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transport matters is an industry briefing note we circulate regularly to clients and partners interested in urban transport issues and trends. It aims to contribute to the discussion on building productive, prosperous and liveable cities through integrated land use and transport planning.
chairman’s note

Greg Tucker
greg.tucker@gta.com.au
03 9851 9600

GTA Consultants started in a Melbourne suburb on the 13th of March 1989 and accordingly this year marks our 25th anniversary.

It is impossible for me to not be somewhat sentimental at this time and to reflect on the inception and growth over the 25 years.

From its very humble beginnings GTA now has staff in offices around Australia. GTA has gone from a small, local concern to an organisation that has taken on a truly national perspective. Indeed GTA is increasingly fulfilling its goal of being the “pre-eminent transport consultancy for Australia and beyond.” When governments, agencies and clients from the private sector wrestle with traffic and transportation issues, GTA is more often than not there to help them as their consultant of choice.

However some things, I am pleased to say, have not changed. At GTA we have continued to conduct ourselves in a manner consistent with our core values. This is the DNA of GTA and it is what has consistently distinguished us from our competitors. As GTA continued to grow we extended our core values to include the principle of being ‘One Company’ enabling all of our staff to think and act collegially drawing on the strengths and skills of our professionals wherever they may be around the country.

Finally, and most importantly, what has made GTA is its staff. Every member of staff, those surrounding us now and those who were part of the story in earlier years, have or are contributing to the ongoing success of GTA. I would like to extend my personal thanks to each and everyone of you.

I look forward with great confidence to the continuing success of GTA in the years to come. Twenty five years ago I did not foresee the organisation that GTA has now become and of which I am so proud. Similarly I cannot foresee with certainty the GTA of the future but I am certain both the journey and the company will be exciting.

Greg Tucker
Chairman (and Founder)
The year was 1989.

It was perhaps the most significant political and cultural time since the dramatic and desperately sought conclusion to the second world war a little under 50 years earlier.

It would ultimately result in the most profound social impact felt around the globe that would forever change the lives of millions.

The wave of revolutions commenced in Poland in January with the beginning of a move to private enterprise.

With momentum gathering in Eastern Europe, the Berlin Wall was eventually torn down in the most spectacular and memorable of fashion in November, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics collapsed shortly thereafter.

This was the beginning of the post-Cold War period which would see the further rise of American political dominance and cultural influence that has continued to this day.

On a separate front, it was the year that also saw the birth of the world wide web, a technological advancement that was understood by few at the time, but would also have the deepest of influences upon life as we know it.

The world was changing forever.

At the same time, and with slightly less fanfare or coverage, Greg Tucker sat at a desk in Prahran and GTA Consultants commenced trading.

It was a moment that time has now marked as a milestone event in its own right.

That was 25 years ago...and a quarter of a century is a long time in anyone’s book. It is certainly a long time in the corporate world, particularly when one reflects on the fact that an overwhelming number of small-to-medium businesses fail within the first three years of operation.

At GTA, we are all exceptionally proud of working for a business that has reached its 25th year in operation. A business that commenced on a very modest kitchen bench top and then quickly progressed to as nearly a modest weatherboard cottage in the backstreets of Richmond. A business that was conceived and brought into existence during a severe recession that lingered for years, and has subsequently navigated through the more recent Global Financial Crisis.

Indeed, it was a business that was very exposed and could easily have been fatally wounded during its early days. It could have become just another unsuccessful start-up that was to be consigned to the vague memories of the corporate wasteland.

But it didn’t – primarily for all sorts of incredibly good reasons that are more appropriate for documentation in other forums.

However, what I can say is that GTA is a business that I love and a place where I have happily and proudly spent my entire professional life – a business full of wonderful intelligent people who have cared about the work we do, about each other, and for the clients we do it for.

It’s a business that is determined to be different and to make a difference. Looking forward, it is a business that is destined to be something exceptionally special.

We hope you enjoy this current edition of transportmatters that commemorates this important milestone.

Michael Durkin
Managing Director
GTA: then & now

our staff

then

now

our offices

melbourne 1989
sydney 2004
gold coast 2010
townsville 2010
brisbane 2007
adelaide 2010
canberra 2009
melbourne 1989
our growth

- GTA: 20%+
- Australian GDP: 3.5%

our clients

- Public sector: 50%
- Private sector: 50%

- Government: Federal, State, Territory and Local
- Transport Operators and Authorities
- Land Development, Planning and Infrastructure Agencies
- Property Owners, Managers and Developers
- Financiers, Banks and Lawyers
- Educational Institutions
- Urban Planners, Designers, Project Managers and Architects

what our clients say

GTA 2013 Overall Client Satisfaction Survey Result: 94%

90% target
25 years is a long time whichever way you cut it. A generation, and time enough to see the impact of long run land use and transport changes and decision making.

