



**Conservation Council
of South Australia Inc**

**Environment, Resources and
Development Committee**

TRANSPORT INQUIRY

31st October 2008

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Table of Contents

Terms of Reference	4
Preamble	6
Introduction	6
Transport Planning for Sustainability	7
Holistic Planning – Reducing Urban Sprawl	7
Public Transport	9
Promoting active transport	10
Private Transport	10

Terms of Reference

Pursuant to section 16(1)(a) of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991 the Committee is to conduct an inquiry; namely:

That the Environment, Resources and Development Committee inquire into and report into the current and future transport needs for South Australia and in particular -

- I. the development of an efficient and integrated public transport system incorporating all forms of public transport and necessary infrastructure improvements;
- II. the needs of metropolitan and outer metropolitan regions;
- III. the opportunities and impediments to increasing public transport patronage with a view to reducing greenhouse emissions and other relevant matters; and
- IV. an assessment and report of the feasibility and cost and benefits of the following proposals (to include the benefit to car users who remain on the road network, road crash cost savings, benefits to car drivers who shift to public transport, revenue, journey time savings, emission reductions, noise reductions, avoided car ownership) –
 - (a) the introduction of a high speed passenger train service between Adelaide and Angaston to service the Barossa tourist area, with a report on the feasibility of co-use leasing or of purchasing the current line from Gawler to Angaston from GWA to restore rail coverage to Lyndoch, Tanunda, Nuriootpa and Angaston;
 - (b) the introduction of a passenger train service between Adelaide and Mount Barker via either the duplication of a broad gauge line from Belair to Mount Barker or conversion of the Belair metropolitan train line to standard gauge during scheduled re-sleepering works in such a way that the metropolitan line can reconnect with the standard gauge ARTC line from Mount Barker to restore rail coverage to Mount Barker, Littlehampton, Balhannah, Bridgewater, Aldgate and Stirling;
 - (c) the re-laying of the now defunct Northfield line to include "Park and Ride" stations at Port Wakefield Road and Main North Road, and to provide high-speed passenger rail coverage to the suburbs of Gepps Cross, Pooraka, Walkley Heights, Northfield, Gilles Plains, Ingle Farm and Valley View;
 - (d) the relaying of the now defunct southern suburbs line from Reynella to Huntfield Heights (known as the "Willunga line"), with an investigation as to the feasibility of using either the old corridor from Hallett Cove station, or of alternatively linking viable portions of the old corridor to a new line extending from Tonsley station to provide high-speed rail coverage to Sheidow Park, Trott Park, Fountain Valley, Reynella, Woodcroft, Morphett Vale, Hackham,

and field Heights (and provide new coverage to Flinders University and Medical Centre, Darlington, and O'Halloran Hill should the line extend from Tonsley station);

(e) costs and feasibility of providing high-speed rail services from Adelaide to Aldinga via a restored Willunga rail line and the feasibility of re-using the existing but defunct Willunga line bridge over the Onkaparinga River as an alternative to a new extension and new bridge from Noarlunga to restore rail coverage to Seaford and provide new coverage to Aldinga; and

(f) the re-instatement of regular regional passenger rail services, including services to Murray Bridge, Victor Harbor, Whyalla, Mt. Gambier and Broken Hill;

and such report to include any other factors or recommendations that the Committee deems appropriate, along with a summary of submissions provided in response to a request for community input regarding each proposal.

Preamble

The **Conservation Council of South Australia Inc (CCSA)** is the peak conservation body for South Australia, representing over 50 of the State's environment and conservation organisations. CCSA is an independent non-profit, non party-political, community based organisation which provides resources, advice and representation for the SA environment movement, and which leads many of the key conservation campaigns in SA. CCSA is also known for its success in developing long-term community development, education, and on-ground environmental restoration programs.

