

Connecting NSW Strategy

Priorities for Transport

Transport
for NSW

Acknowledgement of Country

Transport for NSW acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal people and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

Many of the transport routes we use today – from rail lines, to roads, to water crossings – follow the traditional Songlines, trade routes and ceremonial paths in Country that our nation's First Peoples followed for tens of thousands of years.

Transport for NSW is committed to honouring Aboriginal peoples' cultural and spiritual connections to the land, waters and seas and their rich contributions to society.

The name of the NSW waratah comes from the people of the Eora Nation, the original inhabitants of the Sydney area. It means 'red flowering tree'. According to Aboriginal Dreamtime, the red waratah was originally white until a wonga pigeon bled on it. Indigenous people used the flowers medicinally and infused water with their flavour for a sweet drink
© Brad Quaglino/Shutterstock.com

Cover: A young child riding a scooter to school



Ministers and Secretary foreword

The Hon. John Graham, MLC

I am pleased to present to you the Connecting NSW Strategy. Connecting NSW outlines our priorities for Transport to ensure we are coordinating our efforts and resources in the areas that will have the greatest impact for our communities, passengers and customers.

Improving transport access and choice can change the way people live, work and thrive in their community. Connecting people to jobs closer to home, new well-located housing, essential services, and social and cultural opportunities in their neighbouring areas.

By providing more car-free options in our cities and suburbs we can accommodate the travel demands of a growing population, improve the vibrancy and liveability of communities and support sustainability goals without sacrificing quality of life and health outcomes.

Transport also plays a critical role in enabling and supporting broader, whole-of-government outcomes including the delivery of more housing, the energy transition and Closing the Gap.

Connecting NSW sets a clear direction for ourselves, our partners and the people we are delivering for.



The Hon. John Graham, MLC
NSW Minister for Transport

The Hon. Jenny Aitchison, MP

Access to roads and transport are a social determinant of health, education, opportunity and jobs, delivering social and recreational connections.

The challenge is to provide a road and transport network that is safe, resilient, and meets everyone's needs. Creating a transport system that works for all our citizens is a core pillar for the Government – which starts with looking after our most vulnerable and isolated communities, while supporting economic productivity and efficiency across our state.

Connecting NSW strongly puts our focus on reducing transport disadvantage. Directing efforts to connecting all people in NSW to the jobs and health, education, cultural and recreational services they need to prosper, regardless of where they live and their ability to pay.

Connecting NSW has a focus on getting back to basics. Enhancing roads and transport access and connectivity by minimising disruptions, restoring reliability and strengthening the resilience of our networks to keep our communities and businesses moving.



The Hon. Jenny Aitchison, MP
NSW Minister for
Roads and Minister for
Regional Transport

Josh Murray

We're here to make moving around NSW safe, easy and accessible for all.

We are working to provide better connections for people and communities across NSW.

With the aspirational goal of eliminating trauma across the entire NSW transport network, the safety and security of our network and services is our number one priority, and one that we must get right first time, every time.

Our role is an important one. The services and projects we deliver across all transport modes provide better access to other critical services such as health, education, jobs and housing.

We also play a key role in providing solutions to some of the biggest challenges facing NSW including housing availability, addressing the rising cost of living, and driving a reduction in emissions and accelerating the decarbonisation of transport in NSW.

Connecting NSW clearly outlines our priorities for our people, our partners, our passengers, customers and communities – providing direction on the tangible outcomes we are trying to achieve across NSW.



Josh Murray
Secretary,
Transport for NSW





School children boarding
a bus in regional NSW



Contents

Strategy at a glance	5
Introduction	6
The transport challenge	7
What we're planning for and responding to	8
Strategic context	9
Towards zero trauma	11
Restore reliability and build resilience	15
Transition to net zero emissions	19
Reduce transport disadvantage	22
Reimagine road space to drive mode shift	26
Enable whole-of-government outcomes	31
Implementation	37

Strategy at a glance

Our purpose

We're here to make moving around NSW safe, easy, and accessible for all.

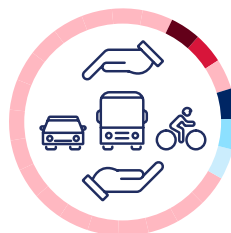
Our priorities for connecting NSW

The Connecting NSW Strategy outlines our priorities that will guide how and where Transport invests resources to ensure we are coordinating our efforts in the areas that will make the greatest difference for our passengers, customers, and communities.

To deliver on our purpose we are directing our efforts and resources to make significant progress in six priority areas.

Progressing these priorities, which reinforce and support each other, will have a multiplier effect, improving customer and passenger experience and the wellbeing of all our communities.

Towards zero trauma



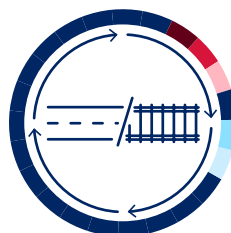
Aspire to eliminate trauma across the entire NSW transport network and ensure the safety and peace of mind of communities across NSW.

Reduce transport disadvantage



Connect all people in NSW to the jobs and health, education, cultural and recreational services they need to prosper, regardless of where they live and their ability to pay.

Restore reliability and build resilience



Enhance transport access and connectivity by minimising disruptions, restoring reliability, ensuring safety and strengthening the resilience of our networks to keep our communities and supply chains moving.

Reimagine road space to drive mode shift



Accommodate the travel demands of a growing population, and support sustainability goals without sacrificing quality of life and health outcomes.

Transition to net zero emissions



Drive a reduction in emissions and accelerate the decarbonisation of NSW's transport sector to transition to a net zero future to combat climate change.

Enable whole-of-government outcomes



Work collaboratively with our cross-agency partners to support the Government's key priorities, including the delivery of more housing, energy transition and Closing the Gap.



Mother and daughter getting on a bus with a pram

Introduction

With a focus on getting back to basics, the Connecting NSW Strategy responds to the critical challenges facing NSW as well as the Government's directions and priorities.

The strategy responds to the recent independent reviews which examined areas of Transport to understand how our organisation needs to adapt to deliver a safe, reliable, integrated and equitable transport network for NSW.

The Connecting NSW Strategy outlines our priorities that will guide tough prioritisation and funding decisions, transport planning, policy decisions and reforms to make moving around NSW safe, easy, and accessible for all.

Our priorities will mean different things for different communities. In a vast and varied state like NSW, a one-size-fits-all approach won't work. What's needed in a growing regional centre may look very different to the needs of an inner-city suburb or a remote town. Applying this strategy to our planning work must be grounded in local context. Listening to communities and tailoring solutions will mean we respond to their unique challenges, aspirations and identities. This process is already underway through strategic regional integrated transport plans, which have been developed in collaboration with communities, councils and industry since 2024.

The transport challenge

Transport is critical in supporting economic growth and the livelihoods and wellbeing of our people and communities.

Transport is an essential service, with access to transport being a social determinant of health, education, opportunity and jobs, as well as social and recreational connections. The challenge is to provide a transport network that meets everyone's needs.

This challenge is compounded by a growing population, an expanding and evolving freight task, ageing infrastructure and a constrained fiscal environment.

Recent independent reviews highlighted the growing pressure on our assets to deliver reliable services. They also highlighted the rising and significant cost to access some transport infrastructure and services at a time when cost of living pressures are mounting.

Broader challenges include the unknown effects of rapid technology change, the future of working practices, and the impacts of climate change.

The cost and availability of housing has reached a crisis level and is a key concern for many. While the supply of housing is outside Transport's legislative responsibility, Transport plays a significant role in enabling the Government's housing agenda.

Challenges for Transport to address

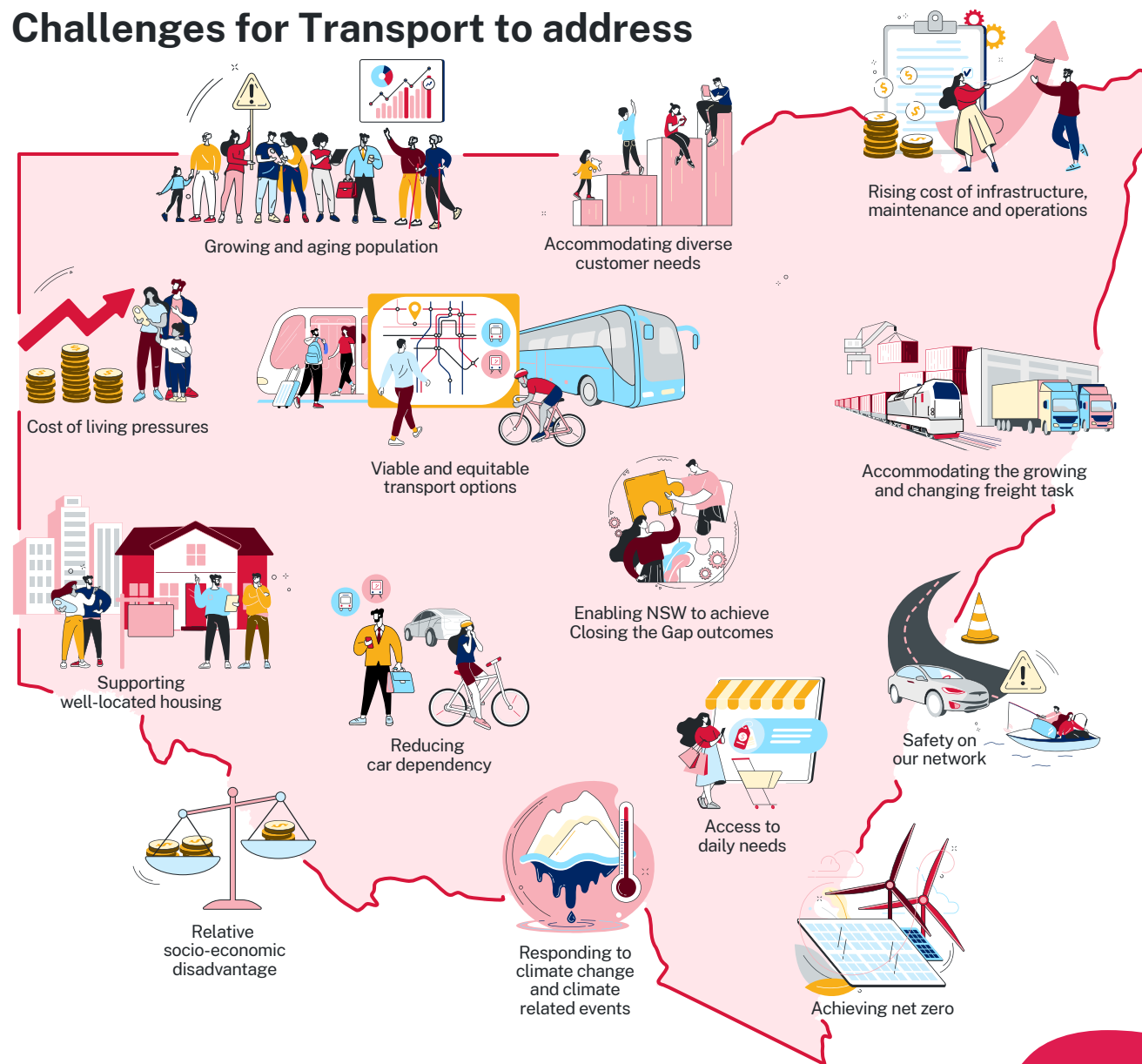


Figure 1. Transport challenges

What we're planning for and responding to

We're focused on preparing for and responding to a range of emerging trends, technologies and policies.

