

**Submission
No 110**

INQUIRY INTO DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSPORT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Organisation: Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.

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Action for Public Transport (N.S.W.) Inc.

P O Box K606
Haymarket NSW 1240
27 March 2024

Secretary
Portfolio Committee No. 7 - Planning and Environment
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney 2000
Submitted via inquiry website

Dear Secretary,

NSW Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 7

Inquiry into development of the Transport Oriented Development Program

Submission

Introduction

Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc. is a transport advocacy group which has been active in Sydney since 1974. We promote the interests of beneficiaries of public transport - passengers and the wider community alike.

We would be pleased to appear at hearings if desired.

Discussion

Under the term of reference **(r) any other related matters** we submit:

Communication of the policy

The 12-page document "Transport Oriented Development Program" dated December 2023 and available at <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/transport-oriented-development-program> is apparently intended to be the main vehicle for communicating the policy to the public.

We are perplexed by the chosen name "transport oriented development program". Is this some relation to transit oriented development? Transit oriented development has been studied internationally for decades. Transit is an American term corresponding to our usage "public transport". The term "transit" is not in common use in Australia. However, the phrase "transit oriented development" is universally understood in the American sense of the word "transit".

The document does not help. On page 3 it says

This is a well-understood model of urban growth that is commonly referred to as 'transport-oriented development', and it has been a key feature of strategic planning in NSW and around the world for many years.

The term used overseas, in both USA and UK, is transit-oriented development. Perhaps the NSW program should be called "public transport oriented development" if Americanisms are frowned upon.

In Australia, transport oriented development might mean development arranged around any mode of transport. It would include, for instance, service areas along rural highways. But that's obviously not what the subject program refers to.

Confusingly, page 11 of the document refers in a heading to "transit hubs". Perhaps that is due to an error.

Some of the program reportedly involves development around retail areas that do not have worthwhile public transport, such as St Ives. The document should explain the relation between the two types of development.

Need good maps

Expressions such as "within 400 metres of a railway station" deserve careful definition, especially when sudden changes in land values are likely. We asked for a map from one of the councils involved in recent announcements. A council official said there were no detailed maps down to the level of particular properties.

Sales talk

We are struck by the number of times the word "vibrant" and references to "high quality homes" appear in the document. Also, if one of the objectives is to promote cycling, then why isn't the absence of steep hills one of the criteria for selecting development areas?

Conclusion

We think the transport oriented development program seems to have been assembled hastily, with too much attention to rhetoric and too little attention to details. However, it makes more sense than, for instance, decisions of former governments to open areas at Gwandalan and Catherine Hill Bay for development.

Recommendations

We suggest that a second edition of Transport Oriented Development Program is warranted, with attention given to the above matters.

Jim Donovan
Secretary
Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.