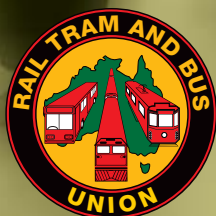




# Moving On

The RTBU's Public Transport Blueprint for Sydney



# A 10 point plan for a sustainable transport future

**While urban transport planning was once viewed as a solely technical activity to be executed by ‘value-free’ experts, it is now acknowledged that it is an inherently political activity because it influences the distribution of costs and benefits within societies.**

*(Kenworthy et al, 2005)*

This document summarises the Rail Tram and Bus Union's (RTBU) Transport Blueprint. The Blueprint recommends ten key policy changes that would help to deliver a sustainable transport future for Sydney. The full Blueprint (*Moving On: The RTBU's Public Transport Blueprint for Sydney*) is described in a longer policy paper available online.

Most of the recommendations outline fundamental structural changes needed to develop a sustainable public transport system rather than identifying specific transport initiatives. Current State and Federal Government planning and decision-making frameworks for transport in NSW hinder the transition to a sustainable public transport system. Framework focus on short-term planning governed by election cycles, without guiding principles or sufficient investment to permit long-term commitments. The recommendations in the Blueprint provide a framework to identify sustainable public transport policy initiatives consistent with the expectations of New South Wales taxpayers and transport users for public transport that is safe, accessible, efficient and effective.

The RTBU urges all political parties to consider and adopt these policy recommendations in advance of the NSW election in 2007. Without significant change, New South Wales' and Sydney's continued economic growth will be threatened and the negative impact on our community and the environment will be exacerbated by the growth of transport modes that are neither fuel-efficient nor socially equitable. Only long-term thinking supported by immediate action can deliver a public transport system that reflects Sydney's status as a world city.

## Current State and Federal Government planning and decision-making frameworks for transport in NSW hinder the transition to a sustainable public transport system.





Public transport must be appropriately priced, fast, efficient, close, reliable, frequent and safe.



# 1

## **Commit to a long-term legislated plan for a world-class public transport system in Sydney that provides a real alternative to car use.**

The history of transport planning in Sydney indicates a lack of long-term political commitment to the development of a public transport system which is capable of challenging increased car use as the only solution to transport challenges. To be attractive, public transport must be appropriately priced, fast, efficient, close, reliable, frequent and safe.

### **THE RTBU CALLS FOR**

- A legislated plan for the development of a world-class public transport system for Sydney incorporating clear and enshrined targets to reduce private vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) and increase public transport usage
- A clear VKT reduction plan to accompany the VKT target
- Firm targets for increased public transport accessibility, frequency and quality.

# 2

## **Commit continuous, annual and substantial State and Commonwealth funding to the development of a world-class transport system in Sydney.**

The development of a world class public transport system requires changes to both funding sources and funding priorities. Efficiency of funding allocation should be improved but additional resources also need to be found and applied to the reduction of reliance on private motor vehicles and increased support for public transport.

### **THE RTBU CALLS FOR**

- Commonwealth Government to allocate a proportion of fuel excise to support the development of public transport in major cities
- NSW Government to adopt an integrated resource planning approach to identify the most efficient allocation of resources
- NSW Government to identify and commit to additional funding mechanisms and to enshrine the chosen mechanisms in legislation.

# 3

## **Establish an independent NSW Transport Coordination Authority to oversee the development of a sustainable, world-class transport system for Sydney.**

Responsibility for transport planning is spread across numerous government departments and authorities and too much power rests with the Roads and Traffic Authority. Greater coordination is needed.

## THE RTBU CALLS FOR

- An independent NSW Transport Coordination Authority, which is:
- Modelled on the successful example of the Olympic Roads and Traffic Authority
- A statutory body, reporting to Parliament, with responsibility for transport planning and allocation of funds across all modes of transport
- Charged with the task of developing and implementing the plan to achieve a world-class sustainable public transport system.

## 4 Adopt principles of sustainable transport to provide a framework for the development of Sydney's transport system.

Sydney's existing transport system is not sustainable. It is characterised by poor access and poor service quality, health impacts, lack of integrated planning, inefficient land use, greenhouse gas emissions, reliance on fossil fuels and low economic efficiency. These characteristics arise from the ad hoc and haphazard approach adopted by governments of all persuasions in dealing with the challenge of high quality public transport provision across Sydney.

**THE RTBU CALLS FOR** a transport system that complies with principles of sustainable transport. See last page for sustainable transport principles.


## 5 Give high priority to initiatives that will improve transport equity in Sydney.

Sydney's public transport system is marked by geographical and social inequity. People living in older and wealthier parts of the city have a range of public transport options that include various combinations of heavy rail, light rail, ferries and buses.

People living in the outer urban rings of Sydney and new developments in the south western and north western corridors have few options other than to use private vehicles.

## THE RTBU CALLS FOR

- The extension of public transport options, particularly to western and south western Sydney
- Improved planning for the provision of public bus and light rail services as 'feeds' to the heavy rail network
- A review of the provision of public and community-based transport services with a view to improved integration of services to the transport disadvantaged with a specific focus on people with disabilities and people with mobility issues as a result of ageing
- Acceleration of the Metropolitan Rail Expansion Project
- A more equitable distribution of road tolls accompanied by incentives for public transport usage especially targeted at areas where toll roads dominate transport options.



