

21st Century Public Transport solutions for Canberra

Transport Canberra electric bus



Trackless tram in Perth



Advantages of Bus Rapid Transit (with electric buses)

- Quieter than diesel buses
- Provides better air quality than diesel buses
- Reduced carbon emissions
- Avoids adverse heritage impacts
- Reduces road congestion
- Reduced fuel and maintenance costs
- Costs 53% less than light rail
- Much better cost-to-benefit ratio than for light rail

Other public transport options

- Trackless trams – use existing roads, can move in mixed traffic, quiet operation, no need for a concrete-based steel track, zero emissions, much cheaper than light rail
- Autonomous electric vehicles – already operating on demand in the USA, and Scotland, door-to-door service, same advantages as trackless trams
- Increased use of high occupancy vehicle lanes – reduced congestion, travel time and emissions

Problems with Light Rail Stage 2B

- Not cost effective
- Inflexible
- Expensive bridges required
- Trade-off between Parliamentary Triangle route and travel time
- No express service
- Travel time likely to be double that of current express buses
- Many passengers will not get a seat
- Extra capital cost to operate on batteries in Parliamentary Triangle
- Adverse heritage impacts (e.g. trees in centre of Commonwealth Ave)
- Disruption to road traffic during construction and in operation

Recommendations to the ACT Government

1. Complete Light Rail Stage 2A ground works only, while undertaking a thorough evaluation of the future adoption of a trackless tram system to replace light rail.
2. Take no further action on Light Rail Stage 2B and cancel existing contracts or amend them, to provide for bus rapid transit, as soon as practicable.
3. Accelerate the acquisition of electric buses so that the transition to zero emissions public transport is completed by 2030.
4. Prepare and publish full cost benefit analyses and a business case for the use of Bus Rapid Transit between the City and Woden.
5. Extend the existing Adelaide Avenue T2 lanes to Civic and Woden.
6. Prepare and publish a plan for the use and management of T2 and T3 lanes, electric buses, Bus Rapid Transit, trackless trams, and autonomous cars in the ACT, integrating these modes with Light Rail Stage 1 to provide all Canberrans with a fully integrated public transport network.
7. Seek funding from the Commonwealth Government to collaborate with other cities to investigate and trial emerging public transport modes including trackless trams.

Recommendations to the Commonwealth Government

- Stick to the statement made during the election campaign not to support projects, such as Light Rail Stage 2B, where the benefits do not stack up. The Commonwealth Government should reject the claimed wider economic benefits of this project unless the ACT Government identifies and fully justifies these benefits, and provides evidence that they can be achieved.
- Respond to ACT Government requests for Stage 2B funding by instituting a public inquiry into the project, either through the EPBC Act or through a reference to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories. Such an inquiry should only take place when the business case and the environmental impact statement prepared under the EPBC Act are publicly available.

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This report can be downloaded from the Deakin Residents' Association

- www.deakinresidents.asn.au