

A TRANSPORT AGENDA FOR MELBOURNE

Delivering a more productive economy
through better transport

November 2014



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AUSTRALIA
Tourism & Transport Forum

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OVERVIEW

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Investment in Melbourne's transport infrastructure and improved transport services is critical to the productivity of the Victorian economy and the liveability of the city. By investing now in critical projects, the Victorian government can ensure the city's infrastructure is able to support predicted population growth and accelerate economic growth while also reducing traffic congestion.

This paper outlines the key projects and service delivery reforms we believe are essential for ensuring Melbourne's transport system aids rather than hinders the growth of the city.

TTF is advocating for major investments in public transport and road projects. Our first priority is to see the capacity of the Melbourne rail network expanded through the construction of a new CBD rail tunnel. This will support other critical extensions of the network, including a long overdue rail link to Melbourne Airport. We also endorse the additional capacity the East-West link will provide to Melbourne's road network.

We support the modernisation of the tram and bus networks through better rolling-stock, greater prioritisation for both modes on Melbourne's roads and a rationalisation of routes. More efficient and customer-focused bus services can be delivered by the competitive forces of open tendering for future contracts.

TTF welcomes the recognition by all political parties that there is much more to do to improve Melbourne's transport network. With funding from sources like asset recycling and strong political leadership, Melbourne can have a better transport system that supports its role as a major global city.



Margy Osmond
Chief Executive Officer
Tourism & Transport Forum

TTF'S PLAN TO IMPROVE TRANSPORT IN MELBOURNE

1

Develop and seek bipartisan support for a Transport Master Plan for Melbourne to guide transport infrastructure investment for the next 20 years

2

Construct a new CBD rail tunnel to boost capacity across the rail network

3

Build a railway line to Melbourne Airport

4

Continue the segregation of rail lines

5

Give greater priority to high-capacity signalling and new rolling stock

6

Implement a forward plan for the removal of level crossings

7

Progress a rail link to Avalon Airport

8

Accelerate the roll-out of E-class rolling stock on Melbourne's tram network

9

Plan a tram line to Fishermans Bend

10

Improve the efficiency and speed of the tram network

11

Implement open tendering for all bus contracts

12

Reform the bus network to improve speed and reliability

13

Give bus commuters more real-time information

14

Construct the East-West link

15

Complete the CityLink-Tullamarine Freeway widening

16

Create a more walkable city

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Unlock the potential of cycling

