



PUBLIC TRANSPORT FIT FOR A REGIONAL CAPITAL

A CALL TO THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mount Gambier is South Australia's regional capital and serves a cross-border population of over 130,000 people. Despite our size and state contribution, our public transport system is outdated, inequitable, and deeply inadequate.

We call on the Government of South Australia to work with us to deliver a sustainable, inclusive and modern public transport system that supports liveability, social equity, and opportunities for all in our community.

WHY THE CURRENT SYSTEM FAILS OUR COMMUNITY

The current City Bus service:

- Is a State Government responsibility with **almost no change in 35 years**, despite significant city growth and development.
- Is **critically underfunded**: Regional SA receives under \$40 per person in transport funding, compared to \$273 per person in metropolitan Adelaide.
- **Disadvantages our most vulnerable**, as the only affordable option for many—particularly new migrants, the unemployed, seniors, and those with accessibility needs.
- **Restricts workforce participation**, with no services before 9:00am and last services commencing from 4:45pm.
- **Hinders social inclusion** by excluding weekends, evenings and public holidays, limiting access to civic, social, cultural programming and activities.
- **Fails to compare to interstate standards**: smaller regional towns like Stawell in Victoria have far superior services.
- **Underserves surrounding communities**—many in the Limestone Coast rely on Mount Gambier for essential services but lack accessible public transport.
- **Undermines our capacity** to contribute to South Australia's growth as a regional capital.
- **Neglects key areas**, including:
 - Residential zones with **2,000+ homes and 5,000 residents** established over 20 years ago.
 - **Health facilities** like Hawkins on Pinehall and limited Mount Gambier Hospital service.
 - Infrequent, poorly timed services to **TAFE SA** and **university campuses**.
 - **Retirement communities** (Woodlands Grove, Hallmont Estate, Sunrise Village) with 500+ dwellings.
 - **Major community sites** such as Wulanda Recreation and Convention Centre, Blue Lake Sports Park, Carinya Gardens Cemetery, and the Crater Lakes.
 - Important **tourism infrastructure** like Mount Gambier Regional Airport, visitor attractions, and holiday parks.

OUR COMMUNITY'S CALL TO ACTION

The City of Mount Gambier urges the South Australian Government to:

- 1. Deliver immediate improvements**
 - Extend services to currently unserved or underserved areas.
 - Increase frequency of services.
 - Introduce services in the mornings, evenings and on weekends.
- 2. Restructure the Mount Gambier public transport service**
 - In partnership with the local community and Council, undertake a focused review of public transport in and around Mount Gambier to determine, fund and deliver a fit-for-purpose and sustainable model for our city, including consideration of complementary On Demand services.
- 3. Prioritise Mount Gambier for future trials**
 - Use Mount Gambier as a pilot site for new transport technologies or service models in regional South Australia.
- 4. Establish fair standards for regional South Australia**
 - Introduce transparent, population-based service benchmarks, aligned with national standards, to guide regional public transport funding and service delivery.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Improvements to the public transport model in Mount Gambier align with the goals of the South Australian Transport Strategy, which recognises the value of strong regional centres. Our advocacy supports its aim to:

- Expand transport options in regional towns and cities.
- Promote low-emissions travel by reducing car dependency.
- Improve regional connectivity to essential services.
- Enhance wellbeing through healthier, inclusive transport choices.

READY TO WORK TOGETHER

Mount Gambier is ready to collaborate. With State Government support, we can create a model regional transport system that is fair, forward-looking and fully aligned with South Australia's goals of inclusion, equity and sustainability.