

Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 (Burleigh Heads to Coolangatta)

July 2021

Traffic and transport

Factsheet



Artist's impression: Gold Coast Highway, Tugun

Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 will deliver a 13km extension south of the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3, linking Burleigh Heads to Coolangatta, via the Gold Coast Airport. The Queensland Government has committed \$1.5 million to undertake the *Gold Coast Highway (Tugun to Coolangatta) Multi-modal Corridor Study*. A further \$5 million jointly funded by Queensland Government and City of Gold Coast has been committed to undertake a Preliminary Business Case for Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 from Burleigh Heads to Coolangatta, via the Gold Coast Airport.



The Gold Coast's population is set to grow to more than 900,000 by 2041, with 80% of this growth expected to occur in existing urban areas with the majority of growth expected in existing centres and the urban core. (Source: ShapingSEQ Regional Plan 2017)

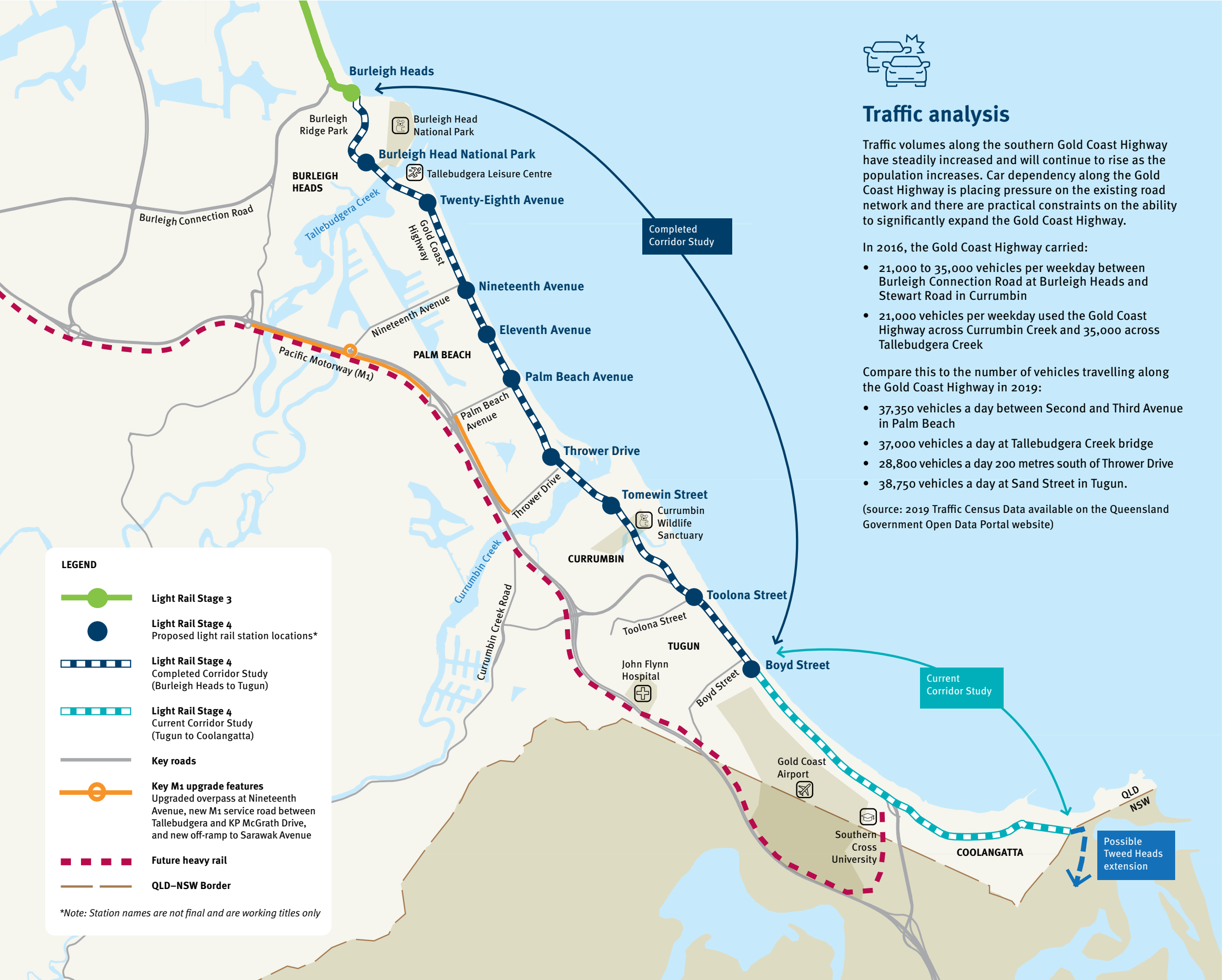
Expanding public transport

- Approximately 88% of all trips on the Gold Coast are by private vehicle resulting in significant road congestion and poor journey reliability (Source: Gold Coast City Transport Strategy 2031).
- In April 2020 (at the height of COVID-19), light rail patronage numbers dropped as low as 140,000 trips per month (84.5% reduction). However, in July 2020 patronage numbers rose to over 420,000 trips per month (Source: TransLink ticketing data).
- The number of people using public transport on the Gold Coast continues to grow. Since Stage 2 opened in 2017, there has been a 61.8% increase in average number of trips being taken per day during the period of 2014 to 2019 (See Figure 1).
- Since 2014, 55 million passengers have travelled on the Gold Coast light rail (Source: TransLink ticketing data).
- Pre-COVID-19, overall public transport use on the Gold Coast has increased by 50% since the introduction of light rail in 2014. (Source: TransLink ticketing data).

Figure 1: Average number of light rail trips per day.



(Source: City of Gold Coast, *Light Rail Corridor 2019 Status Report*).



Traffic analysis

Traffic volumes along the southern Gold Coast Highway have steadily increased and will continue to rise as the population increases. Car dependency along the Gold Coast Highway is placing pressure on the existing road network and there are practical constraints on the ability to significantly expand the Gold Coast Highway.

In 2016, the Gold Coast Highway carried:

- 21,000 to 35,000 vehicles per weekday between Burleigh Connection Road at Burleigh Heads and Stewart Road in Currumbin
- 21,000 vehicles per weekday used the Gold Coast Highway across Currumbin Creek and 35,000 across Tallebudgera Creek

Compare this to the number of vehicles travelling along the Gold Coast Highway in 2019:

- 37,350 vehicles a day between Second and Third Avenue in Palm Beach
- 37,000 vehicles a day at Tallebudgera Creek bridge
- 28,800 vehicles a day 200 metres south of Thrower Drive
- 38,750 vehicles a day at Sand Street in Tugun.

(source: 2019 Traffic Census Data available on the Queensland Government Open Data Portal website)



Delivering benefits

The Gold Coast Highway and the Pacific Motorway M1 perform key north to south road functions for the southern Gold Coast.

