

Submission
No 56

**INQUIRY INTO CURRENT AND FUTURE PUBLIC
TRANSPORT NEEDS IN WESTERN SYDNEY**

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Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

18 September 2023

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Legislative Council
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Sydney NSW 2000

Submission – Parliamentary inquiry into current and future transport needs in Western Sydney

Dear Ms Faehrmann,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a formal submission on the inquiry into current and future transport needs in Western Sydney.

I support the government and the important role it plays in establishing a strategic vision for our growing metropolis, and the importance of transport infrastructure in achieving this. The inquiry into current and future transport needs marks an important milestone, providing the basis to guide future transport infrastructure funding and planning, particularly as new region plans prepared by the Greater Cities Commission (GCC) are expected to be released in coming months.

I believe it is critical that the future planning for Western Sydney happens now so that infrastructure planning is coordinated and aligned to housing delivery, especially as we are in the midst of a housing supply and affordability crisis. Continued transport planning to support the significant investment currently happening in and around the Western Sydney International (Nancy Bird Walton) Airport (WSIA) is urgently needed to accommodate the anticipated population growth.

I strongly encourage the inquiry to consider the comments and recommendations below, and the ways in which the upcoming Regional Plans can deliver global competitiveness and increased local liveability for Western Sydney. The following points are considered critical to encourage the positive and effective implementation of thorough transport planning in Western Sydney.

These recommendations are explored on the following pages.

(a) availability and accessibility of public transport services across Western Sydney, the adequacy of connectivity between public transport hubs and commercial hubs and any gaps in services

The transport accessibility in Western Sydney is significantly more limited when compared to eastern and central parts of the city. There is a lack of frequent services between each of the

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significant centres in Western Sydney, resulting in Western Sydney being disconnected from Western Sydney.

The T5 Cumberland line does not adequately service the major population centres of Campbelltown, Liverpool, Parramatta, Blacktown and Penrith. Infrequent service frequency (1 train every 30 minutes) and poor capacity (4 car carriage service in the peak) discourage public transport uptake and is resulting in severely overcrowded services in peak hour.

Being the only radial rail line that does not go into the Sydney CBD, the T5 line is critical component of public transport infrastructure in Western Sydney. However, on weekends, during track work and when severe weather hits, the T5 line is always the first line out of action. There is inadequate service reliability on the T5 line in Western Sydney and this needs to be improved to encourage greater public transport uptake.

Recommendation A1

Provide increased frequency in train services between Campbelltown and Liverpool to Parramatta, Blacktown and Penrith.

The provision of frequent, reliable, and safe transport after hours is critical to developing a vibrant night-time economy. It encourages people to not only make essential trips, but to go out of their way to explore Greater Sydney and experience what the city has to offer. Limited public transport options reduce the accessibility to residents to contribute to the local economy, while also increasing the potential for anti-social behaviour within late night areas. As outlined in the 24 Hour Sydney Strategy:

“A recent survey of Greater Sydney residents conducted by The Greater Sydney Commission found that transport is a significant factor in the late night economy, with 72 percent of respondents saying that they would like more late night public transport options and 63 per cent indicating that they would go out more often if they had 24-hour public transport options”

As a regular collaborator and government leader, the government has the potential to deliver positive change to 24-hour transport options across Western Sydney.

Faster rail connections in the Sydney region and to the surrounding major regional centres are much needed. This also needs to be addressed in the inquiry. The GCC discussion paper highlighted the critical need for a rapid and frequent connection between Western Sydney, Sydney CBD, Newcastle and Wollongong. Faster rail does not exist in isolation and an integrated public and active transport strategy should be developed alongside for Western Sydney.

Recommendation A2

Continue Planning and Investment into Fast Rail solutions for Western Sydney and broader NSW.

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(b) current and anticipated levels of demand for public transport services and the public transport requirements to meet this demand

There needs to be a strong awareness that a lot of jobs are going to be located in Western Sydney. With the Western Sydney Employment Area (WSEA), Aerotropolis and growth areas continuing to grow, there is going to be increased jobs being located away from the existing transport networks.

The network needs to grow in accordance with the location of jobs but also the associated population growth.

Recommendation B1

Future strategic transport planning AND delivery is aligned with strategic rezonings and government identified jobs and homes precincts

(c) changing nature of public transport needs due to shifting demographics, new suburbs, planned infrastructure and increased density

Public transport is adjusting, and the nature of our cities are adjusting. Not everyone is commuting into the CBD. There needs to be adjustments away from the CBD and adopt smaller urban centres and suburbs to better accommodate density and bring everything closer together.

Recommendation C1

The GCC Strategic Plans and TfNSW Future Transport Strategies must address the changing nature of the urban fabric and discuss implementation measures in their strategic plans.

(d) social, economic and planning impacts of vehicle dependency and poorly integrated public transport

Urban sprawl is contributing to increased private vehicle dependency. We need strong integrated land use and transport planning to encourage more dense urban forms and to release the 15 / 30-minute city visions that are being adopted worldwide.

Recommendation D1

Ensure integrated strategic land use planning and transport planning are adopted in the NSW Planning system

(e) affordability compared with other areas of Greater Sydney and New South Wales and relative to means

Affordability of transport should definitely be considered in terms of toll pricing reform. Noting that there is a Toll inquiry currently happening; there must be broader reform to better acknowledge the increased costs associated with driving in Western Sydney.

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Whilst a price on driving is needed to distribute demand and reflect the true cost that driving incurs on the broader urban fabric, it must be balanced and reflect the poor quality, accessibility and frequency of PT in Western Sydney.

The use of CBD cordon charges, similar to London and other major cities worldwide should also be investigated for Parramatta, Penrith, Liverpool, Campbelltown, and Blacktown. This would encourage public transport usage. However, this would need to be supported by better PT options, frequencies and service types.

Recommendation E1

Implement broader road toll pricing reform for motorways

Recommendation E2

Investigate the potential for CBD Cordon Prices in major centres to incentivise PT uptake

(f) role of public transport and future transport technologies to reduce car dependency in Western Sydney, including barriers to improving public transport services

(g) role of the public and private sector, including local government and the use of innovative funding models, such as transit oriented development and value capture mechanisms, in public transport provision

Value Capture must be investigated as the State continues its large investment into city shaping public transport projects. The value created by the government (which is the community!) must be captured and shared with the people of NSW and not landowners who have been lucky or opportunistic. A value capture system is needed to continue the investment into future transport projects. The Transport Project Component of the Housing and Productivity Contribution is a great start, but should be expanded and increased.

Recommendation G1

Investigate and implement a broad Value Capture System for transport projects throughout Western Sydney

(h) staffing and future workforce planning, taking into account predicted service demand based on predicted population growth in Western Sydney.

Refer to criteria B.