Community expectations about what our cities should be and how we live, demographic change, urban growth models and our investment in productive infrastructure. All of these are now fertile ground for dinner party conversation, and recognised by governments state and commonwealth as determinants of election day success around the country.

Now that our national GDP figure, our sharemarket capitalisation and the national pool of superannuation funds all exceed $1.5 trillion, we should give pause as to how we’re placed to manage our urban growth in a productive and sustainable way for the next generation.

The fact is there is no shortage of capital chasing worthy solutions to real, long-run and growing problems in our cities, the engine room of our economy. We desperately need an ongoing pipeline of transport projects across Australia with bi-partisan political support, community acceptance and industry buy-in. The good news is this is getting closer with a more constructive recent national conversation about user pays funding via the Productivity Commission, and proposed models for private sector involvement in road projects such as WestConnex in Sydney, and public transport projects through the Cranbourne-Pakenham Rail Link in Melbourne.

Getting this big-ticket infrastructure backbone right creates the environment for the finer grained community level connectivity and urban design creativity to occur. The outcome should be resilient and healthy communities contributing to our national prosperity.

At GTA, we’ve played our part in this story over the last 25 years, consistently working both for government and the private sector. These days we advise state governments on multi-billion dollar transport projects in our cities, and the country’s development industry on marquee urban renewal sites and proposals.

The following pages provide a snapshot of some of our activities and provide some contacts if you’re interested in finding out more.

Please get in touch, we’d love to share with you our skills and experience from around the country.

Christian Griffith
christian.griffith@gta.com.au
03 9851 9600
As outlined earlier in this edition of transport matters, Melbourne is where GTA all began. The Melbourne office has grown enormously over the past 25 years from its humble beginnings on a dining table in Prahran to its current location at 55 Collins Street via Richmond, Hawthorn and Kew.

After a period of government review, Melbourne is currently preparing for a period of significant change as set out in Plan Melbourne which is the Victorian Government’s vision for the city to 2050.

The combination of Plan Melbourne and the zoning reforms are designed to manage future significant increases in population density in designated locations, while providing more certainty regarding development in the residential hinterland.

The change in priority can also be seen in the morphing of the Growth Areas Authority (GAA) into the Melbourne Planning Authority (MPA). The MPA is an independent statutory body with a charter to implement the initiatives set out in Plan Melbourne throughout Melbourne’s inner and outer suburbs as well as regional centres.

A number of major transport projects are well underway including the much talked about East-West Link and the recently announced Dandenong Rail Capacity Project, which has the potential to increase capacity by approximately 11,000 passengers per hour.

VicTrack is also embarking on the Station Precinct Enhancement Program aiming to deliver commercially viable projects around stations to make them safer and more attractive places for travellers and the community. Planning has already commenced at Glen Waverley, Jewell, Alphington and Hampton Stations.

And of course, March in Melbourne always represents one of the busiest and most exciting periods in the major events calendar, with the Moomba Festival, F1 Grand Prix, Asia-Pacific Iron Man competition and annual White Night celebration increasing the demands on our transport system.

We look forward to an exciting future in 2014 and beyond.

Mock-up of page elements:

- Victoria
- Simon Davies
- simon.davies@gta.com.au
- 03 9851 9600

Key projects:

- Australian F1 Grand Prix Traffic and Transport Implementation Plan 1998 - Ongoing
- Australian Tennis Open Traffic and Transport Plan Tennis Australia 2001 - Ongoing
- Moomba Waterfest Traffic Management Plan City of Melbourne 2003 - Ongoing

GTA continues to meet these challenges, and be involved in various projects across Melbourne from strategic transport planning through to strategic and microsimulation modelling and finishing with functional and civil design.
new south wales

It is almost 10 years since GTA opened its Sydney office and from that two person practice serving local government it has now developed into a team of 25 servicing a broad range of clients from small developers to senior levels of government and international clients.

The Sydney office is truly a specialist transport planning business, leaders in advisory services to the development industry and national leader for the company in advisory services to the major transport infrastructure industry.

For GTA Sydney, it has truly been a reflection of the journey that GTA took from its modest beginnings in Melbourne 25 years ago.

The last five years in NSW have been particularly challenging following the decline in major transport infrastructure construction and the onset of the GFC in 2008. The development industry went quiet and the NSW government stopped spending. But despite all this, GTA continued to deliver quality service and the industry responded in seeking out and supporting us.

In the last two years, GTA Sydney has more than doubled in size and been involved in landmark projects such as the iconic redevelopment of the old CUB site on the southern fringe of the Sydney CBD.

We provided detailed traffic and transport assessments, gained concept plan approval for the entire site, and are continuing to provide on-going traffic and transport advice for the project.

We have been a key advisor on the Sydney Light Rail Project with the development of an innovative modelling and analysis procedure to assess its traffic impact.

Nationally GTA Sydney has been providing key transport planning advice in connection with major road PPP projects in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne.