The way we move is shaped by macro and micro influences and trends, both local and international. For example, the last major global disrupter – the Covid-19 pandemic – has had lasting impacts on when and how we travel, as well as what we value in our transport choices.

Safer journeys for all

Every life lost or person who is seriously injured on our network is one too many. That's why our vision is unambiguous: zero fatalities and serious injuries across the transport network.

Getting the most from what we've built

With unprecedented investments delivered in recent years – Sydney Metro, WestConnex, Western Sydney International Airport connections, and regional upgrades such as Newell Highway and Great Western Highway – our focus will now shift toward optimising, integrating, and enhancing what we have.

Responding to a changing climate

Climate change is no longer a future risk, intense floods, heatwaves, and bushfires are already testing our network's resilience. We must design for a new climate reality, ensuring continuity, safety, and reliability across all modes. At the same time, transport must be part of the solution, accelerating our efforts to reduce emissions.

Meeting the needs of a growing and changing population

The State's population is growing and aging. We must design and manage a transport system that can accommodate growth and is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to local needs.

Powering a dynamic, low-carbon economy

NSW is diversifying its economy to drive productivity and resilience, capitalising on emerging industries like critical minerals, advanced manufacturing, and digital services. To support this transition, transport must enable growth through faster, smarter, and cleaner movement of goods and people. With the demand for goods forecast to continue to increase, freight movements will remain critical to powering economic activity.

Adapting to changing travel behaviours and expectations

From hybrid work to rideshare, micromobility to the growing role of AI in daily life, travel patterns are shifting. Transport must keep pace with the way different people want to move and when.

Expectations of younger customers are also redefining what public transport must deliver: real-time, on-demand, integrated, and zero-emissions options.

Creating a fairer transport system

Where you live should not determine your access to opportunity. Yet in many parts of NSW, particularly outer suburban and regional areas, limited transport options leave communities disconnected – deepening social and economic disadvantage. We are committed to creating a more equitable and inclusive network.

Tackling financial pressures sustainably

The cost of maintaining and expanding the transport system is growing – with ageing infrastructure, climate resilience requirements, and rising service demand all increasing financial pressures. We must invest wisely, equitably, and with future generations in mind.



Commuters waiting for a ferry at
Sydney Olympic Park wharf

We're here to make moving around NSW
safe, easy and accessible for all.



Strategic context

Transport touches everyone's lives, getting us to work, school, essential services and all the other places we want and need to go.

Transport connects us to each other, to opportunities, to the goods and services we need or provide, to social, cultural and leisure activities and to the great places NSW has to offer. We are committed to delivering a safe and accessible transport system with more choices to connect NSW.

Our strategic direction is set according to multiple external and internal strategies, plans and obligations including the NSW Government's commitments and priorities, and Australian Government drivers. Together with the transport challenges we face, these help guide our funding priorities and efforts to achieve the best outcomes for our customers, communities and the people of NSW.



Our purpose

We're here to make moving around NSW safe, easy and accessible for all.

Transport has an ongoing responsibility to deliver critical public transport services, roads and projects that make a positive impact on our passengers, customers and communities across NSW.

We are responsible for providing an integrated, reliable and efficient transport system to connect the people of NSW and drive economic activity. We aim to do this regardless of mode, location or journey type, blending public, private, rideshare, taxi, on-demand, active and personal mobility services and options.

The Transport Outcomes

Our strategies and plans are informed by the four Transport Outcomes:

- Connecting people safely and reliably
- Communities and places are sustainable, healthy and resilient
- Enabling a prosperous and inclusive NSW
- Thriving people doing meaningful work.

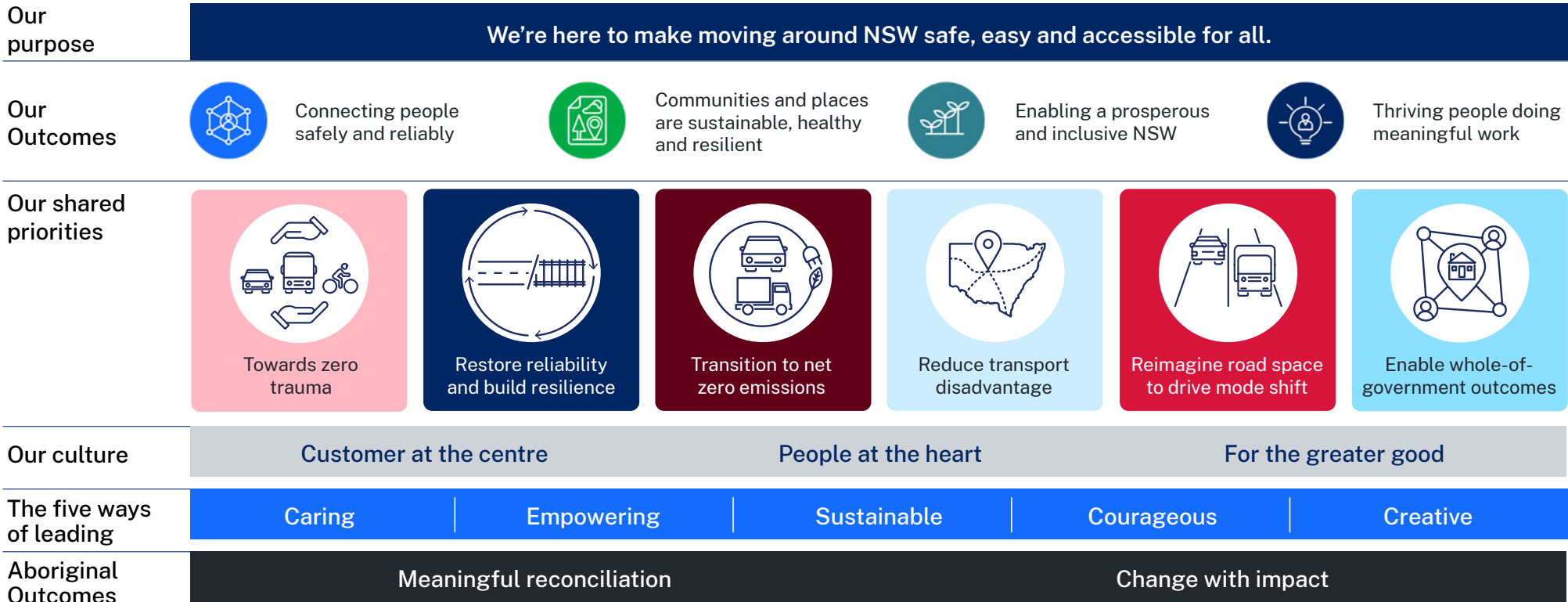
These describe the value we are seeking to achieve for customers, communities, the people of NSW and the people of Transport. They encourage us to focus on the role we play and how it contributes to our society and wellbeing.

Aboriginal Outcomes

Aligned with the four Transport Outcomes, a set of Aboriginal Outcomes were developed to focus Transport on delivering the highest value activities for Aboriginal communities. They articulate what each outcome means for Aboriginal people, communities and Country.

- Aboriginal people are connected safely to the economy and socially, through transport solutions.
- Our community and Country is healthy and strong through transport planning and placemaking.
- Aboriginal economic independence is supported by Transport work.
- Transport drives transformational action to deliver systemic change.

Figure 2. Strategy on a page





Mother and daughters use school crossing

Towards zero trauma

One life lost or one person seriously injured on our transport network is one too many.

Everyone has the right to get where they need to go safely, with no exceptions. Sadly, we are currently falling short. Trauma on our network has a significant impact – deaths, life changing injuries, and trauma for families, first responders and communities. We cannot accept deaths and serious injuries are an inevitable price of mobility.

Transport is committed to keeping everyone on our network safe. This includes safety on our roads, waterways, and across our public transport network and private services, and includes the safety of everyone working on the network.

Transport has set a long-term strategic goal of achieving zero trauma on our roads and waterways in the [NSW 2026 Road Safety Action Plan](#) and [Maritime Safety Plan 2026](#). Both plans adopt the internationally recognised Safe System approach to reduce trauma.

Safety is a shared responsibility. Transport network managers and operators, government at all levels, business and the community all have a role to play in protecting people from harm on our network. As individuals, we also all have a role to play in making safe choices.

With our commitment to achieving zero trauma on our roads and waterways already pledged, we are now aspiring to achieve the goal of zero trauma across the entire transport system.

Make NSW roads safer

Our 2026 Road Safety Action Plan targets a 50 per cent reduction in fatalities and a 30 per cent reduction in serious injuries on our roads by 2030, setting NSW on a path towards zero road trauma by 2050. In 2024, 340 people were killed on our roads, highlighting the urgent need to address trauma on our roads.

Implementing evidence-based road safety measures is critical to reducing trauma and bringing NSW back on track towards our 2030 road safety targets. We also know we need to work closely with Aboriginal communities to improve road safety outcomes, with Aboriginal people experiencing higher rates of fatalities and serious injuries on our roads – including as pedestrians – particularly in remote and regional areas.



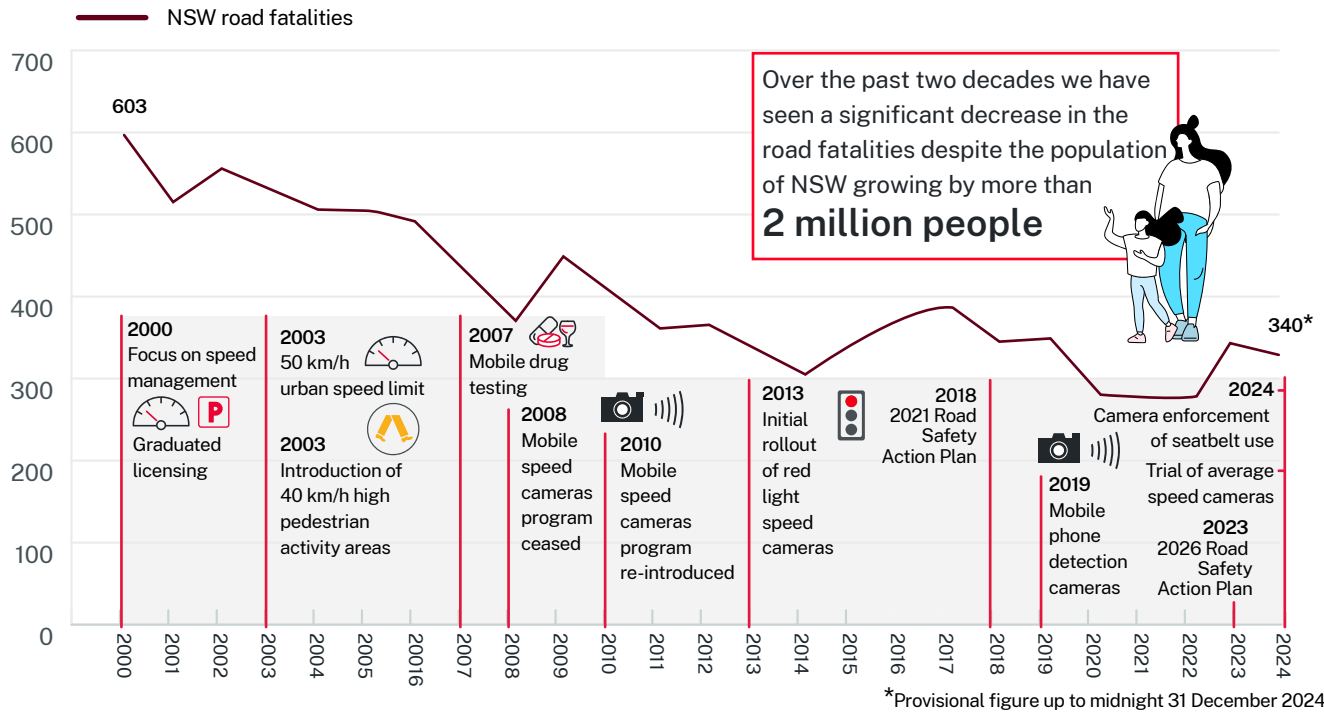


Figure 3. NSW road fatalities and safety interventions

A low trauma future is achievable by delivering the right combination of measures across the road network. These include:

- the accelerated implementation of Safe System infrastructure
- the accelerated mandatory introduction of vehicle safety standards in Australia
- widespread speed management in urban and regional areas
- increased levels of speed, alcohol and drug enforcement
- the implementation of programs to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal people in road trauma.

