

ITEM MAYORAL MINUTE - WESTCONNEX

Department Executive Services

Author Initials: AT

REPORT

Council is advised of the progress with the WestConnex: M4 East Motorway.

Between November 2013 and 17 February 2014 the concept design for the project has been on display with the opportunity for the community to seek information and provide feedback to the State Government. This is a project of national and state significance and will have a major impact locally, particularly on residents and property owners adjacent to the Parramatta Road corridor.

On Saturday, 18 January I was invited to speak at a community meeting in relation to the WestConnex, organised by local resident in Alexandra Street Concord, Amanda Bull on behalf of the WestCon Action Group. Other politicians invited to speak were:

- Federal Member Craig Laundy MP
- State Members Charles Casuscelli MP and John Sidoti MP
- Greens MP Dr Mehreen Faruqi

Councillors Kenzler and Tyrrell were also in attendance.

In addition WestConnex representatives, invited transport experts and resident representatives also spoke.

It was clear from the number of people in attendance, well in excess of 200, that there is community concern about the lack of detail at this stage of the project.

Council is not opposed to the WestConnex project and is supportive of projects that will remove regional traffic from our local streets and will seek to achieve the best outcome for all involved. This Council has called for an extension to the M4 East since 2004.

I was glad to hear the State Member, John Sidoti at the public rally on 18 January support a fair process for our residents who are directly impacted and that this project is not about politics. We are talking about people's homes and as such it is important that this is recognised and reflected in the process.

City of Canada Bay is different to other inner west councils with the current M4 ending at Concord Road and feeding traffic from Sydney's West through our streets. With the City of Canada Bay bounded by the main roads of Homebush Bay Drive, Victoria Rd and Parramatta Road the current road network has left our City with regional traffic "rat running" across our area.

At present the M4 stops at the City of Canada Bay leaving over 120,000 vehicles per day travelling through the Parramatta Road - Queens Road corridor. In addition we have over 85,000 vehicles per day travelling through Drummoyne on Victoria Rd. We have two of the busiest and slowest corridors in Sydney.

Over the past two (2) years alone Council has spent \$350,000 on traffic calming treatments in our streets around Flavelle and Wellbank Streets, Concord to deter regional traffic from running through our local streets. A further \$60,000 is planned to be spent in the next six

months in the Concord/Cabarita area. Council has spent over \$1.4m on local roads due to the M4 stopping on our Western doorstep.

We recognise the WestConnex as a project of National and State significance and a key element to relieving traffic congestion off our local roads. However this project needs to be planned as part of an overall integrated approach to transport and accompanied with improvements to cycle-ways and pedestrian links, increased frequency of public transport (ie buses, and trains) and serious consideration of a light rail solution in the Inner West.

Further Council will be advocating for its local community to the State Government for:

- construction methods that minimise disruption and impact on our community
- world class filtration and ventilation systems and is pleased to be advised of the appointment of the Chief Scientist to undertake independent testing
- appropriate environmental management during construction to minimise noise, dust and inconvenience to our communities
- guarantees of good environmental management of the tunnels operations, in particular to ventilation and air filtration with regular independent monitoring
- high quality infrastructure and streetscape treatments work upon completion
- transparency in the decision making process
- active and respectful community engagement throughout the process.

Council has also had a long term view to improving the amenity along the Parramatta Road Corridor. The WestConnex Project, if managed well has the potential to make a significant difference in reducing regional traffic from local roads and an opportunity to address improved amenity along the Parramatta Road corridor.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT Council write to the Minister for Roads and Ports, the Hon. Duncan Gay MLC, advocating in support of the community and seeking an extension to the deadline of 17 February to 17 April 2014, enabling residents and other key stakeholders to make an informed submission to the concept design, in light of last information session being held 12 February.
2. THAT Council develop a submission to the WestConnex Delivery Authority, working towards the current deadline of 17 February.
3. THAT Council invite WestConnex Delivery Authority and Urban Growth NSW representatives to brief Council following the closing of submissions.
4. THAT Council seek assurance from the State Government that there will be a duty of care for residents impacted by the WestConnex project, in particular the owners of houses under compulsory acquisition and those owners whose houses are currently set to remain.