Like our other GTA interstate teams, we look forward to partnering and growing as transport advisors of choice to public and private sector clients.

Chris Wilson
chris.wilson@gta.com.au
02 8448 1800

key projects

Barangaroo
Traffic Management Advice
Barangaroo Delivery Authority
2012 - Ongoing

Sydney CBD Light Rail
Multi-layered Transport Model
Transport for NSW (TfNSW)
2013 - Ongoing

Warringah Mall
Transport Planning
Westfield
2013 - Ongoing

source: www.sydneylightrail.transport.nsw.gov.au
source: www.barangaroo.com
source: www.westfield.com.au
The establishment of the Queensland local entity began in November 2007 in a tiny room of the Christie Corporate Centre in the heart of Brisbane. Queensland at this time was one of the fastest growing economies within Australia, with strong growth in housing construction and tourism and booming activity in the resources sectors of coal, seam gas and the mining of minerals and metals.

This, coupled with the hard work of the well-rounded and highly knowledgeable transport specialists at GTA, Queensland’s inaugural year got off to a successful start.

In hindsight this was a gentle introduction to the States’ challenges ahead. The financial problems in 2009 saw approvals in Queensland’s development and construction industry at a historic low. Times showed their strain when the then Premier announced plans for the controversial privatisation of a number of government-owned assets including Queensland Motorways, QR National and the Port of Brisbane.

Then in late 2010, an exceptionally strong La Nina weather pattern brought a series of floods to Queensland and three-quarters of the state was declared a disaster zone in early 2011.

Despite the obvious challenges this presented for businesses, our Queensland Office continued to thrive and grew at a healthy and steady rate, largely due to our loyal clients, referrers and alliance partners.

GTA’s project services reach also extended geographically beyond South East Queensland: from Townsville to Toowoomba and Gladstone to Rockhampton. The scale and type of projects also grew and exemplified the diverse skills of the GTA staff; ranging from strategic planning, strategic and micro simulation modelling to event management, road safety and the transport component of major EIS’s for the resource sector.

Today, the Queensland team continues to grow and is a consolidated force, located in new offices on Elizabeth Street in Brisbane with secondary offices in the Gold Coast and Townsville.

With Queensland hosting notable events such as the G20 and the 2018 Commonwealth Games, and with strong population growth demanding improved infrastructure and housing, recent funding commitments to big ticket infrastructure projects mean there is well and truly a buzz of optimism in the air for Queensland.
GTA’s Canberra office was set up in mid-2009, initially based in my spare room. After three or four months of footslogging, knocking on doors, networking and frustration, we were asked to review the operation of the Aikman Drive and Joy Cummings Place Intersection in Belconnen for Roads ACT. The rest, as they say, is history.

It is this patience and tenacity that has seen the Canberra office go from strength to strength, fully capable of weathering the various challenges facing the Territory today.

Although the ACT is still growing strongly (with a number of growth areas) there is considerable concern in the property and allied sectors about reductions in federal government employment and the impact of the 2014 Federal Budget.

Almost 40% of commonwealth employees work in the ACT, so any reduction in public service employee numbers has a big influence on Canberra.

In early March, the ACT Government announced a package of initiatives designed to provide confidence and economic stimulus for the ACT building and construction industry.

These include:

– Releasing civil contracts for estate works in Moncrieff (a new suburb in the north of Canberra)
– Reductions in lease variation charges
– Legislation to facilitate major projects across the ACT.

Economic stimulus will also be provided by a number of ACT Government programs. Key programs are:

– The Majura Parkway, a $280 million project currently being constructed. This will be a by-pass around central Canberra, linking the northern suburbs with the airport
– The Capital Metro (light rail) project, now in the planning stages, and set to commence services in 2019 (see page 17).

Also being planned is City to the Lake. This will create a new public waterfront address and identity for the City. The project connects the City across Parkes Way to Lake Burley Griffin and includes several important civic projects - a new stadium, residential apartments catering for 15,000 to 20,000 new residents, a regional aquatic centre and urban beach, and a new convention and exhibition centre.
south australia

The South Australian Office opened in April 2010. Since that time it has grown significantly through both private and public transport planning and traffic engineering projects.

GTA in South Australia advises state and local government, as well as commercial developers and property owners for the growth of property and transport in the future.

A key focus of our work has been the development of higher density living in the city centre, including apartments, hotels and student accommodation. This focus is aligned with the 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide, which increases density in the existing developed area to provide for future growth.

The 30 Year Plan is a landmark document defining future growth areas in greater Adelaide for the next generation and beyond. GTA has been instrumental in assisting with Development Plan Amendments for growth areas in Mount Barker, Virginia and Angle Vale to ensure the future infrastructure is appropriate to the communities needs, and maintaining an efficient and safe transport network for all future users.