18

Make public transport and *myki* easier for visitors to use

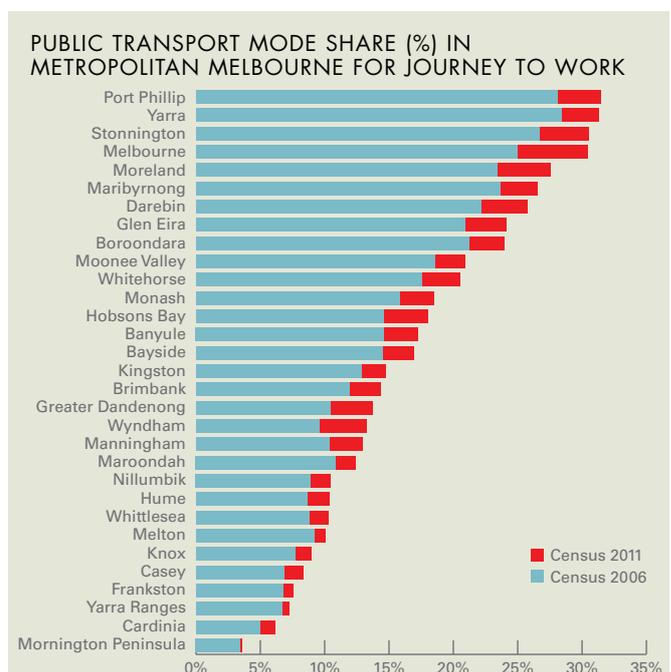
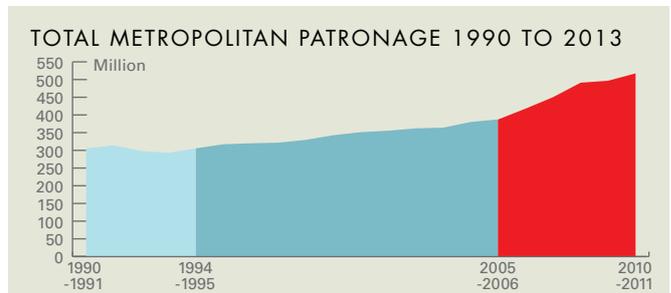
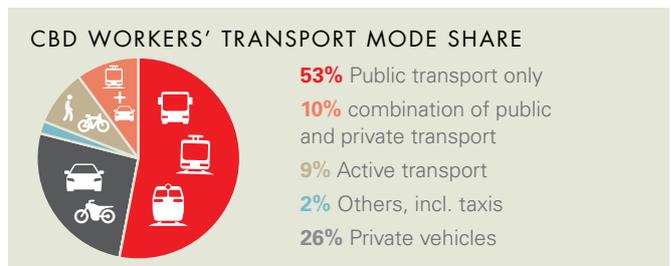
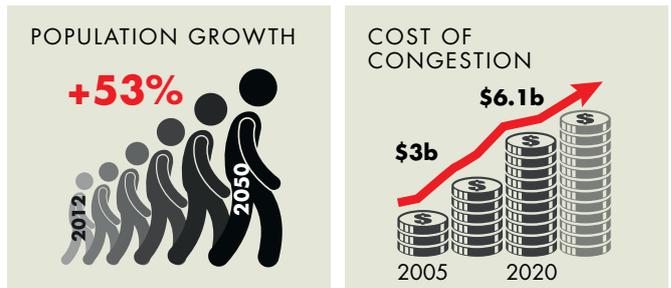
IMPORTANCE OF TRANSPORT TO VICTORIA'S GROWTH AND PRODUCTIVITY

With 4.25 million residents,¹ metropolitan Melbourne is home to nearly three quarters of Victoria's population and accounts for around 81% of Victoria's GSP.² Melbourne is the state's economic powerhouse and its contribution to the Australian economy is expected to grow steadily over coming decades. However, further investment in critical infrastructure and services is required to build on this success and ensure sustainable growth.

The Victorian capital's population is expected to keep growing rapidly, topping 6.5 million by 2050. Around 1.2 million additional jobs will be needed, requiring Melbourne to remain extremely competitive on both the domestic and international fronts. Traffic congestion is already reducing Melbourne's competitiveness, with related costs expected to double from 2005 levels to \$6.1 billion annually by 2020.³ Tackling congestion requires investment in both public transport and major roads, especially those bypassing city centres.

The 2011 Census data revealed that 63% of CBD workers commute by public transport and the CBD's reliance on public transport is expected to grow with the increasing number of commuters and worsening traffic congestion. By 2031, average weekday boardings on metropolitan trains are expected to double to 1.7 million, while tram and bus boardings will both be near one million per day,⁴ in line with existing trends. Over the last decade, public transport patronage has grown by more than 40% despite the GFC and the proportion of commuters using public transport has significantly increased across the metropolitan area.

With over 800 kilometres of train tracks and one of the world's largest tram networks, Melbourne's transport network has a solid base for meeting future demand. However, recent patronage growth has stretched the capacity of the aging network. Limited network capacity leads to overcrowding on vehicles and platforms and threatens the reliability of services. To face the long-term growth in transport demand and maintain Melbourne's competitiveness, the Victorian government needs a clear vision for the expansion and modernisation of the transport network, supported by strong investment in infrastructure and services.