CCSA regularly liaises with Local, State and Federal Governments, government agencies, media, educational institutions, NGOs, unions, industry, business and other groups on matters relating to the environment and social justice. As a community organisation, much of what CCSA achieves is through a large network of skilled volunteers from all walks of life for its office, on-ground, governance and campaign activities.

The Conservation Council of South Australia is committed to a healthy environment for South Australia.

Introduction

CCSA welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the **ERD Committee** on how South Australia can best address its current and future transport needs through development of an efficient, integrated public transport system.

As a low-density, car-dependent city spread out over 1800km², Adelaide in its current form is inherently unsustainable. It is particularly vulnerable to future of the cumulative impacts of climate change and peak oil. Massive changes for South Australia's society, economy and environment lie ahead as a result.

Transport will be one of the sectors that will be heavily impacted across the board. It has a significant impact in its own right - at present nearly 20% of South Australian GHG emissions are transport related¹ with further increases projected under most scenarios.²

Residents on the outer-metropolitan periphery are likely to be the hardest hit and face substantial increases in fuel and energy costs. Rural and regional dwellers will also face particular hardship in a carbon-constrained era and are currently poorly served by public transport options.

¹ Tackling Climate Change – SA Government (2007), p34

² Transport Sector Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2007, Dept of Climate Change (2008), p iii.

Transport Planning for Sustainability

South Australia needs to develop a sustainable vision for its future in a climatically changed world.

The transport sector in South Australia faces a triple-bottom line imperative to reduce fossil fuel usage and greenhouse gas emissions as fast as possible to address the cumulative impacts of climate change and 'Peak Oil'.

Planning and investment in an efficient, integrated and sustainable public transport system, incorporating the necessary infrastructure improvements, will be critical in adapting to, and mitigating the negative consequences of, climate change and peak oil.

The State Government's **Tackling Climate Change** strategy identified the overarching goal for the Transport & Planning sector to be: "*South Australia to substantially reduce transport-related greenhouse emissions while maintaining accessibility and economic development*"³. Its foremost principle calls for integrated land use and transport planning⁴. This is strongly supported.

CCSA has previously called for the State Government (along with its federal and local counterparts) to incorporate planning for peak oil into its future planning strategies and projections across the board through an **Oil Vulnerability Assessment** and a **Peak Oil Action Plan**.⁵ This will have obvious implications for transport policies given our dependence on fossil fuels.

Holistic Planning – Reducing Urban Sprawl

Climate change and peak oil are interlinked and can be effectively addressed simultaneously. CCSA believes it is essential to develop a holistic long-term strategic vision that would revolve around major infrastructural investment in transport, particularly public transport and active transport. The earlier this is enacted, the cheaper and more cost-effective it will be.

Using the planning system to create more compact and energy efficient urban development is a win-win option for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and moving towards sustainability.

1. A **Transport Master Plan** should be developed and integrated with the proposed **Oil Vulnerability Assessment & Peak Oil Action Plan**, existing Planning SA strategy, and the over-arching State Government program **Tackling Climate Change**.

A strategic long-term vision has been articulated in part through the recent **Planning Review** and its proposal for a 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide⁶.

³ Tackling Climate Change – SA Government (2007), p34

⁴ Tackling Climate Change – SA Government (2007), p34

⁵ CCSA Submission to the ERD Committee on Peak Oil 2008

⁶ Report to the Minister for Urban Development and Planning from the Planning & Development Review Steering Committee for consideration by Cabinet, Executive Summary & Recommendations (2008) pp7-8.

Projected population growth should be focused and channelled into **Transit Oriented Development** (TODs) (as per recommendation 12 & 13). These are medium to high density, multi-story, mixed use, residential developments clustered around nodes along electric light rail corridors.

CCSA supports TODs in principle,⁷

2. Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) based on successful examples from Portland, USA and Subiaco in Western Australia should form a central focus of an integrated approach to land use in a Transport Master Plan.
3. Adelaide's TODs should be a showcase of world's best practice in terms of carbon neutrality, passive solar design, energy and water efficiency and waste management.