The development of the Streets for People Compendium for South Australian Practice provides a new benchmark and way of thinking for the creation of new streets and the redevelopment of existing streets. It also provides a change in thinking for a focus on better environments for people to live in our streets, and to think beyond the normal traffic management principles.

This work extended to the North West Corridor Transport Study, where future higher density development along the Outer Harbour Railway Line requires a new way of thinking about street design to harness active travel by walking and cycling. New cross sections and plan layouts for street design were prepared, invoking shared space and single surface philosophies. GTA has used this as the basis for other strategies for walking and cycling around the metropolitan area.

In the short space of 4 years, GTA has had a major impact on the transport planning and traffic engineering of Adelaide with key strategies and plans working to define our transport future.

Paul Morris
paul.morris@gta.com.au
08 8334 3600

key projects

Streets for People Compendium
SA Active Living Coalition 2010 - 2012
PIA Excellence Award Winner

North West Corridor Transport Study
City of Charles Sturt 2011

Mount Barker Transport Infrastructure Deed
Transport Planning
Mount Barker Consortium 2010

Source: www.infrastructure.sa.gov.au
Source: www.saactivelivingcoalition.com.au
1989  
March 1989  
GTA Consultants commences trading in Melbourne

December 1989  
Average petrol price is $0.60 per litre. Unleaded petrol has now been on the market for 3 years

January 1990  
Victoria becomes the first state to introduce mandatory bicycle helmet laws

March 1996  
Australian F1 Grand Prix returns to Melbourne after 10 years in Adelaide. The race was won by Great Britain’s Damon Hill.

April 2000  
GTA Melbourne relocates to Hawthorn

August 2000  
Discount Australian Airline Virgin Blue hits the skies

1992  
The design of public transport infrastructure changed dramatically following the adoption of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), and in more recent times, the Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (2002). So next time you are using a tram superstop, or observe tactile paving at a bus stop, reflect on the role of the DDA in changing the face of public transport infrastructure.

1994  
1st edition of Sydways is published

1997  
GTA becomes the key transport consultant for the Australian F1 Grand Prix

1998  
Metcard introduced into Melbourne Public Transport System

2000  
Review of fuel quality requirements for Australian transport is released.

August 1990  
Victoria becomes the first state to introduce mandatory bicycle helmet laws

July 1990  
Opening of Sydney Harbour Tunnel

1992
1997
1998
1999
2000

1997
GTA becomes the key transport consultant for the Australian F1 Grand Prix

March 1996
Australian F1 Grand Prix returns to Melbourne after 10 years in Adelaide. The race was won by Great Britain’s Damon Hill.

1999
Introduction of The Australian Road Rules (ARR). These ‘model laws’ were developed to help Australia’s states and territories improve uniformity in road rules across Australia.

1998
Metcard introduced into Melbourne Public Transport System

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Review of fuel quality requirements for Australian transport is released.

August 2000
Discount Australian Airline Virgin Blue hits the skies

25 years in review
2000
Sydney Olympics successful with public transport (including a new airport rail link) meeting most of the demand.

January 2001
Study into deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is undertaken by Australian Federal Transport Department.

2002
Drug and alcohol testing commences for the aviation industry.

2003
Alliance between Qantas and Air New Zealand denied by ACCC.

March 2004
Melbourne hosts the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

February 2008
South-east Queensland successfully implements ‘Go Card’ for public transport services, reducing boarding times and offering discounted transport to users.

June 2009
GTA Brisbane opens.

January 2001
Study into deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is undertaken by Australian Federal Transport Department.

October 2004
GTA Adelaide opens.

April 2010
GTA Melbourne relocates to 55 Collins Street.

September 2000
Sydney Olympics successful with public transport (including a new airport rail link) meeting most of the demand.

February 2008
South-east Queensland successfully implements ‘Go Card’ for public transport services, reducing boarding times and offering discounted transport to users.

September 2005
GTA Adelaide opens.

September 2005
GTA Melbourne relocates to Kew.

October 2012
Petrol prices surge to $1.60 in some metropolitan areas.

2009
Rollout of Myki ticketing system begins in Melbourne, ultimately replacing existing Metcard system on 29 December 2012.

June 2014
Closirng of Sydney Monorail after 25 years of operation.

2001
GTA becomes a key planning consultant for Australian Tennis Open.

October 2004
GTA Sydney opens.

November 2007
GTA Brisbane opens.

July 2009
GTA Canberra opens.

2012 / 2013 / 2014
Consecutive BRW Client Choice Awards Success.

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Consecutive BRW Client Choice Awards Success.
Productivity Commission Public Infrastructure Draft Report


The report highlights areas for improvement in infrastructure financing, funding and procurement, and makes recommendations across all levels of Government, aimed at attracting increased investment from the private sector.

The Commission is accepting feedback on the draft report until 4 April, with public hearings to follow, and a final report to be provided to the Australian Government in late May.

The draft report is available for download from the Productivity Commission website.