1 *Plan Melbourne, Metropolitan Planning Strategy* – 2013
 2 *Mapping Australia's economy* – Grattan Institute – July 2014
 3 *Estimating urban traffic and congestion cost trends for Australian cities* – BITRE
 4 *Network Development plan – Metropolitan rail – Public Transport Victoria* – December 2012

Source: Census data – method of travel to work by place of residence

TTF'S PLAN TO IMPROVE TRANSPORT IN MELBOURNE

BETTER TRANSPORT PLANNING

- 1** DEVELOP AND SEEK BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR A TRANSPORT MASTER PLAN FOR MELBOURNE TO GUIDE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS

Transport infrastructure requires long-term planning and construction periods spanning many years. With finite funding and an expanding construction demand for major projects across several states, it is important the Victorian government has in place a transport master plan that will guide investment and priorities for the next 20 years.

A Victorian transport master plan should build on planning work already completed, such as Plan Melbourne (which provides an integrated overarching framework) and the individual modal plans that are being developed by Public Transport Victoria. The master plan should identify priorities and timelines for the roll-out of new transport infrastructure for all modes of transport as well as setting growth targets for public and active transport mode share.

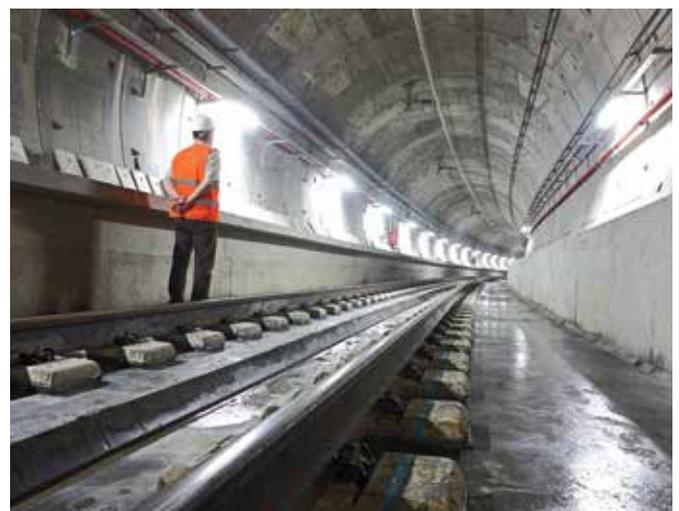
Long-term transport planning would be aided by a master plan that has broad political support. This would ensure that elections and the political cycle do not result in delays caused by departments being sent back to the drawing board every four years. A bipartisan commitment to the key transport infrastructure priorities will also improve community, business and investment confidence and allow long-term land-planning decisions to be better integrated with transport infrastructure.

The next Victorian government should therefore look at ways to encourage greater bipartisanship for transport infrastructure. This may take the form of an independent infrastructure body like Infrastructure NSW or parliamentary consideration and adoption of a transport master plan.



INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE RAIL NETWORK

- 2** CONSTRUCT A NEW CBD RAIL TUNNEL TO BOOST CAPACITY ACROSS THE RAIL NETWORK



Rail patronage has been growing at unprecedented rates over the last decade and shows no signs of slowing in the foreseeable future. While the shift towards public transport is encouraging, the network is a victim of its own success. The City Loop is reaching capacity and this will constrain future growth of the entire network unless additional CBD rail infrastructure is constructed. Building a new CBD rail line should be the first transport priority for the Victorian government and funded through asset recycling.

The construction of a new CBD rail tunnel will allow the most significant overhaul of the rail network since the opening of the City Loop. As has been identified in Public Transport Victoria's Network Development Plan, completing this project is crucial to allow the construction of new rail lines and increase service frequency on existing lines.

The new CBD rail link will also be the foundation for the introduction of a metro-style rail system to Melbourne. This will deliver benefits to commuters such as 'turn up and go' frequency, segregated lines that are not impacted by disruptions on other lines, new higher-capacity rolling stock and high-capacity signalling which will allow for more frequent services.