CCSA wholeheartedly endorses the viewpoint that “*Support can [best] be provided for these actions [integrated land use planning and TODs] by maintaining an urban growth boundary...*”⁸

4. The Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) should be retained to minimise the physical and the ecological ‘footprint’ of Adelaide and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport emissions.

Other objectives of the State government’s Tackling Climate Change transport and planning policy framework that should be incorporated into a Transport Master plan include: *moving towards more sustainable travel behaviour, improving the emissions performance of vehicles and fuels and to shift transport towards low greenhouse emission modes*⁹.

This submission will not address emissions performance of vehicles, nor bio-fuels and other alternatives to oil (which deserves an inquiry to itself), but will concentrate on the question of public and active transport as a low greenhouse emission mode and how best we can create “mode shifting”.

5. State Government and **Adelaide City Council** should work towards progressively reducing private car use in the Adelaide CBD.

A number of cities around the world provide examples of mechanisms to achieve these outcomes. These may include increasing the CBD resident population (that don't own cars), prioritising pedestrian access within the CBD, emphasising increased use of both public transport and active transport through cycle lanes and pedestrian precincts, ‘transit’ lane priority (eg bus lane or multi-occupant vehicles) and reducing car parking within the CBD.

Establishing frequent reliable public transport shuttles from Park'n'Ride nodes around the city and congestion pricing (the London model) are other initiatives worthy of assessment.

⁷ although we do not unequivocally support all of the proposed TODs, particularly Cheltenham

⁸ Tackling Climate Change – SA Government (2007), p36.

⁹ *ibid*, p 35

Public Transport

Overall, CCSA believes investment in public transport will deliver substantial returns across a triple bottom line, environmentally, socially and economically. Benefits include reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, noise, oil consumption, congestion and road accidents. In a carbon-constrained world public transport development is more sustainable.

Even if all private vehicles could be converted/replaced with electric/ hybrid/ bio-fuelled vehicles, it is clear that in general investment in public transport is a more efficient, environmentally friendly and cost effective way to move large numbers of people (and freight) around. Rail in particular provides substantial greenhouse emission reductions on a per passenger basis (especially compared to flying) and when electrically powered, will be capable of operating on a zero emissions basis.

6. The **SA Strategic Plan** target to improve Adelaide's public transport patronage to 10% by 2018 is lacklustre and should be increased to a more aspirational 25% overall.
7. Targets for travel into the Adelaide CBD should be raised to 50% by 2018.
8. Purchase of the Seaford-Aldinga rail corridor (budgeted for in the 2008 State Budget) should be fast-tracked. The extension of the train line along the Noarlunga-Seaford rail corridor should be progressed in tandem with the re-sleeping and electrification on the Noarlunga/Tonsley line.
9. The Tonsley rail line should be extended to develop a TOD around Flinders Medical Centre/Flinders University and Darlington.
10. CCSA support the proposal to re-route the eastbound ARTC freight route northwards via Mallala instead of via the Belair line. Passenger train services through the Adelaide Hills could then be re-introduced with services to Aldgate, Stirling Bridgewater and potentially extended to Mount Barker, Littlehampton and Balhannah.
11. To help resource the above-mentioned initiatives, the State Government should lobby for a substantial proportion of the federal **Building Australia Fund** to be invested in public transport and active transport infrastructure in South Australia.

Specifically this funding would be utilised to fast track the rollout of the electrification, re-sleeping and standardization of gauges on all suburban lines.

CCSA is unable to provide specific data on the feasibility of re-commissioning the Willunga, Northfield and Angaston lines and resuming regional services to Murray Bridge, Victor Harbor, Whyalla, Mt. Gambier and Broken Hill.

CCSA however supports these services being re-established in principle, based on increasing the sustainability of transport options, reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with the transport sector, shifting freight back to rail, moving towards renewably powered (public) transport and proactively addressing peak oil and the inevitable increases in the costs of liquid hydrocarbon fuels.