Road Pricing and Transport Infrastructure Funding Report

On 25 March, Infrastructure Partnerships Australia (IPA) released a report detailing recommendations to improve Australia’s transport funding and congestion challenges.

Developed in partnership with NRMA, RACQ, RACV and the Australian Automobile Association, the report examines the current transport network pricing system and suggests significant changes.

Examples of these suggested improvements include the launch of a Public Inquiry into the funding and regulation of Australia’s road transport market, a single regulatory regime for light vehicles across Australia, and increased public awareness of the current challenges faced by the industry.

The report can be found at the IPA website.

Commencement of Inner West Light Rail Services

NSW Premier The Hon Barry O’Farrell and Minister for Transport The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP officially announced the Inner West Light Rail Extension on 27 March 2014, with peak services to take customers into the CBD for the first time.

This follows improvements announced to CBD and South East Light Rail project on 11 March 2014 as a result of community consultation, and detailed in a Submissions Report to be reviewed by the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure before a decision is made regarding planning approval in the coming months.

GTA continues to advise and assist TfNSW with this project.

Information on the announcement of services and the Submissions Report is available from the Sydney Light Rail website.
**Updated Brisbane draft new City Plan**

Brisbane City Council’s Draft New City Plan guides the infrastructure planning, land use and development throughout the city. It will be instrumental in managing and supporting the city’s long term growth and will define the future footprint of Brisbane’s built form.

During the 60-day consultation period between June and July 2013, the public submitted over 2700 submissions on the draft.

In February 2014, the Council met to consider all of the feedback submitted, and approved the release of a revised Draft City Plan, which has been sent to the Queensland Government for final approval.

Further information about the revised Draft City Plan (including an overview of the changes made) is available at the Brisbane City Council website.

**Capital Metro Light Rail**

The ACT Light Rail project is the largest infrastructure project currently being planned in the ACT.

Known as Capital Metro, the first stage of the project will be a line from the City Centre to Gungahlin, which may be extended to other centres in the future.

Project planning studies are currently being undertaken. Feedback will be sought from the community throughout 2014, with the draft Light Rail Master Plan to be completed by the end of 2014.

Aims for the project include:

– Increase the mode share of public transport
– Provide a stimulus to the Canberra economy
– Revitalise the Northbourne Avenue corridor

For more information on Capital Metro and the proposed Light Rail Master Plan, head to the Capital Metro website.

**SA Integrated Transport and Land Use Plan**

Public consultation closed on SA’s draft Integrated Transport and Land Use Plan on January 17, 2014, with over 1500 submissions received during the consultation period.

The draft Plan recognises the fundamental relationship between the transport and land use systems and has identified key transport corridors throughout the state.

The Plan is designed to guide the safe and efficient management and operation of these corridors, to shape the development of adjoining land through links to appropriate land use planning processes, and to support the function of the corridor and enable specific transport plans, investments and actions.

All submissions are currently being reviewed by the SA Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, while the Plan is available for download from the SA Government website.
Transport Project Development (TPD) is a relatively new business group within GTA, reflecting the growing importance placed on integrated transport and land use planning, and a strategic issues-based approach to our work.

We work at the ‘front end’ of transport projects nationally, providing innovative solutions to ensure that projects are set up to succeed by supporting the wider economic, social and environmental policy goals of governments.

Recent reports such as the Victorian Government Auditor General’s report on Managing Traffic Congestion (2013) propose a shift away from the traditional ‘predict and provide’ method of transport planning, with an increased focus on the efficient use of available infrastructure as funding for large ‘supply side’ infrastructure projects becomes harder to secure.

In practice, this means that for many of our major projects we need to learn from the lessons of the vibrant and successful areas of our cities.

Melbourne CBD’s systematic and sustained approach to improving access for pedestrians, bikes and public transport may have traffic modelling software throwing in the towel, but the CBD has never been a better place to live, work and play.

Also exciting is the recent Victorian Government announcement of a $2.5 billion project to improve rail network capacity in Melbourne’s south east. This is a new development in public transport project funding for Australia, and the first bid brought to the Government by a private consortium under the new unsolicited proposal guideline.

Successful road funding models are now a familiar part of the infrastructure landscape, with large projects being routinely funded up front by the private sector.

But until now, this model had not been successfully applied to public transport infrastructure....watch this space.

With these new funding models in place, we will continue to work with our major private clients to advocate for new public transport infrastructure, to further progress projects and open up discussions with government.

Tom is an Associate in GTA’s Melbourne Office and a key contact in our Transport Project Development Group.

tom.courtice@gta.com.au | 03 9851 9600
A rising population coupled with intermittent and often trailing investment in a commensurate level of transport infrastructure capacity has delivered some interesting challenges in the way we move in and around our cities.

Whilst many of us have grown up in households dominated by car-centric travel behaviour, we are experiencing first-hand a level of change we could not have imagined late in the 20th Century.

