

**Report to General Manager****Council**
Attachments:**SUBJECT:** Transport Strategies & Public Transport Funding – Position Statement**AUTHOR:** Cathy Edwards-Davis, Traffic Engineer, 10 April 2006**SUMMARY:**

Given the recent political, media and community interest in Public-Private Partnerships for major civil infrastructure projects and associated tolling, and the imminent opening of the Falcon Street ramps as part of the Lane Cove Tunnel Project, it is appropriate that Council outlines a position statement on transport strategies and public transport funding.

RECOMMENDATION:**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.

THAT the Mayor forward this report for the information of the NSW Premier and the Minister for Roads.**THAT** support for Council's position be sought from the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition.**Financial Implications**

There are no additional financial implications.

Signed _____

Endorsed by _____

Director of Engineering & Property Services

DETAIL

1. Executive Summary

Given the recent political, media and community interest in Public-Private Partnerships for major civil infrastructure projects and associated tolling, and the imminent opening of the Falcon Street ramps as part of the Lane Cove Tunnel Project, it is appropriate that Council outlines a position statement on transport strategies and public transport funding.

Transport is essential for connecting communities and businesses. However, travel has environmental, health and other costs. 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.

Currently public transport users subsidise private motor vehicle usage, whether this is measured in real dollar terms or personal time. This inequality must be addressed by 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 should 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.

2. The Problem

In Sydney, travel by private vehicle is larger than all other modes combined. In 1991, 70% of all trips were made in a private vehicle. This majority share was sustained a decade later in 2001 as car usage continued to grow. The share of trips by car has remained stable over time, but this total masks a shift from passenger to driver trips. The prevalence of the car can be evidenced from all indicators of car travel, which increased at a faster pace in comparison to population. Between 1991 and 2001, the number of car driver and passenger trips made on an average weekday grew annually by 1.8% from about 9 million to about 11 million trips. The total number of household vehicles rose from 1.7 to 2.1 million by a faster rate of 2.2%. The number of licence holders increased by 2.1%. Vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) also grew from 64 to 80 million kilometres, up by an average of 2.3% every year. These growth rates outpaced the annual growth in population of 1.3% (TransFigures, DIPNR, 2005)

The number of public transport trips has been declining at about a percent each year and this is reflected in its gradually declining share of the market (compared with other modes) since 1999 (TransFigures, DIPNR, 2005). The geographical analysis of car usage demonstrates that the proximity and accessibility of public transport infrastructure exerts a strong influence on private motor vehicle usage.

Since 1999, there has been a declining proportion of households with none or one private vehicle. The share of those with multiple vehicles has been rising. The result is an increase in the average number of vehicles per household from 1.40 in 1999 to 1.46 in 2003, an annual average growth of 1.2%, despite a decline in household size from 2.73 to 2.71 over the same period.

3. North Sydney

Residents

In the North Sydney Council LGA in 1996, there were 53,790 people living in 30,139 dwellings. In 2001, the population increased to 56,547 people living in 32,278 dwellings. In 2003, the population was 60,023.

Of the occupied dwellings in the North Sydney area, the following graph, Figure 1, shows a breakdown of the number of vehicles per household.

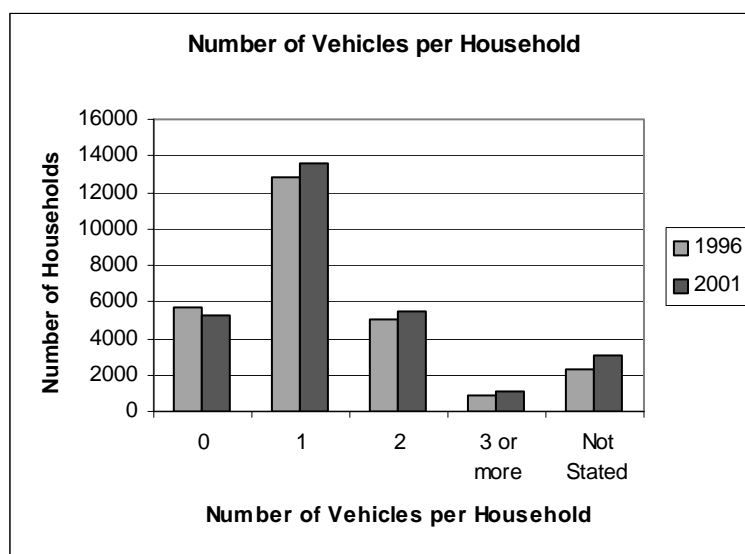


Figure 1: Number of Vehicles per Household (ABS, 1996 & ABS, 2001)