12. Services on the Willunga, Northfield and Angaston lines should be resumed or re-commissioned using the best (ie most sustainable) corridors available.
13. SA should continue to encourage and facilitate the switching of road freight to rail. This will require further investment in rail infrastructure across rural and regional SA.

Promoting active transport

Numerous strategies already exist to promote active transport. *Safety in Numbers, A Cycling Strategy for SA 2006–2010*, for example places a particular emphasis on actions that encourage replacement of motorised trips with cycling, such as comprehensive cycling networks and workplace end-of-trip facilities. Despite the good policy intentions, chronic under-funding is the norm.

14. To facilitate and promote active transport (eg cycling, walking) State and local governments should adequately resource an integrated network of bikepaths and walkways separated from motorised traffic throughout urban areas. Secure, undercover bike parking facilities and bicycle security at public transport stations/terminuses, within the CBD and at suburban hubs should also be provided.
15. Traffic calming devices should be implemented throughout residential neighborhoods and in selected retail precincts to create pedestrian-priority zones.
16. The City Free Bike scheme should be expanded and adequate publicity and funding given to the scheme.

Private Transport

17. The State Government should argue through COAG to abolish the considerable Federal subsidies for fossil fuel use that encourage private vehicle transport. Alternatively, they should be redirected into developing better infrastructure for public and active transport and/or give similar tax benefits to public transport users.
18. Car-pooling should be encouraged and facilitated by state and local governments, through workplaces and web-based programs. Flexibility in work start/finish times should be encouraged to spread peak loads across a broader timeframe to reduce congestion during 'peak hour'.
19. Priority should be given to buses and car pool traffic in dedicated peak hour transit lanes.

20. The State Government should lobby the Federal Government to enable all-electric vehicles such as the REVA car (quadricycle) to be road-registerable in Australia.
21. Incentives for the registration of non-fossil fuelled vehicles should be enhanced. This should include hybrid vehicles, and also differential registration pricing for smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles.
22. A comprehensive assessment of the viability of alternative fuels should be made. Infrastructure for alternatively powered vehicles, such as recharging stations, or alternative liquid fuels, should be established across the State.
23. State government should lobby for any Federal funding for the automotive industry to be conditional upon it being directed towards 'green car' research & development and manufacture.

Some of these options will require financial assistance from the Federal government that is now potentially available through the **Building Australia** fund.

We urge the ERD Committee to take this opportunity to produce a roadmap for the development of SAs transport systems across the next few decades and beyond. A long-term vision to develop a sustainable transport system (to underpin a sustainable future) is needed.

In the short term, CCSA supports the State Government *Tackling Climate Change Action Plan's* Transport & Planning objectives which include focusing on the following four areas: Integrated land use and transport planning, travel behaviour change, vehicle performance and mode shifting.¹⁰

Specific recommendations for public transport CCSA support include:

- o Improve public transport services
- o Improve infrastructure, safety and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists to encourage these zero emissions modes
- o Encourage freight to shift to lower greenhouse emission modes
- o Increase peak hour public transport services to meet high demand
- o Improve the frequency, speed and connectivity of public transport services
- o Consider investment in fixed rail infrastructure
- o Support zero emissions modes by:
 - o implementing *Safety in Numbers, A Cycling Strategy for SA, 2006–2010*, with a particular emphasis on actions that encourage replacement of motorised trips with cycling, such as comprehensive cycling networks and workplace end of trip facilities
 - o developing a walking strategy

10

<http://www.climatechange.sa.gov.au/uploads/pdf/TacklingClimateChange2007/GAP/GAP-TransportAndPlanning.pdf>

- Expand bus, train and tram fleet capacity
- Investigate measures to improve and support public transport services in activity centres, including in regional areas
- Facilitate the improvement and/or re-opening of key rail freight lines
- Assess opportunities and obstacles to increase the role of shipping in the domestic freight task
- Consider increased interconnectivity of the state's rail network with gauge standardisation and associated network improvements