Indeed, rising challenges are seeing marked changes in the travel behaviour of our communities. In particular, a shift away from traditional single occupant motorised vehicular travel to other alternatives including those of the mass transit and active travel variety.

In more extreme cases, our community is choosing to change the time of their selected travel or making a stronger commitment to residing much closer to their primary place of employment or vice versa.

Numerous strategic policy decisions set by government have helped manage our rising transport challenges and contain the spread of land use development on the urban fringe. These decisions have also sought to respond to evolving demographics which are seeing a material rise in single occupant households and issues of housing affordability.

It is not surprising that corresponding efforts are being made by the development sector to respond to rising land values by seeking to deliver land use density outcomes we are more accustomed to experiencing in other international urbanised metropolis’. These outcomes are broadly being supported by community, which is placing a higher price on the value of time, at least as it relates to the day to day commute and its link to the often discussed work-life balance equation.

In response, we have seen the steady rise in planning and approvals of higher density mixed-use developments within and around our city centres.

Our office has experienced this transition first-hand and played a significant role in facilitating the changing fabric of our urbanised centres.

John is a National Director based at GTA’s Melbourne Office and a key contact in our Transportation Planning & Traffic Engineering Group.

john.kiriakidis@gta.com.au | 03 9851 9600
In 1989 the terms “Active Travel”, “Green Travel Plan” and “Shared Space” weren’t invented, bicycle infrastructure consisted of small blue signs with white bicycles, and days would go by before you’d see a bicycle on the road.

How things have changed! And how GTA has grown to respond to the rapid changes!

Some key changes and events in active travel include:

- The NSW Bicycle Guidelines in 2003 which I co-authored with Warren Salomon of Sustainable Transport Consultants, forming the basis of much of the current series of Austroads guidelines. Other important new instruments include the series of 24 VicRoads Cycle Notes and the Queensland Separated Cycleway Guidelines.

- The construction of hundreds of kilometres of high quality cycleways in each of our capital cities with more facilities in regional areas and in particular the one-way pair and bi-directional separated cycleways, which allow traffic shy people to ride safely and in comfort.

- The 2013 Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into Cycling Issues has set new directions for cycling around the country, including guidelines for the planning and design of facilities and investment in new infrastructure.

- Transport planners have formed close working relationships with preventative health research and promotion agencies such as Victoria Walks, the Premiers Council for Active Living and the various State Health Departments.

But some things just never change:

- We still rely on Fruin’s 1971 research for pedestrian level of service.

- Traffic Impact Assessments too often only assess traffic and parking generated by private cars.

GTA has made significant contributions to the emerging field of active travel, with a team of experts across Australia who can help with research, planning, design and implementation of all things walking, cycling and access to public transport.

Dick is a Director in GTA’s Sydney Office and a key contact in our Active Travel Group.

dvd@gta.com.au | 02 8448 1800
When GTA opened its doors, Traffic and Transport Impact Assessments used simple, static intersection modelling packages.

What is the intersection degree of saturation? Tab, Alt, Enter. Computer processes the data, algorithms run, report the results.

Does it work? Results suggest it does. Project approved.

Fast forward to today to our major towns and cities multimodal, multifaceted, congested and complex transport networks. What about impacts on trams, buses, pedestrians, cyclists and signal control? Innovative transport solutions are not only common place but are moreover a requirement to test the impact of a wide range of land use and infrastructure projects.

Transport Information Systems and Modelling are now a key component and driver in GTA’s service offering.

It’s now common to use both high level strategic transport modelling that informs long term travel behaviour, planning and investigations as well as microsimulation modelling to test the operating characteristics and integration of the network. Mesoscopic models can now provide the missing link between strategic and microsimulation models. Nanosimulation is capable of measuring the performance of a person’s journey of travel.

Whatever the task, we can set up a practical and robust framework for testing a range of policy decisions and infrastructure proposals covering public transport projects, congestion management, road pricing/parking policy, special event planning and land use developments.

These tools provide a detailed analysis of the entire transport task that not only assess the local and broader network operation, but provide the optimum solution, both from a mitigating infrastructure perspective as well as an economic perspective.

The team now works on a broad range of transport related projects from across the public and private sectors. They determine capacity improvements, intersection upgrades, network performance and provide inputs into economic and triple bottom line assessments and business cases.

Policy dictates that sustainable transport solutions and network optimisation are at the forefront of planning decisions. We have the tools and capability to deliver that.

Reece is a Director in GTA’s Melbourne Office and a key contact in our Transport Information Systems & Modelling Group.

reece.humphreys@gta.com.au | 03 9851 9600
In 1989, the use of Computer Aided Design (CAD) software was becoming the preferred method for the preparation of engineering design and documentation. The skilled workmanship of tracers and draftspersons, with their artistic touch and accuracy of an archer, was fast becoming a thing of the past.

