



# The Real Transport Challenges: A Call for a Vision



The Real Transport Challenges: A Call for a Vision

The Real Transport Challenges: A Call for a Vision

A review of the Bracks Government's Meeting Our Transport Challenges plan  
October 2006

Published by the Public Transport Users Association

[www.ptua.org.au](http://www.ptua.org.au)

Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000

T: 9650 7898

Email: [office@ptua.org.au](mailto:office@ptua.org.au)

Copyright © 2006 Public Transport Users Association Inc. (PTUA), Victoria, Australia.  
ABN 83 801 487 611.

General copying and distribution on a non-commercial basis is permitted subject to proper  
acknowledgement.

---



## The Real Transport Challenges: A Call for a Vision

A review of the Bracks Government's Meeting Our Transport Challenges plan

### Contents

1	In search of a visionary transport policy	6
1.1	Introduction	6
1.2	Is it a good start?	6
1.3	Bouquets	7
1.4	Brickbats	7
1.5	Unravelling Government Spin	8
1.6	Key to our annotations	10
2	Contribution to our transport challenges	11
2.1	Congestion	11
2.1.1	Does MOTC contribute to the Government's goal of 20% of motorised trips being made by public transport by 2020?	11
2.1.2	Will the plan get people out of their cars and onto public transport?	11
2.1.3	Will the plan help more busy people switch to public transport?	12
2.1.4	Will the plan try to build our way out of congestion?	18
2.1.5	Will the plan reduce traffic congestion?	18
2.2	Sustainability	19
2.2.1	Will the plan reduce greenhouse gas emissions?	19
2.2.2	Will the plan improve urban air quality?	20
2.2.3	Will the plan improve public health?	20
2.3	Energy security	20
2.3.1	Will the plan prepare Melbourne for Peak Oil?	20
2.4	Liveability	24
2.4.1	Liveability misdefined	24
2.4.2	Liveability missed	24

## The Real Transport Challenges: A Call for a Vision

2.5	Access and mobility	24
2.5.1	Will the plan improve access for people with mobility impairments?	24
2.5.2	Will the plan help the aged?	24
2.5.3	Will the plan help young people?	25
2.5.4	Will the plan provide more options for the transport disadvantaged?	25
2.5.5	Will the plan provide more social opportunities for the transport disadvantaged?	25
2.5.6	Will the plan support the transport needs of Melbourne's Growth Areas?	25
2.6	Planning, Funding and Management	28
2.6.1	Does the plan reconsider privatisation?	28
2.6.2	Will the plan implement a public planning agency?	29
2.6.3	Is there a legislative threat to shopping streets and local communities?	30
2.6.4	Is the analysis of travel needs based on evidence, not mythology?	30
2.6.5	Are Smartcards the answer?	31
2.6.6	Is it clear how the funding decisions were made? Were roads and public transport treated on a 'level playing field'?	31
2.6.7	Was the plan put together with public involvement?	31
2.6.8	Is the funding well directed?	31
3	Actions under the microscope	32
3.1	Action 1: Delivering for the future	32
3.1.1	Initiatives	32
3.1.2	Will the plan redress the past road bias in transport funding?	32
3.1.3	Where are the initial dollars going?	33
3.1.4	Will future transport policy, planning and funding eliminate bias towards roads?	34
3.2	Action 2: Creating a cross-town transport network for Melbourne	35
3.2.1	Initiatives	35
3.2.2	Will the plan improve transport in the Eastern Freeway/Manningham corridor?	38
3.3	Action 3: Boosting Melbourne's rail network	39
3.3.1	Initiatives	39
3.3.2	What is missing?	41
3.4	Action 4: Improving metropolitan train and tram services	42
3.4.1	Initiatives	42
3.4.2	What is missing?	43
3.5	Action 5: Delivering first class public transport for provincial Victoria	44
3.5.1	Initiatives	44
3.5.2	What is missing?	44
3.6	Action 6: Building better road connections	45
3.6.1	Initiatives	45
3.6.2	Integrated transport - a one way street?	45
3.7	Action 7: Delivering a better link between the east and west of Melbourne	45
3.7.1	Initiatives	45
3.7.2	Is the government planning to build a new East-West road link?	46

## The Real Transport Challenges: A Call for a Vision

3.8	Action 8: Promoting smarter, healthier travel choices	47
3.8.1	Initiatives	47
3.8.2	What is missing?	47
3.9	Action 9: Creating accessible, connected communities	47
3.9.1	Initiatives	47
3.9.2	Does the plan support Melbourne 2030?	49
3.10	Action 10: Building a safer, more secure network	50
3.10.1	Initiatives	50
3.10.2	What is missing?	50
4	Transport for the 21 <sup>st</sup> century	51
4.1	A new paradigm	51
4.2	Management	51
4.2.1	A vision for a new institutional arrangement	51
4.3	Coverage	52
5	Conclusion	53
5.1	Our challenges to Government	53
5.2	Priority actions for Government	54
5.2.1	Melbourne's 10 Priorities for Public Transport Infrastructure Investment	54
5.2.2	Not a priority	57
5.2.3	3 ways the state government can implement these priorities	58
	Appendix	58

# 1 In search of a visionary transport policy

## 1.1 Introduction

A significant level of public debate in recent months has highlighted the difficulties of living in a city with large travel distances, rising petrol prices, increasing congestion and public transport that does not meet the needs of the majority of its citizens. There is acknowledgement in many quarters that an improved public transport system is capable of servicing a higher proportion of journeys, providing an alternative to the private car and thereby reducing congestion, pollution and carbon emissions. The Victorian State Government has a target to increase public transport patronage (Melbourne 2030 metropolitan strategy: 20% by 2020). Following criticism of Melbourne's poor public transport infrastructure, insufficient progress by the government toward meeting its aim, and Melbourne losing its coveted place at the top of the international liveability rankings, the government declared it would release a Transport and Liveability Statement.

On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2006 that statement was released as "Meeting Our Transport Challenges". The Premier claimed that it was a vision for transport planning for the next 25 years and the statement sets the funding for the next decade.

With the transport debate complicated by government spin, it is important to thoroughly analyse transport policies to see if they really match up to the rhetoric. In this document the Public Transport Users Association (PTUA) asks the critical questions that face Melbourne's transport system and looks at how the statement stacks up. We also review each of the initiatives and highlight the positives and the negatives of the government's plan. With the agenda being set for the next generation and massive public expenditure at stake, we ask if the statement is truly visionary. Does it meet the challenge and set the right direction for Victoria's future transport needs, as claimed?

## 1.2 Is it a good start?

Meeting Our Transport Challenges (MOTC) may have been appropriate in the Bracks government's first term, however as a 25 year plan it lacks vision. It is not appropriate to be merely "making a start" seven years later as the government prepares for a possible third term. Around the time it was first elected, the Bracks government "made a start" by promising rail to South Morang, rail to Rowville and a halt to plans for a Scoresby Freeway, none of which were delivered. MOTC is described as a long-term plan, yet it lacks even these earlier promises and other urgent needs such as rail to Doncaster and fundamental reform of transport management. Those long term initiatives that have been included are generally localised and do not address network problems. It is a belated and inadequate start that now appears to be blocking more fundamental improvements that are needed to safeguard Melbourne's future liveability.

We are, however, encouraged by recent signs of a recognition within government that MOTC is inadequate and that public transport improvements will be required above and beyond those explicitly promised in the statement. For example, the Public Transport Directorate has since indicated that more attractive and useful service frequencies may be provided than those proposed in MOTC, and these would be warmly welcomed by the PTUA.

### **1.3 Bouquets**

The PTUA acknowledges the following positive elements of MOTC:

1. The plan will assist people in the community who are transport disadvantaged, by providing a very basic level of public transport access to all, seven days a week.
2. The plan may help to improve the integration of public transport services through the upgrading of interchanges.
3. The plan will help increase the capacity of the rail system, though we believe much of the expenditure could be avoided with smarter modern train scheduling.
4. The plan will make a start on introducing higher quality bus services to more of Melbourne through the SmartBus program, but progress will be very slow.
5. The plan will help to encourage more people to use cycling as a means of transport.
6. The plan may help to encourage people to use their car less and sustainable transport more, but only those people in a small number of areas that have high quality public transport options.
7. The plan theoretically allocates greater funding for public transport than roads, but does not redress past imbalances in transport funding that have been heavily biased towards road building.
8. The plan moves forward on providing accessible (DDA-compliant) transport, benefiting wheelchair users, parents with prams, and others, and in many cases improving vehicle loading/unloading times.

