



Keeping Hobart Moving



Feedback on the draft plan

2024

Keeping Hobart Moving: feedback on the Keeping Hobart Moving – Transport Solutions for Our Future draft plan

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Introduction

This submission has been developed by the Tasmanian branch of Engineers Australia's Transport Australia Society (TAs) to provide expert comment on the Keeping Hobart Moving draft plan.

It draws on the expertise of our members, TAs thought leadership discussion papers and Engineers Australia's Future of Transport discussion paper. Of particular relevance is the newly released [Urban Transport Systems](#) Report. All papers can be found on Engineers Australia's website.

About Engineers Australia

As Australia's national body for engineering, we are the voice and champion of our 120,000-plus members. We provide them with the resources, connections, and growth they need to do ethical, competent and high-value work in our communities.

A mission-based, not-for-profit professional association, Engineers Australia is constituted by Royal Charter to advance the science and practice of engineering for the benefit of the community. We back today's problem-solvers, so they can shape a better tomorrow.

Transport Australia society is a technical society for transport professionals in Australia. It focusses on key transport decisions affecting the wellbeing, productivity and sustainability of our cities and regions.

Contact

Engineers Australia and the Transport Australia Society welcomes the opportunity to be part of the ongoing work that encompasses Keeping Hobart Moving and urges agencies and stakeholders to draw on our expertise.

To discuss the points raised in this submission further, please contact Darren Beattie, General Manager, Engineers Australia at tasmania@engineersaustralia.org.au.

General comments

Our Tasmanian Branch agrees that Greater Hobart's future prosperity will require a great transport network. As a group of local transportation professionals, we make this submission to highlight priorities for the Keep Hobart Moving plan, and to suggest some changes for adoption in the final plan.

It is appreciated that multiple agencies and stakeholders will be involved with the development of the plan. We ask and encourage that the issues presented here by TAs are shared with these groups and considered as part of a constructive and ongoing collaboration.

We welcome the plan's objectives to improve the transport system so it provides better choice, access and equity. We also welcome the emphasis on the need to improve active travel and public transport options so the objectives can be realised.

We agree that Keeping Hobart Moving – Transport Solutions for our Future must be an:

“inherently dynamic plan, as cities and peoples' needs change.”

The Plan requires more than simply a pipeline of projects, it requires a greater commitment to a long-term view of the desired outcomes. This commitment must include the prioritisation of investment decisions which will enable modal shift (for example, from private car to bus) by providing infrastructure that supports access to employment, health services and recreation within a safe and environmentally sustainable system for people of all ages and abilities.

The draft plan does not go far enough in shifting transport priorities and investment away from roads, towards public transport and active transport.

We have 5 recommendations, that flow from recommendation 1. These are outlined below.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: ensure city development and transport actions are aligned under a Sustainable Mobility Management approach

The TAs Urban Transport Systems Report (August 2023) explains that a Sustainable Mobility Management (SMM) approach is the best way to manage growth in urban populations and economic activity while lowering congestion and environmental impacts of transportation. Pursuing SMM has key elements:

- Land and building development plans that place people close to jobs, schools, services, with access to public and active transport. A key commitment of Keeping Hobart Moving must be to retain and enforce the Urban Growth Boundaries set in STRLUS. The oft-used model of expanding urban limits must be dropped in favour of increased density within existing limits on transport corridors. This will require determination by both the state government and councils, in the face of the inevitable resistance to change by some developers and existing residents. New sub-divisions within the current urban limits need mandated design elements that maximise the ease of use of bus services and active transport.
- Improve the existing road and street network so that connectivity and safety for active and public transport users are maximised
- Manage travel demand to reduce car traffic on the network

- Improve public transport – frequency, reliability and coverage
- Improve cycling opportunities – via infrastructure and policies that encourage cycling
- Improve walking opportunities – via 30km/h speed limits around schools and busy pedestrian areas, more frequent road crossings, more and better walking routes that incorporate shade, shelter, attractiveness and directness.

Recommendation 2: more ambitious targets, backed by increased commitment and funding for public and active transport

The draft Plan includes a target “to increase public transport use for journeys to work from 6.4 per cent to 10 per cent by 2030.”

It also includes a target to “double the number of people walking, wheeling or bike riding over 10 years”.

