

The Rail Now Campaign Incorporated

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MEDIA RELEASE

Why We Need More Bus Lanes

Recent complaints about the bus-only lanes in Parramatta highlight the fact that Sydney is yet to adjust to being a city of 4 million people, according to the Rail Now Campaign.

“While sympathising with those stuck in traffic on the Great Western Highway and elsewhere, people have to realise that you cannot drive as much in a city of 4 million as you could when Sydney had only 2 million people,” a spokesman, Philip Howell, said today. “Keeping our old habits just isn’t an option.”

“You can’t keep cramming more and more people into the same space without it having consequences. One consequence is that we can no longer afford the luxury of driving whenever and wherever we want.”

“Some people have asked why we should have bus lanes when so few people travel by bus. The answer is simple. We need to make much more efficient use of the land we’ve set aside for transport corridors. If we do it properly, plenty of people will be prepared to travel by bus.”

“Everyone knows Sydney’s land is increasingly valuable. We can’t keep wasting more and more of it on roads, just so that 4m people can drive around with one person per car. That is simply too expensive - environmentally and economically.”

“The first thing we should be doing is building more railways. The next most important thing to do is to make better use of the roads we’ve got. We can do that by replacing cars with buses. Bus only lanes are an important part of the solution.”

“There have been occasional complaints about bus lanes “forcing” people to use public transport. Do these people ever complain about all the people who are forced to drive by present policies? Without bus lanes and adequate public transport, people have no choice but to drive. You cannot have choice in transport unless your transport system is balanced. And our transport system is chronically unbalanced due to over-reliance on the car. Bus lanes help redress that imbalance.”

“The real problem with bus only lanes is that so far the Government hasn’t provided the buses to run on them. Hopefully they’re coming soon, but the Rail Now Campaign is a bit sceptical.”

“For bus only lanes to be viable, you need at least a bus every 10 minutes; preferably every 5 minutes in peak hour. We could easily afford this if the Government didn’t waste so much money on Transitways. Let’s not forget the Carr Government has spent \$315 million on the Liverpool Parramatta Transitway. That’s nearly a third of a billion just for one bus route! And they’re about to repeat the mistake with the North-West Transitway, stage 1 of which is forecast to cost roughly *half a billion dollars*.”

“You don’t need a new road to have a new bus service. It costs only about \$150,000 per lane per kilometre to change a road lane into a bus lane. Had they used bus lanes on existing roads, the Liverpool Parramatta Transitway could have been built for only \$9 million, instead of \$315 million. The money saved could have been used to buy extra buses to provide the type of service which would attract people out of their cars, with plenty left over to improve the railways.”

“If you’re stuck in traffic, don’t blame the bus lanes. Just demand the buses we need to run along them.”

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