### **1.4 Brickbats**

The PTUA believes a number of elements in MOTC are inappropriate or insufficient:

1. The plan will make little to no progress on the government's policy objective of having 20% of motorised journeys made by public transport in 2020. Indeed, this goal is not mentioned at all in the plan.
2. The plan is unlikely to entice very many people out of their cars and onto public transport. In many cases, by expanding road capacity, it will do the opposite.
3. The plan will not reduce congestion on our roads; indeed it is likely to increase congestion in the inner city and around the Westgate and Monash Freeways.
4. The plan subscribes to the thoroughly discredited notion that you can build your way out of congestion.
5. The plan will increase the harmful environmental effects of high car use in Melbourne.
6. Much of the public transport expenditure is deferred to later years, while most road projects begin much sooner.
7. The plan does not support the government's Melbourne 2030 metropolitan planning strategy, because it does not make any significant progress on the 20/2020 goal or address Transit Cities transport requirements.

8. The plan does not prepare Melbourne for the predicted global decline in oil production that will see petrol prices permanently continue to increase.
9. The plan will not contribute positively to Melbourne's liveability, despite its tag as a "Transport and Liveability Statement".
10. The plan does not clearly address the fundamental imbalances in transport policy, planning and funding in Victoria.
11. The plan recycles previously discredited plans for building a new east-west freeway through the inner north.

### 1.5 Unravelling Government Spin

As with all major policy documents, there is a lot of spin involved in selling packages to the public. Unfortunately the MOTC document makes several erroneous statements and contains some unfortunate references.








Government Spin	A Dose of Reality
"For the first time, the new network will enable people living in Melbourne's middle and outer suburbs to travel directly between major suburban centres without going through the CBD "  (MOTC, p36)	This statement is easily proven false by a cursory look at the 2006 Melbourne Public Transport Map that shows that the vast majority of existing bus routes do not travel to the CBD. Indeed a great proportion could be described as cross-town, linking stations on multiple train lines.
"Taking into account the cost of a monthly bus pass for Chris..."  (Overview, p6)	There is no such ticket product in Melbourne as a 'Bus Pass'. Indeed a great strength of Melbourne's public transport is the intermodal ticketing system (with the small exception of National Bus section fares). All Metcard products are valid on all three modes of public transport in Melbourne. It would be a huge step backwards for Melbourne if more mode-specific ticketing were re-introduced in Melbourne.
The map on page 14 of the Overview document makes reference to  "Metropolitan Rail Extensions & New Stations" under the Growth Areas heading	In reality there are only two extensions of the suburban rail network proposed. One is the South Morang extension that is slated for 2016-2021 (with no firm funding commitment). The other is the extension of the Upfield line to Roxburgh Park. While this would involve restoring and electrifying existing track, no new stations would be provided, and this would mostly be about connecting rather than extending services.



Government Spin	A Dose of Reality
<p>In reference to SmartBus service, the following is stated:</p> <p>“They also provide state-of-the-art digital displays along the bus routes, providing passengers with up-to-the-minute information about services and timetables.”</p> <p>(Overview, p20)</p>	<p>Real time passenger information displays have been around for many years, and really simply involve displaying information generated by a central monitoring computer. Public digital displays networked to remote computers and remote vehicle monitoring are nothing new. Indeed they have existed on the Tram network for several years already in Melbourne. The SmartBus digital displays in particular have been plagued by technical problems and required a wholesale replacement after only three years of operation, at a cost of many millions of dollars.</p>
<p>The map on page 21 of the Overview document suggests that almost every street in Melbourne currently served by buses will meet the new service standards (hourly services until 9pm seven days a week). It also shows which bus routes in Melbourne supposedly meet this standard now.</p>	<p>The future map includes the route 695 extension that currently operates once a week on Tuesdays between Gembrook and Fountain Gate. We’d be pleasantly surprised if this route was to be upgraded to the new seven day standard, but are concerned it may be a waste of resources.</p> <p>The current map also claims routes 560, 665, and 571 currently operate at least hourly until 9pm seven days a week. Route 560 does not operate at all on Sundays, only a small section of route 571 operates on Sundays, and route 665 finishes at 6.30pm on Sundays.</p>
<p>With reference to the local bus service upgrades:</p> <p>“By improving these bus services the Government is making public transport a real option for most Melburnians.”</p>	<p>This statement assumes that an hourly bus service is a “real option” for most Melburnians. The reality is that a great portion of Melburnians lead busy lifestyles, are unwilling to wait up to an hour between buses, and are not home by 9pm every night of the week. These upgraded local bus services will not be a real option for most people in Melbourne.</p>

## 1.6 Key to our annotations

In this document the following symbols are used to rate elements of MOTC.

	A good measure, making a positive contribution to Melbourne's transport challenges.
	Good outcome but of less strategic value, or an initiative that is only a partial solution.
	Measure of questionable value.
	Counterproductive measure.
	Handout to private operators with no matching contribution, or large expenditure providing poor value for money.
	Delayed promise, often in danger of not being implemented by the government of the day.
	Reannouncement of a previous initiative.

## 2 Contribution to our transport challenges

The publicity about MOTC has focussed primarily on the large sums of money to be spent. By contrast, PTUA believes that the focus should be on the value or outcomes that can be expected in areas such as congestion, sustainability and social exclusion. Only then can a fair judgement be made on whether or not the touted expenditure is worthwhile.

In this section we ask the critical transport questions facing Melbourne and analyse the contribution of MOTC.

### 2.1 Congestion

#### 2.1.1 Does MOTC contribute to the Government's goal of 20% of motorised trips being made by public transport by 2020?

No. The government has stated that public transport patronage will only grow by 50 million annual trips by 2010. Even the Committee for Melbourne (not known for being radical transport activists) suggested that around 130 million additional public transport trips are required by 2011 to be on the path to meeting the government's policy goal. This plan clearly falls well short and it is no surprise that the 20/2020 target does not even rate a mention in the document. Instead, the plan appears to contradict government policy by hinting that the 20/2020 goal is unachievable:

*There are limits to the impact that public transport system improvements can have. This is because the current number of people travelling by car is several times higher than those using public transport (meaning that a small reduction in car usage requires a very large increase in public transport usage in relative terms). Consequently, road travel is expected to increase – with 2 key implications for road planning and development.*

*(MOTC, p28)*

This lack of faith in the ability of the public transport system to provide world class transport alternatives means the government is perpetuating the current policy stance of car dependence for the vast majority of travel, and overlooks the potential for significant growth in off-peak public transport patronage.

#### 2.1.2 Will the plan get people out of their cars and onto public transport?

No, it is quite likely to do the opposite. The plan intends to increase the capacity of one of Melbourne's largest freeway corridors by 50%. It boasts reductions in travel times by car of up to 50% in peak hours, including a saving of 23 minutes between Dandenong and the CBD. It is very difficult to see how people will be less inclined to drive their cars when the freeway system will be improved to the extent detailed in the plan. Any gains in public transport patronage from a handful of extra peak train services, and hourly buses till mid-evening will quite likely be wiped out by people moving away from the currently overcrowded train systems and into their cars on improved freeways.

This massive growth in freeway capacity contradicts the statement's own pronouncements about road travel:

*Unconstrained growth in road travel is unsustainable and the provision of attractive and well-patronised public transport alternatives is critical to Melbourne's future liveability.*

*(MOTC, p28)*

Also demonstrating the plan's large failure to get people out of their cars are admissions in the document itself about what is required:

*However, unless these services are reliable and frequent, most people will still use their cars to travel to work, school or shops.*

*(Overview, p21)*

It is well known that public transport services running less frequently than every 15 minutes are very unlikely to attract travellers with the option of car travel. This view was put by Chandra, L. (2005) *"Putting the Transit into Transit Oriented Development"*, a paper presented at the Transit Oriented Development - Making it Happen conference, 5-8 July 2005, Fremantle, Western Australia; and the view is supported by the Victorian state government in *The Bus Plan* (Draft final report, November 2002 and in *The Train Plan* (Draft March 2003). With one bus an hour being the typical frequency advocated by MOTC for many planned local bus upgrades, this is unlikely to result in any significant shift from cars to public transport.

What hasn't been detailed is the 'high frequencies on selected routes'. It seems unlikely however that any of these routes would be upgraded to a frequency of 15 minutes, which would match the SmartBus standard. Thus while some services may operate every 30 or even 20 minutes, they too are unlikely to have any significant impact on public transport mode share. They may be compared instead with off-peak train services to the northern and western suburbs, which with their 20 minute frequencies fail to attract a significant share of travel.