It is evident from this graph that the number of vehicles per household is increasing, and at the same time the number of households is increasing in the North Sydney LGA. In 1996, the minimum total number of vehicles belonging to people in North Sydney was 25,608 (where those households with 3 vehicles or more are counted as only having 3 and 2,321 households did not state how many vehicles they owned). In 2001, the minimum total number of vehicles was 27,750 (where 3,064 households did not state how many vehicles they owned).

The residential population of North Sydney is expected to grow from between 3,200 to 7,499 by the year 2011 - an average increase of between 320 and 750 persons per year and it is

anticipated that there will be an average of 350 additional dwellings per year over the next ten years and then decrease over time (NSC, 2004).

Working Population

North Sydney is a major employment centre in the Sydney Region providing employment for an estimated 62,338 workers (NSC, 2004) in an estimated 1,257,790m² of net commercial floor space. The ratio of commercial floor space to worker is estimated to be 20m². According to the 2001 Census 15.5% of North Sydney residents also work in North Sydney. The existing worker population that does not live in North Sydney is 52,676 (62,338 minus 15.5%).

Growth of commercial floor space will be concentrated in the North Sydney Centre, where further residential development is prohibited. The NSLEP 2001 allows for an additional 250,000m², resulting in an additional worker population of 10,563. It is estimated that 17,600m² of additional commercial floor space can be developed in St Leonards, resulting in an additional worker population of 743. In the smaller commercial centres in North Sydney, it is assumed that the workforce population will increase by 11,306 in the ten year period to 2013.

North Sydney Traffic and Transport Strategy

The North Sydney Traffic and Transport Strategy states in terms of equity that, “vehicle users should pay for the costs of works associated with making their journeys compatible with these principles” and with respect to the environment, “the environmental effects of vehicular trips should be minimised by encouraging people to make fewer trips and use their car less.”

2020 Vision

The recently drafted and adopted North Sydney 2020 Vision has a section on transport issues. The report 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

Some of the stated aims with regard to transport include:

- The impact of the private car on our community and environment is dramatically reduced
- The frequency, quality and diversity of public transport throughout North Sydney is increased
- Pedestrians and cyclists enjoy easy and safe access throughout North Sydney
- Transport management is coordinated at a regional level

4. Impacts

Report of Cathy Edwards-Davis, Traffic Engineer

Re: Transport Strategies & Public Transport Funding – Position Statement

Transport is essential for connecting communities and businesses. A given transport service usually provides users with multiple outputs. As well as moving between two points, factors such as comfort, flexibility, reliability and time taken are all important attributes.

However, travel has environmental and other costs: it consumes significant amounts of non-renewable resources especially 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. Runoff from roads can affect water quality and can have an impact on biodiversity by fragmenting natural ecosystems. 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 (EPA, 2003).

The Australian Greenhouse Office has identified the following attributes of vehicles:

- Larger cars and those with bigger engines often consume more fuel, which increases the level of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Commercial style vehicles and large off road vehicles are usually built to less stringent emission standards than regular passenger cars, so produce more air pollutants.
- Air pollution is more of a concern in areas with larger populations and more traffic. This is particularly the case in our larger cities.
- Greenhouse emissions will have an impact regardless of where you live or are likely to drive.

There are also economic costs associated with motor vehicles including accidents, congestion, noise, costs from human health, pollution control and repair, and the costs of having to manage climate change in the future.

Major roads can also create psychological and physical barriers to communities. The Warringah Freeway through North Sydney is a very good example of this.

