

Sustainable Cities Authority (SCA)

So far, the SCA proposal has received very positive feedback along with a number of constructive comments including:

- The need to avoid duplication of services.
- The fact that many of the ideas already exist as (Victorian) State Government policy.
- The idea that the SCA could start its life as an advisory body.
- That the language was too emotive.

In response I would emphasise that the SCA needs to be a streamlined body that must work with existing organisations and not duplicate their work. The SCA could certainly start as an advisory body but if we want to see some real progress we will need to start funding some innovative and enlightening ideas.

It may be that the mechanisms are already part of the policy framework but the fact that they are not being widely implemented (in areas of lower density) demonstrates the need for the SCA. With regards to language, I hope that I was more subdued than recent media 'dire warning' headlines with regards to climate change. My point is that we are facing several pending issues (including Climate Change, Peak Oil, and pandemic) which will lead to social upheaval. We need to plan for these contingencies. The inclusion of 'pandemic' may seem unusual but I was trying to make the point that social upheaval could create the conditions that allow such a pandemic.

More Feedback on the SCA Proposal

"This is a useful document built on a sound idea in response to our specific and multiple concerns in the area of sustainability - particularly the policy isolation and decentralisation currently occurring in the industry generally. "

Paul Smith, Manager City Strategy,
City of Port Phillip, 29/1/07

"My first question relates to the boundaries of issues to be addressed by the proposed SCA. While it is indicated that the key responsibilities would relate to urban design, transport, building design and tourism, the term sustainability is extremely relevant to many other questions and it is likely to be difficult to contain the work of any Authority to the four topics indicated.

Nevertheless the key consideration to determining whether or not a new Authority is required, or whether the issues could be addressed within existing frameworks, is closely

aligned to the clarity of the definition of the key roles of the proposed organisation.

My second question is partially implied in the first. What are the reasons why an existing bureaucratic structure can't adequately address the key responsibilities as an alternative to proposing another organisation which is likely to mean that communication challenges, etc, are expanded? In practice, broadening the responsibilities of an existing Authority is probably more tenable politically than creating a new organisation, although it is recognised that the indicated desire for a joint Federal/State Taskforce in itself means that any proposal would be challenging.

My third issue is that the Draft contains a number of proposals/ideas of what might be solutions. As a consequence, it is unclear as to whether the proposal to create a Sustainable Cities Authority is primarily aimed at establishing a vehicle to drive achievement of favoured proposals or whether the key objective is to establish an Authority with an open agenda which might include considering the viability or otherwise, of these proposals.

I note in your Transport Newsletter #12, that a number of parties have provided feedback expressing their enthusiasm for the concepts. While it is good to receive enthusiastic and strongly supportive feedback, the key to the success of the proposal will probably lie outside of the quantum of support and be more orientated to the capacity to drive important outcomes, either within the policy frameworks of the Federal and State Governments or at least in ways which is acceptable to the participating Governments.

I hope these comments are of assistance to the development of the proposal."

Ian Robins, CEO,
Wyndham City Council, 22/1/07

Free Forums

Sustainable Transport: Visions for Victoria

Stephen Ingrouille, Principal, Going Solar

○ Saturday February 17, 4pm
Sustainable Living Festival, Federation Square

(In the 'Design Tent' behind Transport bar)

○ Wednesday March 7, 5.30pm
ANZSES, 60 Leicester Street, Carlton (Vic)

○ Thursday March 29, 6.15pm
Council Chambers, Manningham Civic Offices
699 Doncaster Road, Doncaster (Vic)

(Manningham Bookings: Kay Toussaint 9840 9348 or eeadmin@manningham.vic.gov.au)

Sydney Trip

I've just returned from a two and half week trip to Sydney where I managed to observe a number of transport modes: airport train, suburban trains, buses, aerial gondola, Manly ferry, inner-harbour ferry, JetCat, SuperCat and RiverCat

NSW is in the grip of an election and transport issues are featuring prominently, particularly with regards to the rail system. Apparently the rail authority removed trains in its revised timetable so that the remaining trains would run on time (which was redefined as being 5 minutes late).

On my trips from Wynyard to Granville and Marrickville the trains seemed to be running extraordinarily slowly and the system compares very unfavourably with, for example, the system used in Vancouver. Removing trains naturally leads to overcrowding which is of particular concern in a humid climate like Sydney.

I was however impressed with the new railway station at Parramatta and also with the RiverCat service from Parramatta to the city. Generally all the ferry services were reasonable but with some obvious opportunities for improvement (which we will try to incorporate in the proposed Port Phillip Bay service). I was also quite impressed with the First Fleet vessels which are used on some of the inner-harbour runs.

Buses were one transport mode that didn't seem to be receiving undue criticism in the media - perhaps because Sydneysiders are immune to such an appalling service. The classic transport problem is demonstrated by the (peak hour only) Route 171 bus from Manly to the CBD (Wynyard) which tries to encompass as much of the Dobroyd Head peninsula as possible. This desire to run the service within reasonable proximity to the majority of dwellings means that the bus travels in a convoluted pattern before finally heading to its destination. I also observed the sister service (132) which runs over part of the same convoluted route arrive and leave one stop four minutes ahead of the scheduled time. Anyone arriving at the bus stop on time would have had to wait another hour for the next bus.

On my way to the airport, I caught the 171 bus which made reasonable time on most of the route only to be caught in a bus jamb between the Harbour Bridge and the Wynyard terminus. At one stage (around 9am) there were queues of buses in four lanes all trying to converge on the one spot. Perhaps it's time to build a direct rail-based system with feeder buses along the route!



RiverCat Wharf at Parramatta



RiverCat on Parramatta River



First Fleet and RiverCat at Circular Quay

Newsletter Feedback

"Thanks for another interesting newsletter! Just thought you might like to add ...our Transport Planner here at Wyndham, to your email list.... I'd like to keep receiving them too, so don't take me off your list."

Jen Nicita

Sustainability Officer,
Wyndham City Council

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