### **2.1.3 Will the plan help more busy people switch to public transport?**

Yes, for some people who live near a SmartBus service in a few years' time. No, for everyone else. Fifteen-minute weekday frequencies on SmartBus routes, connecting to tram and train networks, will begin to make public transport usable for people with limited time to travel. The 'local' bus upgrades on the other hand will provide primarily half-hourly to hourly services. People with busy lifestyles are unlikely to find these local services convenient enough to meet their needs, particularly where services meander along convoluted routes and are not coordinated with connecting train services. There may be some commuters who are fortunate enough to have a local bus service that suits their hours of work but infrequent services require people to plan their daily activities around the public transport timetable and waste a long time making connections. Frequent services allow people to rely on public transport being available when they need it.

### Why mode share is stagnant and our roads are clogged

There's nothing that discourages public transport usage more than the prospect of long waits for services. Anybody with a choice does simply not put up with waiting, nor do they want to check timetables to minimise that waiting. They drive instead.

Studies such as the government's unreleased Train Plan have shown repeatedly that until services run at 15 minute or better frequencies (for most trips), large numbers of choice passengers will remain in their cars.

Yet our figures have found few of Melbourne routes run at or better than every 15 minutes.

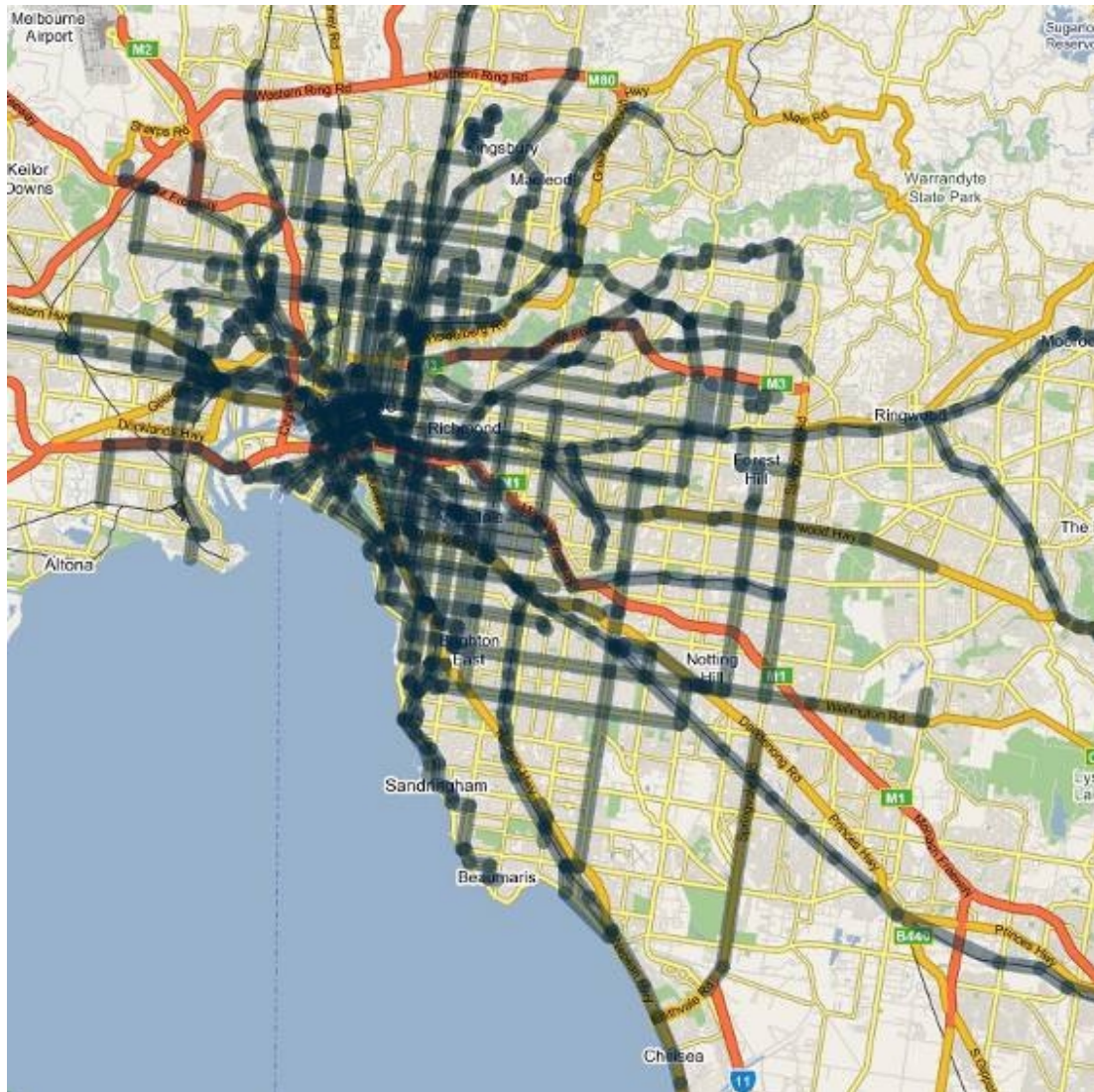
	<b>Peak</b>	<b>Weekday off-peak</b>	<b>Weekend*</b>	<b>Evening*</b>
<b>Trains</b>	72.7%	50.0%	18.2%	13.6%
<b>Trams</b>	96.3%	96.3%	96.3%	11.1%
<b>Buses</b>	12.0%	6.3%	1.3%	0.3%
<b>All routes</b>	22.3%	16.0%	9.7%	2.0%

\*Weekend figures are for Saturday. Sundays slightly less than Saturdays. Evening figures for Monday to Saturday. Sundays slightly less.

Includes combinations of routes, eg trains between city and Caulfield

The following maps show which suburbs are lucky enough to get frequent services.

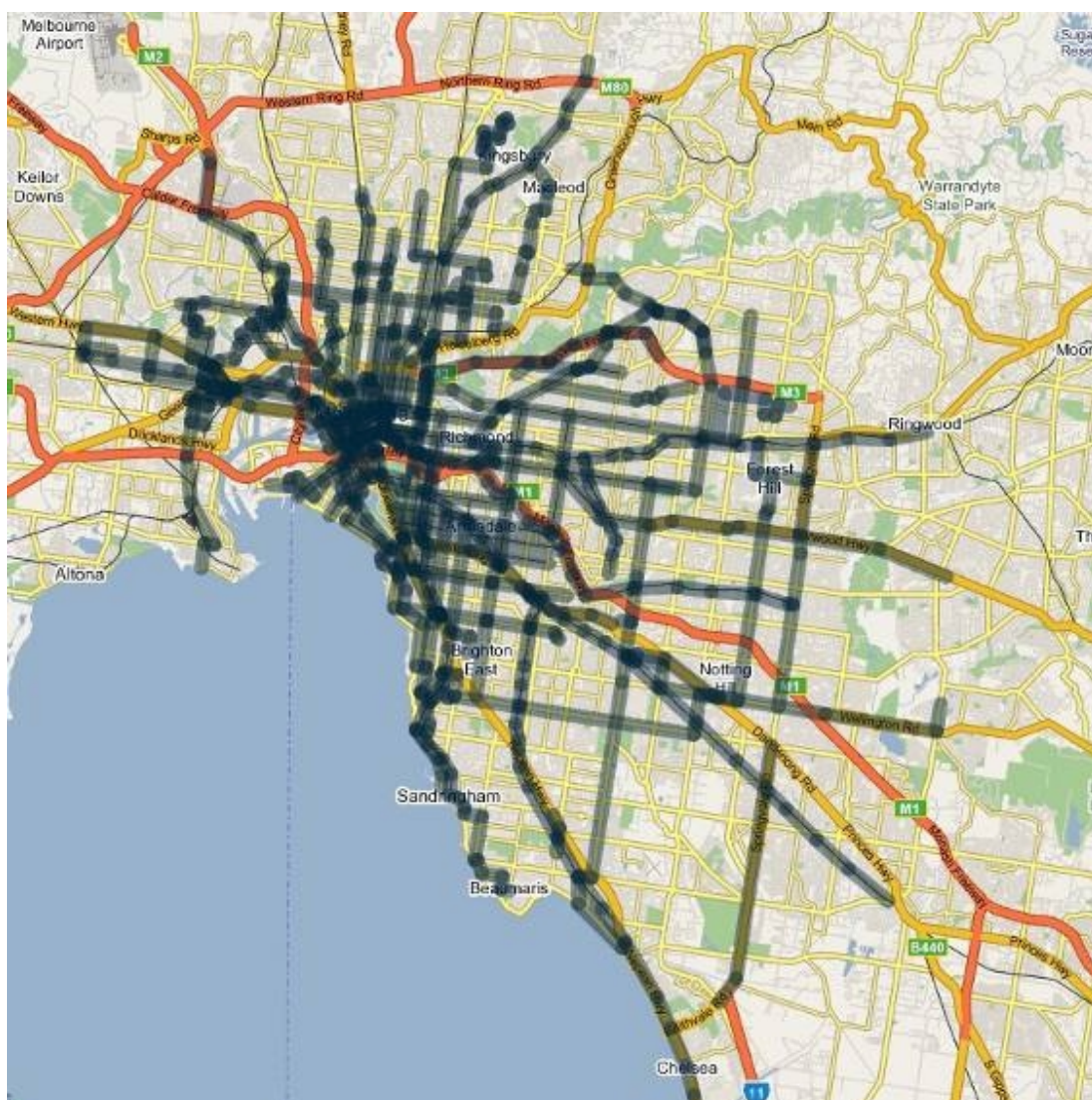
Maps copyright Google/MapData Sciences.



