PIA response to RACT Greater Hobart Mobility Vision

The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) is the peak representative body for the planning industry in Australia and like the RACT PIA is a member-based organisation. This submission is made on behalf of the Tasmanian Division. The RACT and University of Tasmania is to be commended on the leadership role that it is taking in preparing a Mobility Vision for Greater Hobart.

Greater Hobart is experiencing a relatively rapid urban growth, with low density residential development in outer dormitory suburbs, with Hobart’s central business area acting as the focal point for employment, services, entertainment, retail, and education. Building or purchasing a home on the urban fringes is perceived as more affordable but results in greater travel distances, as evidenced by the Origin Destination survey undertaken by State Growth.

The increased population living on the urban fringe have limited options for reliable transport into the cities. Yet car-based transport has been shown to be increasingly unreliable in Hobart and is approaching capacity. Furthermore, transport is the now the subsector which is attributed to the largest greenhouse gas emissions in Tasmania. Tasmania currently has, on average, the oldest passenger vehicles in Australia, an average of 12.3 years old, resulting in many being made before more stringent emission standards.

Hobart’s location and topographical constraints increase the complexity of the planning of transport options, however Hobart and Tasmania are not alone in the nation when it comes to the current challenges of growth and infrastructure planning.

In recent days PIA has strongly endorsed a federal parliamentary inquiry’s call for the development of a national plan of settlement to help guide the growth of Australia’s cities and regions. The Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities made the recommendation in its report into the Australian government’s role in the development of cities tabled on 17 September.

PIA National President Brendan Nelson said rising community frustration at the nationally disjointed growth of our cities and regions meant governments and policy-makers needed to consider new ways to ensure that Australia’s cities and regions remained some of the most liveable in the world. “It’s clear we’re reaching a tipping point in terms of the pressures on our cities, towns and regions,” Mr Nelson said.
PIA believe it is important to recognise that the challenges around the current state of mobility in Greater Hobart are inextricably linked to broader strategic planning issues including importantly settlement strategy, from the national level, through State, regional and down to the local level. There are a number of existing land use planning strategies that are currently guide land use decisions in the Greater Hobart area, primarily the Southern Tasmanian Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS); for transportation the Southern Integrated Transport Plan, and while still in its draft form, the City of Hobart Transport Strategy 2018-2030.

The STRLUS provides the existing framework for settlement including an Urban Growth Boundary for the region, Planning Schemes within the region are required to be consistent with this Strategy, however it has been recognised at both Local and State Government levels that the current regional strategies including STRLUS is in need of review, given the significant change that has occurred since it was originally approved.

Unfortunately, the State Government has indicated that this review of the STRLUS will not occur in the short term, PIA considers that to effectively plan for improvement in the mobility of Greater Hobart a coordinated settlement strategy and review of the STRLUS is necessary. PIA would therefore like to advocate for outcomes that consider the broader land use issues, to guide the region’s growth. Further to the above we provide further specific comments on the transport options below:

It is important that solutions consider:
- Health;
- Environment;
- Inclusivity and accessibility

Any vision for Greater Hobart should be built on data and evidence, and we believe the vision should also include consideration of Smart City principles across greater Hobart that will allow for an integrated, modern and connected public transport network, as well as, providing options and incentives for people of working age to move closer to where they work or include active transport as part of their commute. Mobility projects that would facilitate this include:

- **Light Rail. Stage 1 from Elizabeth Street to Claremont. Stage 2 Claremont to Brighton**
  The fixed nature of light rail allows for greater confidence for community and developers, with value capture projects helping fund such proposals⁶. Transit oriented developments such as Claremont in Western Australia show the ability rail focused projects can have on increasing inner urban living⁷. Claremont, WA could be considered analogous to Glenorchy in terms of layout and prominence the rail line has on the suburb. The confidence in rail based projects is proven on the Gold Coast; an increase in property values by up to 30 percent has been found⁸. Electrified light rail can be carbon neutral in Hobart.

- **Rapid bus network to Kingston/Huntingfield/Sorell**
  As areas which will not connect to potential light rail, dedicated bus lanes/bus priorities should be developed for the growing areas of Kingston and Sorell to improve the travel time and reliability for this modality. Bus services would also be improved if increased frequency of service could be delivered, for example running every 10 minutes in peak times, as is currently occurring on the Glenorchy and Howrah to UTAS routes. Evidence from the upcoming Project 2018 bus review by the state government should be considered, as well as a stronger push for a coordinated effort from both local and state governments to fund the construction and maintenance of bus network infrastructure.

- **Ferry service to Bellerive /Tranmere/Lindisfarne**
  A ferry service should be considered for areas not currently serviced well by public transport. Active transport modes should be promoted within these suburbs to service any passenger ferry.
• Active transport networks, both retrofitted and for new developments, as per Heart Foundation’s Healthy Places and Spaces guidelines.

We appreciate the opportunity this project creates and would like to be involved where possible in the future.

Yours sincerely

Irene Duckett MPIA (Fellow)
Planning Institute of Australia, Tasmanian President

---

1 https://www.tomtom.com/en_gb/trafficindex/city/hobart