

# How to tackle Adelaide traffic congestion in the future, according to Infrastructure Australia

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Expanding Adelaide's bus network instead of building more tram lines would better cater for the city's growth, Infrastructure Australia says.

An Infrastructure Australia audit released today says the daily cost of congestion in Adelaide – including lost productivity – is expected to almost double to \$7.6 million in the next 12 years.

Peter Colacino, Infrastructure Australia's executive director of policy and research, said much of Adelaide growth would occur in the middle band of suburbs – rather than the inner-city – which were better serviced by bus networks than expensive tram lines.

"There's a lower rate of growth in Adelaide and the growth is occurring in the middle band of suburbs, which is very distinct to the other (capital cities), where it is a mix of fringe and inner-city," Mr Colacino said.

"Lots of cities around the world ... and in Australia are looking at light rail and the role it can play. In terms of Adelaide ... then the role of buses will grow in importance.

"Things like investments in stops, stations and interchanges, as well as clear ways and traffic light prioritisation can all make a bus perform just like a tram in terms of travel times."

According to the audit, public transport use across Adelaide is forecast to grow by almost a third from 2016 levels by 2031, influenced by the increased time and costs of car travel. Trips by car are also expected to increase by 24 per cent over that period.

## AM PEAK

Corridor	Direction	Total delay hrs
Main South Rd / South Rd	N/B	3600
Outer Main North Rd	S/B	2800
Port Wakefield Rd / Main North Rd	S/B	2400
Princes Highway (M1) / Glen Osmond Rd	N/B	2300
South Rd / Main South Rd	S/B	2300
North East Rd	S/B	2200
Commercial Rd / Dyson Rd / Lonsdale Rd / Brighton Rd / Tapleys Hill Rd	N/B	2100
Marion Rd	N/B	1900
Port Rd	E/B	1800
Lower North East Rd / Payneham Rd	W/B	1800

## PM PEAK

Corridor	Direction	Total delay hrs
South Rd / Main South Rd	S/B	3800
Outer Main North Rd	N/B	2800
Main South Rd / South Rd	N/B	2600
Tapleys Hill Rd / Brighton Rd / Lonsdale Rd / Dyson Rd / Commercial Rd	S/B	2400
North East Rd	N/B	2100
Main North Rd / Port Wakefield Rd	N/B	2100
Marion Rd	S/B	2100
Glen Osmond Rd / Princes Highway (M1)	S/B	2100
Port Rd	W/B	1800
Payneham Rd / Lower North East Rd	E/B	1700

Aggregated delay for vehicles using road during AM/PM peak period.

Note: N/B, S/B, W/B and E/B represent northbound, southbound, westbound and eastbound, respectively.

Source: Veitch Lister Consulting (2019)197

Adelaide's most congested roads, 2031.

"Traffic congestion will cause delays to buses, diminishing access to jobs within 30 minutes by public transport for residents of Adelaide's outer suburbs that are not serviced by rail," the report states.

Adelaide's busiest roads, according to user experience data, are expected to remain as Fullarton Rd, Goodwood Rd, Glynburn Rd, Magill Rd and the Lower North East Rd/Payneham Rd corridor. Adelaide's population growth of just 0.8 per cent last year, to 1.34 million, was well below the 1.9 per cent average for all capital cities.

The Infrastructure Australia audit groups Adelaide in with satellite cities interstate, rather than Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth.

Mr Colacino said Adelaide and cities such as Geelong, Newcastle and Wollongong would be expected to better plan for population growth by using the experience of the big four cities.

Infrastructure Australia estimates that a commitment of \$200 billion worth of construction work will be needed every five years for the next 15 years to "keep pace" with population growth nationwide.

Urban Infrastructure Minister Alan Tudge said the Federal Government had a congestion-busting agreement with the South Australian Government that invested heavily in roads.

Urban Development Institute of Australia (SA) chief executive Pat Gerace has cautioned Infrastructure Australia against lumping Adelaide together with regional cities, saying its capacity for population growth as a capital city should be recognised.

Labor's federal infrastructure spokeswoman Catherine King said the audit confirmed the need for the Morrison Government to produce a real plan for infrastructure "to protect jobs, curb rising congestion and stimulate the economy".

The Infrastructure Australia audit is conducted every five years to help determine priority projects.

## **COST INCREASES**

- Modelling indicates the annualised cost of road congestion will almost double to about \$2.6 billion, and public transport crowding will increase fourfold to \$4 million in 2031.
- South Australians spend the least of their income, 13.8 per cent, on transport costs, compared to 16.8 per cent for Victorians.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

- SA has \$30 billion in planned projects, but less than \$20 billion for definite projects, according to Deloitte Access Economics.
- Major projects included in Adelaide's 2031 forecast include the Northern Connector Freeway, Darlington Upgrade Project and Flinders Link rail line.

## **ENERGY**

- The pressure is on SA to think about how it can ensure its energy transmission infrastructure and its grid capacity supports renewable-energy sources.
- Infrastructure Australia has highlighted the steel city of Whyalla as an area that will need additional infrastructure as its population and works increase.

Whyalla will need additional infrastructure as its population and works increase.  
Picture: Tait Schmaal

## **SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

- There's an opportunity for hospital and universities to work together to create infrastructure that unlocks growth.
- SA faces considerable pressures to fund equitable services in the state's most isolated and disadvantaged communities. This includes the APY Lands.
- The difference between response times for structural fires in major cities and remote areas is an average of 29 minutes in South Australia.

## **GLENELG TRAM**

- Light crowding is forecast on the Adelaide to Glenelg tram for peak periods by 2031. Infrastructure Australia says the service could be better integrated with other forms of travel, such as walking or riding a bike.

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## **ECONOMY**

■ Fast-growing cities are making a significant contribution to Australia's GDP growth, with Adelaide making up 4.7 per cent of the growth.

Adelaide's top three industries are: health care and social assistance, construction and professional services.