgrades
- Development of an Interchange Strategy
- Provision of accurate and modern real-time and wayfinding information to assist public transport patrons
- Development of an integrated Strategic Transit Network model for Sydney, supported by clear network hierarchies, to clarify roles, functions and service standards for specific transit corridors.
- Work to align, improve and simplify public transport timetables.
- Investment in a modern public transport fleet, including new trains and ferries for Sydney and new buses for growth areas and strategic corridors.
- Review of Passenger Transport Legislation.
- Fleet upgrade programs to renew and expand Sydney Trains and regional rolling stock
- Major investment in rail safety and technology systems, including Automatic Train Protection and digital train radio systems.
- Completion of the Northern Sydney Freight Corridor Program and the Southern Sydney Freight Line improvements
- Development of a metropolitan intermodal terminal network and invest in rail freight capacity projects to move more freight by rail
- Rail maintenance programs
- NSW Rail Access Review
- Continued collaboration with the Australian Government to examine the feasibility of issues associated with high speed rail proposals.

RAIL

Sydney's Rail Future is a strategy document released by the NSW Government in June 2012 as part of the Long Term Transport Master Plan for Sydney, which comprises a three tiered system of passenger rail transport, namely, Tier 1 – Rapid Transit, Tier 2 – Suburban trains and Tier 3 – Intercity services. Cabramatta is proposed as a designated stop for the new Tier 1 – Rapid Transit rail service which will be characterised by a frequent 'turn up and go' service without the need for consulting a timetable. The services will be provided by fast single deck trains that are designed for easy boarding and alighting.

BUS

There were 15 Sydney Metropolitan Contract Regions that were established as part of the NSW Government's bus reform programme. The Fairfield LGA falls within contract regions 3 and 13. The two bus companies that currently provide services to these regions are Transdev and Transit Systems.

Also, the Liverpool to Parramatta Transitway links the regional centres of Liverpool and Parramatta with the route passing through the Fairfield LGA. As of October 2013, the service which used to be provided by State Transit is being provided by the new operator Transit Systems.

In 2013 the free Cabramatta Shuttle Bus was removed from service as part of a significant reduction of the program.

Across metropolitan Sydney, 13 Rapid bus routes will operate and 20 Suburban routes have been confirmed as part of Sydney's Bus Future released by the NSW Government in December 2013. Customers on these routes will not wait longer than 15 minutes for a bus in each direction on Suburban routes between 6 am and 7 pm every weekday, and 10 minutes during commuter peaks. One of these new suburban bus routes aimed at providing direct, end-to-end access between centres is proposed which will link Blacktown to Bankstown via Fairfield and Wetherill Park.

COMMUTER CAR PARKS – TRANSPORT ACCESS PROGRAMME

The existing commuter car park at Villawood Station has been upgraded with 65 car parking spaces now available.

A commuter car park is being constructed at Fornasier Lane, Canley Vale. In addition to the 87 existing, timed car parking spaces, there will be 97 commuter spaces with construction expected to be completed by the end of 2015. As part of this project, Canley Vale Station was also upgraded with ramps installed on both sides of the station to improve passenger accessibility.

Construction of a commuter car park in Cabramatta is being considered by Transport for NSW as part of its ongoing provision of commuter car parks at railway stations through the Transport Access Programme.

FAIRFIELD INTERCHANGE

The upgrade to the Fairfield Transport Interchange commenced in February 2013 and was completed in June 2014. The following improvements have been made at the Fairfield transport interchange:

- reconfiguring the bus interchange into the commuter car park previously at the intersection of The Crescent and Court Road
- formalising the kiss and ride zone on the westbound lane of The Crescent
- relocating the taxi rank to the eastbound lane at the western end of The Crescent
- aligning the exit point of the bus interchange with the Smart Street intersection
- relocating the signalised pedestrian crossing and creating a new marked foot crossing on The Crescent
- relocating timed and commuter parking on both sides of Fairfield Station, including replacement car parking with 57 commuter spaces at Wilga Street.
- improving the streetscape on The Crescent and throughout the bus interchange, including new paving, street furniture, landscaping and wayfinding signage

- extending the station forecourt to incorporate the historic crane previously located in the bus interchange
- upgrading CCTV camera surveillance.