Our use of Computer Aided Design (CAD) began in the late 1990’s. This required the setting up of detailed systems to facilitate the production of accurate, presentable and consistent outputs, including an initial and continued investment in reliable tools such as CAD software, CAD specific machines and of course expert operators and designers.

The development of CAD software and supporting design tools has also seen an increase in the number of degree qualified engineers using these tools as part of their skillset. In days gone by, engineers would typically be responsible for design development with the bulk of documentation prepared by tracers and draftpersons. This has resulted in a significant amount of ‘value’ added to the design process, creating a new role for professional engineers who can apply their engineering knowledge in a CAD environment.

Our design capabilities have also expanded as the company has grown. Fast forward to 2014, we now have a dedicated, reliable, highly skilled and nationally focused team, comprising transport designers and civil engineers offering a full design delivery service for transport infrastructure.

We provide a holistic approach to designing projects, considering transport design, civil engineering and road safety implications at the ‘front end’. We also engage and manage other trusted specialist consultants and contractors to deliver ‘turn key’ design solutions.

Our focus is on managing the whole process from planning through design to approvals and construction to manage design quality and minimise risk for delivery on time and budget.

Craig is a National Director based at GTA’s Melbourne Office and a key contact in our Civil Engineering and Transport Design Groups.

craig.gist@gta.com.au | 03 9851 9600

craig gist
In 2002, I stepped straight out of University and into the real world at GTA. A world of fax machines, traffic, car parking layouts, supply, demand and surveys. The journey had begun and the starting place was opposite an average suburban pub in Hawthorn, where car parking was an issue.

Before I knew it I had simulated, modelled, walked and photographed my way around most of Melbourne and indeed some of Sydney and Brisbane care of our new offices.

2004 saw me packing my bag and riding pillion behind a local Thai man along the congested streets of Bangkok for three consecutive weekends, where the market for paid car parking was the issue. We moved to Kew in 2005 and the new office in the beginning had plenty of car parking.

In 2007, the Cricket World Cup beckoned and I was off to the Caribbean and a year abroad. After bussing, hitching and hiking my way around South America I arrived in Babylon, the home of the Square Mile and the city otherwise known as London.

I lived in the west and had a job in Notting Hill within the extended congestion charge zone, where car parking was always an issue.

One contract to another saw this transport engineer work on a Foster and Partners project in Istanbul, and within the blink of an eye I had moved from West to East London to be working in one of the most deprived Boroughs rolling out cycle hire and car share schemes along with keeping an eye on the plans for the Olympics over the back fence. Every time I proposed something for the supposed benefit of the community, car parking was an issue.

Eventually I jumped the back fence and scored a plum job with the London Olympic Organising Committee and was assigned Road Cycling venues at Hampton Court Palace (Olympic Time Trial) and Brands Hatch (Paralympic Road Cycling). You wouldn’t believe it, but as a Venue Transport Manager it all boils down to car parking.

In late 2012, I booked my flight and begged for my job back. I needed sunlight, I needed multiple approvals of high rise residential towers, I needed to stop drinking midweek and I needed a decent coffee.

In March 2013, I happily returned to GTA knowing before I walked in the door, it has and always will be a great place to work. Things had definitely changed people talked strategy, corridors and precinct plans. In late 2013 we moved offices to Collins Street and we now have two car parking spaces. Car parking is always an issue.

So what have I learnt? Yes car parking is an issue, yes the horses in Iceland run differently to other horses, yes English ale is excellent and football isn’t AFL, but mainly transport engineering can take you places and open both small and Olympic sized doors.

Here is to a great 25 years of opening doors for both staff and clients and to the next 25! Even if I do expect there to be car parking issues.
Local streets have long been designed around the motor vehicle, with space for driving and parking paramount to support our motorised lives, reflected in the decline in public transport and use of the street as a place for living and activity.

However renewed interest in public transport has rekindled interest in streets as places for people, with walking the primary mode for public transport passengers in transit, yet whilst the public transport networks are highly scrutinised and designed, the infrastructure for people to walk or cycle to the station or stop is often overlooked.

New practices emerging in South Australia are challenging local street design to create an environment where walking and cycling for transport and recreation is a safe and enjoyable alternative to driving.

To learn more, go to the Streets for People Compendium website.

As Australia is changing, our transport use is evolving. Our population is growing more strongly than many other developed countries and most of this growth is in our large cities.

More Australians (even families) are living in apartments and in some areas many households do not own a car. These changes are most obvious in our cities, especially inner urban areas.

Australians are changing some of their travel patterns, including increasing their use of public transport and active modes. We are also using a wider range of vehicles.

We are developing new ways to access cars and bikes, without owning them, through car share and city bike schemes. Governments, and transport professionals will face increasing pressure to provide safe and attractive environments for a variety of transport modes.

Click here for the full presentation.

With congestion, obesity and inactivity on the rise across the country, many councils are looking towards walking and cycling as an important part of an integrated solution.

