

**Submission
No 137**

THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF SYDNEY'S NORTH-WEST SECTOR

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Submission to Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No 4, Transport needs of Sydney's North-West Sector.

Background

As an IT contractor living at Bella Vista, in the past 12 years I have had numerous contracts in the area between North Ryde and North Sydney, including Chatswood and St Leonards. My comments are based on the frustration of attempting to commute using public bus services.

High-tech employment in the area between North Ryde and North Sydney is very popular for North-West commuters: from an article in the Sydney Morning Herald (7 May, 2008):

The Government has calculated that 38 per cent of north-west passengers want to access the Macquarie Park corridor, as well as Chatswood to North Sydney.

<http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2008/05/06/1209839649452.html>

The Herald refers to the areas between North Ryde and North Sydney as the "global arc".

1. Poor routing

There are 0 bus routes from the North West T-way to the global arc. There is one peak hour service from Castle Hill to this area. Waiting times for a T-way bus connection on the M2 range between 30 minutes and 60 minutes for an outward journey, with no certainty that a connection will actually arrive.

Bus routes need to reflect the needs of commuters. Some city-bound services could easily detour through North Ryde and North Sydney, probably with little effect on their travel times.

2. Poor facilities for commuters

Only a few North West bus stops have a dedicated car park, and these few are not big enough. Other than the T-Way, almost no bus stops have a shelter. The popular Baulkham Hills Exchange bus stop for M2 commuters has neither shelter nor car park, despite having hundreds of commuters every day (the waiting queue often holds 100+ people).

There should be many more all-day car parks and bus shelters.

3. Express buses stuck in traffic

(a) The North West T-way provides a fast bus corridor, as does the dedicated bus lane on the M2. However, they are not connected. The 5 km trip between them forces buses to compete with normal gridlocked peak hour traffic. When working at North Ryde I commute by bicycle and my speed over this segment greatly exceeds all vehicles including buses.

There is sufficient space on the M2 roadway to construct dedicated bus lanes between Baulkham Hills and the T-Way.

(b) The M2 exit ramp to Epping station is greatly under used. Many more buses could use this, especially when the Epping-Chatswood rail link opens, thus removing the need for buses to continue through the M2 tunnel and on to Lane Cove without the benefit of a bus lane.

Combining (a) and (b) would provide an express bus route from Rouse Hill to Epping Station, and then by rail to the global arc. Most of the infrastructure is already in place.