

Bus service improvements for Armidale

Why are there changes to the public transport network in Armidale?

- It's important that people have a public transport network that they want to use, so we asked the key stakeholders in Armidale about local bus services, the community's transport needs and challenges in getting around.
- Key stakeholders identified that the community wanted more reliable services and better connections to the places they want to visit, at the time they want to go.
- Using feedback we received from stakeholders, we've created a network with additional services to help customers get to and from work, Uni, Hospital, shopping, doctors' appointments, social and recreational places, for longer hours of the day and more days of the week.

What changes are being made to the Armidale bus routes?

31 additional weekly services year-round

97 additional weekly services Nov-Feb to create consistent year-round timetable

Route 480: Uralla to Armidale

- Additional return service mid-morning to early afternoon on Weekdays
- New return service mid-morning to early afternoon on Saturdays

Route 481: University of New England to Armidale via Niagara St

- Operate same timetable throughout the year, removing current split timetable (term-time and summer)
- In addition, extension of evening hours Monday to Thursday
- Two additional trips on Saturday afternoons to provide consistent headway

Route 482: University of New England to Armidale via Donnelly St

- Operate same timetable throughout the year, removing current split timetable (term-time and summer)

Route 485: University of New England to Armidale via Armidale Station

- Operate same timetable throughout the year, removing current split timetable (term-time and summer)

Route 483: Armidale to South Hill via Soudan Heights

- Extension of hours on Saturdays with 2 additional trips

Route 484: Armidale to North Hill via Duval HS

- Extension of hours on Saturday with 2 additional trips

Will any existing routes or times be impacted by this change?

- There will be no changes to any existing services that are in the current timetable. These changes are all additional to the current services.

Will there be changes to bus stop locations?

- Existing bus stops will be used for the new Armidale bus timetable.
- Customers can plan their trip at www.transportnsw.info

Are there alternative transport services for senior customers?

- Public transport is available for all community members to use.
- Senior customers are entitled to a discounted fare when traveling on the Armidale bus network. Customers can plan their trip at www.transportnsw.info.
- Alternatively, the local community transport operator provides services to recreational and shopping areas, medical and social services and social contact for people experiencing transport disadvantage, including:
 - people who are financially disadvantaged, isolated, lack public transport or have a mobility impairment
 - older people who are frail and their carers
 - people with disabilities and their carers
 - Tablelands Community Transport can be contacted on (02) 6778 6450.
- Vision impaired customers may be eligible for the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme - for further details, please visit <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/programs/point-to-point-transport/transport-disability-incentives-and-subsidies>

Will there be some changes to school services?

- No school services in Armidale have been changed as part of this initiative.

Will bus trips cost the same?

- Yes. There will be no changes to the cost of a bus trip.
- More information about regional bus fares is available at transportnsw.info/tickets-opal/regional-tickets-fares/regional-buses-fares.

Was there any consultation undertaken before introducing changes to the Armidale bus network?

Armidale Regional Council, the scheduled bus operator Edwards Coaches, Tablelands Community Transport, TAFE NSW Armidale, Northern NSW Local Health District, University of New England, and NSW TrainLink were all consulted in this process.

Some of the key themes captured from stakeholder feedback included:

- Coverage of bus routes
- Frequency and hours of services
- Year-round connectivity to the University of New England campus
- Connectivity to workplaces and employment opportunities
- Weekend services so people can access social activities, shopping, especially for outlying communities
- Evening services
- Better customer information
- Better integration between local and regional services

When will the community get opportunities to have their say and provide feedback?

Community feedback and inputs will be sought in the next phase (Holistic Planning) of service planning. During Holistic Planning, wider community and stakeholder consultation, led by a Human Centred Design approach, will be undertaken.

When will Armidale get Opal?

- At this stage there are no plans to expand Opal to regional bus networks outside of the greater Sydney area.
- Information about Opal and Opal updates is available at www.transportnsw.info/opal

Is the NSW Government making changes to bus networks in other cities too?

The improvements to the bus network across Armidale are part of the NSW Government's 16 Regional Cities Services Improvement Program which is an election commitment to improving public transport services throughout regional NSW.

Improvements to bus services in Armidale provide better connections to where customers need to go for work, schools, health, and social and recreational activities.

In December 2019, the Tweed benefited from more than 450 additional weekly bus services. In March 2020, Wagga Wagga benefited from more than 240 additional weekly bus services. Over the coming months planning will progress for other regional cities.

The cities included in the **16 Regional Cities Services Improvement Program** are:

- Wagga Wagga – complete
- Tweed Heads – complete
- Griffith – complete
- Bathurst – complete
- Orange – complete
- Dubbo – complete
- Parkes – complete
- Port Macquarie – complete
- Grafton – complete
- Nowra-Bomaderry – complete
- Queanbeyan – complete
- Coffs Harbour – complete
- Lismore – complete
- Albury/Wodonga – complete
- Tamworth – complete
- Armidale – complete

How will the bus service changes be implemented?

The program consists of two work streams: top priorities and holistic planning.

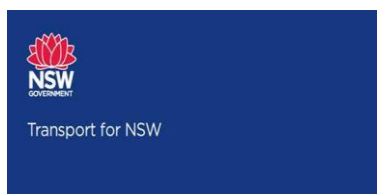
The Top Priorities phase will introduce some targeted early service improvements to the existing bus network. These will be delivered by mid to late 2020.

The Holistic Planning phase will include a review of the whole public transport network in the city, identifying the community's travel needs and gaps to help develop and deliver an integrated transport services plan.

The current changes to the Armidale bus network in October 2020 are the Top Priorities phase, which will be followed by the more extensive Holistic Planning phase.

How can I get additional information?

- For Transport information and to plan your trip visit transportnsw.info
- Information about the new bus network across Armidale, school services and fares is available at your local bus operator's webpage: Edwards Coaches (Website: <https://www.edwardscoaches.com.au/timetables.html>)
- For information about the program visit <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/programs/16-regional-cities-program> or call 1800 717 528



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