3 BUILD A RAILWAY LINE TO MELBOURNE AIRPORT

By 2033, airport passenger movements are expected to more than double and airport-related jobs grow to 23,000 employees. To support this strong growth, Melbourne Airport requires a multi-modal ground transport system. A rail link would alleviate traffic congestion and parking capacity pressure while improving the visitor experience and reducing travel times to the CBD. Final route design should be based on criteria that recognise the often unique needs of airport passengers and users. Essential will be a service that allows a travel time to the CBD of no more than 20 minutes and the opportunity to utilise dedicated rolling-stock designed for travellers and their luggage. Construction of an airport rail link – first mooted over 40 years ago – should be completed by 2025.

In the interim, the Victorian government should improve road transport to the airport and introduce additional bus services between the airport and centres not served by the CBD SkyBus route. The freeway express lane to the airport for taxis and the SkyBus service should be properly enforced to reduce travel times for people using these services.

4 CONTINUE THE SEGREGATION OF RAIL LINES

The segregation of rail services is the foundation of a 'metro-style' network. The Regional Rail Link is a good example of the segregation of regional and metropolitan services that will allow higher peak frequencies and greater reliability for metropolitan services. The principles of the Regional Rail Link should be expanded to the broader network and especially to the Dandenong rail corridor. While the Dandenong corridor is currently undergoing significant upgrades, its potential is still undermined by metropolitan services sharing tracks with V/Line and freight trains. Segregation would significantly increase the capacity and reliability of commuter services.

5 GIVE GREATER PRIORITY TO HIGH-CAPACITY SIGNALLING AND NEW ROLLING STOCK

Some of the existing signalling on Melbourne's rail network is a century old. Modern signalling systems considerably reduce headways, allowing higher frequency without compromising safety and reliability. With modern signalling, peak service frequency could reach over 30 trains per hour, almost twice the number of services currently provided on the network. These 'new' signalling systems have been successfully used worldwide for many years. Given that these are tested systems of proven efficiency, the government should minimise the trial period of the technology and accelerate roll-out on the entire network, starting with the busiest and most capacity-constrained rail lines. The roll out of high capacity signalling should be a high priority for the Victorian government. Upgraded signalling can be completed before the construction of a new CBD rail tunnel and provide a boost to capacity in the shorter term.

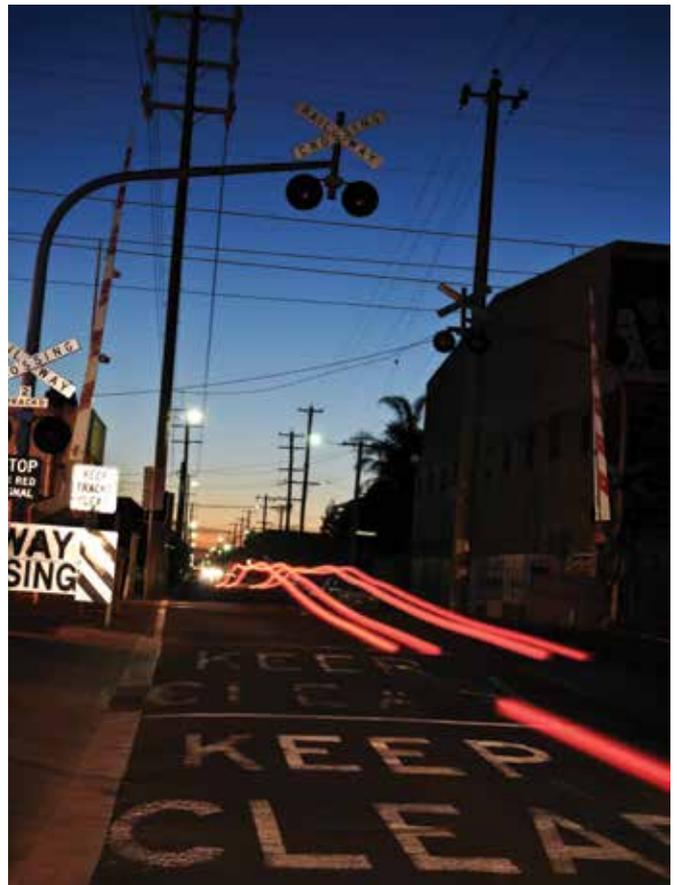
With Melbourne rail patronage at record highs and strong demand forecast to continue, a long-term fleet procurement program is required. New rolling stock is also essential to progressively replace the aging Comeng fleet, which entered in service in 1981 and is supposed to be taken out of service

by 2024. The replacement of the Comeng fleet should start as early as 2018 to ensure continuity of services.