**15 min or better services, weekday peak hours**

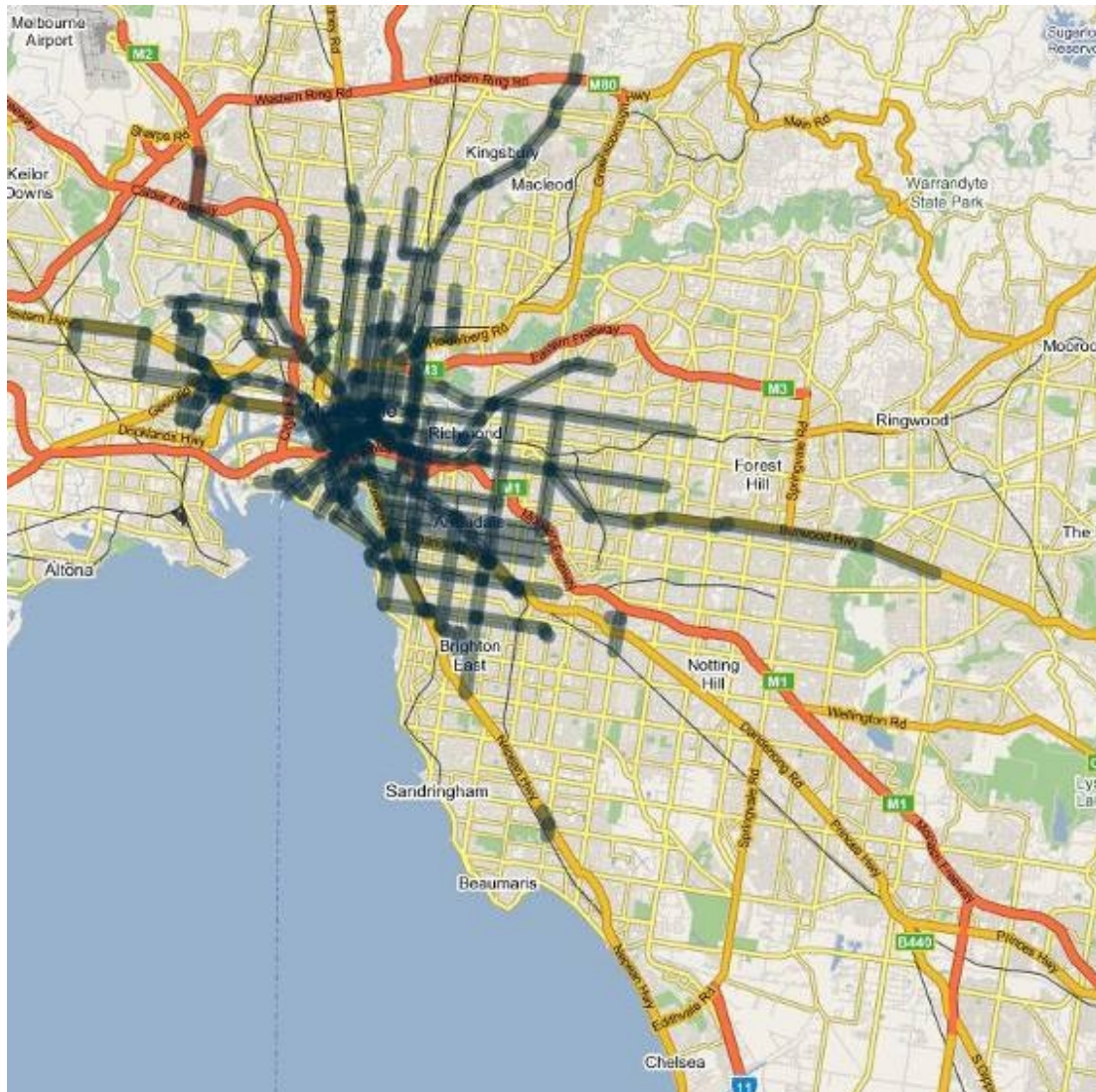
Even during peak hour, a number of railway stations, including locations as close to the CBD as Brunswick and Yarraville, have services worse than every 15 minutes, underscoring why parallel motorways are so congested. Most suburbs beyond the tram system also miss out, causing most commuters to choose to drive.





**15 min or better services, weekday off-peak (daytime)**

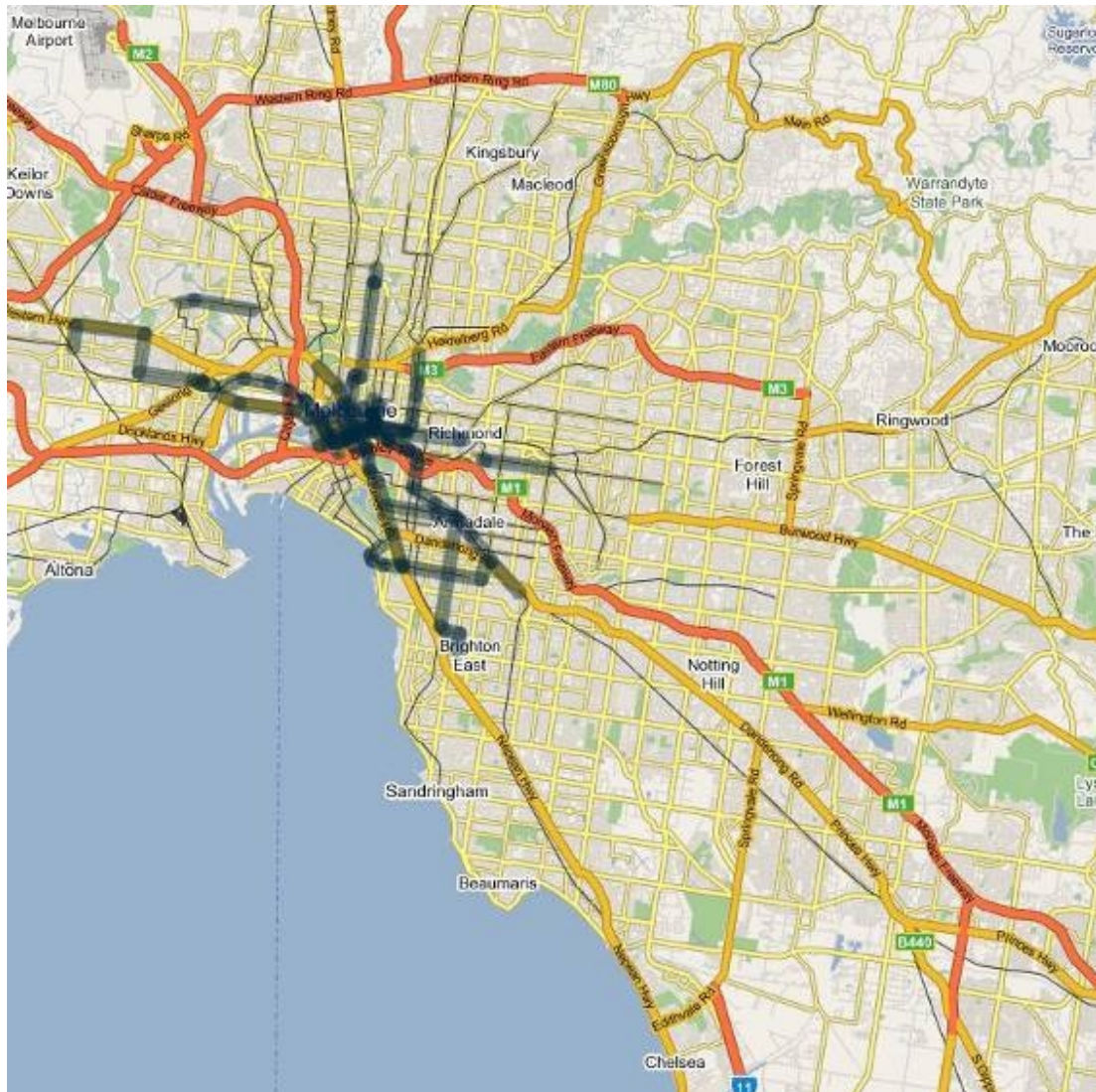
During weekday daytime off-peak hours, trams and some train lines offer frequencies high enough to travel without timetables, but vast swathes of Melbourne's suburbs only have services that are too infrequent to attract people out of their cars.



