

New Metros will better connect our modern city

Paul Nicolaou



Get ready for 2024 being the year of the Metro for Sydney, bringing ultra-modern public transport to the heart of our great city.

With Chatswood to the CBD due to open during the year, we will literally see our new look city taking shape right before our eyes.

New stations at Crows Nest, Victoria Cross, Barangaroo, Martin Place, Pitt Street (Gadigal), Waterloo and new underground platforms at Central will come online to add to the existing Tallawong to Chatswood route.

Each station will become a hub for an unprecedented level of commercial and residential development adding to Sydney's

position as Australia's economic powerhouse. With a pivotal New Year upon us, it's useful to take stock of the enormous reach and economic potential of Sydney's new public transport architecture.

So many connections with high speed driverless trains running at four-minute intervals — and that is only the start.

The aim is to eventually have these computer-controlled trains running at two-minute intervals carrying up to 40,000 commuters per hour — that's almost double the capacity of the existing system.

Sydney Metro, when combined with signalling and infrastructure upgrades on the existing rail network, will increase the number of train services entering the CBD from about 120 an hour to up to 200 after 2024.

In short, the Metro, with all of its connections, is a big city system redolent of a global city such as Sydney. The scale of Australia's biggest and most ambitious public

transport project with its four Metro lines, 46 stations and 113km of track is truly astonishing.

Still to come is the next stage of the Metro City and Southwest link to Bankstown via Sydenham, Sydney Metro West and the Metro Western Sydney Airport link.

The Metro West connecting our two great CBDs — Sydney and Parramatta — is breathtaking in its scope, raising so much potential for building commercial opportunities along its route.

It will double rail capacity between the two CBDs with stations at Westmead, Parramatta, Sydney Olympic Park, North Strathfield, Burwood North, Five Dock, The Bays, Pyrmont and Hunter Street.

Now, Rosehill Gardens can be added to the "destination board" supporting a new community of 25,000 homes following the planned acquisition of the racecourse.

Each station precinct will become a nucleus for innovative businesses and

imaginative housing options for growing communities. The Metro will make Sydney a different city in many ways but we've always been a city where change has been a constant.

The 23km Western Sydney Airport link from St Mary's will be an adrenaline charge for the economy, supporting more than 14,000 jobs during its construction.

There is no doubt we are entering the big league with international cities that have comparable 21st century transport systems.

Overall, the Metro is amazing in its grandeur.

John Bradfield, who pioneered the Sydney Harbour Bridge and so much more of our city's transport infrastructure, would be proud of it and of the city he helped build.

However, there could still be an element of what might have been. Business Sydney is among those who have advocated strongly for a Metro station at Moore Park to service an area that has been Sydney's

entertainment and sporting playground for generations. Soon enough, many more Sydneysiders will be discovering the Metro for themselves as the line opens in the heart of the city. That will truly be a red letter day for our city.

Premier Chris Minns and Transport Minister Jo Haylen will have the honour of presiding over the official opening but they will no doubt be generous in praising the previous government for initiating this city-changing transport system.

There would be no Metro without former Premiers Barry O'Farrell and Gladys Berejiklian giving it the green light.

It is fitting that the Metro enjoys bipartisan support and that its potential as an economic driver is universally supported and understood.

For Sydney, 2024 will be the year of the Metro.

Paul Nicolaou is executive director of Business Sydney.