The health benefits of walking and cycling are well documented and with almost half of the car trips in Melbourne being less than 5km long, this presents a great opportunity to encourage the current growth in cycling and walking.

The provision of safe infrastructure to support and encourage the rise in active travel must include separated paths and facilities that cater for all ages (8-80s) and anticipate future long-term growth.

Safety remains a significant barrier to encouraging walking and cycling. Reducing speeds to create a more equitable road environment is paramount to improving the safety of vulnerable road users. I will be considering this topic, and the concept of reclaiming our streets at the forthcoming Velo-City Global conference in Adelaide.
In 2012 the NSW Government began the extension of the Inner West Light Rail line and recently announced the $1.6 billion CBD and South East Light Rail Project.

The assessment of the project and its potential impacts on the operation of the road network has adopted a first of its kind, multi-layered transport modelling approach, extracting the best elements out of multiple software packages to rigorously assess then inform the relevant agencies in government in their planning and implementation of light rail, and the impacts on other transport system users.

The models developed for this project will pave the way for a new future of transport modelling for large scale urban networks that can guide transport planning and policy as well as infrastructure projects.

My full presentation on mesoscopic modelling of the proposed Sydney CBD light rail system, can be found at the GTA website.

The provision of car parking goes beyond the simple provision of ‘space’ and has a far greater influence on the broader transport network and the ability to change the way in which people travel.

Over the last 25 years in Australia we have seen the increased introduction and consideration of parking maximisation policies as a means of reducing road network congestion and an increased introduction of paid parking, not as a revenue tool, but rather a demand management tool to encourage shift in transport modes and to better manage and prioritise this finite resource.

This trend will continue into the future as we seek to balance housing affordability, infrastructure costs, road space allocation, congestion, and urban amenity.

More is available on this topic at the GTA website:

Parking: A Basis or Burden, to Liveable and Accessible Communities.
ACT – Parking Changes and Industry Impacts.

robert.dus@gta.com.au
03 9851 9600
chris.coath@gta.com.au
03 9851 9600
thank you

our vision
“to be the pre-eminent transport consultancy in Australia and beyond”

“25 years is a long time in business.

We’re grateful for the support of our many loyal clients, the strong relationships we have with key partners and agencies, and all the wonderful staff at GTA.

Thank you all.”
the senior GTA team

national directors

Greg Tucker
Chairman

Michael Durkin
Managing Director

Christian Griffith

John Kiriakidis

Kate Partenio

Craig Gist

Chris Wilson

directors

Simon Davies
VIC

Reece Humphreys
VIC

De Tim Young
VIC

David Graham
VIC

Dick van den Dool
NSW

Brett Maynard
NSW

Paul Morris
SA

Ken Hollyoak
NSW

Jason Rudd
NSW

Mac Hulbert
QLD

Bruce Masson
Executive Consultant
NSW

associate directors

Chris Coath
VIC

Jason Sellars
VIC

Paul Delacca
VIC

Tanya Moran
QLD

Peter Strang
ACT

Paul Froggatt
SA

Robert Dus
VIC

Peter Wills
VIC
Melbourne
phone: [03] 9851 9600
fax: [03] 9851 9610
post: PO Box 24055, MELBOURNE VIC 3000
phys: Level 25, 55 Collins Street, MELBOURNE VIC 3000
email: melbourne@gta.com.au

Sydney
phone: [02] 8448 1800
fax: [02] 8448 1810
post: PO Box 6254, WEST CHATSWOOD NSW 1515
phys: Level 6, 15 Help Street, CHATSWOOD NSW 2067
email: sydney@gta.com.au

Brisbane
phone: [07] 3113 9000
fax: [07] 3113 9010
post: GPO Box 115, BRISBANE QLD 4001
phys: Level 4, 283 Elizabeth Street, BRISBANE QLD 4000
email: brisbane@gta.com.au

Canberra
phone: [02] 6263 9400
fax: [02] 6263 9410
post: PO Box 46, DICKSON ACT 2602
phys: Suite 4, Level 1, 136 The Parade, DICKSON ACT 2602
email: canberra@gta.com.au

Adelaide
phone: [08] 8334 3600
fax: [08] 8334 3610
post: PO Box 2421, NORWOOD SA 5067
phys: Suite 4, Level 1, 136 The Parade, NORWOOD SA 5067
email: adelaide@gta.com.au

Gold Coast
phone: [07] 5510 4814
fax: [07] 5510 4850
post: Box 37, 1 Corporate Court, BUNDALL QLD 4217
phys: Level 9, Corporate Centre 2, 1 Corporate Court, BUNDALL QLD 4217
email: goldcoast@gta.com.au

Townsville
phone: [07] 4722 2765
fax: [07] 4722 2778
post: PO Box 184, TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810
phys: Level 1, 25 Sturt Street, TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810
email: townsville@gta.com.au