An increased reliance on private cars by populations results in greater infrastructure requirements (roads and parking), and likely increases in energy consumption, noise levels, accidents and associated fatalities. Reductions in the level of motor vehicle use can free up financial, energy and land resources for other activities.

The transport sector accounts for 15% of all carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (CO₂-e) net national emissions in 2003, after stationary energy industries and agriculture. Road transport emissions were 31% higher in 2003 than in 1990. Within the transport sector, road transport contributed 90% of emissions in 2003. This represents 13% of net national emissions (Greenhouse Gas Inventory, Greenhouse Office, 2003). The Australian Greenhouse Office predicts that cars will increase their greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2020. This is because, although vehicles are becoming more fuel efficient, more people are driving further.

In 2001-2002, 37% of final energy consumption in Australia was consumed in the transport sector. Energy use in transport is growing faster than in other sectors, despite the fact that motor

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Re: Transport Strategies & Public Transport Funding – Position Statement

vehicles, and transport systems generally, have continually become more energy efficient. The increase in energy usage reflects increased vehicle numbers and usage (Productivity Commission, 2005).

The environmental and health impacts of vehicles have been highlighted recently in the media, particularly in the Sydney Morning Herald's "Campaign for Sydney."

5. Lack of Funding for Public & Alternative Transport

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 and has seen rapid decreases in the reliability, service and safety of the existing public transport network and insufficient funding for new services. Just one example is highlighted by the Long Term Strategic Plan for Rail (Christie Report) which found that since 1996, there had been a significant decline in spending on rail infrastructure in the state. This has resulted in obsolete rolling stock, outdated signaling and passenger overcrowding.

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. The only effective way to manage this is to incorporate an efficient mass public transport system with any proposal to increase road capacity.

In addition to public transport, there is a need to take cycling and walking as a mode of transport more seriously. Despite this, in mid-2005 the Roads and Traffic Authority announced cuts to the RTA Bicycle Facilities funding and to the loss of the General Manager Bicycle and Pedestrians from the RTA's Management structure. A specific example of where the RTA have given no consideration to pedestrian and bicycle issues is the construction of the Falcon Street ramps at the Warringah Freeway, in conjunction with the Lane Cove Tunnel Project. At this location, there is currently an unbroken footpath approximately 150m long for pedestrians, which 330 pedestrians are using in the peak hours. With the new works, there will now be three signalised crossings for pedestrians/bicycles on the northern side of Falcon Street and six signalised crossings for pedestrians/bicycles on the southern side of Falcon Street. This not only means there will be no improvement in pedestrian facilities, there will be a significant reduction in the level of service for pedestrians and a significant reduction in safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

The north-south crossing from the Military Road island to the northern side of Military Road has been located, at Park Avenue, approximately 170 metres to the east of Merlin Street north. This presents a significant detour for pedestrians, particularly those using the bus stop proposed for Merlin Street north. Of principal concern to Council is pedestrian safety on a road that caters to over 77,000 vehicles per day.

Thiess John Holland presented the Cycle & Pedestrian Plan (TJH-PL-GL-ENV-114 29 November 2005), as per Minister's Condition of Approval 42 for the Falcon Street ramps.

Council's response to the plan concludes:

As has been demonstrated throughout this report, North Sydney Council maintains that the Minister's Conditions 42, 43, 242 and 235 have not been met with regard to the Falcon Street works. Council has repeatedly expressed concerns regarding pedestrian and cyclist access and safety at Falcon Street. North Sydney Council firmly believes that the only way to provide safe pedestrian and cyclist access at Falcon Street is to provide grade separated facilities in both an east-west direction and a north-south direction.

6. Users of public transport pay significantly more than private transport

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 European cities. 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 (Productivity Commission, 2005).

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 (NSROC Transport).

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.

7. Cost Equality

There are three main methods to improve the equity of private motor vehicle transportation and improve cost equity between private and public modes of transport:

- Standardised tolling (cost per kilometre) for toll roads
- Standardised parking levy across the Sydney metropolitan area
- Greater equity with polluter pays policies

Standardised Tolling

It is increasingly evident that urban areas, particularly Sydney, are facing total traffic gridlock, particularly at peak hours. This has stemmed from the rapid growth in private vehicle journeys combined with the push for substantial residential growth.