Purchasing rolling stock in bulk orders necessitates large capital investment. However, a long-term program to acquire new trains every year would cater for continued growth and ensure ongoing capital expenditure. An initial ten-year program for ten trains per year should commence immediately. The new rolling stock should have a rationalised number of seats to increase the overall capacity of each vehicle and reduce dwell times.

6 IMPLEMENT A FORWARD PLAN FOR THE REMOVAL OF LEVEL CROSSINGS

In addition to being a safety hazard, level crossings serve as a major constraint on both road and rail capacity. The more level crossings present on a given line, the more disruptive to traffic each train service will be. This acts as a disincentive to achieving higher frequency train service levels. The removal of level crossings should be based on a rigorous cost-benefit analysis. The issue should be depoliticised with a clear forward plan to prioritise the removal of level crossings. This methodology should gather bipartisan support to ensure the continuity of the program over several terms of parliament.



7 PROGRESS A RAIL LINK TO AVALON AIRPORT

Avalon Airport can become an international airport for Victoria as well as maintaining its role in domestic travel. To support this growth, public transport access must be improved. The Victorian government has committed to the protection of a future rail corridor linking Avalon Airport to the Geelong-Melbourne rail line. This should be followed by planning and funding for the rail link.



Image courtesy of Keolis Downer

IMPROVING MELBOURNE'S ICONIC TRAMS

8 ACCELERATE THE ROLLOUT OF E-CLASS ROLLING STOCK ON MELBOURNE'S TRAM NETWORK

Public Transport Victoria has commenced the roll out of E-Class rolling stock on the Melbourne tram network with the Victorian government committed to delivering 50 new vehicles by 2017. The E-Class trams are modern vehicles bringing many benefits to the tram network and its passengers. Key features include accessibility, higher capacity with up to 210 passengers per tram, more doors allowing faster boarding of passengers, and other improvements to passenger safety and comfort. Nine of the 50 announced trams are currently in operation with 41 still to come. While the existing order is a good first step, more vehicles will be required. The existing tram fleet is aging, with the 147 strong Z-Class fleet reaching the end of its design-life after about 30 years of operation. Renewal of the fleet should be accelerated to 20 vehicles per year, and a further 70 to 80 E-Class vehicles should be acquired by 2020.

9 PLAN A TRAM LINE TO FISHERMANS BEND

Fishermans Bend will be the next major urban renewal development in Melbourne. The precinct is expected to become home to more than 80,000 residents and about 40,000 workers within the next 40 years. Such densification requires a significant upgrade of public transport services. While the proposed Melbourne Rail Link includes a train station at Montague, it will not provide sufficient connections to and from the Melbourne CBD. This connectivity can be delivered by an expansion of the tram network to Fishermans Bend via a new tram bridge across the Yarra River. Connecting Fishermans Bend to Collins Street and the rest of the tram network will support the redevelopment of Fishermans Bend's 250 hectares and will further activate the Docklands precinct.

10 IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY AND SPEED OF THE TRAM NETWORK

Melbourne's tram network is the world's largest but also one of the world's oldest and slowest. The network needs to be modernised to match current urban densities and travel patterns. Major tram routes should be seen as mass transit corridors with stop spacing and priority levels reflecting their function. The simplification of the network will improve its legibility, reduce operational costs, and significantly improve interchanges.

There is also a need to reconfigure the tram network within Melbourne's CBD. With most north-south tram routes running on Swanston Street, a minor localised issue quickly becomes a major disruption to the whole network. Shared tracks between routes also limit the potential to increase service frequency. The CBD tram network should be re-balanced by removing some stops and relocating some routes to the western part of the CBD. This would improve reliability on Swanston Street and better service the western side of the CBD, including Docklands.

