

Top firms jostling to construct \$1b Metro

EXCLUSIVE
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BRISBANE'S \$1 billion new Metro public transport system is a step closer, with the City Council shortlisting three consortia to construct the massive infrastructure project.

The groups include leading Australian and overseas firms.

They are vying for a contract which includes a new tunnel under Adelaide St from North Quay to King George Square, a new underground station at the Cultural Centre and revamps of Melbourne and Grey streets, South Brisbane.

The shortlisted consortia are TransForm BNE, led by McConnell Dowell Constructors Pty Ltd; Brisbane Move, headed by the Australian wings of global giants Acciona and Arup; and METRO4BNE whose members include CPB Contractors Pty Ltd and Brisbane-based Seymour Whyte.

The final contract is expected to be awarded late next year.

Brisbane City Council has also shortlisted three firms to build the fleet of 60 Metro vehicles, carrying 150 passengers each.

They are Gold Coast-based bus builder and operator Transit Australia Group, HESS AG from Switzerland, and Daimler Truck and Bus Australia Pacific Pty Ltd. The winner will be announced in mid-2019.

"Brisbane Metro services will commence in 2023 and revolutionise the way we travel," Lord Mayor Graham Quirk (pictured) said.

"It will get residents home up to 50 per cent faster on a high-frequency service, reducing bus congestion in inner-city streets and ensuring our city continues to thrive as a great place to live, work and relax."

The \$944 million system will operate initially on 21km of existing busways. One line will run from Eight Mile Plains to Roma St and a second will run from the University of Queensland to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

The *Courier-Mail's* Future SEQ action plan calls for later extensions to Bracken Ridge, Springwood, Capalaba and the Centenary Suburbs.

The current council is committed to the expansion but 2020 Labor mayoral candidate Rod Harding is "sceptical" of the benefits, instead favouring a light rail system.