It is evident from the graph on the following page that the Falcon Street ramps in dollars per kilometre are grossly over-priced.

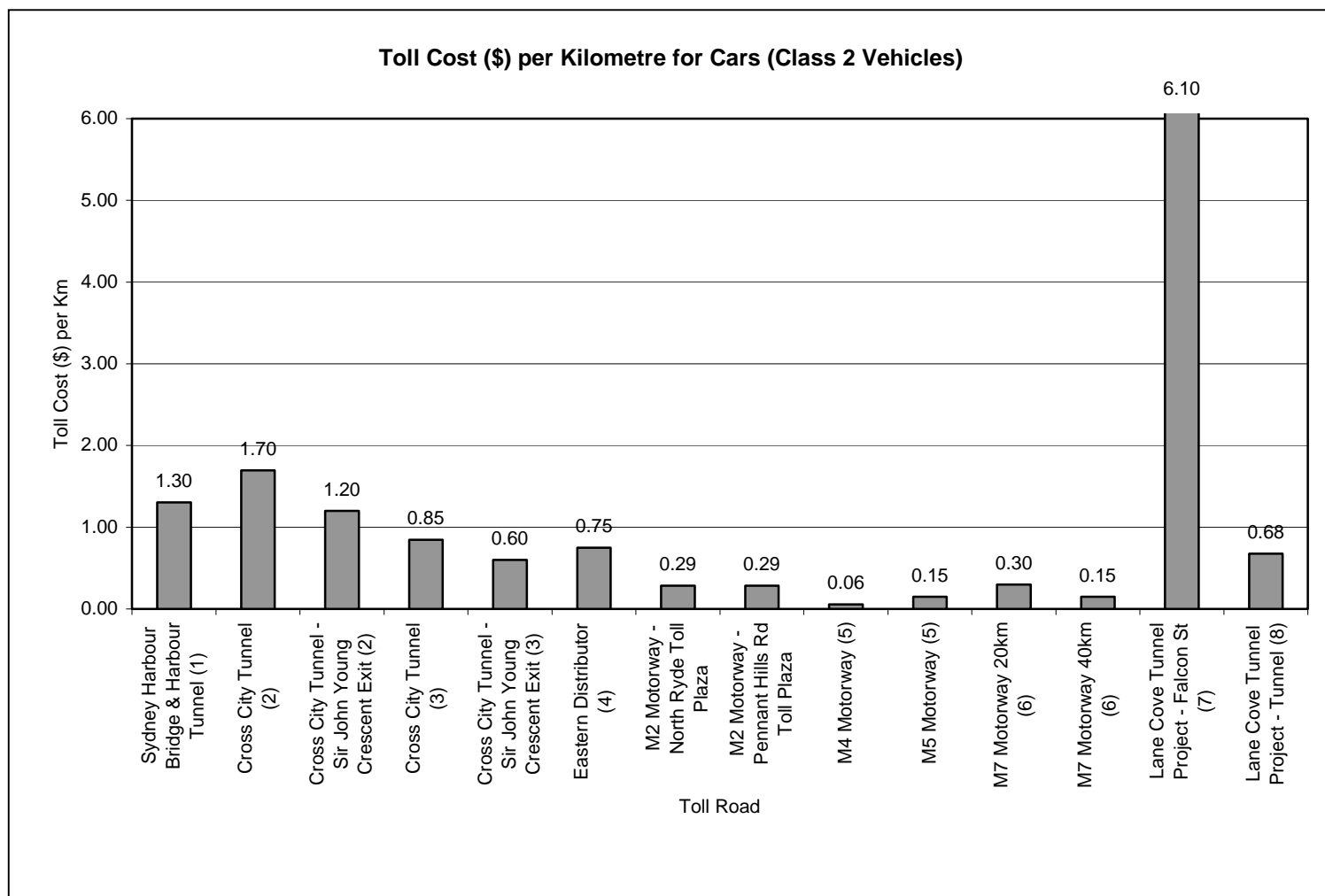
It is likely that the RTA will argue that the Falcon Street tolls are not for the short 200 metre section of ramps, but that in conjunction with the tunnel toll, it will cover the full cost of the Lane Cove Tunnel *Project*. However, the public perception is likely to be that the Falcon Street toll is just for the 200 metre ramps; and it is public perception that is important when considering road tolls. This is evident with the recent public backlash to the Cross City Tunnel tolls.

