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Media Release

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Budget praised on urban rail projects

The Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF) praised the Federal budget allocation of \$3.2 billion for Melbourne's Regional Rail Link. This will enable acceleration of this critical project with both Stage 1 - the City to Sunshine, and Stage 2 from Sunshine to Werribee.

The federal allocation to support planning for Melbourne's Dynon to Domain metro rail tunnel, was also applauded by MTF Chair, Cr Jackie Fristacky. This project provides the basis for a new metro system for Melbourne and an essential rail link for the University of Melbourne and Parkville's hospital and research precincts.

Cr Jackie Fristacky said that "these budget allocations to urban transport systems reflected a massive shift in federal government thinking."

"The Federal government now recognizes that investment in passenger transport is not solely a State responsibility, but is critical to nation building and the national economy."

Cr Fristacky emphasised "the superior job creation benefits in rail projects over road building; investing in rail is one of the most effective means of helping spur economic recovery".

The MTF is however, disappointed that the Budget makes no commitment to phasing out distortions in Federal Fringe Benefits Tax with FBT actively promoting car use while discriminating against public transport.

The MTF represents 19 Melbourne metropolitan Councils.

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