**15 min or better services, Saturday daytime**

This map shows weekend daytime services, and is even more stark - for the most part only those living within walking distance of tram lines have access to routes running every 15 minutes or better.





#### **15 min or better services, Monday to Saturday evenings**

During the evening the situation is even worse, and it becomes crystal clear why just 8% of trips are by public transport, and why roads are increasingly congested during most times of the day.

MOTC does little to alleviate this - which is why the PTUA has branded it a failure. Despite including billions in spending, virtually the only upgrades to 15 minutes or better will be a small number of orbital SmartBus routes, many replacing existing routes which largely meet that standard already.

Until services right across Melbourne offer frequencies that minimise waiting time and don't require users to schedule their trips to match timetables, patronage growth and mode share are likely to remain stagnant.

#### **2.1.4 Will the plan try to build our way out of congestion?**

Yes. It's been well accepted in transport circles that you can't build your way out of congestion however, that is precisely what this plan will attempt to do.

*The Government is introducing a range of measures to manage congestion, including making public transport a more attractive and viable travel option, boosting the capacity of the Monash-Westgate corridor, making existing roads operate more efficiently, and encouraging people to make more sustainable travel choices.*

*(Overview, p13)*

These measures combined are mutually cancelling: building road capacity will not make public transport a more attractive travel alternative and will not encourage people to make more sustainable transport choices. Quite the opposite. Any gains made on improving public transport patronage will be cancelled out by incentives to travel by car.

Another note in the Overview document suggests that, despite evidence to the contrary in Melbourne, the government still believes that it is possible to build your way out of congestion:

*This pressure is causing significant congestion which, in the short to medium term, will be relieved through capacity and traffic management improvements to the corridor. In the longer term, a viable alternate east-west link will be required.*

*(Overview document, p33)*

This also demonstrates that the East-West Needs Assessment has a pre-determined outcome and the residents of the inner north of Melbourne may soon confront a new freeway ploughing from the Eastern Freeway through to Citylink dumping thousands of extra cars on inner city streets.

#### **2.1.5 Will the plan reduce traffic congestion?**

No. While there may be short term congestion reductions on the Westgate-Monash freeways, the increase in traffic volume on this route will deliver yet more traffic to the suburbs around the freeways, including the inner city. This plan is very likely to significantly increase congestion in the inner city and the CBD, on streets that are already heavily congested - a big step backwards for liveability. Any attempt to increase road capacity on inner city streets to compensate would come at the expense of pedestrians, public transport and public space as there is no spare land available.

There is now a global consensus based on comprehensive evidence that increases in road capacity induce additional car trips, so that new road space fills up within a few years. (Refer 1994 report "Trunk Roads and the Generation of Traffic" by the Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment (SACTRA), UK Department for Transport (1994); further references available at <http://www.ptua.org.au/myths/congestion.shtml> and the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission's report on Traffic Congestion). We only need to look at the CityLink project that was trumpeted by the Kennett Government as the once-and-for-all solution to congestion problems in Melbourne. Only 5 years after opening, congestion has not been solved, and is just as bad if not worse than before. Spending \$1 billion to add a lane

to the freeway will be throwing good money after bad, while lining the pockets of Transurban who reap the increased toll revenue.

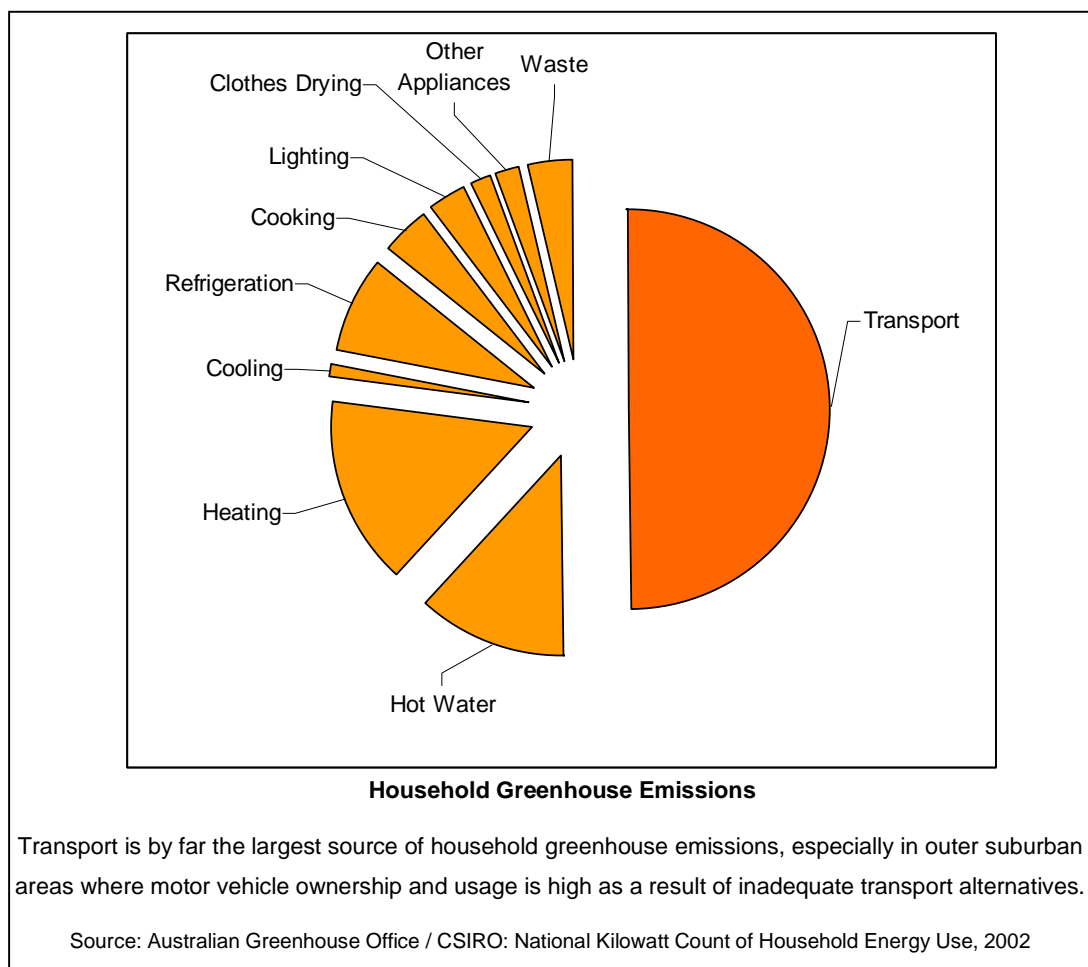
The SmartBus routes might attract some people out of their cars, and therefore make a small contribution to lessening congestion, but the roll out is very slow and the impact is likely to be drowned out by more people remaining dependent on cars. The cycling infrastructure might also entice some more people out of their cars and onto their bikes, but the volumes are unlikely to have a significant effect.

## 2.2 Sustainability

### 2.2.1 Will the plan reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

No. As explained above, the plan is very unlikely to generate a modal shift from cars to public transport. Many more trips will be made by private car in Melbourne, increasing greenhouse gas emissions contributing to the devastating effects of global warming.

MOTC entrenches continuing dependence on fossil fuel based modes when we should be shifting to electrical modes (light and heavy rail) in readiness for suitable alternative fuel sources since there are no viable liquid fuel sources on the horizon.



### **2.2.2 Will the plan improve urban air quality?**

No. While new vehicles (including cars, trucks and buses) have lower emissions and are slowly replacing older vehicles, the total kilometres travelled will continue to grow (as there will be little to no mode shift away from cars), negating much of the benefit of cleaner engines.

As the National Greenhouse Inventory states, the total passenger-kilometres travelled in cars has increased by 18 per cent, and vehicle-kilometres by 25 per cent, over the period 1991 to 2002. Vehicle-kilometres have grown faster, because each car now carries fewer passengers on average than in 1991.