Segregation from traffic and priority measures at traffic lights are two of the key principles of the Premium Line concept being applied to route 96. Premium Lines also include greater accessibility, modern rolling stock and improved customer information at stops and in vehicles. The Victorian government should continue the roll-out of the Premium Line concept to other parts of the network, starting with the busiest routes. Tram route 11 (West Preston – Victoria Harbour Docklands) would be ideally suited to become the next Premium Line.

With 80 per cent of the tram network shared with cars, traffic congestion is clogging tram routes. About 17 per cent of tram journey time is spent at traffic lights. By global comparison, reengineered old networks average 3 per cent and new networks average 1 per cent at traffic lights. To reduce delays due to traffic congestion, the tram network must be granted higher priority through segregation from traffic and other priority measures at traffic lights. A review of existing services' reliability should be conducted to identify the bottlenecks in the network. This review should then inform the development of a pinch-point program for the tram network.



Image courtesy of Transdev Australasia

EXPANDING THE ROLE OF BUSES

11 IMPLEMENT OPEN TENDERING FOR ALL BUS CONTRACTS

While Melbourne’s bus network is already privately operated, only about 30 per cent of the network is subject to competitive tendering. Competitiveness drives efficiency and better customer service. The bus franchising experience in NSW and Western Australia shows that testing the market every seven or eight years encourages private operators to innovate while providing enough certainty to the industry to bid for the contract. The Victorian government should implement open tendering across the network, which will deliver reduced costs to taxpayers while promoting better customer service.

should feed these main corridors following the principles of existing SmartBus routes. The third tier, local bus routes with shorter stop spacing, would complete the network by linking residential areas with local centres and transport hubs.

The potential of Melbourne’s bus network is being limited by very few bus priority lanes on the road network. While Melbourne has some transit lanes on freeways, bus-only lanes must be expanded to other parts of the road network. Bus lanes and bus priority measures at traffic lights along key bus corridors would significantly reduce travel times, improve service reliability and enable more frequent services with the same number of buses and drivers. Implementing more bus priority is a relatively low-cost way to make the best out of existing assets.

12 REFORM THE BUS NETWORK TO IMPROVE SPEED AND RELIABILITY

The complexity of the current bus network is impeding its efficiency and attractiveness. In places, bus services follow a beeline and are coming in and out of main road corridors with a lack of legibility that confuses customers. A clear on-road public transport strategy should be developed with a three-level service network. High-demand corridors should be fitted with high capacity/frequency routes, either trams or high-priority bus routes (ideally Bus Rapid Transit). Cross-metropolitan bus routes with localised prioritisation

13 GIVE BUS COMMUTERS MORE REAL-TIME INFORMATION

Providing customers with real-time information should be a priority. Real-time information is one of the key service improvements driving increased customer satisfaction. Real-time Passenger Information Displays (PIDs) have been installed at some interchanges along SmartBus routes and should be expanded to other major bus corridors. GPS data from on-board *myki* readers or GPS tracking systems should allow real-time information to be accessible by commuters through smartphone apps.

REDUCING ROAD CONGESTION

14 CONSTRUCT THE EAST-WEST LINK

The proposed East-West link will connect Melbourne’s eastern suburbs with the growing western region. The project will assist in reducing traffic congestion, provide better cross-city connectivity, deliver additional capacity to the CBD and assist in the movement of freight. It will also relieve growing capacity issues on the M1 Corridor. Related works have the potential to improve cycling facilities and the reliability of tram and bus services in the surrounding area.

While construction of a Melbourne CBD rail tunnel should be the first transport infrastructure priority for the Victorian government, both projects should be supported.

