

PO Box 361
Brookvale NSW 2100

Ph: 02 9905 0095
Fx: 02 9939 6454

Email: admin@shoroc.nsw.gov.au
Web: shoroc.com



13 April 2012

The Hon Gladys Berejiklian, MP
Transport Minister
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Minister Berejiklian

SHOROC submission on NSW Long-Term Transport Masterplan Discussion Paper

SHOROC is a partnership of Manly, Mosman, Pittwater and Warringah councils led by a Board of the council Mayors and General Managers. Collectively we represent a population of over 275,000 residents who contribute over \$20 billion annually to the NSW economy, and a region of over 288km².

I write to formally provide input on the NSW Long-term Transport Masterplan Discussion Paper on behalf of the four SHOROC councils and our communities. We welcome the opportunity to provide input and appreciate involvement in the Masterplan Advisory Group and recent community forum.

Our residents continually tell us that transport is the biggest issue across the region and numerous studies show we have the slowest major roads in Sydney if not Australia. Travel around and in and out of our region relies heavily on private vehicles because of slow and unreliable public transport.

We have collaborated through SHOROC to strategically plan for the future, bringing together landuse with major infrastructure planning. In regard to transport, the priorities for investment are:

- Constructing a Bus Rapid Transit system for fast reliable public transport from Mona Vale to the city and from Dee Why to Chatswood.
- Road upgrades for: Warringah Road particularly the intersections with Wakehurst Parkway and Forest Way, a critical part of construction of the Northern Beaches Hospital; for Mona Vale Road; and for the Wakehurst Parkway.

The attached submission responds to the *NSW Long-term Transport Masterplan Discussion Paper* by outlining in more detail what we consider the priorities are for transport planning for the SHOROC region and for NSW. We look forward to your response on this issue and would welcome a meeting with you to discuss the submission in further detail.

Your government has taken a great positive step in conducting a pre-feasibility study into a Northern Beaches BRT and considering Northern Beaches Hospital transport requirements. I encourage you to take the next step and commit to constructing the transport infrastructure our region sorely needs.

Yours sincerely

Jean Hay AM
SHOROC President, Mayor of Manly

cc. *The Hon Duncan Gay, MLC*

NSW LongTerm Transport Masterplan Discussion Paper SHOROC Submission

April 2012

1. Introduction and objectives

SHOROC is a partnership of Manly, Mosman, Pittwater & Warringah councils led by a Board of the council Mayors and General Managers. We collectively represent a population of over 275,000 residents who contribute over \$20 billion annually to the NSW economy.

Our region covers an area of approximately 288km² in north east Sydney and is characterised by its outstanding natural environment, vibrant community and large influx of tourists and weekend visitors.

Numerous studies have shown we have the slowest major roads in Sydney, if not Australia. Travel around, and in and out of our region, relies heavily on private vehicle patronage because of our slow and unreliable public transport system.

Our residents continually tell us that transport is the biggest issue across the SHOROC region, particularly the lack of efficient and reliable public transport and ongoing road congestion. Despite this our region has been overlooked for decades in transport plan after transport plan.

Shaping Our Future – the regional strategy for transport, health, housing and jobs

To address this, our councils decided we would take the lead by developing an integrated regional strategy, bringing together major directions for housing, employment, transport and health to address major issues for the region now and for the future.

Shaping Our Future links council planning for future housing and employment growth together with major infrastructure planning, focussing on hospital planning and the major transport infrastructure priorities for our region.

It was developed through an evidence-based spatial analysis and planning process conducted by experienced council staff in partnership with expert planning consultants. *Shaping Our Future* was formally adopted in September 2010 by all four SHOROC councils.

Shaping Our Future clearly outlines what the councils consider are the major transport infrastructure and planning priorities for the SHOROC region and these are detailed further in this submission. In addition, as liveability and sustainability are valued highly by the SHOROC community and councils, it should be noted that the principles underpinning *Shaping Our Future* are to maintain and enhance these characteristics as the region grows including:

- Maintaining and enhancing quality of life, wellbeing, the high proportion of jobs close to home and access to social services, recreation, infrastructure and transport.
- Increasing engagement, involvement and connectedness of community members and development of social capital.
- Seeking to improve housing choice in response to demographic changes such as the availability of affordable housing for a diversity of households, including key workers.
- Creating more sustainable communities with more appropriate management of the region's water, energy, waste and natural resources including greater residential and business

conservation and re-use and investigation of the viability of providing water, energy and waste recycling services within the region.

