



Making  
public  
transport  
work for  
communities

THE  
GREENS  
TRANSPORT  
VISION &  
2020  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
PLAN FOR NSW



# The Greens NSW.

The Greens NSW have six elected representatives in NSW Parliament and an Australian federal Senator.



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# A PLAN FOR THE PUBLIC

Public transport is an essential service. Affordable and functional public transport systems make our community more sustainable, connected, and liveable.

Sadly, NSW is currently far from achieving this. Our current system is both inadequate and inefficient. Meanwhile our roads are congested and costing us billions every year.

The old parties have never taken public transport seriously. Whether it is the **"do nothing" approach of Labor, or the privatisation and toll road agenda of the Coalition** that will leave us with a dysfunctional and expensive system.

**The people of NSW deserve much better.**

The Greens Transport Vision and 2020 Infrastructure Plan is an exciting alternative that will connect our communities and help people access education and work. Investing in **integrated, affordable and efficient** public transport across NSW must be prioritised as a matter of urgency. Public transport must be **publicly owned and operated and fully integrated with modern cycleways and other active transport infrastructure**.

The Greens Transport Vision is about rolling out a fully integrated transport network for Sydney; making transport more accessible, affordable and safe across NSW; shifting freight onto rail; connecting our regional cities and towns; and committing to genuine transparency and community participation in transport planning.

The Greens 2020 Transport Infrastructure Plan is the first stage of this, to roll out over the next five years. We will **redirect the money earmarked for WestConnex and NorthConnex toll roads** towards integrated, efficient, publicly-owned and operated public transport solutions.

This plan would not require selling off our valuable electricity assets. The Greens believe the government does not need to privatise public assets to invest heavily in public transport.

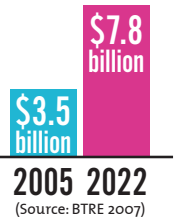
Instead, we need to end the government's obsession with building roads and tollways.





# 1. THE GREENS VISION FOR TRANSPORT

The cost of congestion in Sydney is rising



Around the world, the way people travel and commute is undergoing a rapid transformation because our cities are growing and where we work and how we live is changing.

By 2030, more than 90% of Australians will be living in urban areas and Sydney's population will grow to 5.3 million. To put it simply, private automobile use and road building cannot move this many people without permanent gridlock. Smart cities are recognising this and investing in integrated public transport solutions.

Across Europe, **cars are being given up in favour of cleaner transport options**. Even in the United States, where the private car is still considered king, motor vehicle usage is on the decline while public transport use is steadily increasing (especially in urban areas).

In Australia, there is growing evidence that **more and more young people are ditching private motor vehicles to use public transport**. A falling mode share of car trips, as well as fewer young people obtaining driver licences, are indicative of this.

Meanwhile, the cost of congestion in Sydney is rising to alarming levels (predicted to reach \$7.8bn in 2022) and transport planning from previous Liberal and Labor governments is decades behind and tarnished by privatisation.

In Sydney we know that **when people have good public transport as an option they will use it, with only 14 percent of CBD commuters driving their cars to work**. Sydney no longer has a single CBD, with jobs and facilities spread out in multiple large hubs including Parramatta, Chatswood, Bankstown, Castle Hill, and Hurstville. **Car use outside of the Sydney CBD remains high** because desired destinations cannot be reached easily or service frequencies are low. This inadequacy demands a more widely covering, higher frequency and closely integrated public transport service so we can make the necessary transition.

**We need to end piecemeal transport planning and establish strategic goals for mode shift to public transport, with clear targets for reducing car trips and increasing public and active transport trips in Sydney.**

Additionally, across rural and regional NSW, and metropolitan NSW cities other than Sydney, we need to be ensuring vital rail services are maintained and protected, and community transport is funded and encouraged. **Our regions' transport needs have been long neglected by the old parties, and must be addressed.**

We should be making our transport system more affordable and accessible, so everyone can benefit from the opportunities that come from being able to get around.