While ongoing development and mandating of vehicle safety features in new cars will play a significant role in preventing deaths and injuries on our roads, in the near term our focus is on safer road infrastructure, setting safer speed limits and improving driver behaviour.

Safer road infrastructure

Driving in regional and remote areas of NSW can be challenging. Road condition and design, speeds, roadside hazards and the limited public transport options contribute to a greater risk and severity of a crash on regional roads. Two thirds of NSW road fatalities happen on country roads.



The Safer Country Roads Program is addressing key contributors to road fatalities and serious injuries on country roads. It is delivering route-based, mass action road safety treatments and targeted crash location safety treatments along with enforcement and education programs.

Safer speeds

Speeding is the biggest contributor to trauma on NSW roads. Speed determines both the risk of a crash and the severity of a crash. Speed is unique in the Safe System as it needs to be managed in an integrated way with the safe people, safe vehicles and safe roads pillars.

Transport will continue to review speed zones on high risk, low quality, high speed country roads. We will partner with councils to implement safer speed limits to provide safer environments on high speed roads.

To encourage a shift to walking and cycling for short trips, we will focus on setting safer speed limits, designing and delivering safer road environments, and educating car drivers.

Improving driver behaviour

Driver behaviour continues to be a big contributor to trauma on our roads. Speeding, as well as drink and drug driving, and driver fatigue are factors that contribute to crashes. Education, behavioural road safety initiatives and better enforcement of unsafe road user behaviour will improve road safety.

Support safe places and communities

Our transport networks shape the places around us and support our communities. However, they also have the potential to cause harm. This is especially the case in urban areas where there is more activity and a greater

mix of transport modes and transport users in the same environment, and on our waterways where recreational boating remains a popular pastime.

We can improve the safety of our communities by planning and designing context sensitive roads, streets and places that are safe for everyone. This can include infrastructure safety upgrades focusing on pedestrians and bike riders and addressing crashes at intersections.

Delivering safe and connected cycleways to better connect centres, precincts, places and local bike networks will protect bike riders as well as pedestrians by separating cars, bike riders and people walking in locations with competing demands.

We are working to achieve safer point to point transport in NSW. This includes all passenger services in vehicles (other than buses) that take customers on the route they choose, at a time that suits them, for a fare. This includes taxis, limousines, rideshare services, airport transfers and other hire vehicles. As the regulator, the Point to Point Commissioner is committed to making sure everyone in the point to point industry understands how they are accountable for the safety of passengers, drivers and the general public.

Safer environments

We will continue to strengthen local government's role in funding, planning, designing and operating safe local road networks to improve community safety. This includes the ongoing delivery of safety infrastructure by helping build capability in councils to improve integrated road safety planning.

Level crossings represent significant collision potential for rail and road users, including pedestrians. Through the Level Crossing Improvement Program, Transport is committed to working collaboratively with councils, rail agencies and other stakeholders to achieve safer level crossings.

A school crossing supervisor assisting pedestrians to cross a road



Transport will continue to set and support safer speed settings for a broad mix of road users and improve safety and amenity. Increasing the roll out of 10 km/h, 20 km/h, 30 km/h and 40 km/h speed limits for side streets, local neighbourhood streets, urban centres and around public transport interchanges will help to facilitate safe access by walking and cycling and reduce crashes and the severity of crashes.

Safer speed limits can also help address the mobility and safety challenges faced by the growing elderly population in NSW and encourage more walking and cycling in younger age groups.

Safer waterways

Waterways in NSW are embraced by communities with an estimated two million people going boating each year on the state's waterways. The Maritime Safety Plan establishes an interim target to reduce waterway fatalities and serious injuries by 30 per cent by 2025–26. To achieve this we are focusing on four areas:

- safer lifejacket wear and equipment
- safer boating through technology
- safer waterway access and infrastructure
- growing our safety culture together.

Transport's role in ensuring safer waterways includes the regulation of 23,000 private and commercial mooring sites throughout NSW.

Ensure safe public transport systems

Personal safety concerns can deter people from using public transport or walking, especially at night. Improving actual and perceived safety has a positive impact on our cities and supports a growing night-time economy.

As the primary regulator responsible for bus safety, Transport ensures that operators meet standards for licensed, trained and fit-for-duty staff, properly maintained buses, and safe service design.

At stations and stops, better lighting, CCTV and travel information can improve actual and perceived personal safety. Providing more public transport services in the late evening and overnight, such as improved NightRide bus services, also improves actual and perceived personal safety.

Improving actual and perceived safety has a positive impact on our cities.

Passengers on our public transport network must feel secure and culturally safe travelling day and night. We know that women, older people, Aboriginal people and culturally and linguistically diverse and LGBTIQ+ communities do not always feel secure travelling on our network, particularly at night. Studies have shown that 30 per cent of women feel unsafe in Sydney during the day, increasing to 90 per cent of women at night.

We must consider the safety of all our customers on our public transport network and on their journey to access public transport. All transport projects must meet design standards for the safety and security of all users, regardless of age or ability.

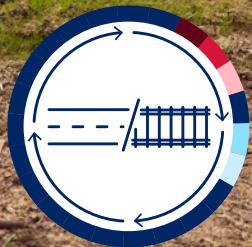
On our Sydney rail network, the number of reportable safety incidents has steadily declined over the past five years. However, we have still experienced trauma on the network. Many of these incidents involved human error or the violation of rules or procedures, notably trespass into the secure rail corridor.

We will continue to focus on controlling the hazards that we can and protecting our workers, while remaining hypervigilant in responding to any significant safety system deficiencies. Education for passengers and communities and ongoing enforcement of unsafe and illegal behaviour will help us reduce trauma across our public transport network and keep our customers, passengers and staff safe.

People walking in the Sydney CBD near the light rail in the evening



Field workers undertaking an inspection of a major road infrastructure project



Restore reliability and build resilience

Our ageing assets are being pushed harder than ever before.

Our roads are moving more vehicles and more freight, with increased costs for maintenance and upgrades making the challenge more difficult. This is compounded by heavy vehicles being allowed to operate at increased mass, and by the transition to electric vehicles (EV) which are heavier than internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles.

On our public transport network, ageing rail infrastructure is impacting reliability, causing delays and outages, with a large and ongoing maintenance task required. Gaining access to assets for maintenance is difficult, as planned maintenance cannot be carried out without planned disruptions to network operations.

Disruptions and delays on the network have wide-ranging impacts. Small disruptions or incidents frustrate passengers and customers, can lead to a loss of faith in the network, and carry an economic burden. Catastrophic outages can result in significant economic impacts and communities being cut off during emergencies, and can even endanger human life.

Our network is becoming increasingly vulnerable to severe weather, with the ongoing threats of natural disasters, technical failures and accidental or deliberate interference always present. Weather events over the past few years have highlighted the costs of transport disruption to the community, the freight industry and the Government. With the evidence indicating that these risks are increasing, both immediate action and long-term planning is necessary.

A resilient transport network supports reliable transport services. Network resilience can be enhanced by increasing network adaptability, proactive preparation, network availability and recovering swiftly when disruptions are inevitable. A more resilient network will be better placed to absorb long-term stresses and withstand future shocks.

Our goal is to restore reliability and improve network resilience to minimise disruptions, and to support the preparedness and resilience of communities to natural disasters and emergencies.



This will require more adaptable and reliable infrastructure to provide services under more conditions and to reduce the magnitude and duration of disruptive events.

When disruptions are planned or inevitable, how quickly we can recover from any disruption will be how we measure our performance.

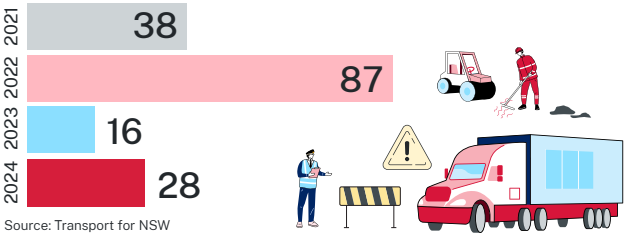


Figure 4. Total road closures on key freight routes

Restoring reliability

We are working hard to restore reliability to our transport network, increasing our investment. Recent investments aimed at improving reliability include the Bus Priority Infrastructure Program, the Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package, road maintenance and safety improvements, the Rail Service Improvement Program, and our Future Fleet Program.

We are actively working to restore reliability to the transport network by responding to recommendations from recent independent reviews examining the transport system in NSW. Reviews, including those focused on Sydney Trains’ rail infrastructure and systems and the Bus Industry Taskforce. We are investing heavily in maintenance, guided by plans such as the Rail Repair Plan and Train Repair Plan, to address issues impacting the reliability of our network.

Renew our focus on asset maintenance

Maintenance is critical to the ongoing sustainability and resilience of our assets and our ability to deliver reliable services. We will continue to develop and implement integrated, statewide operational and capital maintenance activities. We will outline and oversee a clear pipeline of projects and funding to support proactive and preventative maintenance.

Our renewed focus on asset maintenance will include accelerating minor works and asset maintenance and repairing roads across the state.

Rail repairs, upgrades and refurbishments will reduce the maintenance backlog, improve network reliability and resilience, and prevent future safety risks. The Sydney Train’s Rail Repair Plan, as a response to the Sydney Trains Review, has been promptly and systematically working through a backlog of maintenance.

We are responding to the recommendations of the NSW Bus Industry Taskforce reports, improving the reliability of bus services across NSW, including by refocusing on providing replacement and emergency buses and supporting driver recruitment and retention.

