

An aerial map of Sydney, Australia, showing the city grid and surrounding areas. The map is overlaid with a semi-transparent white layer, and the title 'Sydney Metro - City & Southwest' is centered on it.

# Sydney Metro – City & Southwest

Submission to Transport for NSW  
prepared by **Urban Taskforce Australia**, July 2015

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## 1. The Urban Taskforce supports the Sydney Metro – City & Southwest project

The Urban Taskforce welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to Transport for NSW on the Sydney Metro – City and Southwest proposal.

The Urban Taskforce believes that a new railway network such as the Sydney Metro, will assist in alleviating public transport bottlenecks throughout the Sydney metropolitan area and this provides an excellent opportunity for the growth and renewal of areas surrounding the stations on the Sydney Metro line. As indicated in the NSW Government's Sydney Metropolitan Strategy, *A Plan for Growing Sydney*, an additional 664,000 dwellings are needed to accommodate Sydney's growing population. Over the next 50 years, we will need 1.66 million new homes, which is double the number of homes currently within the next Sydney metropolitan area. Maximising the development opportunities provided by the Sydney Metro will assist greatly in ensuring that this demand for dwellings can be met.

Our submission focuses on:

- Stimulating development around the Sydney Metro stations;
- The need for a coordinated, whole-of-Government approach to ensure the best use of the Sydney Metro line, in particular ongoing cooperation with the Department of Planning & Environment;
- Selection of stations

## 2. The Sydney Metro – CBD and Southwest must stimulate significant development around stations

The Department of Planning & Environment has calculated that population growth within the Sydney metropolitan area over the next 20 years will require an additional 33,200<sup>1</sup> new dwellings each year. The Urban Taskforce believes the real figure should be closer to 40,000 new dwellings a year due to the significant undersupply already existing in the Sydney housing market. In the 2013/2014 financial

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Planning & Environment (2014) *A Plan for Growing Sydney*. This is calculated by using the overall projected demand for dwellings from 2011 – 2031 and dividing this by 20 to derive an annual production rate.

year, only 22,750 dwellings were completed in the Sydney metropolitan area. New dwellings are required urgently.

The Urban Taskforce has previously championed the need for more towers around major rail stations and has undertaken research to examine this approach to density. An Urban Ideas study titled 'Towers & Transport' has found that housing one third of Sydney's population in residential towers at transport nodes can create the density required to accommodate future population growth without changing the character of all low-density suburbs in the Sydney metropolitan area<sup>2</sup>. Approximately 5,000 new residential towers at railway stations across Sydney can provide a third of Sydney's housing over the next 50 years without requiring planning authorities to make the unpopular decision to increase densities throughout existing low density suburbs.

Studies indicate that apartment style living is becoming an increasingly popular dwelling choice as people prefer to be located close to transport, services and amenities. An ageing population, coupled with a demographic shift towards smaller households, has increased demand for apartments. High –density residential development also encourages retail and commercial development nearby and can facilitate lively cultural and entertainment precincts. We have enclosed copies of relevant reports to support our findings in our submission.

Under-development of areas around the Sydney Metro stations will only increase pressure on Sydney's already congested road network and encourage further unsustainable urban sprawl.

### **3. A whole of government approach is needed to maximise the use of transport assets**

A 'whole of government' approach is needed to maximise the potential of the Sydney Metro – CBD & Southwest, in particular ongoing collaboration with the Department of Planning & Environment.

It is noted that the Department of Planning & Environment is undertaking work on the Bankstown to Sydenham Priority Urban Renewal Corridor, along the Southwest component of the Sydney Metro-CBD to South West line, through consultation with relevant councils.

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<sup>2</sup> Urban Taskforce Australia (September 2014) *Urban Ideas: Towers & Transport*. Available at [www.urbantaskforce.com.au](http://www.urbantaskforce.com.au)

This same approach has been used by the Department in the past with development of the Parramatta Road Corridor, with little outcome to date.

The Urban Taskforce fears the same result will occur again if steps are not taken to establish an overarching agency with the authority to make strategic plans, environmental planning instruments and assess development applications. The Department is currently working on the establishment of the Greater Sydney Commission, which could be the ideal agency to undertake the role of coordinating development around the corridor, provided this agency has the authority to make strategic plans, environmental planning instruments and assess development applications.

Although the establishment of such an authority is the responsibility of the Department of Planning & Environment, not Transport for NSW, it is crucial that Transport for NSW understand that in order for the Sydney Metro to service the maximum amount of passengers, strategic planning around the Metro stations must be coordinated by an overarching planning authority and not individual councils.

#### **4. Future stations**

The Sydney Metro – CBD and South proposes new stations at Central, Pitt Street, Martin Place, Victoria Cross, Artarmon Industrial Area and Barangaroo. In addition, there is a choice being between new stations at:

- St Leonards or Crows Nest
- University of Sydney and Waterloo

St Leonards and Waterloo are the best choices for new metro stations as they both support significant new development potential.

##### **St Leonards**

- Provides access to the existing high rise commercial business hub (including major offices for global companies such as IBM, Manchester Unity, Verizon) as well as the Royal North Shore Hospital.
- There is existing high rise residential development ensures around St Leonards and capacity for additional residential development.
- The existing high density residential and commercial development places pressure on this area for quality, reliable public transport.
- The existing heavy rail line at St Leonards would enable passengers quickly and efficiently connect to the north Shore, Northern and Western train lines of the Sydney Rail Network.

- Many of the Urban Taskforce members see excellent opportunities for significant development around St Leonards station if there is strong state government leadership.

### **Waterloo**

- A new station at Waterloo would be the catalyst for a major renewal of this area including a mixture of social and private sector housing.
- The *Urban Renewal State Environmental Planning Policy 2010* (Urban Renewal SEPP), which focuses upon ensuring the renewal and redevelopment of key sites along transit corridors, has identified Redfern-Waterloo as an urban renewal precinct with potential for high density housing, commercial and mixed use development.
- Identification of Waterloo in this SEPP provides a faster strategic and statutory planning process for this area, providing an opportunity for this area to be renewed and revitalised quickly and efficiently.
- Currently, the only public transportation provided to Waterloo is the Sydney bus network, which constrains the development potential of this area.
- A Metro station at Waterloo would allow passengers to connect with bus services along Botany Road, increase connectivity to the Australia Technology Park and Redfern Station and contribute to the revitalisation of the Redfern Waterloo area.
- A station at the University of Sydney does not provide the same renewal opportunities.

## **5. Review of building heights and floor space ratio around all new stations**

In order to accelerate the statutory and strategic planning required to facilitate additional dwellings in accessible areas, a review of building heights and floor space ratio around all Sydney Metro stations should commence as soon as the project details are finalised. Development around future metro stations should be reflective of the increased accessibility in these areas, with development controls to match.