### **2.2.3 Will the plan improve public health?**

Yes and no.

The positives include:

- A funding boost for cycling infrastructure that will encourage more people to cycle more often, thus increasing their health. However, the actual increase in cycling attributed to better infrastructure is hard to quantify, especially in the context of the continued growth in heavy motor vehicle traffic facilitated by the plan and the existence of broader systemic barriers to increased cycling such as hostile traffic engineering practices.
- Travel behaviour change programmes can generate short-term increases in walking, cycling and to a lesser extent public transport (primarily related to the quality of public transport services). Compared to motorists, public transport users generally gain more exercise through walking to and from stops and between services, and hence suffer from lower levels of obesity and associated illness. However, available research suggests that the changes in behaviour are not sustained and may in some cases be fictitious. (Refer Morton and Mees: "Too Good to be True? An Assessment of the Melbourne Travel Behaviour Modification Pilot", 28th Australasian Transport Research Forum, Sydney, September 2005)

The negatives:

- For the majority of Melburnians, there will be little additional high quality public transport to entice people out of their cars. Continuing high levels of car dependence will mean many people continue to live sedentary lifestyles, and government will ultimately pay for the associated health costs of these lifestyles due to higher levels of obesity, diabetes and heart disease.
- As explained in section 2.2.2 above, urban air quality is unlikely to significantly improve.

## **2.3 Energy security**

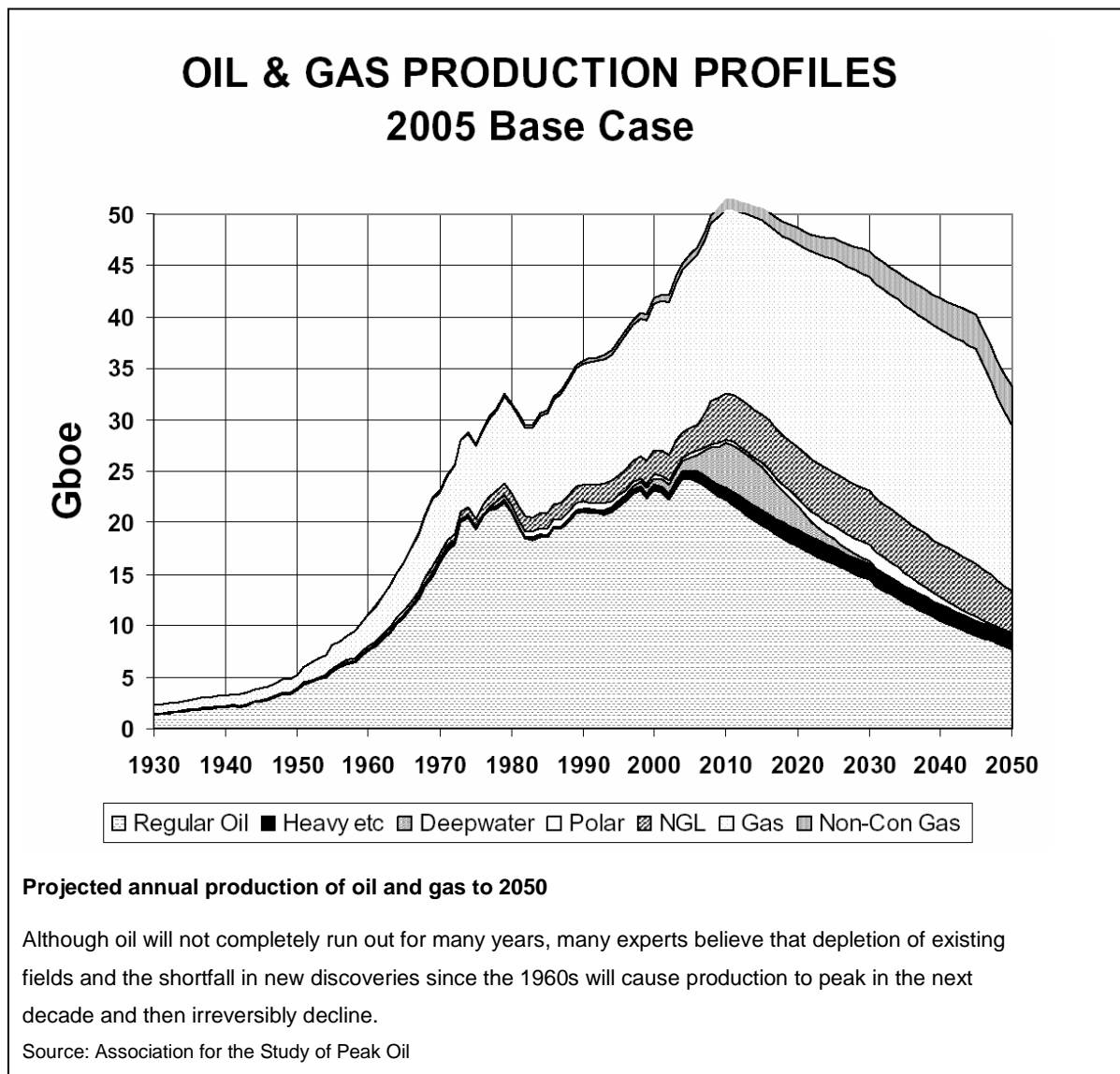
### **2.3.1 Will the plan prepare Melbourne for Peak Oil?**

No. As stated above, the plan will not provide attractive alternatives to the motor car for the vast majority of transport trips in Melbourne. The plan will not reduce Melbourne's dependence on motor cars for transport. While bus services will be available in more suburbs for longer hours, these will not be viable alternatives for

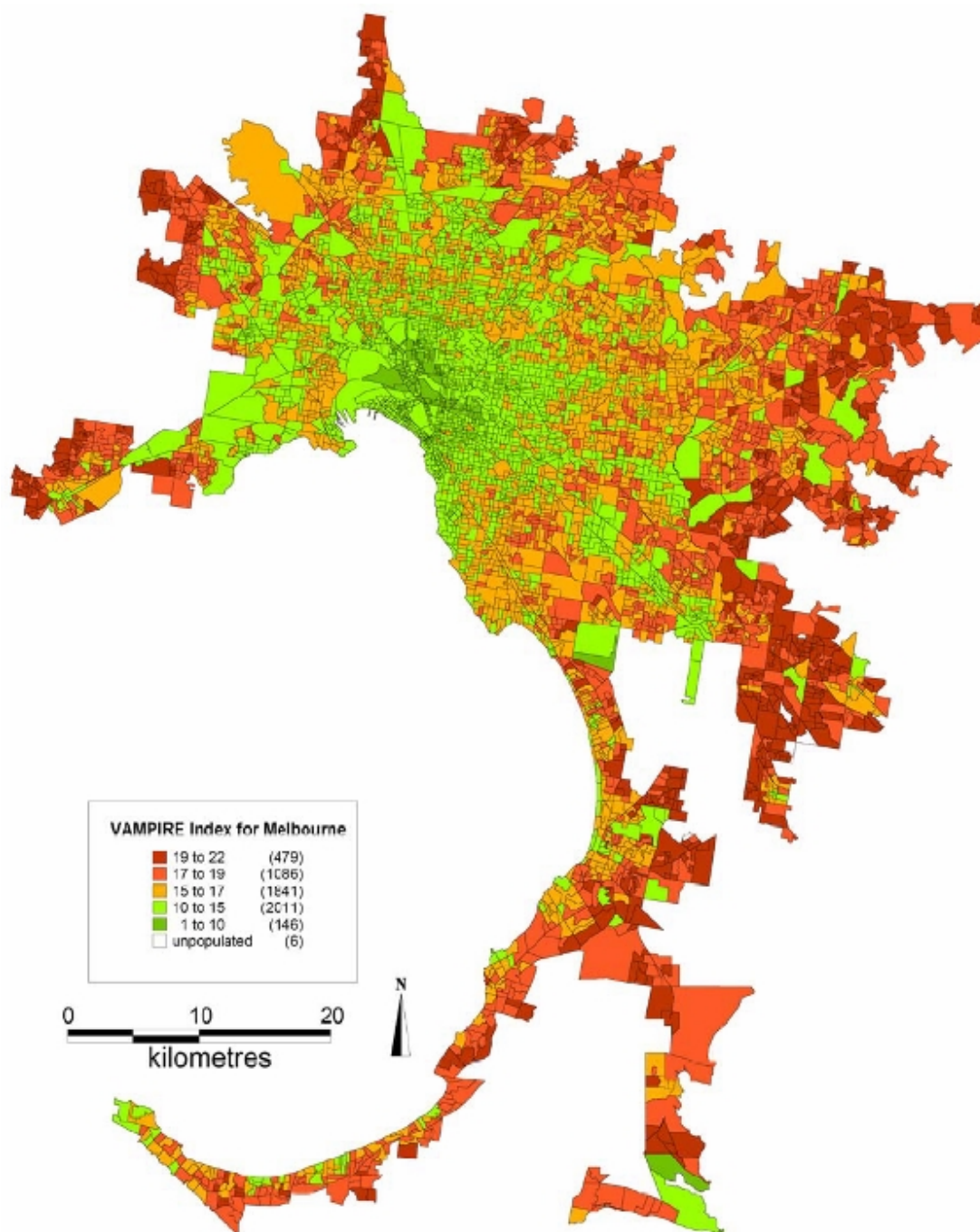
busy people due to the very low frequencies. With oil production not keeping up with demand, the price of oil is set to continue a strong growth, dramatically eating into household budgets.