The plan should adopt a stronger and more comprehensive set of targets. This is part of the process of enabling governments and agencies to pursue a clear goal, that can then be backed by properly planned and funded action.

Suitable targets for the shift of trips from private cars to public and active transport options should be adopted accordingly.

The public transport target for instance should be broader, as buses and ferries are used for trips to school, services and other purposes beyond work.

The Transport Australia society recommends a cycling target of 8 per cent for all outer urban trips and 10 per cent for inner city trips. These targets should be adopted for Hobart. Walking targets should also be adopted – for instance strong walkability scores for each of Hobart’s suburbs. See [Walkability – Australian Urban Observatory \(auo.org.au\)](http://Walkability – Australian Urban Observatory (auo.org.au)).

Targets alone are destined to be missed unless there is genuine commitment to making public and active transport a cornerstone of Greater Hobart’s transport system.

The world’s great cities and towns share a commitment – by their governments, businesses and residents – to public and active transport. This ensures that walking, cycling and using public transport is entrenched within the culture of the place.

Hobart has a beautiful natural setting and values its heritage buildings, but this constrains the road system, which is now reaching the capacity limits. There is now a need to develop a long term solution, which requires an integrated transport and land use plan.

For Hobart to realise its potential as a great city, the most space and energy-efficient means of moving people should be prioritised to manage growing congestion.

The Tasmanian Government must lead cultural change that celebrates and values active and public transport.

This will require:

- a boost to funding.
- governance and attitudinal changes that replace the view that the provision of public and active transport is an inconvenient cost that must be minimised; with a belief that public and active transport are valuable elements of Hobart’s fabric that will enable the region to thrive.

Recommendation 3: Plan to introduce travel demand management systems, that incentivise public and active transport and disincentivise private car use.

Hobart will move and function better when a significant share of trips is shifted from private cars to public and active transport.

This requires greater provision of public transport services and active transport opportunities – as discussed above. This is part of providing an incentive to shift but will not be sufficient to ensure that the size of the shift is maximised.

Further incentives and disincentives will be required. These could include:

- Introducing and increasing parking fees for off street parking spaces in defined high demand areas. This has proven effective in other capital cities.
- Limitations on the provision of additional public and private car-parking places
- Financial and legal pressures have led to a need to examine road user charges as a new revenue source to replace fuel excise as EV's become more prevalent. This could be done in a revenue neutral manner at the introduction, and then adjusted over time as required. The charge could be varied by location and time of day, this would allow it to discourage peak hour commuting and reduce congestion, but not overly penalise long distance trips in regional areas. This should be a long-term action and coordinated at a national and state level. The introduction of road user charging was flagged in Australian Treasury's [Intergenerational Report 2023 \(treasury.gov.au\)](#), see box 8.2.

Recommendation 4: Direct funding to public and active transport

Public funds will always be constrained. It follows that transport network funds should be allocated to areas that deliver the greatest benefit.

This has not always been the case. Funding has often gone to expand the road network, without full consideration of alternative network solutions that would better shift trips from the road to other transport modes and lead to a more efficient and effective system.

Keep Hobart Moving should explicitly commit to a network planning process that comprehensively assesses transport problems and identifies a full range of potential solutions – that encompass different options such as infrastructure provision, service provision and changes to regulatory systems. Such processes are well understood – but not always fully followed. See [Home | Australian Transport Assessment and Planning \(atap.gov.au\)](#).

The expenditure of Australian Government funds on state government operating expenses (such as the provision of public transport) is effectively prohibited under current arrangements. This in turn prevents the proper comparison of infrastructure-dependent options with service provision options (as should occur under the process recommended under ATAP guidelines).

The Tasmanian Government should therefore continue to advocate the Australian Government to allow federally provided transport funding to be spent on transport network operations.

Recommendation 5: be committed, united and bold

Our overarching and final recommendation is to encourage the Tasmanian Government to fully commit to the overall objective of allowing Greater Hobart to become a truly great city served by a great transport network.

A full commitment will require an elevation of the priority and funding given to active and public transport elements of the network.

The Government, including its elected representatives, departments, agencies and officials alike, must be united in the commitment to make Greater Hobart move well. It must be bold enough to push through challenges to the status quo and short-term criticism from narrow interests, to ensure that sustainable and equitable long-term strategies can be implemented.

Engineers Australia and the Transport Australia society is available to help with this task.