Other major Sydney roads such as the Pacific Highway, the Princess Highway, the Great Western Highway, the Hume Highway, etc., for historical reasons do not attract a toll.

The current inequitable imposition of tolls in Sydney has resulted in some of these major civil engineering projects not delivering the expected positive outcomes.

Tolls on existing motorways and new toll roads should be imposed on a per kilometre basis, such as that for the M7 motorway. Further, tolls should be imposed on a consistent and regular basis. That is, they should not be seemingly randomly applied to some roads and not to other major roads.

The following graph shows the cost per kilometre of the various tollways throughout Sydney.



Notes:

- (1) Southbound toll only
- (2) Toll after 6 June 2006
- (3) Toll 6 March 2006 to 6 June 2006 (reduced tolls in exchange for a possible permanent loss of bus lanes in the Sydney CBD)
- (4) Northbound toll only
- (5) The M4 and M5 motorways have a cashback scheme for motorists driving privately registered vehicles
- (6) The M7 operates on distance tolling, currently up to \$5.98 for 20 kilometres, at which point the toll is capped
- (7) The toll is \$1 in 1999 dollars, indexed to quarterly CPI
- (8) The toll is \$2 in 1999 dollars, indexed to quarterly CPI

Council is therefore seeking the support of the Premier to go back to the toll company regarding the inequality of charging tolls for the on and off ramps at Falcon Street and for the toll to be included in the Lane Cove Tunnel toll.

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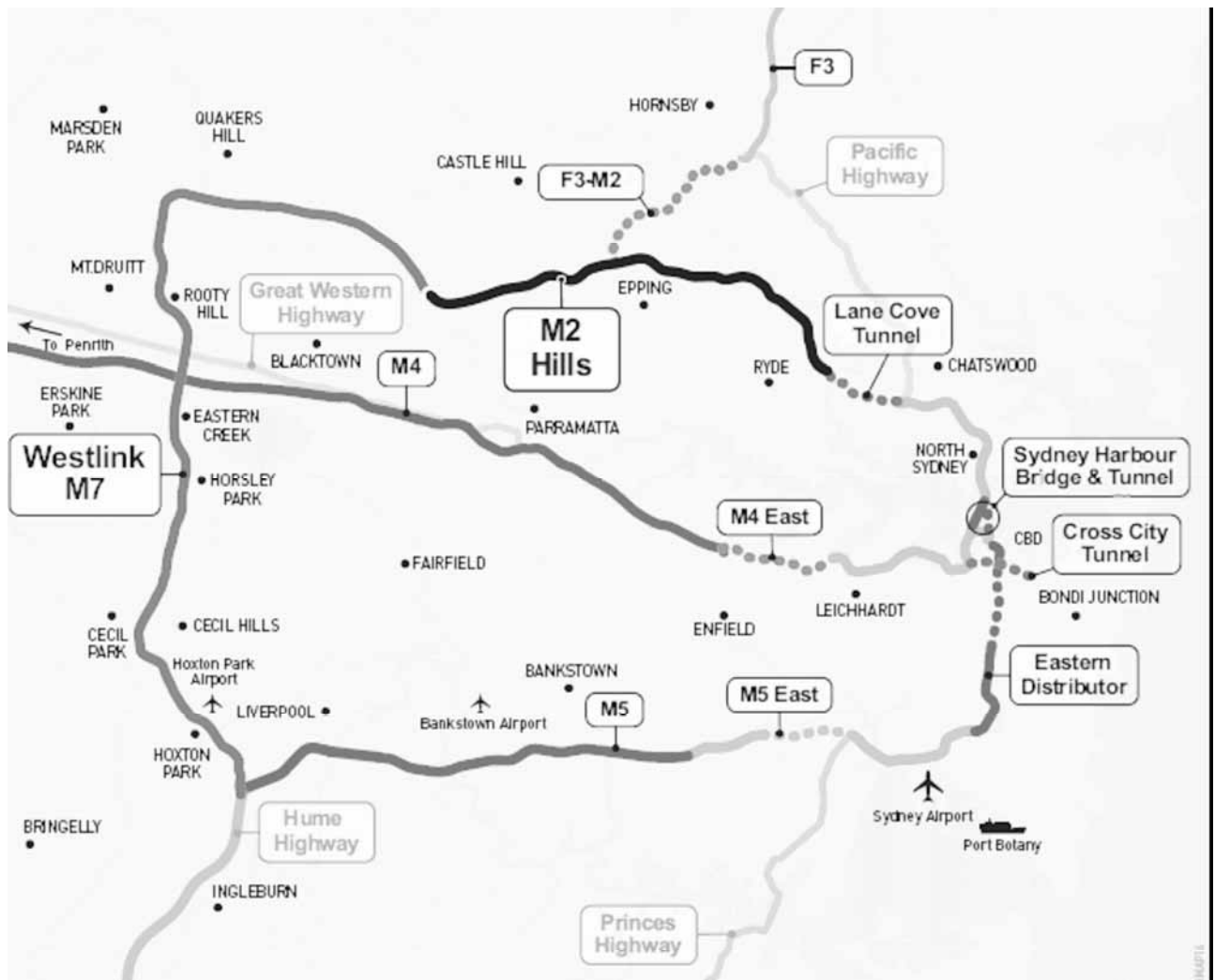