By stating that continued very high car mode share is not going to change, this plan appears to assume the ongoing availability of relatively cheap liquid fuels for our transport sector. There are very few energy experts who would accept the proposition that cheap oil will remain with us for the next 25 years (the period covered by the plan). The most conservative commentators are saying peak oil production will occur around 2020. In 2021, Melbourne will not have a sufficiently upgraded public transport network to allow a significant shift from car based travel to public transport.

When the predecessor of MOTC, Metropolitan Transport Plan, was released in 2004 the price of oil was around US\$30 a barrel. When MOTC was released the price was around \$70 and rising. Despite the significant increase there has been no corresponding policy change in Melbourne's transport planning.







#### Vulnerability of Melbourne's suburbs

Research at Griffith University has shown that many of Melbourne's outer suburbs (shown in red) are highly vulnerable to rising petrol prices due to inadequate transport alternatives.

Source: Dodson & Sipe, 2006

### What does peak oil mean?

The term peak oil refers to the point at which oil production reaches the maximum volume it will ever reach before beginning an irreversible decline. This phenomenon is witnessed at the level of individual oil fields, up through oil provinces (e.g. Bass Strait) and ultimately will be witnessed on a global level. There is disagreement over precisely when global oil production will peak, however a significant body of expert opinion is forming behind the view that global oil production will peak within the next decade, as shown below.

### Projections of when global oil production will peak

2006-2007	Ali Samsam Bakhtiari	Iranian oil executive
2007-2009	Matthew Simmons	US energy investment banker
Post 2007	Chris Skrebowski	Petroleum journal editor
2008	Colin Campbell	Oil geologist
Pre-2009	Kenneth Deffeyes	Oil geologist
Pre-2010	David Goodstein	Vice Provost, Caltech
2010-2020	Jean Laherrere	Oil geologist
Post-2010	World Energy Council	International energy organisation
2012	Weng	
2015	Volvo	Automotive company
2016	Doug-Westwood	
2020	Total	Petroleum company

Even though peak oil does not mean we will have run out of oil altogether, the remaining oil will be more hotly contested and more difficult, more expensive and more environmentally damaging to extract. This will mean substantially higher petrol prices and the possibility of occasional shortages. A report prepared for the US Department of Energy warned that “without timely mitigation, the economic, social, and political costs will be unprecedented”, hinting at upheaval to rival the Great Depression.

Given the risks from failing to adequately prepare for peak oil, the growing credibility of forecasts of an imminent peak, and the time required to undertake mitigating action, the Government should undertake an aggressive program of public transport enhancement and shelve plans for major road projects. Since peak oil signifies limited liquid fuel supplies, particular attention should be paid to enhancing the coverage and integration of the electrified rail network.

## **2.4 Liveability**

### **2.4.1 Liveability misdefined**

Many elements of liveability are impacted by transport policy, not just obvious factors such as congestion and the level of infrastructure provision. For example, excessive car dependence leads to increased pollution, more deaths and injuries on the road, higher incidence of lifestyle diseases, and a higher proportion of household expenditure going to finance oil imports rather than local goods and services (*Transport and Liveability: The Path to a Sustainable Victoria*, Coalition for People's Transport 2005).

Meeting our Transport Challenges states that:

*"[t]he key to liveability is managing land use and transport networks to maintain the highest level of access to community, services and employment opportunities."*

This unfortunately narrow approach to liveability overlooks the minimisation of environmental impacts and other side effects such as road trauma. With such a poorly defined objective, the direction of the strategy is not likely to be appropriate to maximising liveability.

### **2.4.2 Liveability missed**

With the statement announced as a Transport and Liveability Statement and claiming to "*strengthen... the State's transport system to sustain Victoria's and Melbourne's liveability into the future*" its absence of actions to achieve this points to spin over substance. Even using MOTC's own definition of liveability finds it wanting, as explained in the following section.

Even with inherent advantages of climate and social stability, nevertheless Melbourne is slipping down the list of liveable cities, and MOTC will do little to halt this slide.

## **2.5 Access and mobility**

### **2.5.1 Will the plan improve access for people with mobility impairments?**

Yes, but this is in fulfilment of legislative requirements and slower than the original timeframes. It appears the majority of bus stops and train stations will be made compliant with the Disability and Discrimination Act (DDA) by 2011. However the program only tackles 350 'easy' tram stops, those that have little impact on road traffic. Clearly there is a reluctance to reallocate road space to public transport, despite the overtures to improved on-road priority for Melbourne's trams.

The PTUA is supportive of any efforts to provide access for all on the tram network but believe it can be achieved through platform stops that are less expensive and less intrusive than "superstops". At the lower cost they can be implemented more rapidly to meet the DDA targets earlier. The introduction of DDA compliant platform stops should not involve any net loss of the existing number of stop locations which would reduce convenience for other users, including people with visual impairments and the ambulant disabled.

### **2.5.2 Will the plan help the aged?**

Yes. Particularly more elderly people who can no longer drive. The provision of seven day bus services will allow these people to travel on weekends and be less reliant on family, friends and council community buses



for transport. The introduction of free travel on Sundays for seniors will also help with the cost of transport, provided adequate services are available.

### **2.5.3 Will the plan help young people?**

Yes and No. Late night train and tram services will help young people who like to socialise in the inner city late on Friday and Saturday nights. However those outside the train and tram networks will still be reliant on 9 NightRider bus routes. And those not living near SmartBus routes will not have any services between 9pm and around 12.30am on Friday and Saturday nights. This excludes a lot of young people from using public transport to go out in the evenings. The majority of buses will continue to go to bed long before most people conclude their evening social activities, especially youth who are generally transport disadvantaged. Those not lucky enough to live near the train, tram, SmartBus and NightRider bus routes will be forced into other options. For young people who have reached driving age, this makes the deadly mix of alcohol and driving a large risk. Statistics show that Friday and Saturday nights are the worst time for road trauma, particularly involving young people, as detailed by the Transport Accident Commission (refer <http://www.tacsafety.com.au> > Statistics > Young Driver Statistics)

Those who do have access to a car are more at risk when behind the wheel and many have no such access, so the general slant of this plan toward continued car dependence is negative for youth on the whole.

### **2.5.4 Will the plan provide more options for the transport disadvantaged?**

Yes. One of the strengths of the plan is that it will provide a basic public transport option to within 400 metres of most homes in Melbourne 7 days a week until 9pm every day. While hourly services are likely to be inadequate for most people, they at least give an option to people who have no other option.

### **2.5.5 Will the plan provide more social opportunities for the transport disadvantaged?**

Yes and No. During the daytime and early evening, most people in Melbourne will have a public transport option, although often at only an hourly frequency. However the plan fails to boost bus services after 9pm except on the limited SmartBus network. This means those living beyond the reach of the train, tram, and (slowly rolled out) SmartBus network will have to find other modes of transport after 9pm or remain isolated.

### **2.5.6 Will the plan support the transport needs of Melbourne's Growth Areas?**

Only to a limited extent.



The following aspects of the plan apply to all growth areas:




- New local bus routes in growth areas. While these will provide a public transport option to those currently without alternatives, the frequencies are likely to be hourly in most cases. This is insufficient to be an attractive and viable alternative to the car for those with busy lifestyles and/or access to cars. At best, these services provide a social safety net for those who cannot afford car travel, but can afford to spend a lot of their time waiting for infrequent bus services. The new bus routes implemented in Melbourne during 2006 were at poor service levels: most not operating on Sundays or





in the evenings, and with hourly frequencies at best. It is not clear whether the new routes in the plan will fulfil even minimal 'safety net' criteria of hourly operation until 9pm seven days a week.