- Maintaining the biodiversity and quality of bushland and waterways.

In addition, SHOROC recently provided a submission on the NSW 2021 Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan. This submission stated that based on the priorities identified in the NSW 2021 Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan Discussion Paper, at the Community Forum and on the *Shaping Our Future* strategy, council experience and Community Strategic Plans, the local priorities should be:

- Transport – improving transport to, from and across the region by removing congestion and improving public transport.
- Healthcare – building the Northern Beaches Hospital with Mona Vale Hospital in a complementary role, improving aged care and mental health.
- Growing the local economy.
- Protecting the environment – bushland, beaches and waterways.
- Liveable communities – improving education services, youth services, reducing alcohol-related crime and addressing affordable housing.

Prioritising council strategic plans to integrate land use and transport planning

SHOROC notes the NSW Longterm Transport Masterplan is planned to be integrated with the Department of Planning's Metropolitan Strategy and sub-regional plans to bring together land use and transport planning.

As such, we consider it vital that the regional priorities and actions are aligned to the regional priorities identified by councils due to their responsibilities for land use management and role in growing the economy, protecting the natural assets and building and maintaining vibrant, connected and safe communities.

In addition, there is a need for the Mosman Council area to be included in planning for the SHOROC region, in particular due to the strong relationship between land use and transport impacts between the Mosman LGA and the Warringah peninsula. This is particularly evident in planning for solutions to the heavily congested Spit/Military/Pittwater road corridor.

This submission

This submission is based on the NSW Longterm Transport Masterplan Discussion paper and the outcomes from the Sydney (north) regional forum on 6 March 2012 hosted by The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP. The submission is structured to provide comments as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Major Regional infrastructure priorities
3. Government vision for transport
4. Management of transport demand
5. Planning and regulatory regional priorities

2. Major Regional infrastructure priorities

Relates to Discussion paper strategic questions 4,5,6,7

As outlined above, transport is undoubtedly the biggest issue for our region and one the councils have sought to address by identifying the regional transport infrastructure priorities which should be funded and constructed as a matter of urgency.

Priority investment is required from the NSW Governments to enhance the major public transport and road infrastructure for better access to, from and within the SHOROC region so that SHOROC can maintain and enhance its contribution to the NSW economy.

Investment is essential to address major issues now and barriers to future growth, including:

- Lack of availability of efficient public transport for much of the region, affecting residents' ability to rely on this form of transport and driving patronage to private vehicles, further congesting the major transport corridors.
- Heavy congestion on the three major routes to/from the region which are:
 - Warringah Road/Wakehurst Parkway and Mona Vale Road to the East/West, transporting commuters between the regions' major centres and to Chatswood, Macquarie/Ryde and beyond.
 - Spit-Military Road corridor to the North/South, the second-slowest road in Sydney.
- Improving sustainability of the region by reducing reliance on private vehicles as the major transport mode, accounting for example for 72% of commuter journeys.

SHOROC welcomes the work of the NSW Government in conducting a pre-feasibility study into a Bus Rapid Transit system for the Northern Beaches and its mention in the Discussion paper.

There is a critical need for the NSW Government to take the next step and commit funds to constructing the Bus Rapid Transit system as well as the critical road upgrades identified below for our region.

This need is particularly evident considering recent Transport for NSW studies which:

- Identify in the NSW Longterm Transport Masterplan Discussion paper that the Pittwater/Spit/Military Rd corridor is one of the top five highly constrained corridors in Sydney facing the greatest congestion pressure now, and in 20 years time, without additional capacity; and
- Identify that the Warringah Road corridor, particularly the Wakehurst Parkway and Forest Road intersections will exceed peak demand capacity by 2016 without any action. The *AECOM Frenchs Forest Specialised Centre reports – Local Transport Assessment and Strategic Transport Assessment* overwhelmingly conclude that the transport network around Frenchs Forest is already at capacity and needs significant investment in road infrastructure and public transport improvements, to accommodate background growth expected over next five years.

With little to no major government funding in decades, our ageing transport infrastructure is beyond its limits and congestion is only set to worsen with population growth to increase by 11% over the next 20 years (*NSW Statistical Local Area Population Projection, DoP 2010*).

