

**Submission
No 153**

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

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General Purpose Standing Committee No 4
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Chairperson - J Gardiner.

Please accept my submission concerning the transport and infrastructure in the North-West Sydney. ie - the requirements - plans - future roads - rail and bus links - plus funding of the North-West Metro system.

(1) - REQUIREMENTS - vital to the future and the financial stability of the North-West is the need to have an effective - reliable transport service capable of carrying sufficient numbers of passengers to and from their homes and work destinations. The need for such a transport system is well overdue as seen by the clogged roads that people must survive every day they have to attend work or go about their personal business. A Public Transport system would be an advantage in the respect of the cost to the travelling public. One only has to compare the difference in the cost of the Private Buses that are used in the North-West to the cost of the Public Transport provided for the rest of Sydney to realise that the North-West is at a financial disadvantage and has been for too many years.

ie - Hills Shire Times - October 7, 2008, page 5 - "Hills residents have to resort to paying \$4292 per year in tolls, based on 251 working days per year, or lining up for hours every morning and evening to pay \$2413 a year to cram onto overloaded M2 buses". "Meanwhile other suburbs pay up to \$1350 per year, and as little as \$125 per year, for the same journey, taking advantage of a Government's Cash-back scheme on the M4 and M5 motorways - a scheme not available on the M2." "They also have the option of taking the train".

Surely the paragraph above from the Hills Shire Times is an indication of deliberate financial discrimination against the residents of the North-West sector.

(2) - PLANS - The NSW Government enjoys forming committees to discuss the latest need in the guise of obtaining the best outcome for a problem they find difficult to handle. For too many years they have ignored the desperate need for Public transport in the North-West sector. Now that the roads are clogged, housing estates are being built, the Rouse Hill shopping centre plus a future University are adding to the disaster that has been allowed to build up, the Government has been forced to face the reality of the desperate need of the residents of the North-West. There is an essential need for a professional approach to the planning that is needed to ease the major problems that are associated with the North-West. There cannot be excuses "of why it is too difficult to fix properly", land was bought - land was going to be bought - land privately owned placed on hold leaving the owner's not knowing what they could do about the Government's dithering about, "would they or wouldn't they be buying the land that was going to be used for a rail system. Planning must be based on the best possible results to benefit the residents of the North-West who would gladly leave their vehicles at home if they had decent different forms of public transport. Will the plans for the Metro system take into account that there will be a need for safe parking areas for the vehicles and for the people who leave their vehicles in the parking areas along the Metro route? Will the Metro system be capable of carrying the amount of people who choose to use the system ? or will it also be like the M2 bus system that is overcrowded and hard to find let alone get on? Planning should not concentrate solely on a Metro system, there is a need for heavy rail that can move large numbers of patrons and once installed can provide for future enlargement of the residential suburbs along Windsor Road. There is no advantage for the North-West residents if the Metro system planning only follows the "easy quick" solution that will leave too many drivers still having to use their cars simply because the system ran too far away from their destination. I would advise those who will draw up the plans for the Metro system to travel along Windsor Road - Old Windsor Road - Pennant Hills Road Old Northern Road, on a normal peak hour week day and experience what residents of the North-West have had to live with. Unfortunately the heavy traffic continues for most of the day added to by heavy vehicles.

(3) - FUTURE ROADS - The NSW Labor Government points to the amount of money spent on upgrading Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road. They are to be congratulated on the effort they took to perform that work even though it was the public outcry with the help of the North-West Liberal Members of Parliament that finally shamed them into taking the steps to rectify the neglect of both those major roads leading into a major city such as Parramatta.

Travelling to Windsor via those two roads every week during peak periods has made us very much aware that Windsor Road should have been upgraded to three lanes right through to Windsor. Even the Windsor by-pass though a definite advantage was made "single lane" each direction. Once again "short-sighted" planning with no understanding of the usage both roads handle. The money that should have been spent on Windsor Road and the by-pass seems to have been spent on the "bicycle pathway" that during peak hour travelling is minus riders. They prefer to ride on the road with the traffic, week-ends you might actually see a few bike riders on the bicycle pathway. It can only be asked if the million ? or whatever the cost of the bicycle lane was, worth it. To the bumper to bumper car traveller NO. Future roads must be planned with the foresight to cater for greater numbers of vehicle travel, not based on the shortsighted approach of today's needs and that some unforeseen miracle will occur and people will leave their vehicles at home. Future roads must be planned with the understanding that housing estates will not stop at Rouse Hill housing does occur after that suburb and will continue to expand closer to Windsor in the years ahead.

(4) - RAIL and BUS LINKS - There is a rail line to Windsor then on to Richmond, a single line points to the inability of a Government to look forward and does not have the welfare of the NSW public that have their homes in the Windsor Richmond and surrounding areas. It also points to the fact that the NSW Government has no idea of the extent of the population in those areas and the infrastructure needs of that area.

To gain access to the rail line residents along the Windsor Road corridor must cut across from Windsor Road to the rail stations, this is not always possible or practical. There is a need for heavy rail to follow Windsor Road so relieving Windsor Road of the traffic problems that now occur on that road.

BUS LINKS - to what ? The Government in their wisdom ? built the transit bus lanes along Windsor Road - Rouse Hill - through to Westmead then Parramatta. For some reason the Government believes housing stops at Rouse Hill. Once again no thoughts concerning future growth. Parking sites at special places along Windsor Road need to be policed as vehicles have been vandalised as reported in local newspapers. The bus lane has been provided at great cost, why then when travelling in peak traffic times are there buses on Old Windsor Road? The provision of the bus transit lane or the provision of the Metro system, does not or will not provide safe and reliable 'on time' transport. The travelling public need to know they will have reliable transport and the vehicle they leave sitting in a parking lot will not be broken into or vandalised. If the Government plans on providing desperately needed transport for the North-West sector they also need to provide police to monitor both transport and parking facilities.

(5) - FUNDING of the NORTH- WEST METRO system. - I believe the residents of the North-West sector have for years paid with their taxes - with the tolls forced upon them ie - the manipulating of Epping Road - with the cost of fuel they use on clogged roads - with the hours they spend sitting -waiting for the traffic to move. Even for the years of waiting for a rail line that is double tracked to Windsor, and now the Metro system that will only be half the distance needed and will go "across country" instead direct to where it is needed.

As stated earlier - there is no reimbursement of tolls for the residents of the North-West as provided for those who have chosen to live in the other sectors around the CBD. If a person was cynical they could believe that the reimbursement was dependant upon an areas voting choices, if that was not the case surely the Government would compensate the residents of the North-West sector with a transport system comparable with the transport systems provided for other sectors.

Funding for the transport system - badly needed - could start with the monies provided to the mardi-gras plus the funds provided for the presence of the NSW Police free of charge - for the cleaning up of the rubbish left in the streets of the CBD. Just a start on where the money should come from.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Patricia Wagstaff.