Operational reform will continue to drive improvement. We will adopt new technologies that support and enhance safety and operational outcomes for road maintenance and resilience across the state.

We will use more real-time data to improve reliability through timetabling and scheduling improvements and to respond to traffic conditions and incidents on managed motorways.

Upgrading our communication systems for public transport, including real-time information for bus passengers onboard and at key locations, will make the network more resilient and improve the quality of the customer information we can provide when there are disruptions.

A road worker setting up traffic cones



Improve network resilience

Providing communities, customers and passengers with network alternatives makes the network more resilient and can prevent or minimise transport disruptions.

In the urban context, having a distributed public transport or road network that has alternate routes makes the network more resilient. If one or more services or routes are disrupted, other options exist for passengers and customers to reroute their journey.

More options between key freight origins and destinations (ports, airports, intermodal terminals, and key freight precincts) will help to ensure we can access the essential goods we need when there are network disruptions.

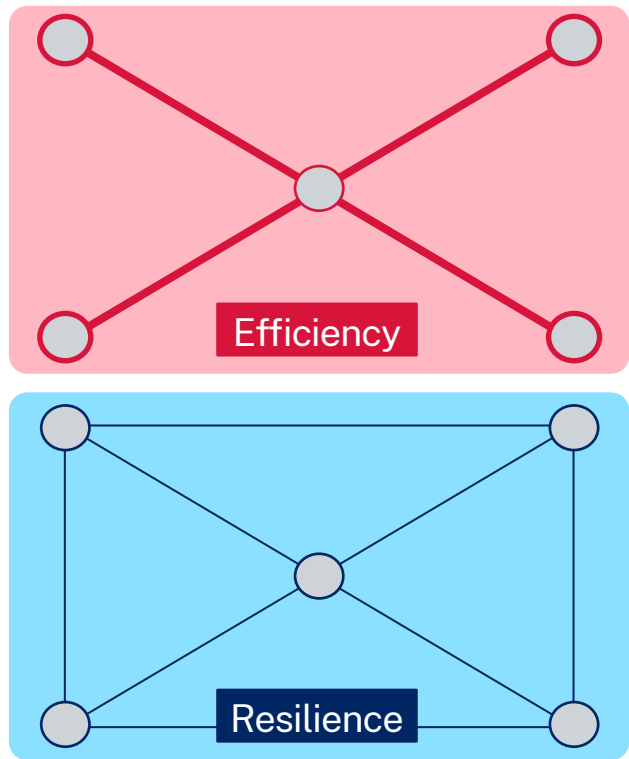
Upgrading select routes so they can act as alternatives during disruptions, or building up and maintaining other parts of the network to an acceptable standard to ensure their availability in an emergency, can reduce the costs of disruptions to freight, communities and passengers, as well as provide more travel options.

Resilient freight networks support regional communities and regional economic growth

Economic growth in the region relies on the movement of goods through reliable freight connections. The ability of producers to move agricultural, manufactured products and natural resources to domestic and export markets in a timely and efficient manner directly impacts productivity and is a major factor driving economic performance and underpinning regional communities.

Our freight connections are the economic arteries of our state. When these connections are disrupted, there are not only economic impacts but disruptions to the community. In severe cases communities can be cut off and isolated from emergency services and the daily goods and services we all need.

While we cannot eliminate disruption, we can improve the resilience of freight networks by building in redundancy to support the liveability and economic growth of regional NSW.



Source: The Geography of Transport Systems – Transportation Network Efficiency and Resilience

Figure 5. Efficient versus resilient network

Prioritise strategic asset upgrades

Upgrades will focus on assets and communities that are at most risk or exposure, for example, where the population has grown around hazards, key freight routes where adaptive capacity is low, or flood exposed roads that connect isolated communities. Where suitable, we will ‘build back better’. Decisions about where we build back better will be based on asset risk and criticality, allowing acceptable risks in parts of the network, while establishing contingency plans or recovery measures in other parts.

We are strengthening natural disaster response, recovery and climate risk management. We are supporting whole-of-government priorities for resilience and natural disaster recovery by addressing the backlog of recovery coordination and enhancing climate risk management. This includes a renewed focus on collaboration with partners to repair and recover the NSW road network.

To prepare for future challenges, we are considering climate change in all our decisions. We will embed future predicted natural hazards and the associated asset resilience actions into future transport asset and service planning and investment decisions. We will also work with Aboriginal communities to apply traditional knowledge to the management of Country around the transport network to improve resilience. All our decisions must consider the changing environment, the increasing cost of response and repair, and where the best value for money will be achieved and realised.

Minimise transport disruptions

While it will always remain our goal to minimise all unplanned transport disruptions, when disruptions do occur, it is vital that we effectively communicate to customers, passengers and communities, and quickly respond and recover.

As the network manager, Transport will strive for continuous improvement in operational planning and preparation so we can respond and restore availability, or services to customers and recover assets from planned and unplanned disruptions and major events.

Improve incident response

Effective incident response is essential for minimising disruptions on our network and services. We will continue to enhance our systems, processes and procedures to improve incident responses. Preparedness through staff training, capability development and resource availability will ensure Transport and its operators are ready and able to respond to and manage major incidents and outages when they occur.

New and emerging technology for monitoring, supporting decision making and communicating disruptions is improving journey resilience. Expanding the provision of real-time data to cover more regions and services will keep customers and passengers informed when they are deciding how and when to travel when there are disruptions.

Disaster resilience and adaptation planning will ensure we are prepared to act. Just as road evacuation routes play an important role in natural disasters such as flooding or bushfires, road and public transport network planning needs to take account of mass evacuation capacity for major events and managing human-induced incidents.

A road construction officer on site



Passengers walking past a zero emissions bus in Wollongong



Transition to net zero emissions

The transport sector in NSW is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 24 per cent of the state's total emissions.

By 2030, the transport sector will become the largest emitting sector. Failing to reduce emissions will impact environmental, social, economic and health outcomes for future generations across NSW.

Transitioning to a sustainable and low-emission transport system is a huge challenge, particularly in regional NSW where alternatives to private vehicles are limited and many of the jobs and services people need to access are not close to where they live.

Addressing road freight emissions is a complex challenge. Freight is the backbone of NSW's economy, creating jobs and connecting domestic, national and global markets. As NSW's freight volumes continue to grow, our networks and supply chains must become more sustainable. Addressing freight emissions is made even more challenging given most of the road

freight industry is comprised of small-sized operators, with 70 per cent of them having only one vehicle.

Transitioning to net zero transport emissions will require encouraging mode shift towards walking, cycling and public transport, accelerating the decarbonisation of our operations, facilitating the uptake of EVs, and supporting the freight industry to reduce their emissions. By doing so, our communities will experience improved air quality and urban amenity, improvements in general health, and reduced car dependency.

Reduce our operational and embodied emissions

Our goal is to have net zero emissions from our operations and fleet by 2035. Our services contribute to three per cent of the total emissions from the transport sector, with this number decreasing each year.



We have already made substantial progress towards our 2035 goal by moving the Sydney Trains and NSW TrainLink electrified network to 100 per cent renewable electricity, halving our operational emissions footprint.

The Zero Emission Buses (ZEB) Tranche 1 project aims to transition around 1200 public buses in the Greater Sydney region to zero-emissions technology, with a target of 50 per cent minimum local content for bus contracts from 2027. We are also transitioning all our Transport operated and contracted corporate vehicles, ferries, non-passenger vehicle fleets, and construction and maintenance vehicles and equipment.

We are committed to net zero embodied emissions by 2045. As one of Australia’s largest project procurers, we have the power and duty to promote decarbonisation. We will investigate the use of sustainable materials to reduce whole-of-life greenhouse gas emissions in transport projects. We will prioritise zero and low-emission transport solutions, including the more efficient use of the existing transport network, and identify non-build solutions, where appropriate. We are using our influence to drive innovation and support the transition to a circular economy.

Facilitate the uptake of electric vehicles

Not every journey can be made on foot, by bike or via public transport. Therefore, we are facilitating the transition to zero or low-emission vehicles for these trips. The popularity of EVs is on the rise. Our strategies aim to increase the sales of EVs to over 50 per cent of new car sales by 2031. To support more EVs on our roads, we want to make charging an EV as straightforward as refuelling a conventional vehicle. The NSW Government is committed to developing a world-class EV charging network to give current and future EV drivers the confidence to use their vehicles whenever and wherever they need.

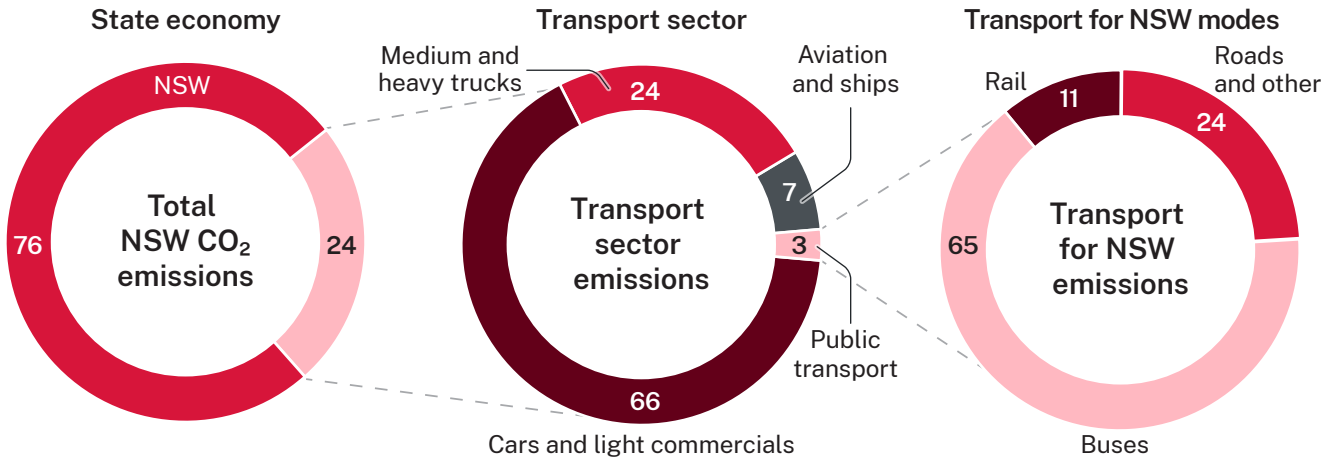


Figure 6. Transport sector emissions in NSW



We are updating our policies, standards and legislation to align with our net zero commitments and encourage the uptake of EVs over high-emission vehicles.

Working closely with the Australian Government, we have supported the establishment of the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard, which came into effect earlier this year and will see a cap on the emissions from new car imports. The standard incentivises carmakers to supply fuel-efficient, low and zero-emissions models into the Australian market.

Support the freight industry move towards net zero emissions

Transport is committed to decarbonising freight, a critical step towards net zero emissions. Pivotal to this is the switch from diesel fleets to low and zero-emission freight vehicles. Zero and low-emission vehicles are heavier and as such have restricted access to the network. Transport can support the industry transition to zero-emission vehicles by enabling access to the NSW state road network for the additional masses required for zero-emission heavy vehicles.