**We should be planning and investing in a transport system that meets the requirements of the people of NSW into the future, not one that simply fixes the deficiencies of our transport and government planning systems today.**

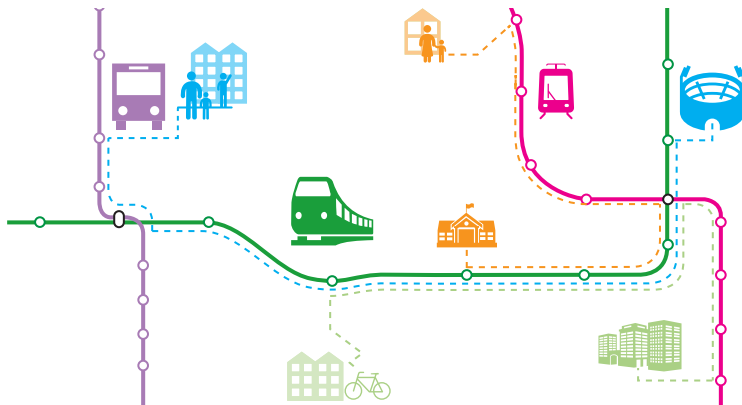
## A fully integrated transport system

**Inadequate frequency and capacity of services are common reasons commuters avoid using public transport.** The Greens will improve the network to increase service frequencies and capacities.

This will require building **missing heavy rail links** such as the Parramatta to Epping link, strong investment in surface transport such as light rail through a **coordinated light rail plan**, and **improved automated signalling** for our train lines. There is evidence from around the world that improving signalling can increase network capacity by up to 60%. A progressive upgrade of signalling is required across our train network - starting with the Northern Line, then the Western, Airport and Southern lines.

The Greens want to invest heavily in improving transport connectivity - that means more interchange infrastructure such as **park-and-ride facilities, integrated cycleways, and better spaces for pedestrians.**

**Integrating fares and timetables** would make transport cheaper and faster for people. It would mean people are charged for the full journey they take (regardless of whether they travel across multiple modes of transport) rather than each individual ride.



## Affordable, accessible and safe transport

Public transport must connect people and be affordable and accessible for everyone. A functioning system provides access to jobs and essential services and fosters social inclusion. The Greens are committed to making public transport more accessible by:

- **Extending transport concessions** beyond pensioners and students to low income earners, by **allowing approximately 100,000 Low Income Health Care Card Holders not currently eligible for transport concessions and asylum seekers living in our community to access discounted fares.** This is estimated to cost only \$18 million annually.
- **Expanding the free school travel transport scheme to cover the light rail network.**
- **Doubling the Taxi Transport Subsidy to \$60** (estimated at \$10.8 million annually).
- **Fast-tracking and expanding the Transport Access Program to ensure that our transport system is accesible to all by investment in lifts, station upgrades, park-and-ride facilities and related infrastructure.**
- **Legislating for "One Metre Matters" laws that would protect cyclists and improve road safety for everyone.**
- **Investigating a flat-fare system for transport.**

## Shift freight onto rail and separate it from passenger services

**NSW roads are clogged with freight trucks** due to the political clout of road freight logistics companies. The NSW government purportedly has a goal of transitioning from road to rail freight, but consistently funds road freight projects over rail freight.

**NSW needs to fund projects to separate passenger and freight rail lines** including stages 2 & 3 of the Northern Sydney Freight Corridor and fast-track the development of an **effective intermodal strategy for all of Sydney**. NSW needs to recognise the benefits to the economy and community by investigating the use of **Newcastle as a container port** and stop protecting private interests.

Alongside these initiatives we need to properly fund and **fast-track noise reduction projects** and address other social and environmental impacts of rail freight corridors. The Greens understand that the time is now to fast-track the federal funding of a **Melbourne to Brisbane inland rail freight route** promised by the Federal Coalition. Further, we need to **clean up the dirty emissions of the remaining freight trucks** by introducing emissions reduction programs such as the successful Diesel Retrofit Program.

## Connecting our regions, cities and towns

### Cities and towns in NSW are disconnected

People outside of Sydney mostly rely on motor vehicles to get around, and public transport often simply isn't an option.

Successive Labor and Coalition governments have neglected regional transport and wilfully shut down rail lines and removed services where the economic benefit was not perceived to be great enough.

**The Greens will reinstate, upgrade and expand inter-city and regional rail services for the public good. We will retain the Newcastle rail line and progressively reinstate the Casino-Murwillumbah service.**

Moreover, **High Speed Rail is an essential project for NSW and Australia this century**. The Greens are committed to revolutionising interstate and intercity transport with a High Speed Rail network that would increase mobility between cities and drastically reduce our reliance on air travel. A federally funded network would begin with a connection between Sydney and Newcastle, then rolled out entirely up the East Coast of Australia.

### Improving regional transport

Regional transport solutions would also involve significant investment in community transport (including "on demand" solutions) and improving bus frequencies in targeted areas. Community transport is becoming an attractive public transport alternative for people particularly in regional areas to get around without their own vehicle, and those for whom travelling by car or rail is not an option. The Greens would **more than double the current level of government spending in community transport, and invest in "on-demand" options** for the service.