Diagram: Map of the motorways in Sydney (transurban.com.au)

The imposition of tolls results in different patterns of behaviour, and should therefore be used for the management of private motor vehicle transportation rather than purely for the method of financing major civil engineering projects.

The most efficient means to reduce the number of private motor trips and to spread the hours of peak travel is to introduce demand management tolling on toll roads. Congestion is greatest during peak hours, when increasingly the “supply” of roads cannot meet the “demand” for roads. The introduction of demand management tolling, where a greater toll is charged during peak hours would have two impacts. It would increase the person to vehicle ratio and it would reduce the “peak” of vehicles, and encourage the spread of demand throughout the day.

North Sydney Council made the following comments regarding travel demand management at the time of the EIS submission for the Lane Cove Tunnel Project (letter dated 31 January 2002):

The main concerns arising from the proposed Lane Cove Tunnel that affect the North Sydney Area are:

- 1) Increase in traffic and congestion on the Warringah Freeway and the Harbour Bridge, and**
- 2) No provision has been made to include Travel Demand Management measures with the project and the Harbour Bridge.**

The EIS notes that traffic flow along the Gore Hill Freeway east of Willoughby Road will increase by 28% and 33% by the end of 2006 and 2016 respectively. This increase in traffic on the Gore Hill Freeway will be loaded onto the Warringah Freeway and partially on the Harbour Bridge. The PARAMICS modelling which was used to simulate traffic flow and queuing starts at Willoughby Road and did not include the Warringah Freeway and Harbour Bridge.

Council has always maintained that without proper controls the Lane Cove Tunnel will add significant additional capacity to the Warringah Freeway. This additional capacity will ultimately be taken up and will lead to congestion on the approaches to the Harbour Bridge. It would be anticipated that this congestion would be similar to what occurred prior to the opening of the Harbour Tunnel. During this period our Council area was badly affected by through traffic filtering off the main roads into our residential streets trying to jump the queue on the Warringah Freeway. Significant rat runs developed through the Council's area and this had an adverse impact on the amenity of our local residents. A repeat of this outcome is totally unacceptable. It is considered that the only effective way of managing this is to incorporate a demand management toll system in the Tunnel project and the Harbour Bridge.