We are looking at immediate opportunities to reduce emissions including optimising access to our road network for modern high productivity vehicles. Heavy vehicles that operate under the Performance Based Standards (PBS) scheme are safer, more sustainable and better equipped to handle the future freight task. By replacing general access vehicles and smaller restricted access vehicles, fewer vehicles are required to perform the same task.

Rail freight produces 16 times less greenhouse gas emissions and is four times more fuel efficient than road freight and will play a significant role in decarbonising the sector. We want to enable more rail freight, reduce road congestion, and improve regional connectivity.

Staff at Cargo Movement
Coordination Centre in Port Botany



We are committed to optimising the role of rail freight, reducing road congestion, and improving regional connectivity.

Passengers waiting for a bus near Tallawong Metro Station



Reduce transport disadvantage

Our goal is to connect all people in NSW to the things they need regardless of their age, physical ability, where they live and their socio-economic circumstance.

Access to transport is a social determinant of health, education, opportunity and employment, as well as an enabler of social and recreational connections.

Transport disadvantage is difficulty accessing transport because of cost, availability of services or poor physical accessibility. The inability to get to where we need to go and when you need to be there can contribute to poor outcomes in areas such as health, education and employment, and can contribute to social exclusion.

Transport disadvantage is more likely to be experienced by specific groups within our community, for example people on low incomes, families with young children, Aboriginal people and communities, and people with a disability. Transport disadvantage is also more common in certain geographies such as urban fringes and rural and remote areas.

In these places factors including low or no public transport, and the need to travel greater distances, contribute to transport disadvantage.

While the proportion of people who feel they cannot get to the places they need may be low, the impact for those people is significant. Across NSW, 79 per cent of surveyed residents reported that they can easily get to the places they need, 14 per cent sometimes have difficulty, and five per cent often have difficulty (ABS General Social Survey 2019).

There are degrees of transport disadvantage. At the extreme end of the scale an example could be someone living in a remote community, with no public transport services and no access to a private vehicle. Towards the other end of the spectrum, factors like extended travel times, unreliable services, numerous interchanges, legibility of the transport system, unaffordability, and limited personal mobility, can all contribute to transport disadvantage.



Tackling transport disadvantage means bringing a social equity lens to all aspects of transport planning and policy, working with communities to understand their needs, and reviewing and rebalancing our funding priorities to improve outcomes for disadvantaged communities. It also means ensuring Aboriginal voices are at the centre of Transport’s decision making, in line with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Can you easily get to the places you need to go?

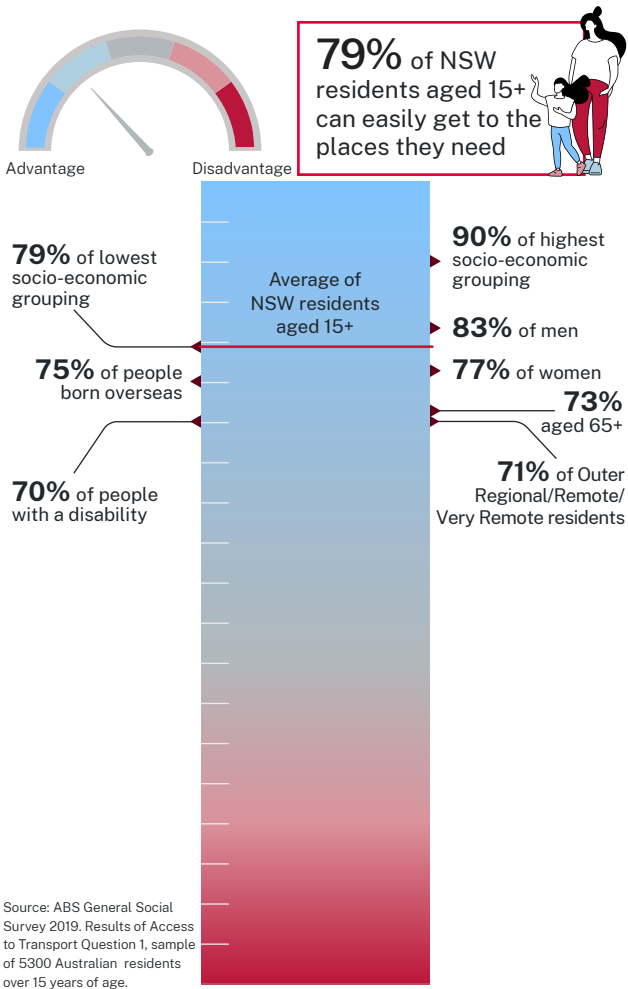


Figure 7. Access to transport in NSW



Deliver more viable transport options for underserved communities

Public transport services in NSW are the best in Australia, with Sydney’s public transport considered world class. However, beyond Sydney, challenges such as state wide coverage, frequency, reliability and longer journey times means public transport struggles to compete with private vehicle travel as a viable choice.

These challenges can impact some sectors of the population more than others, such as women, children and young people, culturally and linguistically diverse people. They can also reinforce private vehicle dependence, which is increasingly burdening household budgets.

People living in underserved areas who are unable to attain a licence or a vehicle for a range of reasons including cost, age, and ability to drive, are more likely to be impacted by transport disadvantage. In NSW 11 per cent of residents aged over 15 do not have a driver licence, growing to 14 per cent of residents over the age of 65.

Addressing obstacles to connecting communities and providing more choice and better access, includes active transport and improved access to reliable public transport. Delivering more transport options for isolated, regional, outer metropolitan and growing communities in parts of Sydney will improve access and inclusion outcomes and enable Closing the Gap for Aboriginal people and communities. We will achieve this through a progressive change in policy, strategy and investment programs.

Future investment should meet the needs of our growing communities and be targeted at reducing the disparity of access. While recent investments in WestConnex, Sydney Metro and the network around Western Sydney Airport are critical to our state's future, the benefits of these projects are concentrated. To spread the benefits of transport investment wider across the state, we must focus on ensuring a sustainable pipeline of small to medium sized investments with equitable distribution of funding.

We are focused on delivering improved bus services to the community. To deliver this, we are establishing a temporary centre of expertise to drive continuous improvement, responding to the Bus Industry Taskforce's recommendations calling for a transformational bus agenda.

Focus on reducing transport inequity

To reduce transport disadvantage in underserved communities, our investment prioritisation must focus on equity, aligning our spending with population growth and targeting areas with the greatest disadvantage (need for access). This may include an increase in bus and heavy rail services and supporting infrastructure, as well as more active transport infrastructure, and other solutions like the Driver Licence Access Program and mobility programs.

Across regional and remote NSW, low population densities, the level of isolation of communities, and the added cost of transporting goods, can make accessing goods a challenge. A reliable regional road network supporting the efficient movement of goods improves productivity and ensures regional communities in NSW have access to food, medical supplies and their other day-to-day needs. Transport will continue to invest in addressing deficiencies in regional and rural roads to support the freight task and ensure all communities have access to the goods and services they need.

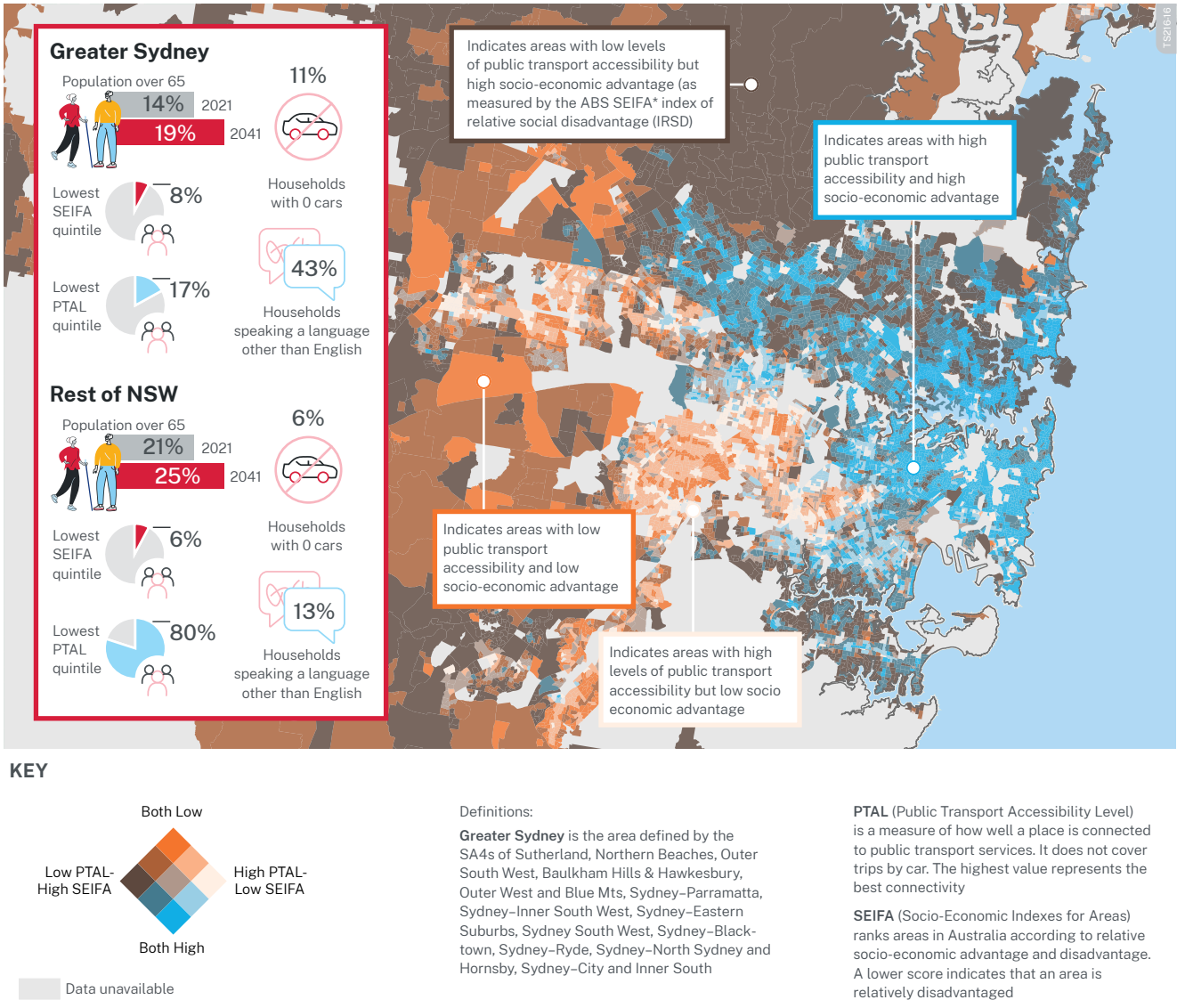


Figure 8. Measuring transport disadvantage in NSW



Committed to Closing the Gap

Transport is jointly accountable, with all NSW Government agencies, to Close the Gap for Aboriginal communities across five priority reform areas and 17 socio-economic targets. Transport is a key enabler as it provides access to health care, goods and services, and supports Aboriginal people to achieve education, social and economic outcomes, and maintain cultural obligations to travel for family commitments.