The *Gold Coast Highway (Burleigh Heads to Tugun) Multi-modal Corridor Study* confirmed that the M1 (Varsity Lakes to Tugun) upgrade will significantly improve accessibility to and from Palm Beach once complete.

It will provide through traffic with a viable alternative, reducing demand on the Gold Coast Highway. This provides an opportunity to redesign the Gold Coast Highway as a more pedestrian friendly corridor with multiple alternatives to car dependency.

The corridor study identified that due to the redistribution of traffic off the Gold Coast Highway to the M1, there is the opportunity for some sections of the Gold Coast Highway to be reduced from four lanes to two lanes, without detrimental impacts on travel time and traffic capacity.



Heavy rail extension

Delivering a city-wide, integrated, high-frequency public transport network requires multiple forms of transport. This helps to keep our city moving safely and efficiently. Preserving the heavy rail corridor, adjacent to the M1, for a future extension will ensure longer regional trips are planned and catered for in years to come. The heavy rail corridor can only accommodate one form of rail.



Parking

Parking plays a significant role in the current transport network on the southern Gold Coast. Community feedback will be used to inform planning to ensure parking along the light rail corridor continues to meet the needs of the community while supporting a more sustainable, multi-modal approach to travel.

Opportunities for urban design

A large part of planning for future transport demands includes identifying opportunities to innovate and improve community spaces through urban design. The *Gold Coast Highway (Burleigh Heads to Tugun) Multi-modal Corridor Study* identified a number of opportunities for urban treatments including:

- transforming existing village hubs in Palm Beach and Tugun into pedestrian friendly boulevards
- developing active transport networks to embrace modes of transport beyond the car.



Project timeline



Get involved and have your say

The Department of Transport and Main Roads will be consulting on the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 planning from mid-2021 to mid-2022.

We would like to hear your views and find out what is important to you. You are invited to participate in our community consultation program to find out more about planning for the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 and provide your input.

Provide your feedback online



Visit the interactive community consultation website to find out more about the project and provide your feedback.

Visit: www.tmr.qld.gov.au/gclr4



Talk to us in person

The project team will be holding community drop-in sessions to enable you to ask questions and provide face-to-face feedback on Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 planning.

Visit the website to find out drop-in session locations and times for the first round of consultation for the Burleigh Heads to Tugun section.

Visit: www.tmr.qld.gov.au/gclr4

Contact us

If you would like further information about Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 or to register for updates, please contact the project team:

Phone: 1800 316 365*
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*Check with your service provider for call costs.

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