



Media release

Speed-up transport spending to ease financial slowdown, say councils

Embargo until midnight Sunday 19 October 2008

Councils launch transport plan

**Media launch Monday 20 October at 10:00 am, Doncaster Library, 2 Hummell Way, Doncaster
MELWAYS 33 F12**

The Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF) has called for government to speed up investment on public transport infrastructure in response to the financial crisis.

The need for improved public transport infrastructure is the focus of a new transport plan being launched on Monday 20 October 2008 and supported by a submission to Infrastructure Australia.

The MTF submission calls for Infrastructure Australia to give priority to investment in urban public transport and rail freight including new rail-lines for Doncaster and Rowville, electrification of the line to Bacchus Marsh, rail extensions to Cranbourne East, South Morang, Mernda and Whittlesea, and rail freight initiatives.

MTF Chair Cr Jackie Fristacky says Australia is the only developed country in the world where its national government does not fund urban public transport systems.

'Federal spending on public transport would reduce greenhouse emissions and boost the economy.'

The projects are outlined in the MTF's 'pt4me2' metropolitan transport plan which has been launched in advance of state government announcements expected this November.

'Melbourne needs a transport plan to meet the needs of a growing city' says Cr Janet Rice, pt4me2 spokesperson.

'That means extending public transport to the rapidly growing outer suburbs and making public transport more attractive'.

Key to the plan is action on long-promised rail extensions and electrification, more frequent and more reliable buses and trains and integration of the system, allowing commuters to change between trains, trams and buses more easily.

Proposals include a train line from Huntingdale to Rowville via Monash, extending the Epping line and the upgrade of facilities at key stations like Footscray and Ferntree Gully.

The MTF plan presents a familiar list of public transport projects – they include long promised rail extensions, more buses and trams – but also the need for an integrated transport plan.

With growing congestion, rising petrol prices and the urgent need to lower greenhouse pollution, Melbourne needs a new wave of investment in sustainable transport.

Cr Fristacky says without a shift to sustainable transport, Melbourne faces an inevitable transport crisis.

'Our trains and trams are struggling to cope with public demand - we've had no major rail extensions since the 1930s, despite an extra 2.7 million residents' she said.

'Developing a well integrated public transport system could even boost the Melbourne economy by cutting congestion and time spent in traffic.'

'The public want a visionary transport plan– we need good news on public transport in tough economic times,' said Cr Fristacky.

EVENT DETAILS

What: Manningham Council Mayor Cr Geoff Gough and MTF spokesperson Cr Janet Rice will launch Melbourne's 'pt4me2' transport plan

When: Monday 20th October at 10:00 a.m.

Where: Doncaster Library

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