The objective of a demand management strategy would be to increase vehicle occupancy, reduce congestion and increase the use of public transport. The benefits of such a strategy would be to increase efficiency of the road network and reduced adverse impacts on the environment, particularly air quality impacts. The key aspects of this system are:

1. Cash tolls higher than electronic tolls.
2. Discounted electronic tolls when travelling outside peak hour periods.
3. Cars that meet the T3 requirement should be allowed to travel in Bus Lanes and pay no toll (video surveillance at toll booths should be implemented to police this).
4. Bus Lanes should be T3
5. All of the above proposals should be cost neutral to the private operator of the freeway and therefore the cash toll and single occupancy electronic toll need to be set at such a level so the discount are revenue neutral.

The Harbour Bridge and Tunnel are also at capacity during peak periods. The proposed Lane Cove Tunnel would relocate the bottleneck from Lane Cove to the bridge and tunnel at North Sydney, exacerbating the problems of:

- Reduced air quality from pollution created by vehicles queuing on the freeway; and

- Reduced local amenity due to a significant volume of traffic that exits the freeway prior to or at North Sydney, and filters through local roads before re-joining the freeway. This traffic not only reduces residential amenity but also increases congestion on the local road system, which in turn leads to increased pollution.

The EIS shows that the Toll Fee can influence travel on the tunnel/corridor however it fails to seriously consider the development of a Travel Demand Management Strategy as discussed above. Council requests that demand management measures be made an integral part of the Lane Cove Tunnel proposal. In this regard it is noted that the Department of Urban Affairs & Planning and Environment Protection Authority have both required that the EIS examine demand management and also the issue of toll avoidance.

The imposition of a \$1 toll on both the on and off ramps at Falcon Street raises the question of toll avoidance. Traffic could avoid the toll by using existing routes such as Berry Street/Mount Street on the west side of Warringah Freeway and the Kurraba Road route on the east side thereby resulting in rat runs and impacting on our local roads and residents.

In 1991, the average vehicle occupancy rate for trips to work was 1.16 persons and in 2002, this had decreased further to 1.12 (DIPNR, Household Travel Survey 2002). This gives a clear indication that there is a large number of vehicles being used to inefficiently transport just one driver. The increase in car driver trips between 1991 and 2001 was highest at 8am (26%) and 5pm (23%) (TransFigures, DIPNR, 2005). This indicates that demand for roadways that are already under strain is continuing to increase in the peaks.

The benefit of demand management tolling on toll roads is a decrease in the level of congestion, effectively a more efficient use of the road resource and an increase in average travel speeds which will mean vehicles are running at closer to their optimum level, decreasing fuel consumption and reducing the amount of air pollution created.

The lack of demand management tolling on the Harbour Bridge greatly impacts on the residential amenity of the North Sydney area. The Harbour Bridge effectively acts as a funnel for traffic during the peak hours for north-south travelling vehicles. This causes a traffic congestion point on the bridge, which then translates into increased noise and air pollution for North Sydney residents as well as an increased potential for “rat running” vehicles to use local North Sydney streets. Projects such as the Lane Cove Tunnel Project serve only to get vehicles to the Harbour Bridge bottleneck faster.

To put this discussion into perspective, consider for a moment the Sydney train and bus networks. If public transport were the equivalent of Sydney’s road network, then for example the Illawarra train line would be free to travel on and the northern line would attract a fare of \$10. Further, the short distance of the northern line between Sydney City and North Sydney would be \$8 and the much greater distance between North Sydney and Berowra would be just \$2. The public transport system could not operate on this basis. This example highlights how the inequitable imposition of fares/tolls is unacceptable to the travelling Sydney public.

Parking Levy

The objectives of the existing Parking Space Levy are generally supported, as it reduces commuter-generated traffic and improves public transport facilities. However, concern is raised that the current Parking Space Levy is an inequitable tax that heavily impacts upon only a few areas of Sydney.

The Ministry of Transport has not provided any substantial facts to demonstrate that the Parking Space Levy has been effective in reducing traffic congestion since its introduction in 1992. The Parking Space Levy was established to fund public transport facilities. In order for the Levy to be effective, there must be a highly visible connection between the Levy charged and an improvement in public transport facilities. However, to date, the projects funded from the Public Transport Facilities Fund are in areas that are not subject to the Parking Space Levy.

