

26 July 2008. Embargoed until 28 July 2008

Councils look to Facebook generation to support Monash - Rowville rail line



Facebook, MySpace and an online petition for university students and the community is the latest step in a campaign to boost public transport in Melbourne's East.

The Metropolitan Transport Forum, a coalition of 19 Melbourne councils, has launched an online petition with Monash University supporting a new rail line to Rowville including a direct service to the university's Clayton campus.

The petition was launched today by Knox Mayor Cr Jim Penna and Monash University Vice-President (Administration) Mr Peter Marshall.

The University recently made a submission to the Government's East West transport study supporting a rail extension to Rowville via Monash University's Clayton campus.

Cr Jim Penna says the on line petition makes it easy to send a message to the State Government about public transport.

'More public transport options are needed in the East,' Mayor Penna said.

'In most cases, residents have no other option but to drive when many have indicated they would use public transport if it were made available.

‘We can’t underestimate the importance of a rail line to Rowville — it will be essential to the mobility of students, and young people in the East,’ he said.

Cr Penna said a 2004 feasibility study outlined the practicalities of the Rowville rail extension.

‘The next step is for the Government to get serious about public transport in the East and conduct its own feasibility study. The Rowville rail extension should be on the agenda.

‘This petition takes what has been a long-running campaign into the digital age and I encourage everyone to lend their voices to the push for the Rowville rail.

‘A Rowville rail line could carry 2,350 people an hour, the equivalent of removing an entire lane of traffic from the Monash Freeway.’

Cr Penna said he hoped that thousands of Monash University staff and students would join the petition. ‘The more signatures we get, the stronger our collective voice becomes.’

MTF pt4me2 spokesperson Cr Janet Rice said the Rowville rail line was the missing link of rail in the East.

‘It’s great that Knox and Monash University are playing a leadership role in transport strategies for the future,’ she said.

Go to our [pt4me2 media page](http://www.pt4me2.org.au/media/index.html) (<http://www.pt4me2.org.au/media/index.html>) for downloads of Monash University East West Needs submission and the Knox City Rowville rail feasibility study 2004.

There’s also a link to the progress of the new underground rail service to Sydney’s Macquarie University set to open in 2009. (<http://www.tidc.nsw.gov.au/ViewSite.aspx?PageID=19>)

Contact details for more information or comment

MTF pt4me2 spokesperson

Cr Janet Rice 0439 363 846

Greg Day, media liaison, 0418 345 829

Monash University

Ms Shaunnagh O’Loughlin,

Media and Communications, Monash University

9903 4843 or 0448 574 148

Knox

Leigh Johnston

Media & Advocacy Advisor

Knox City Council

9298 8583 or 0434 363 428