The major infrastructure priorities for the Northern Beaches and Mosman are as follows:

East-West corridors

The priority for investment in the East-West corridor is between the major centres of Dee Why/Brookvale and Frenchs Forest to Chatswood, Macquarie and beyond to take pressure off the North-South corridor including:

- Fast public transport links to Chatswood, Ryde and CBD with an initial focus on priority median-strip bus corridors using a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system which is adaptable to light rail or other greater capacity transport in future years as needed.
- Grade separation at the intersections of Wakehurst Parkway and Warringah Road, a critical part of the construction of the Northern Beaches Hospital, and Warringah Road and Forest Way.
- Mona Vale Road upgrade to a divided dual-lane carriageway for its full length through to Mona Vale to improve safety and efficiency, and enable Warriewood/Ingleside growth.
- Upgrades to Wakehurst Parkway to provide flood-free emergency access to the hospital.

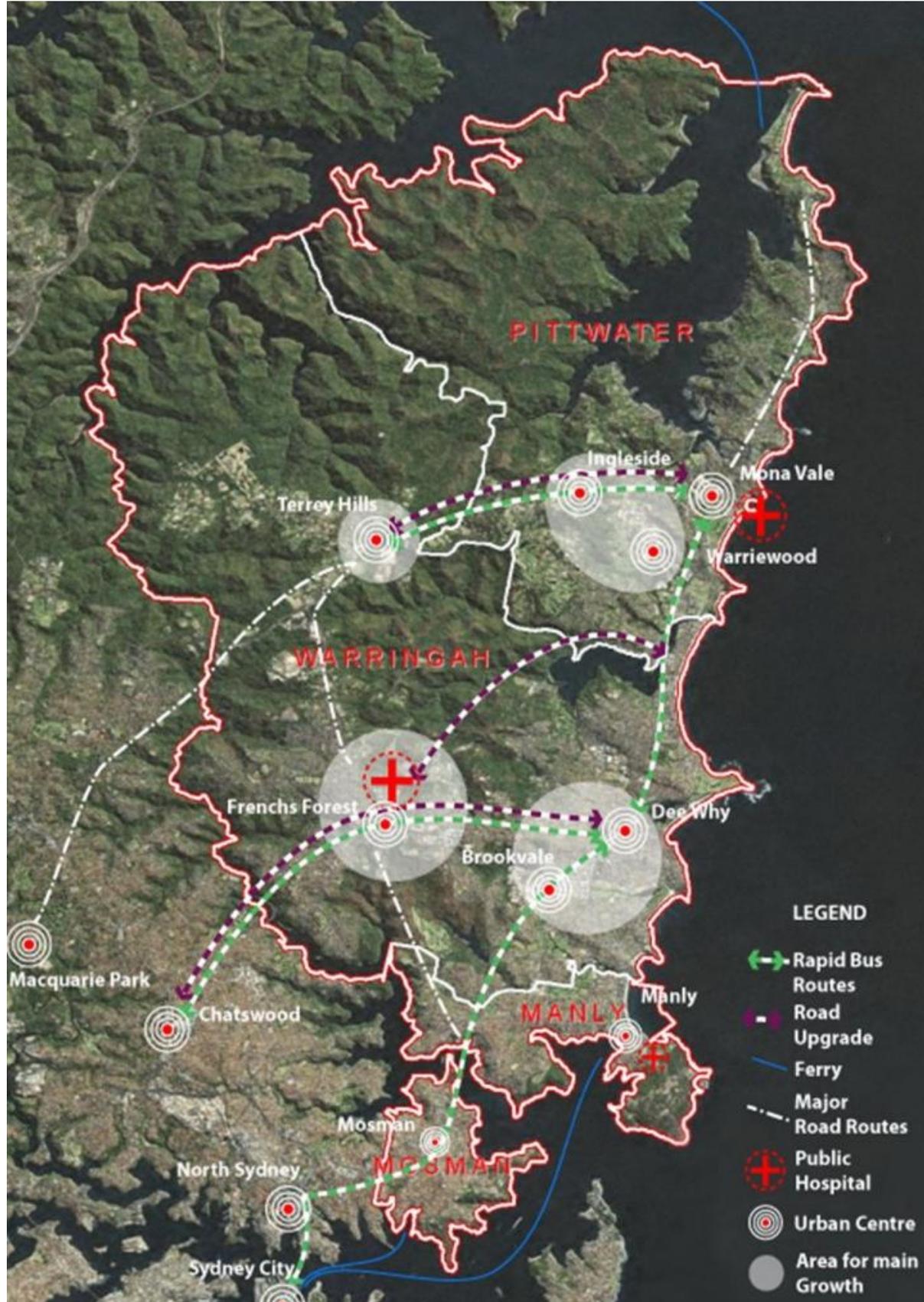
North- South corridor

The priority for North/South, linking the major centres with the north of the region as well as North Sydney and the CBD, is:

- Improving north/south public transport for SHOROC and Sydney's North West:
 - A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system on the north-south corridor from Mona Vale using a peak hour co-located median bus lane to the city or preferably to a new modal interchange at Neutral Bay.
 - A new underground Neutral Bay interchange to also serve buses from Sydney's North West, linking to a metro-style rapid transit service to Wynyard using the Harbour Bridge and redundant tram tunnels.