## Regional Road Safety

Australia is the sixth largest country in the world, making it impossible for public transport alone to connect many of our regional and rural communities. The Greens understand that maintenance of vital roads and bridges in regional areas of NSW puts an enormous strain on the budgets of local councils but is necessary to ensure these communities are connected safely.

**The NSW and federal government's obsession with building urban toll roads has resulted in a major funding disparity between the transport needs of the city and the bush.** The Greens consistently advocate for increased funding from both federal and state government budgets to regional road safety upgrades and are critical of programs that only provide funds for improvements to road freight routes. A transition to rail freight where possible can increase the safety of regional roads and ensure road quality doesn't deteriorate as rapidly.

## Smart planning, transparency and community participation

NSW does not have a coherent strategy when it comes to planning our cities, as the needs of vested interests have been consistently prioritised ahead of the needs of the people. **If we want liveable and vibrant cities in the future, things need to change.**

Communities across NSW are rightly outraged about the lack of transparency and genuine community engagement in transport and infrastructure planning. **People want to be involved in the decision, not simply told what is happening.** The government must disclose the business cases and cost-benefit analyses of transport projects, and genuinely engage and work with the community.



## 2. THE GREENS 2020 TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN FOR NSW

Cancelling unnecessary projects such as WestConnex and NorthConnex will free up \$4.581 billion for investment in public transport over the next five years.

### Light Rail for NSW Fund (\$2.1 billion)

Light rail is the future of surface transport in cities like Sydney. \$2.1 billion would be set aside to invest in targeted light rail projects, including:

- **Western Sydney Light Rail Network:** a series of routes that connect urban hubs such as Castle Hill and Bankstown with the Parramatta CBD.
- **Inner West Light Rail Link:** to connect the city with the inner west via Parramatta Road and Balmain.
- **City to Zetland Light Rail Link** (via Alexandria and Waterloo): a much needed city connection for the rapidly growing south-east of Sydney.

### Build the Epping to Parramatta heavy rail link (\$1 billion)

The Epping to Parramatta heavy rail link has been **on and off the table for years. It's finally time to get it done.** The last Labor federal government quietly scrapped the project, but it is a service that Sydney needs to connect Parramatta to the economically important Macquarie Park and Chatswood regions.

### Buy back the Airport Link and remove the station access fee (\$450 million)

Patronage on the privately managed Sydney Airport Link train line remains at 11 percent of journeys to the airport, well below the original target of 25 percent. The station access fee imposed by Airport Link Company through a deal struck with the government is prohibitively high - as of February 2015, a single adult fare from the city to the International Airport is \$17.80.

**The removal of the station access fee, through buying back the line from the private operator, would result in increased usage of the line and decreased road congestion around the airport and southeast Sydney more generally.** It is also the most responsible course of action from equity and environmental perspectives.



## World class transport servicing Newcastle, the Hunter Region and the Central Coast (\$400 million)

Introducing fast tilt-trains to operate between Sydney and Newcastle is a immediate and effective way of **moving people quickly and more conveniently along the corridor between our state's two largest cities**. This would also provide a critical alternative to the wasteful NorthConnex toll road, alongside transitioning more road freight onto rail.

Public transport within Newcastle also needs a major overhaul. Bus patronage is low due to the poor quality of current services. We need to **invest in improving the bus system**, with higher frequencies and new routes explored. The Greens also support a **full investigation into expanding the integrated public transport network in Newcastle** that would complement, not replace, a retained heavy rail line.

## Integrated cycleways for Sydney (\$250 million)

The Greens will invest \$250 million to finally deliver an integrated cycleway network for Sydney. **\$185 million will fund the construction of the (Inner) Sydney Regional Bike Network**, a 284 km network of separated and shared cycleways connecting 15 Local Government Areas (LGAs) surrounding the Sydney CBD. This network is predicted to increase cycling trips, reduce congestion, improve health and produce a total of **\$506 million in economic benefits** to the community over 30 years. Further, the project has been listed as a priority project by Infrastructure Australia but the federal government is yet to fund it.

An additional **\$65 million will fund key missing cycling infrastructure projects across Sydney**. The Greens 2020 Transport Infrastructure Plan for NSW supports active transport and cycleways.

## Fast-track and expand the Transport Access Program (\$231 million)

The Greens understand that not everyone can walk to their local train station and climb the stairs to the platform. That's why we will fast-track the \$770 million Transport Access Program from the NSW government and **add an additional \$231 million (totalling over \$1 billion)** to ensure the stations that need lifts, secure bike storage and park-and-ride facilities can build them.

