

NEW PLAN SHOWS STAGE 1 OF BUS RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM FOR NORTHERN BEACHES TO BE INTRODUCED IN COMING YEARS

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The future of public transport services across the SHOROC region including Sydney's Northern Beaches and Mosman looks positive under a NSW Government bus strategy released yesterday.

"Our councils have been advocating for better public transport for the people of the Northern Beaches and Mosman for many years and it is great to be working with this government especially our local MPs to get things moving," said SHOROC President and Mayor of Pittwater Jacqueline Townsend.

The councils first proposed a Bus Rapid Transit system (BRT) in the regional strategy *Shaping Our Future*, including routes from Chatswood to Dee Why and Mona Vale to the CBD, and the local NSW MPs have been working with the councils to bring about the new system.

"This plan is a good first step, promising to provide faster and more reliable services by effectively introducing stage 1 of the much-talked-about Bus Rapid Transit system starting next year, as well as significantly improving public transport for the vital Warringah Road corridor."

'Sydney's Bus Future' outlines that the NSW Government will introduce a 'Rapid' service on the Mona Vale to CBD corridor, including new services, infrastructure and traffic planning improvements, new interchanges and better buses. It will also introduce 'Suburban' routes between Chatswood and Manly via Frenchs Forest and Dee Why, as well as Belrose and the CBD via Eastern Valley Way.

"I look forward to working closely with the NSW Government to fast-track this work to see more reliable and faster bus services for our region as the first stage of the planned BRT on these two major corridors".

An area where 'Sydney's Bus Future' deviates from SHOROC's *Shaping Our Future* strategy is that it plans for further investigation of a 'full Bus Rapid Transit' system (BRT) over the coming years, for potential introduction in the longer-term. A 'full' BRT would require further infrastructure improvements and provide a higher level, more reliable and faster service.

"I would like to see the introduction of the BRT system well before 2023 and will call on the Minister for Transport and our local MPs to see if we can bring this investment forward. The findings by Transport for NSW that the Mona Vale to CBD corridor is the most congested in Sydney and the imminent construction of the new Frenchs Forest Hospital support a roll out well before 2023 as the plan appears to suggest. "

"The next steps should be a detailed regional transport plan or access strategy just for the SHOROC region and I look forward to working with our local MPs and the Minister to get this detailed plan finalised," Cr Townsend said.

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