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From: Kevin Eadie [kevin_eadie@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, 29 May 2008 6:27 PM
To: 2030 Project
Subject: Submission from Action for Public Transport

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

This submission has been prepared in response to the City of Sydney's exhibition, website, and other media promoted under the heading "Sustainable Sydney 2030" in April 2008. Action for Public Transport is a Sydney based, member-funded, transport advocacy group, formed circa 1975. We maintain a website at www.aptnsw.org.au

"Sustainable Sydney 2030" (the "Plan") is commended for inviting citizens to think about how they want Sydney to look and function in the future. The Plan's extensive use of graphics has made this process easier. We welcome the opportunity to express our views. Our interest is in transport, and we note that of the five "big moves" identified in the Plan, transport is a factor in four of them. A distinction needs to be made though, between "transport" and "access". People's lives can be improved by better "access" to services and facilities. "Transport" is just one means of achieving that improved access.

We endorse the central theme of the Plan, which is to make walking, cycling and public transport more attractive and to restrict the availability of car parking. But we have concerns. Most of the ideas are expressed in broad terms, which is probably appropriate for a plan of this type, but it leaves perhaps too much scope for misinterpretation, intentional or otherwise. It should be noted that the sentiments expressed in the Plan about Sydney's transport "problems" are not new. They have been espoused, little changed, by transport professionals and newspaper editorialists for at least thirty years. Yet Sydney's transport problems persist.

Which brings us inevitably to politics. All the decisions about the development of Sydney in the period under examination will be political. It is disappointing that there has been nothing in the Plan to make citizens aware of this element nor to stimulate discussion about the role politics will play in the outcomes.

Nor does the Plan address the numerous institutionalised encumbrances within and between government agencies which threaten to stifle its implementation. The community needs to understand these threats, discuss them, and to drive reform, for the Plan to succeed. Many analysts have commented on the excessive influence exercised by the Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA) on transport developments in Sydney since the middle of the twentieth century. The "railway ethos" constraining RailCorp and its previous entities has also been public knowledge for decades. Successive governments have promised reform but progress has been slow, and ultimately ineffective.

Recent developments in Sydney have only confirmed that these depressing tendencies are likely to continue. Of all the transport infrastructure projects promised over the last three decades, only the roads projects have been completed. The effect has been to make car travel more attractive. The

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few rail projects which have been started have been curtailed or threatened with contraction. The electronic tolling of motorways has been integrated by merging a number of independent systems but a similar plan for an integrated electronic public transport ticket, "Tcard", has faltered. The RTA's policy on implementing bus priority measures is that they will only be countenanced so long as they do not in any way restrict the flow of general traffic. The RTA is focussed on moving vehicles, rather than people.

The "silo" culture within state agencies has been aired in the press recently. Instead of constructive inter-agency development and mutual support for projects offering community benefits, isolation and competition between agencies have undermined or thwarted such projects.

The new federal government is showing signs of an interest in urban issues, particularly with the establishment of its well-resourced infrastructure fund.

It is our hope that the politicians from all three levels of government can capitalise on the synchronicity of a number of events; the Plan, a growing public awareness of the causes and solutions of congestion, increased awareness of peak oil and climate change, and federal funding for infrastructure. Only with such unprecedented cooperation will Sydney succeed in showing the rest of the world that that we really can effect worthwhile change.

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