

MM-2 MAYORAL MINUTE - CHANGES TO INNER WEST BUS SERVICES

Department Executive Services

Author Initials: AT

REPORT

I would like to make Council aware of a number of upcoming changes to the timetables for local bus services that will have a detrimental effect on our community.

On 25 October residents in the suburb of Canada Bay and surrounds will see public busses disappear from local streets as foreshadowed changes to Inner West bus services take effect. Many concerned residents have reached out to my office requesting that Council advocate on behalf of the community in respect to these changes.

Amongst the proposed changes, the cancellations of route 439 is of most concern. The route 439 service travels along a section of Gipps Street and along the length of Bayview Road in the suburb of Canada Bay. With the discontinuation of the 439 service, some residents would need to walk over half a kilometre to access a regular bus service.

Should these changes take effect our local residents will also have to walk further to access key sporting facilities in the area including sports fields, hockey fields and tennis courts. Council will be aware of the issues with parking availability around sporting facilities during busy times and the removal of a close transport link will only place further stress on these areas.

Additionally, route 439 currently has a stop directly outside the future primary pedestrian entrance to Concord Oval. The discontinuation of the 439 service will result in the nearest bus stop being approximately 400 meters away.

Considering the importance of this recreation facility in the future of our community, and noting the considerable investment in this project from Council and both the State and Federal Governments, the decision to remove a bus stop from the primary pedestrian entrance to our newly redeveloped Concord Oval facility is unacceptable.

Whilst Council was approached early this year in regards to installing new bus stops and service improvements were foreshadowed, our community has not had the chance to have their say on the specific changes to bus services. This includes the cancellation of the route 439 service.

I do acknowledge that the foreshadowed changes to bus services will have various benefits to our community including faster travel times into the City and

additional services for some areas, however, at this point in time we must do what is possible to fight any changes that will discourage our residents from using the public transport network.

I remind Council that earlier this year we stood with our community and Member for Drummoyne John Sidoti to reject changes to ferry services that would have severed the direct link to the City for our residents.

Our Council and our community have set emissions targets to make our City a better place to live and to combat climate change – any change to public transport must actively encourage residents to take up the option and remove cars from our local streets.

I will be raising these concerns with the Minister for Transport and Roads and our Local MP.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT the Mayor write to the NSW Minister for Transport and Roads Andrew Constance and Member for Drummoyne John Sidoti requesting a meeting to discuss the State Government reconsidering any changes to the local bus network that would result in residents being worse off and discouraging use of public transport.
2. THAT Council request no changes to local bus timetables take effect until our community's concerns have been addressed.