A map showing proposed routes is included on the following page (Figure 1).

Fig. 1. Major infrastructure priorities and directions for housing & employment



Comments on corridor constraints

SHOROC notes as outlined above that the Discussion paper identifies that the Pittwater/Spit/Military Rd corridor is one of the top five highly constrained corridors in Sydney facing the greatest congestion pressure now, and in 20 years time, without additional capacity. This assessment meets with our experience of this corridor as one urgently requiring investment.

However, SHOROC is concerned that the Discussion Paper does not appear to recognise the existing capacity problems of the east-west Warringah Road corridor. Figure 16 of the Discussion Paper identifies transport corridors with demand and capacity challenges over the next 20 years. The east-west Warringah Road corridor is relegated to 'other corridors'.

This conflicts with Transport for NSW's own recent studies which indicate that the east-west corridor along Warringah Road is at capacity now. As mentioned above, the *AECOM Frenchs Forest Specialised Centre reports – Local Transport Assessment and Strategic Transport Assessment* overwhelmingly conclude that the transport network around Frenchs Forest is already at capacity and needs significant investment in road infrastructure and public transport improvements, to accommodate background growth expected over next five years. This investment is imperative given the expected development of a major hospital at Frenchs Forest.

1. Government vision for transport

Relates to Discussion paper strategic questions 1,2,3

In identifying its transport plan as the *NSW Long Term Transport Masterplan*, the NSW Government has acknowledged the need for a long term plan, a vision for transport in NSW. This vision has been sorely lacking for too long and it has appeared transport infrastructure in recent decades has been planned on a knee-jerk or political basis rather than on an objective long term needs basis.

Unfortunately, while it is no doubt good-intentioned and commendable to build a transport plan around the needs of the customer, customer needs and expectations will evolve over time and, as companies such as Apple and Google have taught us, customers don't always know what they need.

Vision and leadership is required from the government to look ahead to the future and beyond what we as customers consider are our needs, to deliver a transport system that makes our cities, our towns, our State and our Country the best they can be. This transport plan and this government should provide the vision, determination and practicality of planners such as Bradfield to bring this about.

2. Management of transport demand

Relates to Discussion paper strategic questions 21, 5, 6

The Discussion Paper gives primary attention to infrastructure solutions but gives lesser weight to the management of transport demand. This has two aspects.

Firstly, the integration of land use planning and transport provides an opportunity to shorten transport journeys and encourage more environmentally sustainable transport modes. For example, development of employment growth near where people live should be a primary focus of the Transport Masterplan. The SHOROC region is characterised by a high degree of jobs containment and the Masterplan needs to ensure good transport services for employment lands - industrial, commercial, retail, schools, hospitals and tourism facilities – to maintain and improve containment in the region.

The SHOROC councils have recognised this and are seeking to integrate transport and land use planning in the *Shaping Our Future* strategy. This strategy focusses on creating more jobs closer to home and focussing development of employment growth around the existing transport corridors.

Secondly, the Discussion Paper tends to skip over the implications of 'teleworking' in reducing the need for travel. The SHOROC region contains a large number of 'home' businesses and the opportunities for

encouraging further 'teleworking' should be addressed in the Masterplan. This should include the implications of the digital economy and the construction of the National Broadband Network.

The ultimate goal for sustainable urban transport should be to have active transport such as walking and cycling and public transport as the preferred mode for any journey.

3. Planning and regulatory regional priorities

Relates to Discussion paper strategic questions 6,7,9,10, 18,

SHOROC considers as outlined above that major infrastructure investment is required urgently for this region. However, SHOROC also considers there are a number of other regional, planning and regulatory improvements that can be made to improve transport in our region and NSW.

Regional transport planning

The Discussion paper identifies that for Sydney 'Corridor' and 'Modal' strategies will be developed. It is considered transport planning could be significantly strengthened by the appointment of a regional coordinator to work in partnership with councils through the ROCs to holistically coordinate all transport planning across a region. This would be particularly effective for a region such as SHOROC which has limited access points. SHOROC would welcome such an appointment and the opportunity to better integrate land use and transport planning that this would provide.

