

People for Public Transport Annual Report 2009

WHAT HAS HAPPENED FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT OVER THE LAST YEAR?

In March 2009, People for Public Transport was sent a copy of the New Connections magazine. This is one of the occasional publications from the State Government which is used to announce those projects which they feel sufficiently proud of to tell everyone.

Looking at this edition of 8 pages we see:

- ❖ A headline article entitled “express roll-out underway” taking up the first page. Later, there is another full page about major road projects, namely, the northern connector and the upgrade of Port Wakefield. Later again, another page on the northern connector, and the Sturt Highway upgrade.
- ❖ With no sense of irony whatsoever, we are told of a “green growth study underway”
- ❖ An article on “Adelaide’s sustainable transport future” concerning Transit Oriented Development at over 14 sites around Adelaide.
- ❖ An article “New Transport projects on horizon” about four major rail related projects. Additional articles reference the Belair rail renewal and the rail car depot relocation.
- ❖ An assertion that the Glenelg Tram Overpass at South Road enhances the local environment, and of the 18,000 trees that will be planted now that the ANZAC Highway Underpass is completed.
- ❖ A trial of a Google based journey planner incorporating timetable information and an article on “mobile timetables at your fingertips”
- ❖ Articles on a travel deal for Clipsal 500 patrons offering free travel on public transport, the After Midnight bus service and the footy express service.
- ❖ The replacement of polycarbonate windows on trains with glass windows – “I can see clearly now” we’re told.
- ❖ “Adelaide metro patronage continues to grow and grow” which says that patronage as increased by 19% since 2000.

This one document highlights both how far the State Government has come in promoting public transport...and how much it remains stuck in old style transport policies. The gratifying aspects are the initiatives such as the Transit Oriented Developments, the rail upgrades and the new types of information services. The unfortunate aspect is the substantial continued investment in infrastructure for motor vehicles.

Then again, there are those issues which one doubts will make into an official publication. Over the last two years we have warned in various submissions to parliamentary enquiries of the need to engage the community in the planning of Transit Oriented Developments.

It is of concern that the government has, to date, mishandled the implementation of Cheltenham Transit Oriented Development to the point where so many of the local residents see the loss of the main park as the sole outcome for them.

We don't expect the Government to announce that despite the many new bus routes and route changes, that there are persons in the community who feel that they ended up worse off with their bus service. We still wish for news of a major investment in the bus system comparable to the announced investments in the rail and tram system.

Our verdict – it was the best of years, it was the worst of years?

WHAT KEPT US BUSY DURING THE YEAR?

People for Public Transport activities during 2008-09 included:

- ❖ Forwarding copies of earlier submission to Legislative enquiry into Peak Oil plus supplementary documents to the Environment, Resources and Development Committee Parliament of South Australia enquiry into public transport and to the federal Infrastructure Enquiry;
- ❖ A representative attending the Conservation Council Energy Summit in February 2009
- ❖ Three Committee members speaking at hearings of the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee Inquiry into the investment of Commonwealth and State funds in public passenger transport infrastructure and services 23 July and presenting documents after the hearings;
- ❖ Making a submission to the Plan for Greater Adelaide;
- ❖ Meeting with Speaker in Residence Fred Hansen on public transport, pedestrian and bicycle issues in conjunction with other groups in October 2009;
- ❖ Briefings from Department of Transport (DTEI) on service and infrastructure changes for members and other interested people (timetable and route changes, Belair line and tram overpass);
- ❖ Following up enquiries and complaints from the public on public transport issues;
- ❖ Interviews with the media, answering a media questionnaire, published letters to the Editor, and sending media releases;
- ❖ Correspondence with transport providers and Department of Transport Energy and Infrastructure, Minister and other members of Parliament;
- ❖ Answering questionnaires from the Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure;
- ❖ Attending seminars and meeting with a transport researcher.

WHERE TO FROM NOW?

Many of you will have seen the draft 30 year Plan for Greater Adelaide, optimistically titled "Planning the Adelaide we all want".

The cheery tone of the artwork belies the mixed content. As with the New Connections articles above, we find that an acknowledgement of mass transit as a vital part of the city's future is grafted onto a plan which:

- ❖ projects a large increase in the city's population, yet assumes that we will have water for another 560,000 persons;
- ❖ still allows substantial green field growth at the margins of the city;
- ❖ allows for development such as Super Schools which seem isolated from the public transport that should support them; and
- ❖ in the best tradition, is vague about the details of how suburban infill will work, and what new mass transit initiatives might actually cost.

What the draft plan does successfully achieve is to show the many factors – land use, transport planning, industrial policy, population policy etc. that need to be considered. It should indicate to us that as we continue to advocate for improvements in public transport, that we continue to be good citizens in the many other areas of social concern.

On a more focused level, People for Public Transport was one of a number of groups that was invited to meet with the Thinker in Residence, Fred Hansen. His role is to advise the State Government on Transit Oriented Development. It is his intention to continue to meet with the same groups during the rest of his term.

Our hope is that we continue to use this, and many similar opportunities, to continue to advocate not just for better public transport but for a better community.

MEMBER'S FUNDS – THE FINANCIAL REPORT

Income and Expenditure from 1 July 2008 to 22 November 2009

Donation	\$ 2.00
Interest	\$ 0.16
Memberships	<u>\$ 340.00</u>
Total Income	\$ 342.16

Committee Costs	\$ 50.00
Internet	\$ 200.00
Subscriptions	\$ 60.00
Venue Hire	<u>\$ 90.00</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 400.00

Loss	\$ 57.84
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Balance Sheet as at 22 November 2009

Cheque Account	\$1,734.82
Cash on Hand	<u>\$ 58.50</u>
Total	\$1,703.32