

Land Transport

AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS ACTION PLAN LAND TRANSPORT SERVICING THE COMMON GOOD

The old ways of planning and funding transport must change dramatically to deal with the triple whammy of unchecked and growing greenhouse emissions from the transport sector, the rise in fuel cost associated with looming peak in world oil production and the increasing traffic congestion clogging our cities. The answers do not lie in more freeways, more inefficient cars and bigger trucks but in increased infrastructure expenditure and planning, availability and patronage of public transport, mass transit, rail and light rail infrastructure, tax reform, increased fuel efficiency of the national fleet and alternatives to petroleum fuels. Australia, like other countries around the world, is facing an immense challenge - to create sustainable cities for the future.

Our Action Agenda

Commonwealth and State funds pooled for all transport infrastructure and allocated on the basis of clear criteria that deliver on long term transport reform objectives and include:

- **Substantial funding for integrated public transport** - rail, light rail and bus networks and transit lanes on urban freeways with a priority for those metro areas where transport services are poor.
- **Improved public transport** frequency, amenity, safety, reliability and accessibility, particularly in outer metropolitan areas. Better scheduling and ticketing coordination.
- **Rail services extended** to residential developments on the city fringe and modernised and high quality sub-regional feeder and circumferential bus services provided.
- The east coast route modernised, multi-modal exchanges, rail links into ports and nationally consistent regulations, codes and communication systems provided. **Fast train services** extended to all major airports and regional centres and linking Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Adelaide for rapid, low emissions passenger and freight travel.
- **Safe off-road walking and cycling networks** for commuters. **Improved local access to public transport** for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Substantially **changed car parking practices** by reducing space requirements for new and refurbished commercial development and increase parking at transport nodes, including safe cycle lockers. With the states, introduce **car**

To maintain a business as usual model of urban development is to condemn the future population and industry of that city to a sub-optimal living and working environment"

**Dr Peter Newman,
Reshaping the future of
cities**

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parking and congestion charges in inner urban areas and reduce public transport charges by at least 10%.

- A **moratorium on residential expansion on the fringes of capital cities** and a shift of growth to regional centres and underutilised urban land. Transport reform objectives applied to urban planning for all land use change.
- A **greenhouse trigger** in Federal environment laws for major infrastructure projects.
- **FBT reformed** to encourage public transport, cycling and car pooling.
- **Excise on alternative fuels removed** until agreed targets have been met
- **Tax incentives for fuel efficient and low emission vehicles**, funded from higher taxes and registration fees for inefficient vehicles and the reintroduction of **fuel excise indexation** (abolished in 2001).
- The ban on blends of more than 10% ethanol lifted and mandatory biofuel targets of 20% of all petrol and diesel sold phased in by 2020. Ethanol **petrol blend** (E10 and E85) availability mandated at all outlets,
- **All government vehicles switched to alternative fuels** and fuel efficient vehicles on re-leasing.
- Democrats-negotiated **alternative fuel vehicle conversion maintained** and extended to electric and LNG vehicles of all sizes.
- **Grants for compressed natural gas, liquefied natural gas, hydrogen and electricity refuelling infrastructure.**
- Auto industry subsidies conditional on producing **high efficiency vehicles** including hybrids
- An enhanced **Bass Strait Passenger Vehicle Equalisation Scheme** that keeps passenger and freight costs as close as possible to those of rail and road over the same distance.
- **Implement recommendations** from the Government's own House of Representatives' **Sustainable Cities** inquiry.

The Issues:

With crude oil at \$80 a barrel in 2007 compared to \$35 in 2004 - the rising global oil price translates to rising domestic fuel costs and household affordability pressures and debt levels. In order to have continued energy security, minimise the impact to our economy and reduce greenhouse emissions - means we need to reduce our dependence on oil and switch to sustainable alternatives.

Australia must undertake as soon as possible, aggressive actions on both transport supply and demand side. On the supply side, develop all feasible options for producing alternative liquid fuels. On the demand side, Australians should increase the fuel efficiency of the national fleet, increase expenditure, availability and patronage of public transport, mass transit, rail and light rail infrastructure.



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