Deliver an accessible transport system

Access to safe and affordable travel is a right, not a privilege. To reduce transport disadvantage, journeys and destinations need to be accessible to everyone. This includes planning and designing our system to be accessible for the entire journey, in line with our obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act. Ensuring equitable access to services also means keeping travel affordable.

Starting from the position of designing our services, infrastructure and systems to meet the needs of people with disability ultimately results in improved outcomes for all.

To deliver an accessible transport system we need to look at how we plan and design the whole network and ensure it is accessible and comfortable for everyone for the entire journey.

Stations, interchanges and surrounding street networks, need to be legible, easily navigable and accessible for everyone including people with low mobility, the elderly, young people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

To ensure more travel options are accessible to more people we will continue to work with private rideshare, taxi and other point to point transport services, to integrate last-mile connections and improving services for people with disability.

Transport options need to be safe, day and night, for all customers for them to be a real option. We know that women, older people and culturally and linguistically diverse, neurodiverse and LGBTIQ+ communities do not always feel secure travelling on public transport, particularly at night. To reduce transport disadvantage, personal safety and perceptions of personal safety need to be addressed to make more transport options more viable for more people.

More affordable transport

Transport should enable all citizens to access health, education and other essential services. This means people can travel to where they need to go, when they need to go there, in an efficient and affordable way. While initiatives like the temporary tolling relief package offer immediate support to the drivers who use tolled motorways, lasting reforms will need to be considered. Reforms could include coordinating motorway network tolling so it is fairer, simpler and more transparent.

Any future toll reforms will need to be coordinated with investment in public and active transport solutions, road space reallocation and parking policy. This will ensure reforms benefit motorists, public transport passengers, freight operators and surrounding communities, making travel more accessible, affordable and efficient without inducing additional car trips.

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyard gives people with hidden disabilities such as autism, dementia, chronic pain or anxiety more confidence navigating the transport network across NSW. The sunflower lanyard indicates to Transport staff that the wearer may need extra help, understanding or just more time.



Open Streets Program, Surry Hills.
The Open Streets Program is
designed to improve the vibrancy
of local streets and centres



Reimagine road space to drive mode shift

Our roads and streets connect our communities
and enable economic activity.

Connecting people, homes and businesses, our roads and streets perform essential functions for transport, commerce, social interaction and public life. When our roads are congested or used inefficiently the impacts are widespread.

While we will continue to build and upgrade roads to support access and productivity, we need to reevaluate how we respond to road congestion. In the past we have invested in additional capacity. While this approach can provide short-term relief, in the absence of providing attractive alternatives to driving, we often see the congestion return. We need to reimagine how we think about and use road space.

To accommodate the travel demand and supply of goods for our growing population while maintaining reliability and efficiency without sacrificing safety, quality of life and health outcomes, we need to stabilise traffic growth in our cities and suburbs. We can facilitate mode shift from private vehicles to more public and active transport trips, and shift more goods from road to rail where possible, or to high productivity vehicles and active transport options.

Provide more car-free options to facilitate sustainable mode shift

Providing more car-free options gives people more flexibility in their transportation choices. More people choosing sustainable modes of transport such as active and public transport will reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and urban amenity, and improve health and wellbeing.

Make active and public transport the first choice

With improved reliability and faster and more frequent connections, we can make public transport the first choice for people living in urban areas, and a viable choice for everyone across the state. This could include metro, rail and light rail extensions and upgrades, rapid and frequent buses, and service, route and reliability improvements, to make public transport more competitive and attractive when compared to private vehicle use.



Greater bus priority can provide faster, more reliable and more direct routes compared with general traffic. Over time, as mode shift occurs this will lead to a reduction in congestion, emissions, and journey times and increase in public transport appeal and patronage.

Providing greater public transport options and priority will encourage more people to choose public transport. This can also free up road space for essential road users such as freight (including in delivery zones), service providers and trades.

We want walking and cycling to be the preferred mode of transport for short trips. Walking and bike riding are the most sustainable forms of transport, contributing to great places, cleaner local environments and healthier lifestyles, and providing economic benefits to local neighbourhoods.

To deliver on this we need to improve the safety and comfort of people walking and riding bikes by providing fit-for-purpose active transport infrastructure and appropriate road speeds. We will continue to support multimodal journeys by integrating active and public transport and encourage greater uptake of bike riding through the delivery of continuous and connected cycling networks.

Rebalance road space

We will rebalance road investment, from providing additional capacity for general traffic (such as through road widening), to reallocating of existing road space for public transport and active transport alternatives. More space for buses can lead to fewer vehicles moving more people.

The reallocation of road space will be required for high quality, frequent, turn-up-and-go bus services which can support the delivery of more diverse, 'missing middle' housing in areas closer to existing infrastructure, services and jobs.



People walking on Little Eveleigh Street outside Redfern Station, Sydney

To drive mode shift and give people more choices for how they move, we are investing in walking and cycling initiatives. This includes developing and delivering continuous and interconnected walking and cycling networks that integrate with public transport, public spaces and green infrastructure.

We will work with councils to build a fully connected cycle network. We will progressively expand strategic cycleway corridors that go beyond local government boundaries, and deliver local bike networks. Some connections between centres, precincts and places are already established.

To make bike riding an attractive option for everyday trips, our priority is filling the gaps to connect cycling networks.

We will enable goods to move in safer, more sustainable and more productive ways including by prioritising the movement of goods by rail where possible, or via newer, safer, more efficient high productivity vehicles and via active transport options for urban deliveries. This will deliver improved road safety and environmental outcomes to improve the quality of life for all while reducing costs and improving the competitiveness of our economy.

Stabilise traffic growth in our cities and suburbs

As our population grows, road congestion is expected to increase. Congestion makes travel unpredictable and expensive, with significant costs for individuals and businesses. It is a common source of frustration, reducing the quality of life and wellbeing of those who experience it regularly. Stabilising private vehicle traffic levels will improve productivity and wellbeing.

Stabilising traffic in our cities and suburbs will require us to prioritise projects that encourage more efficient modes of transport for the movement of people and goods. This will include public transport, walking and cycling, freight rail and high productivity vehicles.

It will also support housing growth and create thriving communities in and around areas that have existing and planned public transport capacity.

While there will always be a need for new roads to provide access for new communities, by providing transport options early on in developments we can avoid entrenching habits that lead to car dependency.

Carefully manage road capacity

In new and existing urban areas it will be important to avoid inducing traffic demand while maintaining efficiency by encouraging more public and active transport trips and, where possible, shifting more freight onto rail or high productivity vehicle and active transport options.