15 COMPLETE THE CITYLINK-TULLAMARINE FREEWAY WIDENING

TTF supports the Victorian government’s commitment to widen the CityLink – Tullamarine freeway. The 19-kilometre corridor linking Melbourne Airport to the West Gate Freeway is subject to traffic congestion affecting both commuters and airport users. The proposed widening has the potential to increase the corridor’s capacity by 30 per cent and to cut travel times between the airport and Melbourne CBD by up to 16 minutes in the peak period. In conjunction with the construction of an airport rail link, this project will improve access to the airport and the CBD, two of the most important drivers of the Victorian economy. The widening of the freeway should include provision for a dedicated bus lane for SkyBus and other high-occupancy vehicles.

EXPANDING FACILITIES FOR CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

16 CREATE A MORE WALKABLE CITY

Every public transport passenger becomes a pedestrian at some stage of their journey. Whether it is accessing a local bus stop, transferring from a bus to a train, or a walk to the final destination, active transport is the key link between modes and the final destination. Simple measures such as better wayfinding and lighting can go a long way to improve the pedestrian experience. In and close to the CBD, buses and trams are often full or nearing capacity and traffic congestion is worsening. Known as “the last mile”, servicing this section of a journey is a recurrent challenge for transport authorities and operators. A more walkable city would alleviate part of the pressure on the public transport network, encouraging more commuters to walk to work instead of using public transport or private vehicles for short trips. The City of Melbourne has developed a draft Walking Plan 2014-17 for its jurisdiction. The plan includes a wide range of measures, from additional walking space to enhanced access to tram stops, innovative traffic management, and education and marketing campaigns. The Victorian government should work closely with the City of Melbourne and other councils in order to improve the walkability of the city. It will benefit public transport users in addition to delivering amenity benefits to the city centre.



17 UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF CYCLING



Cycling is getting more and more popular among commuters. Over the last ten years, ridership for journey to work has increased by five per cent each year in Melbourne. Cycling has the potential to alleviate traffic congestion and reduce the pressure on the public transport network approaching the CBD. While walking to work is most achievable for distances under three kilometres, cycling is a viable option for distances up to ten kilometres. In a congested environment, cycling offers competitive travel times and requires little storage space at the final destination. However, cycling also presents some challenges. The conflicts emerging from sharing space with cars and pedestrians becomes a source of frustration for all road users and can become a safety issue. An integrated cycleway network would remove most of these conflicts and facilitate the take-up of cycling as a means of getting to work. The current government’s Plan Melbourne acknowledges the potential of cycling and maps a series of cycling links to develop an integrated network within the city centre. The Victorian government should build on this strategic document and work with local councils, including the City of Melbourne, to complete the proposed cycling network.



SUPPORTING THE VISITOR ECONOMY

18 MAKE PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND MYKI EASIER FOR VISITORS TO USE

The primary focus of public transport policies and services is undeniably local commuters. However, the role that public transport plays in the visitor economy should not be overlooked. A 'visitor-friendly' transport network can significantly improve perceptions of a city and the experience of those travelling to Victoria.

Tourism has been identified as one of five super-growth sectors in Australia and already contributes to \$19.6 billion to Victorian Gross State Product while supporting about 200,000 jobs. To build on this fast-growing industry, the Victorian government must work to make visitors feel welcome in Melbourne.

The Victorian government should develop a tourism and transport strategy with the objective of ensuring that the transport system is adopting world-best practice in

servicing both domestic and international visitors. The policy should focus on enhancing *myki*, wayfinding, multilingual information, tourist-specific apps, provision of free Wi-Fi at key transport hubs, inclusion of major visitor attractions in the proposed free-travel zone, and other aspects of the visitor's journey on Melbourne's public transport network.

Particular focus should be given to making *myki* work better for tourists. The current *myki* visitor product is a good first step. However, the ease of using *myki* would be enhanced if a tourist card were introduced that allowed time-based unlimited travel on the Victorian transport network. Tourist cards could be offered for one, three and five-day periods and take the guesswork out of the transport ticketing system for those visiting Melbourne.

The Victorian government should also work with Google to include Melbourne in Google Transit. This popular feature available in many cities allows locals and visitors to access public transport and timetabling information as part of Google maps. For visitors, this is a well-known service and many other Australian capital cities are making the necessary data available to Google for this purpose.

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