

**Submission
No 18**

**CRITICAL TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTING THE WESTERN
SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND WESTERN SYDNEY
AEROTROPOLIS**

Organisation: City of Parramatta Council

Date Received: 28 March 2024

Ms. Lynda Voltz, MP
Chair, Legislative Assembly Committee on
Transport and Infrastructure

Email:
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Our Reference F2018/00684

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28 March 2024

Dear Ms Voltz,

Submission by City of Parramatta Council - Inquiry into Critical transport infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis

In accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry, the City of Parramatta Council is pleased to offer this submission.

Council considers transport and access as highly important for our community and the growth of our city. Council's Community Strategic Plan (2018 -2036) identifies *Access: We can all take part and get to where we want to go*, as a key goal. This goal is supported with an action to advocate for public transport to connect Parramatta and its surrounds with the Greater Sydney region.

Council has advocated over the past decade for greater public transport connectivity between Parramatta and the Western Sydney International Airport (WSI) and Aerotropolis.

City of Parramatta's main objective for transport infrastructure for WSI and the Aerotropolis is an East-West rail link from the Airport and Aerotropolis to Parramatta and on to Sydney CBD. As identified in the *Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study Outcomes Report* (2018), this may be an extension of the Sydney Metro West line, currently under construction between Sydney and Westmead. A fast, frequent mass transit connection between the new airport and the three major centres of metropolitan Sydney will increase the competitiveness of WSI Airport, increase Western Sydney residents' access to jobs, and positively guide the development of metropolitan Sydney to support housing affordability, liveability and economic growth.

While planning and design for a future rail connection is undertaken, Council requests rapid bus services between Parramatta and WSI via Bonnyrigg.

Reducing travel time to support airport use

While Council understands the importance of connecting WSI and the Aerotropolis to Western Sydney, it contends that connectivity to all of Metropolitan Sydney, especially through the major central business districts in Parramatta and Sydney, is essential for the economic success of the airport. The East-West rail link creates the fastest connection between the airport and Aerotropolis and these commercial centres. Business travellers and tourists who view their destination as specific workplaces, or 'Sydney' in general will weigh the value of using WSI based on the quality and convenience of these connections. Accordingly, Council has advocated through many submissions to the State Government for extension of Metro West from Westmead to the Aerotropolis and WSI.

A benefit of extending Metro West is that it requires no transfers, a particular concern for airport users carrying luggage and visitors to an unfamiliar city. None of the other rail mass transit connections considered

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for the airport, including northern extension to Metro Northwest in Tallawong and southern and southeastern extensions Macarthur, Leppington or Glenfield, can deliver a fast, one seat trip to major centres and across metropolitan Sydney.

Increasing access to jobs

Council applauds the Committee for considering the impact of employment movements in Western and South-western suburbs of Sydney. The provision of adequate infrastructure to reach jobs is a key concern in Western Sydney. Geographic distribution of jobs, and well-planned infrastructure and services to reach them, can support a more distributed settlement pattern and take advantage of lower land costs outside traditional central cities. Re-distributing jobs beyond central cities can also improve quality of life by reducing commute lengths.

In 2018, Council commissioned an economic analysis of the opportunity provided by four new rail lines serving Parramatta (from Epping, Kogarah, Norwest and WSI) proposed in the State Government's Transport Strategy, Future Transport 2056. The draft report found that a heavy rail, mass transit network centred on Parramatta was needed to support the growth of the Central City, ease congestion, and recalibrate the jobs imbalance between Western and Eastern Sydney. Economic analysis conducted for the report found that the East-West link has the greatest impacts of all four rail options with regard to transport impacts including number of additional rail trips generated, reduced car travel kilometres, and travel time saved for motorists.

Council sees two differences between heavy rail extensions to the north and south and the East-West link to Parramatta:

- Mass transit extensions to the north and south will provide increased access from Western Sydney to future jobs at the Airport and Aerotropolis, while a connection to Parramatta will provide access from Western Sydney to jobs that are available now in Parramatta CBD and to future jobs at the Airport and Aerotropolis.
- Extensions to the north and south serve some areas that underserved by rail and public transport, while a connection to Parramatta provides an opportunity to connect large growth areas like Bonnyrigg and Prairiewood and suburbs surrounding the Aerotropolis that are very far from rail and will be very difficult to serve solely by bus.

These factors, access to jobs that are available in the medium term and extending rail access where it hasn't been, should be considered in evaluating transport options for WSI and the Aerotropolis.

Transformative Impact

New public transport connections usually provide benefits such as travel time savings and increased access. Connections between major centres like the Aerotropolis, Parramatta CBD and Sydney CBD, would provide additional benefits as fast rail connections can support synergistic growth of linked centres as markets for labour, products, services, and ideas can be developed concurrently and shared across centres. This synergistic impact can help centres grow faster and more successfully than if they had to grow on their own. City of Parramatta has supported successive plans to address Metropolitan Sydney's jobs imbalance (the preponderance of jobs in the east *versus* great residential growth in the west) by identification of Parramatta CBD and surrounding precincts like Westmead for increased commercial development and supporting infrastructure and services.

The benefits of the East-West links are significant – the opportunity to strengthen commercial centres, and shape development and travel patterns, with the potential to form the 'backbone' of the Sydney Transport network.

Interim Rapid Bus Services

Rapid bus from Parramatta to the airport was considered in earlier planning for the Airport. Current plans for a Western Sydney Rapid Bus network appear to connect only Penrith, Liverpool, and Campbelltown to WSI.

A rapid bus connection between Parramatta and growth areas expected to be served by an East-West Rail link discussed above should be established as soon as possible. The benefits of such a service will not match those accruing from rail provision, but it will help influence travel patterns as an interim measure while rail infrastructure is developed.

Council requests that any formal inquiry findings make reference to the City of Parramatta's position on the key issues critical to improving public transport connections to WSI and the Aerotropolis as follows:

- Prioritisation of extension of Sydney Metro West from Westmead to serve as the East-West rail link from the Airport and Aerotropolis to Parramatta and on to Sydney CBD.
- Establishment of Rapid Bus services between Parramatta and WSI via Bonnyrigg as an interim measure until the East-West rail link is delivered.

Council has a strong interest in the current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney and would be pleased to further contribute to the Inquiry. My office can be contacted on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



Gail Connolly PSM

Chief Executive Officer