

Submission  
No 152

## **THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF SYDNEY'S NORTH-WEST SECTOR**

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The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir / Madam

#### **TRANSPORT NEEDS OF SYDNEY'S NORTH-WEST SECTOR**

North Sydney Council at its meeting on the 7 October 2008 resolved to make a submission to the GPSC4 Inquiry into the Transport Needs of Sydney's North-West Sector. Council resolved:

**THAT** Council's recognises the importance of the North-West Metro Line but believes the first priority should be the duplication of the line between St Leonards and the City to provide much needed additional capacity on the North Shore Line.

**THAT** Council hold discussions with NSROC regarding the North Shore Line before making any submissions to the State Government.

**THAT** Council urge the State Government to implement an integrated rail/ metro transport system to the North-West area of Sydney and that this be funded as a key transport priority.

**THAT** Council urge the State Government to increase its funding commitment to the upgrading of existing public transport systems and the construction of new public transport services throughout Sydney.

**THAT** the Mayor forward the submission outlined in the report to the Legislative Council's Inquiry into the Transport Needs of Sydney's North-West Sector.

I have attached North Sydney Council's submission. I appreciate the Committee's consideration of this report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Genia McCaffery', written over a large, faint watermark of the same signature.

Genia McCaffery  
**MAYOR**

Transport is essential for connecting communities and businesses. However, travel has environmental and other costs: it consumes significant amounts of non-renewable resources specially fossil fuels, and produces air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Transport also has noise, visual and other impacts on the urban environment and leads to traffic congestion and accidents. There are important linkages between transport use, air pollution and health. Increasing use of public transport, walking and cycling are likely to have a dual benefit: reducing air pollution as well as factors for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and osteoporosis.

An increased reliance on private cars by the population results in greater infrastructure requirements (roads and parking), Other economic costs associated with motor vehicles include accidents, congestion, noise, costs from human health, pollution control and repair, and the costs of having to manage climate change in the future. Reductions in the level of motor vehicle use can free up financial, energy and land resources for other activities.

Over the past few decades, the State Government has concentrated on the expansion of the road network, and at the same time NSW has seen rapid decreases in the reliability, service and safety of the existing public transport network and insufficient funding for new services.

Since the 1980s the State Governments have been pushing the build, own, operate and transfer public-private partnership that has seen a number of large tollway road infrastructure projects built such as the Cross City Tunnel and the Lane Cove Tunnel Project. This capacity to tap into new sources of finance to fund road building increases the pressure on the State Government to give in to the roads lobby and defer adequate transport planning which meets the needs of the existing and future populations, particularly within urban areas. If the large scale urban growth envisaged in the Metro Strategy takes place through urban consolidation, despite enormous spending on road infrastructure, these systems will essentially fail.

In contrast funding for public transport, which has the potential to meet the expanding population, is woefully inadequate.

Without improvements to the public transport system and travel demand measures, additional road capacity provided by major road infrastructure will ultimately be taken up and will lead to further congestion downstream. Once road capacity has been improved and congestion and travel times reduced there will be less incentive for people to change their mode of travel to public transport.

In addition to public transport, there is a need to take cycling and walking as modes of transport more seriously.

Currently public transport users subsidise private motor vehicle usage, whether this is measured in real dollar terms or time. Consideration needs to be given to financially addressing this inequality, as it has been done in some international cities such as London. Beyond a certain level of traffic, every vehicle entering a road space imposes congestion costs on *all* other vehicles using that road. To explain, say it would take 30 minutes to drive from A to B, or 60 minutes on the train. If all or even some of those people travelling on the train were to decide to drive, the congestion on the

roads would increase, and it may now take 45 minutes to drive from A to B. Conversely, if some of the motorists were to catch the train, then congestion would be reduced on the roadways and it may now take 15 minutes to drive from A to B.

As road usage approaches the capacity of a road, additional vehicles slow traffic significantly and fuel consumption is around twice that under free-flow conditions

The bus lane on the harbour bridge transports 13,000 people per hour. One car lane on the harbour bridge transports 1,600 people per hour. Therefore one bus lane carries more people per hour than all seven general traffic lanes combined.

The most effective way to address this inequality and to bring about behavioural change in motorists is a carrot-and-stick approach. That is, to not only improve public transport services, but also to ensure equity in the way tolls and parking levies are implemented on motorists using the road network. This money could then be spent on building faster, regular, more efficient, more reliable and clean public transport.

Further, if triple bottom line analysis was undertaken, the environmental and health cost imposed by private motor vehicles users on the community as a whole is unsustainable when compared with the lesser impact of public transport and active transport usage.

### **North Sydney Council Policy**

The North Sydney 2020 Vision has a section on transport issues. The policy states, “for a reliable, and accessible and sustainable transport system, we will:

- Promote equity of access to public and community transport
- Incorporate true environmental and social costs in our transport planning
- Pursue improvement and expansion of sustainable transport options
- Encourage the use of alternative modes of transport to the private car”

On the 10 April 2006 the previous Council adopted the following position regarding Transport Strategies and Public Transport Funding:

**THAT** Council support the following transport strategies:

- Improving the equity of private motor vehicle transportation through standardised tolling (cost per kilometer) for existing and new toll roads, the introduction of demand management tolling for toll roads, the introduction of E-tags only on the Harbour Bridge and Tunnel, that cashless tolls be introduced on all toll roads, abolition of the two-way toll charged by taxis on the Harbour Bridge and Tunnel, a standardised parking levy for medium and large commercial centres across the Sydney metropolitan area and greater equity with polluter pays policies.
- The income raised from private motor vehicle transportation fees be transferred directly to the upgrading of existing public transport systems and the construction of new public transport services.

These various strategies must be combined with effective integrated land use planning.

### **North-West Transport**

North Sydney is a major employment centre in Sydney with a working population of 60,000. A significant proportion of these people working in North Sydney come from the North-West area. Residents from the North-West would also come to North Sydney to visit the various attractions in the area.

Given this North Sydney Council and its residents have a large interest in seeing adequate funding being spent on public transport facilities to the North-West area. This provides an essential alternative to the private motor vehicle and all the associated negative impacts. Public transport from the North-West area, for commuters and visitors to North Sydney, will reduce congestion and the demand for parking.

The particular aspects of the North-West transport proposals which are of interest to North Sydney are:

- The North-West rail/ metro transport system is a key transport priority for Sydney. However, there is also a general need for the State Government to increase its funding commitment to the upgrading of existing public transport systems and the construction of new public transport services throughout Sydney.
- It is essential that there be easy ticketing and pedestrian access links between the new North-West transport system and the existing CityRail network at the various nodes where these services meet. Of particular importance are the modal links at Epping, into the Epping to Chatswood train line under construction, and the links at Wynyard train station then onto the North Shore line.

At the time of preparing this report the results of the State Government's mini-budget due imminently have not been released. It is unknown what the impact of this mini-budget will have on the proposed North-West Metro Link.