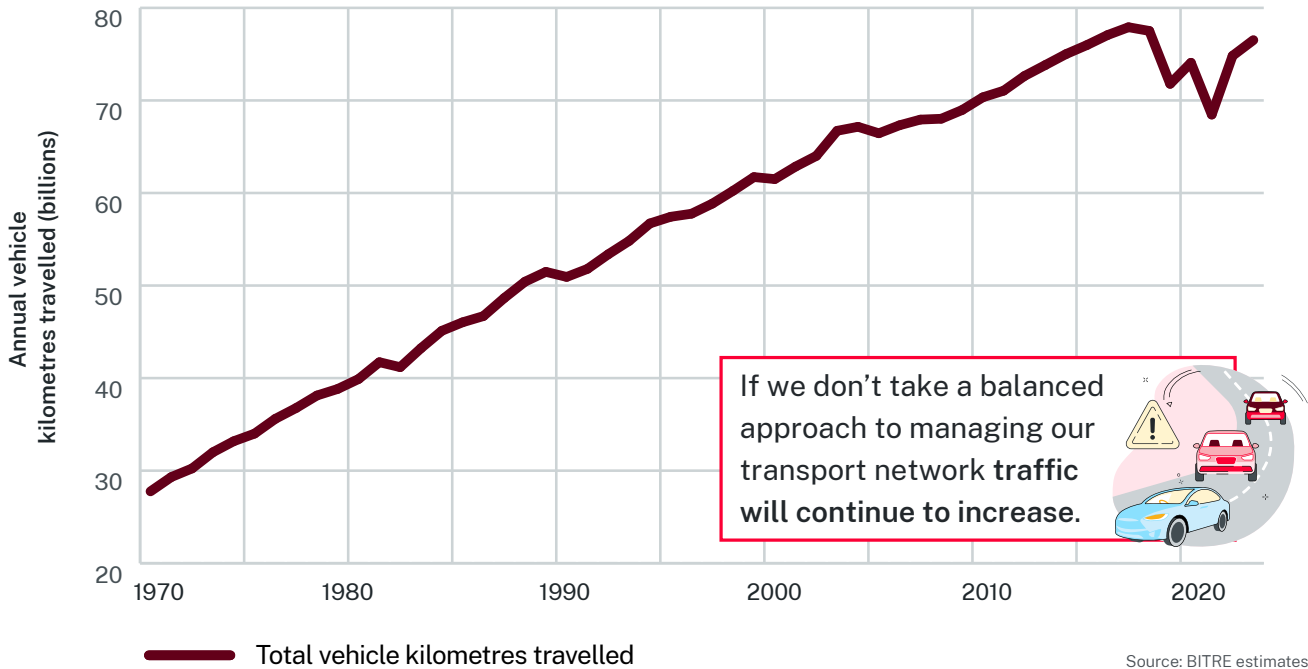


Figure 9. Historical vehicle kilometres travelled levels in NSW



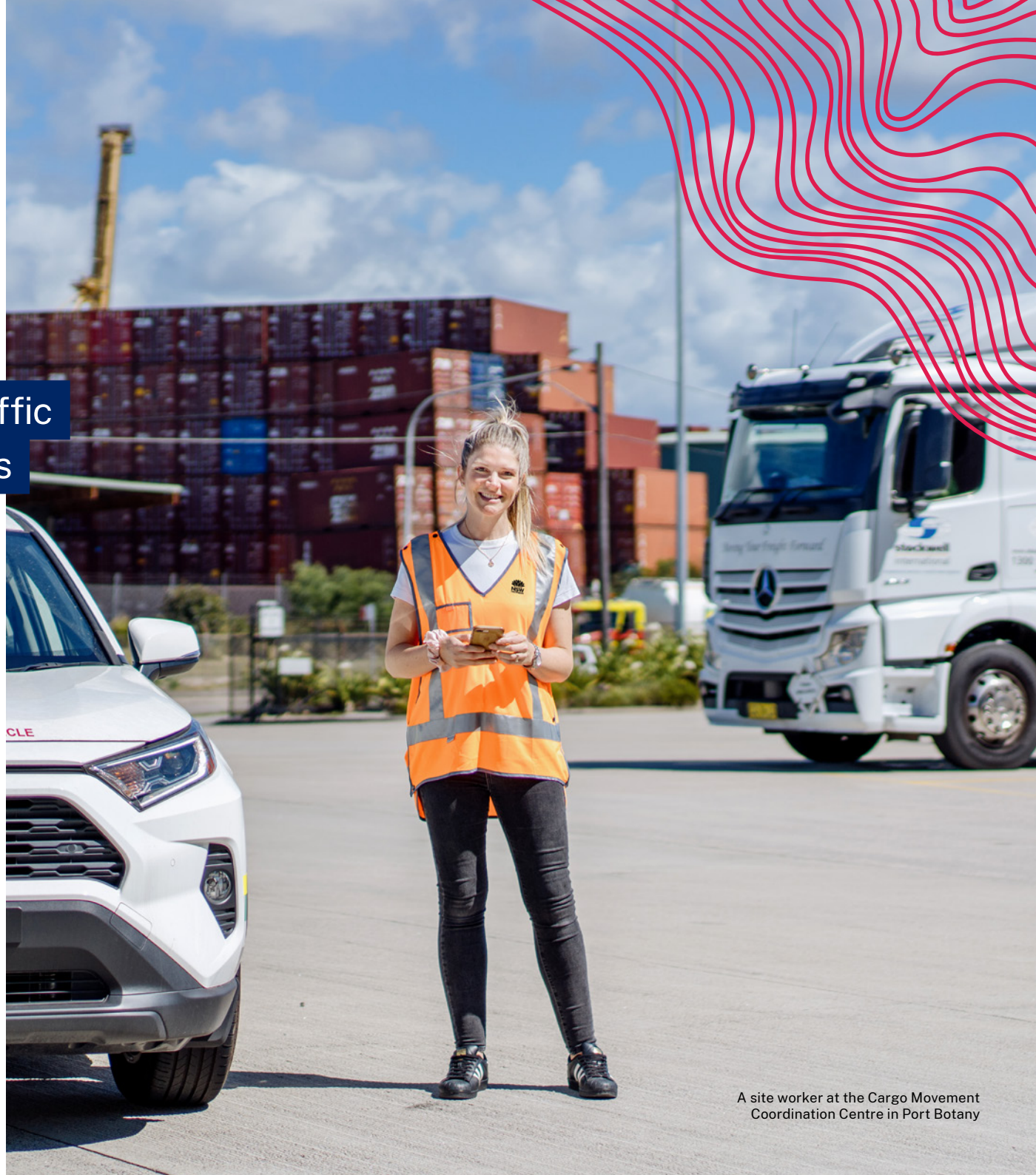
Stabilising private vehicle and freight traffic growth will require a balanced, place-based approach to managing our transport networks and land use planning. In greenfield growth areas, the total vehicle kilometres travelled will inevitably increase for the movement of people and goods, although good planning can ensure public transport, walking and cycling, and logistics locations for the movement of goods are as convenient as possible to reduce avoidable car and truck trips and congestion.

Stabilising general vehicle traffic levels in our cities and suburbs must be a guiding principle.

Traffic growth in some areas will be offset by a reduction in vehicle trips in areas that have good public transport access or micrologistics hubs. Those people who have no viable alternatives due to cost, family, work or health circumstances, will also benefit from the reduction in background traffic levels and the safe, sustainable movement of goods.

An efficient and reliable freight network underpins economic productivity and growth. It can reduce the cost of everyday goods and services and generate vital employment opportunities.

To accommodate our growing population and improve productivity we need to get more out of our existing roads. To support more housing in well-located areas, we need to provide greater car-free transport options and encourage mode shift to sustainable modes. Stabilising general vehicle traffic levels in our cities and suburbs must be a guiding principle for all future planning and investment decisions.



A site worker at the Cargo Movement Coordination Centre in Port Botany

Accommodate the growing and evolving freight task

Our motorways, higher-speed arterial roads and rural highways are the economic arteries of NSW, moving large volumes of freight. Reliable travel times for heavy vehicles are critical to productivity and the economic competitiveness of the State. Maintaining and improving journey time reliability for these customers remains a priority.

While we continue to accommodate heavy vehicles through the provision of safe, direct and easy access to freight generators, such as ports, intermodal terminals and employment lands, where possible, we are encouraging the shift of road freight to rail. This will free up valuable road space and help us maintain a faster more efficient freight network.

More dedicated rail freight capacity will be required to accommodate the growing freight task. Increasing freight rail capacity, by providing more passing loops in regional NSW and more dedicated freight rail in urban areas to improve separation of freight rail and passenger rail services, will improve productivity and contribute to larger economic benefits.

In urban areas there are opportunities to support the growing number of deliveries by sustainable modes of transport. Last-mile deliveries from microhubs to customers can be serviced on foot, bike or by smaller, clean and quiet vehicles to suit local area operations. E-cargo bikes and similar micro freight vehicles can replace larger vans and offer fast delivery, particularly in busy or congested environments, without adding to congestion or impacting amenity.

Taking a vision and validate approach

In the case of designing new roads, we will take a 'vision and validate' approach to determine the desired function and road user space requirements. This includes planning for the desired level of public and active transport use we want to achieve and delivering it. Providing additional lanes for general traffic from day one can be more expensive, have a larger impact on surrounding land use, and induce more private vehicle trips.

We are seeing more electric vehicles (EV) on our roads than ever before. While EVs contribute to reducing emissions, lower operating costs associated with EVs may encourage people to drive more. With EVs taking up the same amount of space as conventional cars, we cannot build infrastructure to cater for unconstrained growth in traffic volumes. We will manage demand and continue to prioritise more space to efficient and sustainable modes of transport.

Investigate clearer, fairer, more efficient charges

Rebalancing how we use and pay for the ongoing maintenance of the network will require more holistic network pricing reforms. Broader pricing reforms present an opportunity to reduce congestion and influence travel behaviour to tailor demand to the capacity of our existing networks.

We can improve travel choices while making charges clearer, fairer, more efficient and more sustainable. Any long-term reform must consider tolls and charges as part of the wider system of roads and public transport, the relationship with parking, and equity for customers who have limited travel options.

A freight train approaches Newstan colliery



Castle Hill Metro Station, shopping centre and nearby high-rise apartments
© 2021 Harley Kingston/Shutterstock.com



Enable whole-of-government outcomes

Transport is an enabler and is integral to the delivery of almost all government services.

Housing, energy transition and Closing the Gap are a strong focus for Government right now. As our government partners, priorities shift, we must respond and adapt.

Work with our NSW Government partners to unlock well-located housing

The NSW Government is committed to confronting the housing crisis as its number one priority. The housing shortage and affordability crisis in NSW has led to a situation where many can either not afford a home or are unable to secure a home because the demand is outstripping supply.

Not being able to secure a home threatens people's health, safety and wellbeing. The lack of affordable, well-located housing is making it increasingly difficult for essential workers and service employees to find a place to live in NSW, particularly in Sydney. This is alarming as the success of the State depends on being able to keep and attract essential workers and young people.

The NSW Government has made a commitment under the National Housing Accord to deliver 377,000 new, well-located homes across the state by 2029, including affordable housing.

While the supply of housing is outside of Transport's legislative role or immediate accountability, Transport can play a significant role contributing to the Government's housing agenda. Local, state and federal governments must all work together to respond to the housing crisis. Transport contributes to this goal by ensuring new and existing housing has access to efficient and affordable transport options.

In existing suburbs, we will coordinate planning and investment decisions across government to ensure all housing benefits from improved access to transport options. We can meet current and future needs by capitalising on existing and committed infrastructure, such as the rail network.



Greater investment in buses

The Government will invest more in buses in our cities and centres. This will include bus and coach services in regional NSW and a program of bus improvements in Sydney supported by the reallocation of road space. Making better use of existing road space, supporting medium density housing and creating a more connected network that caters for all day, all purpose travel. In new development areas in Sydney where there are no existing services, we will take action to improve bus service availability and frequency.

In newly established neighbourhoods, active transport and public transport services will be available from the outset. In greenfield developments where there is no existing transport infrastructure, integrated transport plans will be required to ensure the delivery of multimodal road networks that include active and public transport infrastructure from day one. This will help to instil sustainable travel behaviour and avoid entrenching car dependency in new communities.

Support housing growth around public transport

Major infrastructure projects such as Sydney Metro and Parramatta Light Rail are reshaping a growing Sydney. The precincts along these routes are contributing to unlocking much-needed housing in Sydney as well as facilitating mode shift, by providing high-frequency turn-up-and-go services within a short walk of new dwellings.

Targeting housing growth around existing or planned public transport infrastructure will give residents better access to the things they need. It can also reduce the costs and delays associated with developing additional capacity on our road network and new infrastructure in greenfield developments.

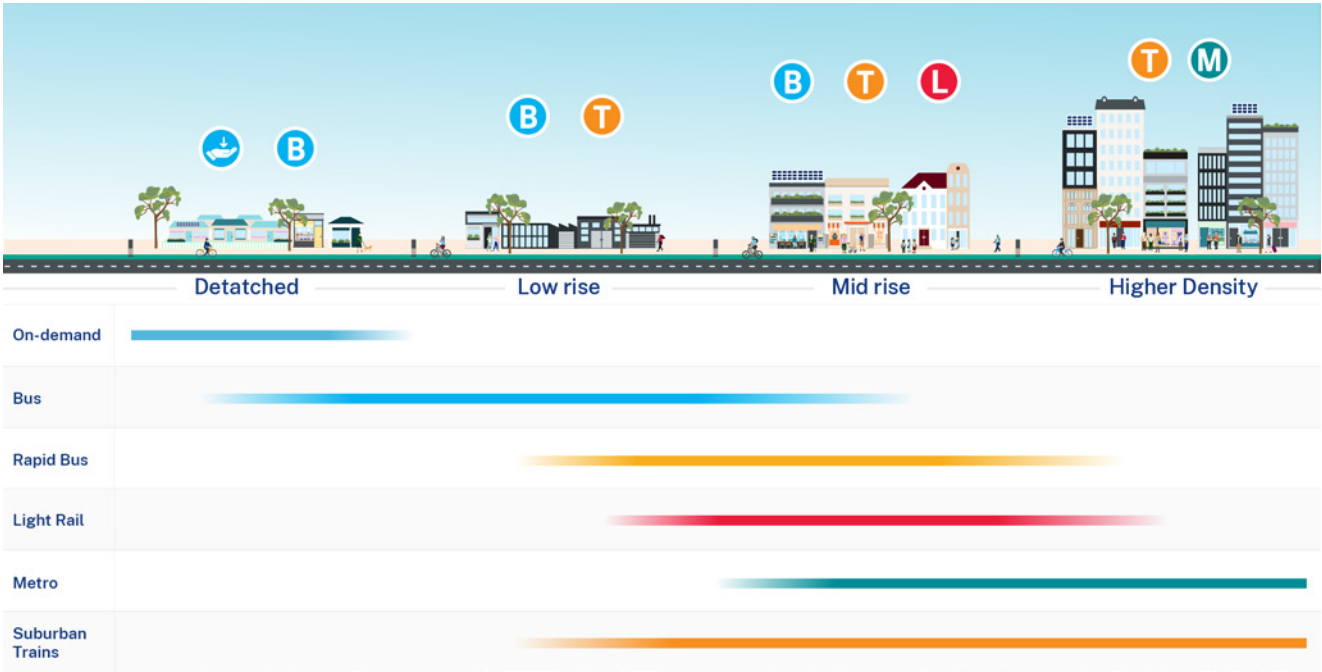


Figure 10. Integrating public transport and land use changes to support the delivery of a diverse range of housing

Unlock housing around public transport stations and stops

The NSW Government’s Transport Oriented Development Program will amend planning controls so more than 170,000 new homes can be created around rail stations. Enabling more people to live closer to transport, jobs, health, education, recreation, night life and amenities will help reduce private vehicle dependency and stabilise traffic in urban areas.

