

NZ Lead on Sustainable Transport

"New Zealand wants to halve its transport greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 ... by using biofuels, buying more diesel and hybrid vehicles, and being one of the first nations to widely use electric-powered vehicles, [according to] an energy strategy released by [the NZ PM Helen Clark]. The move to low-carbon fuels means that by 2020, 25 per cent of liquid fuels used in transport will be from renewable sources, rising to 85 per cent by 2050. Currently, national transport — mainly using petrol and diesel — guzzles 44 per cent of New Zealand's total energy consumption. Unless its energy policies change, greenhouse gas emissions are projected to rise by 39 per cent by 2030. The Government said it plans to have 80 per cent of the vehicle fleet capable of using 10 per cent biofuel blends or electric power by 2015. Its plan seeks electric vehicle sales to reach 60 per cent of market share by 2040. Hydrogen-powered vehicles will make up another 25 per cent of the vehicle fleet by 2050." Ref: **The Age 18/10/07**

More on Federal Funding of PT

"There is an ongoing debate within the ALP about how the platform commitment to federal funding ought to be realised. There is also some sensitivity regarding the way Auslink has become an important funding program for regional centres. Given these debates the worst thing that could happen was an attempt to flush out the ALP. The effect of the senate resolution, if supported by the ALP, would also be to have allowed the national party and regional Liberal MPs to run scare campaigns alleging that Labor was going to rob Auslink to build public transport systems in the inner suburbs of capital cities. We - sustainable transport activists/advocates - need to get a bit smarter about how we play the political process. By and large we have been dumb and the result is the inordinate power, especially at the federal level, that the road and freight lobby enjoy."

Confidential Feedback 9/10/07

"In a recent survey of 1000 voters conducted by the Australian Research Group, the key finding was that a majority of people believe that the Federal Government should consider funding major additions to urban public transport in the same manor it funds roads [and that] 83% of respondents said the issue of public transport infrastructure would be of importance when deciding who they would vote for in the federal election."

Ref: **Geraldine Mitchell Herald Sun 15/10/07**

State Funding of PT

"The [Victorian] Government reported to Parliament yesterday that it was rolling in money. It had a budget surplus of \$1.36 billion.... However the State Government's disclosure yesterday that it would spend \$270 million for another eight trains, on top of the 10 mooted in the May budget, to alleviate crowding is only a part of the transport solution. With a 20 per cent increase in patronage in the past two years, and an urban sprawl in which more than 60 per cent of people live farther away than walking distance from train and tram stops, the network equally needs more lines for these extra trains. This, of course, requires more than an announcement of a train shopping spree, with the trains not on the track until 2009. With the city's population projected to increase by a million by 2030, the planning needs to be in place now.... Mr Brumby's duty is to transform money into social equity."

Ref: **Editorial The Age 11/10/07 "Long-term vision never surplus to requirements"**

More on Copenhagen Bike Lanes

"The main objections are due to the width of the lane, 2 m plus 1m separation, so that 2 bicycles can go abreast, allowing them to be passed. This effectively removes a traffic lane if parking is preserved. There has been a large increase in bike riding in the inner suburbs, particularly in peak hours, so it will be interesting to see if it is enough to justify the wide adoption of Copenhagen style lanes."

Confidential Feedback 9/10/07

Copenhagen challenge



More on the Cost of Parking

For some interesting observations on the cost of parking in the USA see the article: 'We Paved Paradise' by Katharine Mieszkowski www.salon.com/news/feature/2007/10/01/parking/

Online: www.goingsolar.com.au/transport

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Amtrak Increases Patronage

"...the cheery man from New South Wales was impressed with a couple of things he'd not seen in three previous Amtrak treks across [the US] nation's rails over the past two decades: Americans seeming to outnumber tourists, and [there are] far fewer empty seats.... Amtrak anticipates its fifth-straight record year for ridership nationwide, helped by high gasoline prices and congested highways and airports that seem to have encouraged people to keep their vehicles parked.... In trying to hash out the federal budget for next year, Congress is weighing how much U.S. taxpayers should underwrite the passenger service. Amtrak has requested \$1.53 billion, nearly twice the amount the Bush Administration wants to give it. In the past, Bush has proposed giving the service nothing.... Amtrak says the lack of stable funding holds it back, leaving it unable to commit to infrastructure improvements. It still uses some equipment dating back half a century and cannot add new rail cars it says it can easily fill on some routes.

The service also continues to be nagged by travel delays, mostly because it must share the tracks with freight haulers that own the rails and charge Amtrak a modest fee -- \$90 million in the last fiscal year -- for using them. With freight traffic soaring in recent years, Amtrak's on-time performance slid to an average of 68 percent last year, its worst showing since the 1970s....Amtrak has more than \$3.3 billion in debt -- largely tied to equipment leases. Amtrak's operating losses for 2005 topped \$550 million, and its struggles along certain routes continue: The iconic Sunset Limited train between New Orleans and Los Angeles, for instance, loses 62 cents per passenger mile.

Amtrak officials are pinning their hopes on the bipartisan Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act, which would authorize \$3.3 billion for operating expenses and \$4.9 billion for capital improvements over the life of the bill, from 2008 to 2012... To the Midwest High Speed Rail Association's Rick Harnish, Amtrak's time is now.

'The era of cheap oil is over, and we have to find ways to take costs out of the system. There should be a lot more trains running, and they should be faster,' he said. 'If ridership is growing this strongly with the kind of delays they get, just think of what kind of response they'd get if they ran on time. 'It's not rocket science,' he said. 'It's just about providing a good product.'"

Ref: Jim Suhr www.mail.com 9/9/07

Oil & War

"After 9/11, we went into Iraq. Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11, we've occupied two countries now. They were already complaining that our support for countries like Saudi Arabia and our military presence in Saudi Arabia was one of the inciting reasons for them to come here. So we did exactly the opposite of what we were supposed to do. Now we're in worse shape. Our military is run down. We've spent a half a trillion dollars. We've lost all these men and women. We've had 40,000 serious casualties. And all we can do is dig in our heels and say, "Well, we can't leave because there will be chaos." We've created chaos. The longer we stay the more chaos and the more expenses we're going to have....As long as we have this mercantilistic idea that it's our oil, we have to be over there, we have to have cheap oil, we're going to be resented."

Republican Presidential Candidate Ron Paul

Ref: The Online NewsHour (with Jim Lehrer) www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/politics/july-dec07/paul_10-12.html Ref: SBS TV 13/10/07

Putting the Public back into Transport

pt4me2 is a new website by the Metropolitan Transport Forum which represents 18 local councils across Melbourne on public transport issues. pt4me2 is about putting the public back into public transport. It gives the community another opportunity to have their say on public transport and contribute to public transport decisions. It's also an experiment in new ways of involving the public -- via blogging, MySpace, YouTube and sms -- in public transport decision making. pt4me2 will be reporting regularly to state government and local councils about the public's feedback on public transport. The media will also be using pt4me2 as a source of immediate feedback about public transport news.

pt4me2 is about bringing supporters of public transport together to say pt4me2 for a more liveable city with better traffic flows and less greenhouse pollution. Ref: <http://pt4me2.org.au>



Amtrak Train arriving in San Francisco