

From: [REDACTED]
To: [GHT](#)
Subject: submission to Legislative Council on congestion
Date: Tuesday, 17 September 2019 1:26:58 AM

Hello,

I would like to make a submission to the Legislative Council's inquiry into traffic congestion in Hobart.

I am responding to points 1, 2 and 4 of the Terms of Reference:

<http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Council/Advertisements/ght.adm.190814.Advertisement.aw.001.pdf>

- (1) The scope of Greater Hobart's traffic congestion and its impact on the community and economy;
- (2) Causes of congestion, including physical and topographical barriers;
- (4) Future initiatives to address traffic congestion in the Greater Hobart area;

(1) Scope of Hobart's traffic congestion and its impact on the community and economy

I have recently returned to live in Hobart after being away for the past 25 years. Congestion has noticeably increased. Walking my son to school, riding into town, walking through Salamanca, riding to North Hobart and many other activities are less pleasant than they could be.

I have yet to encounter;

- a single on-road separated bicycle lane;
- a 'shared' street, where pedestrians and cycles have priority over cars;
- a filtered street, where bollards or other means are used to restrict through traffic;
- public transit priority lanes;
- trams with dedicated road space.

Transport planning has and continues to fail the city. It has remained car centric and the community and economy are worse for it.

(2) Causes of congestion

It's important to recognise that congestion isn't caused by any unique topographical or physical feature of Hobart or any particular characteristic of the people living in Hobart. Congestion occurs in every city in the world. Hobart is not unique.

Congestion in Hobart is caused solely by too many people having to rely on private cars for transport.

(4) Initiative to address traffic congestion

What NOT to do

If the cause of congestion as stated above is accepted, the steps to take - and perhaps more importantly the steps **not** to take - become clearer:

Building more roads - or taking any steps to encourage or make driving easier (e.g. providing car parking) - will be a mistake. Taking any such steps will lead to more congestion. This has been shown over and over again, throughout the world.

Brent Toderian is a nationally and internationally respected practitioner and thought-leader with over 25 years of experience in advanced urbanism, city planning and urban design (<http://www.toderianurbanworks.com/brent/>). He makes this point far better than I can. This video is a nice summary and I recommend further research into his work.

<https://thewalrus.ca/tv-cities-for-people-not-just-cars/>

Things that can be done.

Congestion will continue to get worse in Hobart unless there is a change to the priority given to various methods of transport. Currently Hobart traffic engineers prioritise cars over all other transport, and focus on moving those cars through places as quickly as possible.

The prioritisation needs to change.

1. Active transport. Pedestrians and cyclists.
2. Public transport.
3. Private cars.

Chris Boardman (Manchester Cycling and Walking Commissioner) makes some very interesting and relevant points about the incremental changes that have occurred in the Netherlands over a number of years; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zq28fU2AuMU#action=share>

Making this change is likely to give rise to objections from people who have had no alternative but to rely on private cars for transport. These objections can be overcome with evidence from national and international experiences.

- Argument that Hobart is different; it's hilly, it's cold, it rains; no-one will walk or ride a bike. Many cities around the world (including places colder, rainier and hillier than Hobart) show that after good, safe and affordable alternative transport options are provided, people use them. ebikes now account for more 50% of bicycle sales in the Netherlands; hills are not an issue.

- Traders relying on car traffic for their income. Traders consistently overestimate the income they receive from parking outside their shops. Replacing car parks with wider footpaths and cycle paths has actually shown to lead to increased foot traffic and commerce. The Frome street experience in Adelaide is a good example: <https://www.bicyclenetwork.com.au/newsroom/2019/08/13/its-not-just-about-bikes/>.

In summary, this is a worthy and necessary inquiry.

Change is needed and is possible. Hobart can be a far better place to live, work and visit provided the current car-centric transport planning is changed.

Regards,

John Thurstans