Transport will focus on improving connections to and from rail stations so that local centres remain places of thriving activity. We will ensure improved active transport connections to and across public transport assets.

Invest in on-street transit to support the delivery of housing

Buses and light rail provide an opportunity to integrate land use changes to support the delivery of a range of diverse housing. While mass transit (rail and metro) can support high density residential development and bus services support low density housing, on-street transit along strategic corridors can support medium density housing. Transit activated corridors can help address the crucial gap in medium density housing.



Support the development sector to unlock more housing capacity

In addition to supporting growth around existing and planned transport services and ensuring new and existing housing has access to efficient and affordable transport options, Transport has other levers at its disposal to support the development of more houses.

Divesting surplus Transport land to support housing

Transport is reviewing its land holdings to identify any land surplus to Transport requirements. Where surplus land is identified in well-located areas, it can be divested and used to support more housing. The NSW Government is transforming one of the most well-connected areas in Sydney, the Redfern North Eveleigh Precinct, to provide housing. Other Transport-owned land holds that are being used for more housing include opportunities arising from the renewal of the Central Station precinct. Sydney Metro’s integrated station developments (the building above and around the station) will deliver homes as well as commercial and community facilities, retail space and better active transport connections. Integrated station developments will include a mix of housing, including affordable and social housing and student accommodation.

Transport has identified and is working through the process of divesting over 70 Transport-owned sites that have the potential to contribute over 8500 dwellings.

Faster, simpler, more efficient approvals

When assessing development applications, consent authorities need to consider the impact of development on the surrounding environment. The avoidance or mitigation of these impacts often requires specialist advice and approval from NSW Government agencies, such as Transport. These agencies have whole-of-life responsibilities for publicly owned systems and infrastructure, which are essential for our communities and their wellbeing.

Transport is supporting whole-of-government reforms to streamline the approval pathways to develop more houses. Concurrence and referral reforms will mean that development applications will require less input from other government agencies, including Transport, as we build a faster, simpler, more efficient planning system. This will get more keys in more front doors faster.

Transport will continue to play a critical role in ensuring everyone is housed in safe, secure and affordable housing.



An artist's impression of the Redfern North Eveleigh Precinct renewal

Recent changes to concurrence and referral provisions for Transport Oriented Development accelerated precincts have introduced exemptions from certain agency concurrence and referral provisions that are not considered high risk to streamline development assessment and housing delivery in those precincts.

Greater coordination of planning activities, cooperation and sharing of information is necessary to unlock more housing.

For concurrence and referrals that come to Transport, we are prioritising efficiently processing them. We have set a target to have a response to 90 per cent of the concurrences and referrals received by Transport within the statutory time period (usually 21 days). This will help development applications and planning proposals move through the planning system more efficiently and lowering costs for proponents and planning authorities.

Improve planning and coordination between agencies

Greater coordination of planning activities, cooperation and sharing of information is necessary to unlock more housing, including on Aboriginal-owned land.

Transport will continue to proactively provide transport capacity analysis, direction and guidance to inform the development of housing targets over the five-year, 10-year and 20-year horizons to ensure that we are supporting more diverse and well-located homes in areas with existing infrastructure capacity, as well as maximising the benefit of recent investment in new transport infrastructure and services.

Passengers crossing the road in front of Rouse Hill Metro Station



Energy transition

The NSW Government is leading the transformation of the State's electricity system with the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap.

As part of the roadmap, the Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is responsible for leading the design, delivery and coordination of NSW's renewable energy zones (REZ) and priority transmission infrastructure projects in a way that benefits consumers, investors and regional communities.

REZs will group new wind and solar power generation where it can be efficiently stored and transmitted across NSW. Construction of new REZ generation and transmission projects will require the delivery of large and heavy equipment, including oversize overmass components such as wind turbine towers and blades, transformers and synchronous condensers.

These oversize overmass components will need to be transported from their point of import to project locations within REZs via the existing state road network. To ensure the state road network can accommodate these oversize overmass vehicle movements, minor road works and corridor modifications are required on the initial route between the Port of Newcastle and the REZs.

Transport and EnergyCo are working together to deliver the Port to REZ Program, which will ensure a coordinated approach to road upgrades, approvals, permits, traffic management and safety measures for the state classified road network. This coordinated approach will enable safe and efficient oversize overmass movements, initially from the Port of Newcastle to REZs along state classified roads and enable critical investment in major renewable energy projects.

The Beryl Solar Farm, Gulgong



Committed to Closing the Gap

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap was established by all Australian governments and the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations to reduce disparities between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

NSW has the largest population of Aboriginal people of any Australian state or territory. The NSW Government is committed to playing its role in Closing the Gap, and has an implementation plan that makes Transport jointly accountable, with all NSW Government agencies, for five priority reform areas and 19 socio-economic outcomes and targets. However, the NSW Closing the Gap Annual Report 2022–2023 found that only six of the 19 targets were on track, while others were not progressing – or worsening – since the national agreement was signed.

Transport has a key enabling role to play as it provides access to health care, goods and services and supports Aboriginal people to achieve education, social and economic outcomes and maintain cultural obligations to travel for family commitments. We have adopted four Aboriginal Outcomes, which were developed through consultation with Aboriginal communities, peak bodies and NSW and Australian government partners to drive delivery of work aligned to Closing the Gap priorities:

- Aboriginal people are connected safely to the economy and socially, through transport solutions.
- Our community and Country is healthy and strong through transport planning and placemaking.
- Aboriginal economic independence is supported by Transport work.
- Transport drives transformational action to deliver systemic change.

Transport has a range of projects and programs in place to deliver the Aboriginal outcomes that support Closing the Gap, but acknowledges more needs to be done. We are focusing our efforts – to address the transport inequity experienced by Aboriginal people, and the impact it has on social, cultural, health and economic outcomes.



Trainee train guards at Petersham Training College



A passenger getting into an On Demand vehicle.
On Demand is a flexible public transport service

Implementation

The Connecting NSW Strategy outlines the priorities, or overarching goals for future planning, including regional transport plans, network plans and organisational strategies.

It signals our clear intent to focus on areas that can move the dial in terms of making communities better connected and improving the lives and wellbeing of everyone in NSW. By using a vision and validate approach to track our progress, subsequent planning will ensure we are taking the right steps.

Ensuring we are solving the right problem for the right passenger, customer and diverse communities is important. We need to target who and where we fund future interventions and track whether our interventions succeed in delivering the desired outcomes.

Measuring and monitoring

Choosing what we measure matters, because what gets measured, gets done. We have developed an initial set of measures to track our priorities' progress. These measures and targets reflect our priorities and will support prioritisation and accountability for heading in the direction we have set in the strategy.

Governments have always relied on markers and indicators to measure performance and ensure prudent and transparent spending of taxpayer dollars. We will periodically review these measures and targets to ensure they align with any holistic government measurement frameworks and the government's evolving priorities, and reflect what the community values. Transport will establish measures and targets to track how our work enables efforts across government on Closing the Gap.

Priority	Measures
Towards zero trauma	▼ Fatalities and serious injuries on NSW roads
	▼ Fatalities and serious injuries on NSW navigable waterways
	▲ Share of roads with speed limits of 40 km/h or below
	▲ Perception of safety on the public transport network
Restore reliability and build resilience	▲ Proactive and preventative maintenance
	▲ Public transport reliability
	▲ Journey time reliability
	▼ Frequency and duration of impacts
Transition to net zero emissions	▼ Transport sector emissions
	▼ Transport for NSW operational emissions
	▼ Transport for NSW embodied emissions
	▲ Proportion of zero emission buses and coaches
	▲ Number of public EV chargers in NSW
Reduce transport disadvantage	▲ Public transport coverage, frequency, and hours of operation
	▲ Access to daily needs in the community
	▲ Proportion of stations, stops, wharves, vessels and vehicles that are accessible for people with a disability, limited mobility or prams
	▲ Access to timely and appropriate information in multiple formats
Reimagine road space to drive mode shift	▼ Private vehicle kilometres travelled in urban areas
	▲ Public transport patronage
	▲ Sustainable transport mode share*
	▲ Percentage of short trips made by walking and bike riding
	▲ Kilometres of cycleways and shared paths
Enable whole-of-government outcomes	▲ Number of dwellings located within 30 minutes of a strategic centre by walking or public transport in Greater Sydney
	▼ The gap between transport access (levels) for Aboriginal people in NSW and the remainder of the NSW population
	▲ On time responses to concurrence and referrals to Transport

*Currently only measurable at the Sydney Greater Metropolitan Area level

Enablers

Our people

Our transport workforce is critical for delivering a safe, reliable, integrated and equitable transport network. At Transport, we put our people at the heart. We are fostering a culture where every member of our workforce feels valued and engaged, and is proud to be a part of our transport system. More than 30,000 people work together across NSW to deliver the transport services and infrastructure that customers and communities rely on.

We are committed to ensuring our people are safe, supported and respected. We are working to ensure our people both on the frontline and behind the scenes have the tools, services and systems they need to do their work effectively. We are investing in their capabilities and empowering them to apply their knowledge, experience and expertise to respond to the needs of our customers.

Partnerships and collaboration

Implementing the Connecting NSW Strategy will rely on partnerships. To deliver and support whole-of-government priorities, Transport will partner and collaborate with many stakeholders including other state agencies, local government, unions, industry partners, advocacy groups, non-government organisations and the community.

Technology and data

Digital connectivity, technology and data will be critical to implementing this strategy and delivering a safe, reliable, integrated and equitable transport network for NSW. Together they are playing an increasingly important role in managing and optimising movements across the transport network. Transport will continue to investigate and implement new technologies which improve access and outcomes for passengers, customers and communities in NSW.

Next steps

The Connecting NSW Strategy responds to the Government's priorities, including independent reviews into various aspects of transport operations. To implement this strategy we will continue to progress the agreed recommendations from the Government's strategic reviews while ensuring future investment and prioritisation decisions are considered through the lens of our priorities.

The strategy articulates the big choices Transport is making to respond to our current challenges, but it is not a detailed plan. More detailed customer strategies, place-based, modal and network planning, and prioritisation work will continue so Transport can provide the level of detail our partners need to support whole-of-government directions and to move the dial in our priority areas to better connect NSW.

A parent and child using a shared path in Penrith



Connecting NSW Strategy Priorities for Transport

October 2025. TS216.

ISBN 978-1-923242-23-4

DISCLAIMER

While all care is taken in producing and publishing this work, no responsibility is taken or warranty made with respect to the accuracy of any information, data or representation. The authors (including copyright owners) and publishers expressly disclaim all liability in respect of anything done or omitted to be done and the consequences upon reliance of the contents of this publication.

© Transport for New South Wales

Users are welcome to copy, reproduce and distribute the information contained in this report for non-commercial purposes only, provided acknowledgement is given to Transport for NSW as the source. Unless otherwise stated all images are the property of Transport for NSW however any third party use of photography will require prior written permission.

Transport for NSW
231 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000