Public transport and road improvements to improve travel times, reliability and accessibility

For the SHOROC region there are a number of regional issues to be considered in working to improve travel times, reliability and accessibility.

- The high level of jobs containment in the region and large number of journeys within the region for business and recreation highlight the need to also focus on improving public transport and car journey times for travel within and around the region, not just the commute to and from the region.
- As much of the public transport is on the major corridors, there continues to be a need for greater strategic planning and more investment in park and ride facilities as they can be effective in assisting people to move to public transport. However, expansion of park and ride facilities needs effective partnerships between local and state governments.
- There is a need to recognize and cater for different types of traffic to just the morning and afternoon peak. For example the road corridors can often be at their most congested during the weekend as people travel to visit natural assets (eg. Beaches in summer or sportsgrounds) and conduct their local business (shopping centres, local centres).
- The interaction of the north-south Pittwater/Spit/Military Road corridor with the CBD, particularly Wynyard, is a critical factor in public transport planning. As outlined above, SHOROC considers there is a need to greater use existing underground space such as the redundant tram tunnels under Wynyard for servicing the public transport system from our region.
- There is a need to maximise the use of ferries and as such SHOROC supports competition with a focus on improved services and greater integration with other public transport services such as the bus network through coordinated timetabling.
- The provision of Wifi on all public transport modes would greatly improve the attractiveness of the bus network across the SHOROC region.

Integrating ticketing and removing the 'penalty' of changing modes

Congratulations for the government's positive steps in finally moving to an integrated ticket for public transport across Sydney. However, in developing the 'Opal' and its fare structure, there is a need to ensure that fares are calculated on a per-journey basis and not a per-mode basis so that travellers are

not penalised with a new fare for each mode they take on a particular journey. Charging on this basis provides much greater flexibility for passengers to choose the route that suits their journey rather than the one that includes the least changes.

This will become particularly important for the residents of the Northern Beaches and Mosman if the government does start terminating more buses in the Wynyard precinct to cut the number of buses in the city and expecting passengers to change to rail or light rail to travel the rest of their journey.

It will also enable greater patronage of the east-west Warringah Road public transport corridor (once the government invests in this route) as an alternative route or transport mode to the CBD or centres across the northern Sydney region such as Macquarie Park.

Alternative transport modes such as community bus services, cycling, walking and car share

The inclusion of walking, cycling and alternative modes of transport in the Discussion paper is supported. Recommendations to improve active and alternative transport modes are as follows:

- There should be a much greater use of community bus services and integration with these services with each other and commercial operators. A key issue that needs to be resolved is that under the current regulatory framework in NSW, Council-provided community bus services are unable to recover costs by charging passenger because of competition restrictions. These services have the ability to feed into the main transport routes as well as provide a local public transport solution and could, with the support of the government through regulatory reform, help achieve a public transport system with a much broader reach meeting the needs of all the community.
- Active transport including cycleways should be strongly supported and a fully interconnected cycle network should be rolled out across Sydney, filling in the gaps and fixing choke points, and heavily promoted through tools such as public signage and on-line trip planners. A priority in all new infrastructure planning and renewal should also be the inclusion of cycleways where feasible as the cost of construction is much lower than if there is a need to retrofit.
- The same support and tools should be provided for walkers with greater investment in safe walking routes and pedestrian-focussed maps, signage and trip planners.
- Integration of active transport with other transport modes should also be a priority, with initiatives such as cycling friendly facilities on public transport and secure bike storage at park & ride facilities and intermodal stations.
- Car share services are becoming more prevalent and a number of companies operate car share services in the metropolitan area. It is claimed that car share replaces up to eight privately owned cars and the implications of car share for future road capacity and local parking infrastructure should be addressed in the Masterplan.

Managing Urban Freight

It should be recognised that there is an urban freight task even for a region such as the Northern Beaches and Mosman. In the SHOROC region the limitations of the highly constrained and often narrow and/or steep road network create issues that need to be managed. SHOROC supports the development of a freight strategy and considers there is a need for it to focus on local needs and issues such as road constraints, pinch points and cycleways.

Further information

For more information visit the SHOROC website www.shoroc.com or contact SHOROC:

Ben Taylor, Executive Director SHOROC
P: (02) 9905 0095 | F: (02) 9939 6454
PO Box 361, Brookvale NSW 2100
E: admin@shoroc.nsw.gov.au