## Support Community Transport (\$100 million)

**We want to inject an additional \$10 million per year** over 2015-2020 into community transport programs. The Greens 2020 Transport Infrastructure Plan would also see **\$50 million dedicated to the trial of a publicly owned, on-demand community transport solution** for key regional communities in NSW.

This new transport solution for regions with limited public transport options or commuters with special accessibility requirements allows users to book trips to and from nominated locations at specific times, grouping passengers with similar trips into the same vehicle. The Greens would also invest in improving the frequency and attractiveness of regional bus services.

## Re-open the Casino to Lismore train line (\$50 million)

We need regional transport in the Northern Rivers. **The closure of the Casino to Murwillumbah rail service in 2004 was a shortsighted and costly mistake** - this part of NSW has been suffering ever since. The Greens will move immediately to reopen the Casino to Lismore segment of the line, fairly costed at \$50 million, followed by the rest of the service.

# 3. THE OLD PARTIES HAVE FAILED

Successive Labor and Coalition state governments have perpetually underperformed and failed to deliver an integrated transport system for the people of NSW.

## Private interests have dominated over public benefit

In NSW, the '**public-private partnership**' (PPP) model has been the cause of infamous **infrastructure disasters such as the Lane Cove Tunnel, the Cross City Tunnel, and the Airport Link train line**. In each of these cases, the private sector was far too optimistic about traffic and passenger numbers, and when they didn't eventuate, the projects themselves quickly failed.

Both the Cross City Tunnel and the Lane Cove Tunnel were built as PPPs, eventually placed into receivership, and are now owned by Transurban (a company that owns almost all of the toll-roads in Sydney and has proposed NorthConnex).

## WestConnex: A “gambler’s addiction” to toll roads

**Toll road projects like WestConnex and NorthConnex are well known to induce congestion and become financially unviable.** The way to remove congestion in Sydney is not through building expensive toll roads shrouded in secrecy, but rather by rolling out effective and efficient public transport options to underserved areas.

In 2014, a report from Infrastructure Australia stated that "**Australia's nearly \$20 billion annual road spend can only be described as hideously inefficient**", with spending consistently outstripping revenue and **draining money away from other public services**. The report also revealed that road agencies are more focused on obtaining and spending taxpayers dollars for road projects "rather than questioning efficiency or value to the motorist and governments" and that **road project proposals "lacked any cost-benefit rigour whatsoever"**.

## Sixteen years of Labor failure

**Through its 16 years in government, NSW Labor wasted billions** on mismanaging and failing to deliver integrated ticketing, the 'Sydney Metro', and a high-speed rail link to Newcastle.

**Labor only delivered two major rail projects:** the Epping-Chatswood Rail Link and the privately-managed Airport Link. The Epping to Chatswood Rail Link was first floated in 1995 as a heavy rail connection from Parramatta to Chatswood. Originally projected as a seven-year, \$1.4 billion construction project to be completed by 2006, the Parramatta-Epping leg was soon indefinitely postponed. The much less ambitious 13 km link blew out to \$2.4 billion and was finally opened in 2009 after many false starts and redrawn plans.

## The Coalition's privatisation agenda

The Coalition government's transport agenda has involved little more than selling off our public transport system to the highest bidder.

In 2012, the Coalition government privatised Sydney's ferries on the basis that the system required private sector involvement in order to become more efficient - however, **services became more expensive and unreliable.**

### North West Rail Link: The North West Deserves Better

The NSW government is finally building the long-awaited North West Rail Link (NWRL). This is **an overdue public transport project**, and the Greens are supportive of building a rail connection to the northwest.

However, there is an enormous catch that could make the whole \$8.3 billion project redundant: **the government is constructing a single-deck, driverless metro-style train system, instead of standard double-deck Sydney Trains that have the capacity to integrate with the rest of the network.**

In addition, the existing Epping-Chatswood line will have to be retrofitted to support single-deck trains, meaning **less seating and an unnecessary change at Chatswood** for city-bound public transport users from the North West. This conversion will close the Epping-Chatswood line - a \$2.4 billion line that was only opened to the public in 2009 - for at least seven months.

**Worryingly, NWRL is a public-private partnership project;** the private operator Northwest Rapid Transit has been granted a \$3.7 billion contract to roll out and operate the line.

### Sydney Rapid Transit (SRT): a misguided transport future

**The NSW government's SRT would, quite simply, herald the beginning of the mass privatisation and cannibalisation of rail in Sydney.** All rail projects (including any second harbour crossing) must be publicly owned and operated with full integration with the rest of the network.

The only option the government has is to **go back to the drawing board and replan any future second harbour crossing as a double-deck, integrated, publicly owned and operated service as it was originally planned to be.**

# How we'll pay for it all...