FAIRFIELD CITY COUNCIL SERVICES AND PROJECTS

After the current Council was elected in September 2012, it adopted its Delivery Program 2013-2017 with commitments on what it would deliver over its 4 year term in office. This included how it would contribute to the community's "Top Ten" priorities.

As discussed above, Council is not a lead agency in the provision of public transport, however, it contributes through the provision of infrastructure and the following on-going services -

CITY CONNECT BUS

Council provides the free City Connect bus services for areas that are poorly serviced by existing private bus routes to increase accessibility to key destinations and community facilities. The service was also introduced to help alleviate traffic congestion and free up existing parking.

The City Connect bus was first introduced in 2012 and now carries approximately 2000 passengers per month.



The bus routes are regularly reviewed and cater to demand within the community. The current regular services are -

- Brown route operating on Mondays - runs between Cabramatta, Canley Vale and Canley Heights.
- Pink route operating on Wednesdays - runs between Fairfield, Fairfield West, Cabramatta West, Cabramatta and Canley Heights.
- Orange route operating on Thursdays-Fridays - runs between Fairfield, Fairfield Heights, Villawood and Carramar.
- Blue route operating on Saturdays - runs between Fairfield West, Prairiewood Leisure Centre, Fairfield Showground, Fairfield Hospital and Villawood.

TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT AND ROAD SAFETY

Council develops and implements traffic, transport and road safety programs throughout the local government area. These works support pedestrians and cyclists as well as the safe and efficient movement of buses and cars around the City. The annual programs include:

Blackspot Program – Council undertakes investigations and consults with the community to rank crash locations and implements remedial treatments to improve road safety. The works include the construction of roundabouts, medians, pedestrian crossings, signals, turning bays etc. The annual expenditure for these works is about \$700,000 with 8-10 projects completed each year.

Local Area Traffic Management Program – Works under this program help to calm traffic and enhance road safety and amenity on local streets. Individual projects can include speed humps, traffic calming devices, kerb extensions etc. Council spends about \$450,000 on 8 projects each year.

Pedestrian Access Mobility Program – This program provides an integrated network of pedestrian pathways with strategically located pedestrian facilities to increase community safety. Almost \$200,000 is allocated annually for 3-4 projects such as installation of pram ramps, kerb realignments, refuges, kerb blisters etc.

ASSET MANAGEMENT OF ROADS, FOOTPATHS AND TRANSPORT

Council inspects and assesses the condition of all its road and transport assets, including roads, bridges, footpaths, car parks, kerb and gutter, traffic facilities, signs and street furniture to help determine the works it undertakes each year. Council's civil infrastructure assets are in good condition when benchmarked to the standards recommended by the NSW State Government, with 81% of our roads and 93% of our footpaths in good condition.

As part of the SRV expenditure, Council has introduced two additional programs to upgrade key assets – roads, kerb & gutter and footpath connections - and so will spend a total in 2015-16 of more than \$12M on its road and footpath network. These works ensure a good standard of roads and footpaths to enable private and public transport across the City.

Works are scheduled through a number of programs, including:

Road Rehabilitation Program – Council spends about \$7.8M per year to upgrade about 60 roads that have fallen below acceptable service levels.

Footpath Replacement Program – Each year Council upgrades footpaths in about 30 locations at a cost of about \$330,000

New Footpath Construction Program – This program is progressing Council's goal to provide a footpath to at least one side of every street in the urban areas of the City. It has a budget of about \$780,000 per year which funds approximately 7 km of new footpaths in about 35 locations.

RMS 3X3 Grant for Regional Roads Program – The Roads & Maritime Service provides grant funding under the Regional Road Block Grant for Council to undertake rehabilitation of regional roads in the City. Funds of about \$137,000 are provided to one priority project each year.

Roads to Recovery Program – The Federal Government provides grant funding under this program of about \$800,000 each year to upgrade roads that are below acceptable service levels.

RMS Repair of Regional Roads Program – The RMS and Council each contribute \$300,000 per year for the rehabilitation of regional roads.