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Sydney's public transport system is marked by geographical and social inequity.



Government needs to make better use of community transport assets that it funds to ensure these resources are not sitting idle and are providing the most effective services for the capital outlaid.



## 6 Establish citizen-driven transport planning processes at multiple levels to identify preferred targets and initiatives.

There have been few effective opportunities for citizens to participate in Sydney transport planning in a way that has a real influence on how public transport is provided.

### THE RTBU CALLS FOR

- The Transport Coordination Authority to establish authentic, participatory processes to guide transport planning at the metropolitan, regional and local levels.

## 7 Develop 'fit for purpose' public transport infrastructure with a heavy rail base at the metropolitan level, buses and light rail operating on a regional scale and more active use of Government provided transport assets at the local level.

Transport requirements change with spatial scale and transport responds to and influences land uses. This needs to be recognised in transport planning and mode selection. Further, the Government needs to make better use of community transport assets that it funds to ensure these resources are not sitting idle and are providing the most effective services for the capital outlaid. Local government is an active provider of local transport for special needs groups. These transport assets may be able to be managed to provide additional transport options for local areas.

### THE RTBU CALLS FOR

- Investment in heavy rail as the skeleton of the network (accelerate MREP, identify missing links in the network and put in place heavy rail to complete the metropolitan coverage)
- Investment in bus services and light rail to provide a finer network
- Investment in active transport options and the improved use of community transport assets at the local level.

## 8 Pursue and fund specific high-priority initiatives in the short-term while establishing the long-term plan.

There is a risk that the development of a long-term plan for the transport system will be used as an excuse to delay initiatives that are needed in the short-term.

### THE RTBU CALLS FOR

- Resumed planning of the Epping-Parramatta heavy rail link
- Electrification of the Southern Highlands rail line and the Kiama-Bomaderry rail line

- Overhaul of fare structures to take into account multi-modal trips and ensure that multi-modal tickets can be purchased across all existing and new public transport modes. There is no reason why existing computerised ticket sales systems should not be used as point of sale for multi-modal trips across NSW
- A comprehensive examination of new and existing light rail and bus proposals with a view to rapidly implementing several of the proposals with the highest merit
- A local trial of demand-responsive bus services integrated with community transport resources in an appropriate location.

## 9 Use appropriate planning and accountability measures to support the development and integration of new transport infrastructure.

In addition to infrastructure development, there is a need to develop planning and accountability measures to support the transition to a sustainable transport system.

### THE RTBU CALLS FOR

- Investigation of the application of emissions trading to transport in NSW
- Better public transport information services, for example the integration of public and private timetabling into the 131 500 service.

## 10 Use targeted programs to support the move from 'car preference travelling' to supporting a 'public transport culture'.

Initiatives to move people to public transport must be supported by innovative programs and incentives to move people towards using public transport.

### THE RTBU CALLS FOR

- Social marketing and education programs to promote public transport
- A public transport service that is fast, reliable, safe, comfortable and frequent – something that is both possible and desirable, as the 2000 Sydney Olympics demonstrated
- Programs with major trip generators – such as universities, hospitals and businesses – that can support sustainable transport options by combining cultural and infrastructure changes
- Development of incentives to encourage people to use public transport, for example, offering tax deductions or higher rebates for those who purchase six or twelve-monthly travel passes.



There is a need to develop planning and accountability measures to support the transition to a sustainable transport system.

# Ten Principles for Sustainable Transport

**Principle 1** People have a right of access to other people, places, goods, services and opportunities.

**Principle 2** Transport services that enable access should meet the community's expectation of a high standard of reliability and quality.

**Principle 3** Governments and transport planners and developers should be bound by a framework that ensures the equitable distribution of basic transportation resources to meet the needs of all people including men and women, young and old, the poor, the disabled and those living in outer suburban or rural areas.

**Principle 4** Transportation systems should be designed and operated in a way that protects and promotes the health (physical, mental and social well-being) and safety of all people, and enhances the quality of life in communities.

**Principle 5** Transport decision-makers have a responsibility to ensure that the transportation systems allow the opportunity for individuals to act to reduce their impacts on the natural environment.

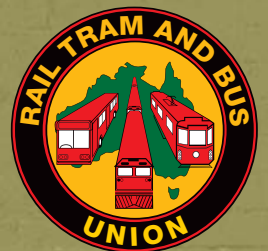
**Principle 6** Transportation decision-makers have a responsibility to pursue more integrated approaches to planning, delivery and use of public transport.

**Principle 7** Transport decision-making processes should support, encourage and provide resources for public participation.

**Principle 8** Transportation needs must be met within a framework which minimises the use of natural resources and land and reduces emissions that threaten public health and essential ecological processes.

**Principle 9** Transportation systems must maximise the use of, and return on, transport assets and resources through better planning and accountability measures, while maintaining their long-term sustainability.

**Principle 10** Transportation systems should be cost effective, now and in the future, and transportation decision-makers must move as expeditiously as possible towards fuller cost accounting, reflecting the true social, economic and environmental costs, in order to ensure that users pay an equitable share of costs.



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