A graduated Parking Space Levy should be applied to other competing medium and large commercial centres across the wider Sydney basin area. A diminished return on investment caused by the Parking Space Levy works actively against future investment by developers and businesses in centres such as the Sydney CBD, North Sydney, Bondi Junction, Chatswood, Parramatta and St Leonards, compared with other locations exempt from the Levy. That is, this tax results in increased development expansion, by pushing developers and businesses away from already established central business districts. This is contrary to State policies, which encourage development within existing centres and policies for nodes of employment and transport. In contrast, this Levy has no impact on large business parks built in the outer suburbs with potentially hundreds of parking spaces and poor links to public transport.

The Parking Space Levy should relate to parking space turnover rates. It is recommended that the levy be applied on a graduated basis across all of Sydney, and not be based on a flat fee in particular seemingly arbitrary areas.

Another means to reduce car usage is to restrict the availability of parking. For example City of Sydney Council and North Sydney Council with their Development Control Plan have a maximum number of car spaces that may be provided within new developments (compared with most Councils which have a minimum number of car spaces). The restrictions on the number of parking spaces in private developments needs to be undertaken in conjunction with resident parking permit schemes for on-street parking. This obviously restricts car ownership and by extension helps to restrict private vehicle usage.

The benefits of restricting parking is further highlighted by Journey to Work Statistics from the Sydney Household Travel Survey which demonstrates that the only areas where less than 50% of commuting is by car is in inner Sydney. Inner city residents are better served by public transport, are likely to be making shorter journeys to work to central locations, and may face parking restrictions at both home and work. The major reason for using public transport cited by 45% of public transport users in response to the Sydney Household Travel Survey was to “avoid parking problems or costs” (DIPNR).

Councils and developers also need to start looking at innovative solutions such as Car Share and Car Pooling, as an alternate to private vehicle ownership. In that way, the number of vehicles provided for in new developments can be significantly reduced, again encouraging public and active transport usage, but still addressing the mobility gap issue. In San Jose, many businesses provide their employees with free public transport passes to get to/from work.

Polluter Pays

In order to foster behavioural change, the State government needs to ensure greater equity with polluter pays policies for motor vehicles that have a greater impact on the environment. This could be done through the registration system. An example of this on a smaller scale, is that North Sydney Council now charges different fees for resident parking permits, based on the environmental impact of the vehicle. Smaller vehicles are charged less, and larger vehicles are charged more. This is a classic carrot-and-stick scenario, where people who choose to run a high impact vehicle may do so, however they will be taxed to do so, while vehicles with a lesser impact such as hybrids pay less.

8. Additional Income for Public Transport

The money raised from standardised tolling on toll roads, the parking levy and greater equity with polluter pays policies can be transferred directly to the upgrading of existing public transport systems and the construction of new transport services.

Currently Parking Levy money is being collected in the inner city areas and spent in the outer suburbs. In order for the existing levy and any expanded levy system to be effective, there must be a highly visual connection between the Levy charged and an improvement in public transport facilities. However, currently the projects funded from the Public Transport Facilities Fund are in areas that are not subject to the Parking Space Levy.

For example, in Perth where a Parking Levy exists, the introduction of the Levy coincided with the improvement to public transport in the central area where the Levy was applied. That is, there was a clear link between the Levy and positive highly visible improvements to the transport alternatives to the car.

Both the Parry and Unsworth reports recommended the appointment of Regional Transport Coordinators, who would be responsible for the coordination of long term regional transport strategies. These positions could be also be funded from monies raised from motor vehicles taxes. The Minister for Transport has recently announced that two Transport Coordinators will be appointed for the Sydney metropolitan area. While this is a step in the right direction, coordinators are needed for the regional areas, including the Northern region of Sydney.

9. Local Government Association

North Sydney Council recently submitted a motion to the 2005 Local Government Conference:

THAT the LGA call upon the State Government to show greater commitment and adequately fund the continual improvement of public transport and alternate transport means to reduce traffic and parking congestion (and their environmental impacts).

This motion was supported.

10. Conclusion

Given the information and discussion above, it is recommended that Council support the following:

- 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.
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