Roads Kerbs & Gutter – An additional \$1.1M will be spent in 2015-16 on reconstruction works at 43 locations.

Footpath Connections – An additional \$100,000 will be spent in 2015-16 on connecting existing footpaths

In addition to the planned expenditure mentioned above, Council has an annual expenditure of about -

- \$4.5 million each year on maintenance and repairs of its roads and footpaths, including potholes
- \$3.5 million on street lighting
- \$100,000 on bus shelters and bus stops (Upgrading existing bus stops to meet DDA requirements - the works include construction of concrete pad and installation of tactile indicators) 90 concrete pads have been constructed and tactile indicators have been programmed for installation within this financial year
- \$243,000 on street signs
- \$137,000 on kerb and gutters

COUNCIL COMMUNITY BUSES

Council's Community Bus Program provides affordable and accessible transport for community groups that operate and are based within the Fairfield Local Government Area. Council has three 21 seater community buses.

The buses are available for hire to community-based organisations, schools, sporting associations and government departments. The buses can be used for activities that benefit residents who would not otherwise have had access to transport.

OTHER COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Council also actively looks for grant funding to expand its regular annual programs.

Cycleway Program – This program focuses on providing off-road shared paths for cyclists and pedestrians. Council has allocated \$100,000 in each of the 4 years since 2012-13 to match grant funding from the RMS for a shared use cycleway program. As part of this program, small bridges have been built across Green Valley Creek at Canley Vale Road and Swager Place, Canley Heights to assist cyclists and pedestrians. Also,

off-road cycleways have been built along Orphan Creek, Green Valley Creek, and from Orphan School Creek via Swager Place to Canley Vale Road, Canley Heights.

In 2015 Council received grant funding from the Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan – Local Roads (associated with planning for the proposed Badgerys Creek Airport) to undertake upgrades along Wetherill St (\$5.23M) and upgrades to intersections along the Cumberland Highway (\$5.42M) during 2015-16. Further grant applications will be submitted as subsequent rounds are announced.

Council also prepares submissions and advocates to the State and Federal Governments on public transport issues and priorities for the community, including

- Submission on the Draft NSW Transport Advocacy Masterplan
- Input to the road network layout for the Erskine Park Southern Link Road
- Requests to the Minister for Transport to allow amendment of the free commuter service to pick up residents between Fairfield Showground and Fairfield Railway Station
- Requests to the Minister for Transport to establish a commuter car park at Cabramatta

QUESTIONS FOR FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

Future population growth, and specifically an ageing community, will put more pressure on the need to improve public transport. The proposed Badgerys Creek Airport and the development of the Western Sydney Employment Area will also generate different public transport demands.

We all need more information about the community's priorities for better public transport to help advocate for the right improvements and implement the right projects. Feedback from the community will be included in the next update of the Fairfield City Plan.

Questions about public transport -

- **How often and why do you use public transport?**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> 5 or more days a week | <input type="radio"/> To go to work |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 or 3 times a week | <input type="radio"/> To go to school/TAFE etc |
| <input type="radio"/> Once a week | <input type="radio"/> To go shopping |
| <input type="radio"/> Once a month | <input type="radio"/> To go to sport or other recreation activity |
| <input type="radio"/> Never | <input type="radio"/> To visit friends |

Other/Comments -----

- **What is the main barrier that prevents you from using public transport?**

- cost
- poor connections between trains and buses
- lack of services where I live and/or where I want to go
- timetable issues
- accessibility problems at stations or using buses etc
- lack of commuter parking near stations

Other/ Comments -----

- **What are your top 3 improvements for public transport?**

- 1.-----
- 2.-----
- 3.-----

REFERENCES

For more information on the issues raised in this paper -

City Connect Bus Service

<http://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/default.asp?iDocID=6681&iNavCatID=6&iSubCatID=72>

Council's 2013-2017 Delivery Program

<http://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/default.asp?iDocID=10835&iNavCatID=47&iSubCatID=3478>

Council's 2015-16 Operational Plan

http://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/upload/file/2015-2016_Operational_Plan_FINAL.pdf