- Some growth areas will receive orbital SmartBus services from the rollout. These will provide upgraded cross town links that will increase transport options, particularly for non-radial travel. However progress will be slow, with one section of orbital route to begin development each year until at least 2010. The non-orbital SmartBus routes will not be implemented until 2011, and these will provide some additional high quality services. However the complete rollout of all bus routes in the PPTN looks set to take decades. The longer the delay between the time residents move into new homes and the time high quality public transport is provided, the more likely it is that people establish and maintain car-dependent travel patterns. This will make it more difficult to attract patronage when services are upgraded.
- Growth areas will receive funding boosts to arterial roads. Roads that were designed to carry rural rather than urban traffic volumes will be upgraded: the main effect of this will be to encourage greater car use, although there may be some benefit to bus travel and a marginal safety benefit if designed appropriately (largely cancelled by the increased traffic volume). When travelling outside the local area to established parts of Melbourne, there will be greater road congestion.
- In Cardinia, Casey, Wyndham, and Hume, there will be 'upgrades' to the capacity of the existing metropolitan rail network, however earlier commitments to rail extensions have been omitted from MOTC or delayed. We discuss the issue of rail capacity in a separate section.

The following table looks at the detail for each of Melbourne's growth areas:

Plenty Valley		<p>This corridor was promised the South Morang rail extension in 1999. The plan will now see it not built until 2016-2021 (but with no funding committed). In the mean time this corridor will be dependent on bus services. While the Trainlink bus service provides the same frequency of service as the Epping rail line, the connections are unreliable, the interchange facilities are very poor, and the travel time to Mill Park by bus is around 15 minutes slower than it would be by train.</p> <p>The lack of high quality public transport services means cars will remain and become increasingly the only viable transport option for people in this corridor. By failing to provide mass transit options households will be forced to purchase additional cars, making it even more difficult to attract people to the train service if and when it is eventually extended.</p>
Epping North		<p>This development is centred on a future train station site, designed to be a showcase in sustainable urban development. However not only is there no mention of a train link to Epping North, there is equally no mention of any rapid transit link of any mode to this development anytime in the next 25 years. The only reference is a 'potential network</p>

		<p>option' on the principal public transport network map.</p> <p>There is clearly no prospect of viable or attractive public transport options in this corridor under the government's plan.</p>
Cardinia		<p>Specific items affecting this area:</p> <p>The introduction of a new train station at Cardinia Road. However this station will not be built until at least 2011 - long after residents have moved in and established car dependent travel patterns, undermining the ability to generate significant rail patronage when the station does open.</p> <p>The upgrade of the Monash Freeway will provide some short term congestion relief on the freeway. However given the fast growth, overcrowding on the Dandenong train line, and disruption to Dandenong rail services with the proposed triplication programme, this road capacity is likely to be filled very quickly. There will also be increased congestion on roads around the Monash Freeway due to the increase in vehicles using these roads.</p>
Casey		<p>A new train station at Lynbrook will serve a growing community in this area, but not until after 2011: a long time after residents have established car-dependent travel habits. Other than rail capacity and local bus improvements, there will be no additional high quality public transport links in this area (there will be no orbital SmartBus routes through Casey and a mooted rail extension to Cranbourne East has failed to materialise). Of greater importance will be the addition of extra lanes on the Monash Freeway, which will provide only short term relief as traffic volumes are likely to climb significantly once implemented, and afterwards consign Casey residents to compulsory congestion of the kind seen in American cities.</p>
Wyndham		<p>Specific items affecting this area:</p> <p>A new station at Point Cook, but not until at least 2011: well after new residents have established car-dependent travel patterns and missing the opportunity to focus transit oriented development around the station.</p> <p>The addition of one extra peak hour train service. Already heavily overcrowded, one extra service will make little difference. The plan talks about increasing the capacity of the rail network, but gives no suggestion as to the increase in service levels that might result, and omits duplication of the Altona loop which would facilitate higher frequencies.</p>


		Additions to Westgate Freeway capacity are unlikely to provide more than short term relief to road traffic congestion.
Melton		<p>Specific items affecting this area:</p> <p>The V/Line train service will improve marginally, but will not provide suburban frequency services to the rest of Melbourne (or at least these have not been stated)</p> <p>Melton misses out completely on any SmartBus services, particularly links to the other western suburbs.</p>
Caroline Springs		<p>Specific items affecting this area:</p> <p>The Green Orbital SmartBus, and not until 2011 or later: long after people have established car-dependent transport patterns.</p> <p>Caroline Springs misses out on any opportunity for a rail service using the Melton line.</p>
Hume	 	<p>Specific items affecting this area:</p> <p>The Yellow orbital cross-town SmartBus route, but not until at least 2009.</p> <p>Extension of suburban electric train services to Craigieburn by 2007 (previously announced and currently underway). However this project is being delivered late and 200 per cent over budget, and the infrastructure has been cut back to a bare-bones improvement, with no stations to be constructed at Coolaroo or Patullos. It is therefore likely that Craigieburn will not receive the same level of service as now provided from Broadmeadows to the city.</p>

The growth in public transport service in many areas will not keep up with residential development and will not be capable of being an alternative to car use. This is inconsistent with the Melbourne 2030 plan, which says:

*Growth will be managed to produce an urban form that can be serviced efficiently so that public transport services are provided concurrent with development. This will avoid delays in public transport provision that require new residents to commit to multiple car ownership – which tends to entrench car use – and will encourage activity centres with a range of facilities and jobs.*

## 2.6 Planning, Funding and Management

### 2.6.1 Does the plan reconsider privatisation?

 No. The government refuses to acknowledge that privatisation in its current form has been a failed experiment and is a drain on public funds. Instead, subsidies to the private operators will be increased further.

The Auditor-General's report found that in 1999 in the last year of public operation, the subsidy to train and tram services was just under \$300 million. It is now close to \$600 million. Private operators and the government have tried to explain away this difference as due to investment in rolling stock, but the Auditor-General's report also implies that the adjustment required to bring the total operating cost (of which only two-thirds is subsidy) onto a "constant investment in rolling stock" basis is less than \$100 million a year. This still leaves a discrepancy of over \$200 million to explain. Over the same period since privatisation, fares have risen faster than inflation and faster than in any other Australian capital.

For more details we refer to the report *Putting the Public Interest Back Into Public Transport* by Mees, Buxton, Moriarty and Stone, whose conclusions the PTUA endorses.

### 2.6.2 Will the plan implement a public planning agency?

**X** No. The government has failed to learn from cities with successful public transport such as Vancouver, Zurich or even Perth. All these cities have efficient, effective public agencies with modest staffing levels and ultimate responsibility for service planning and integration.

The government will instead add to the existing bureaucracy an additional position of Coordinator-General with a role as yet undefined. There will still be 300 bureaucrats responsible for administering the Byzantine franchise contracts with operators rather than planning services. Will this new functionary ensure services are integrated? The position may have no real power over agencies such as VicRoads, and may rely on the discretion of the individual making the decisions, putting in doubt the likelihood of competing projects being evaluated on an equal triple bottom line basis.




Sign at a Connex railway station

Source: PTUA

Current institutional arrangements are not delivering an integrated and seamless transport network.


### **2.6.3 Is there a legislative threat to shopping streets and local communities?**

 Yes. The undertaking to review transport legislation contains an implied threat to local communities' discretion over the use of road space. The VCEC congestion report and the VicRoads Public Transport Advisory Committee have both suggested changing the Transport Act and related legislation to impose road hierarchies, and remove the ability of local councils to resist the imposition of clearways and the conversion of landmark shopping streets and other arterial roads into traffic sewers.

It is conceivable that other changes to the Transport Act could assist further change in transport planning, for example by redefining the statutory responsibilities of VicRoads to prioritise non-car modes of transport. However, one cannot legislate for organisational change. The PTUA has long recommended the route taken by the Western Australian government in 2000, which was to remove planning responsibility from its VicRoads equivalent and vest it in the newly created Department of Planning and Infrastructure. A similar measure was recommended in Victoria by the Premier's Infrastructure Planning Council in 2001.

Similarly, the Transport Act should be amended to enshrine broader sustainability principles into the objectives of the transport/infrastructure department.

### **2.6.4 Is the analysis of travel needs based on evidence, not mythology?**

 No. Evidence-based transport planning as carried out in other liveable cities starts from an analysis of transport needs based on comprehensive survey evidence and input from local communities. The analysis in MOTC is still being done based on urban myths and bureaucratic guesswork.

Not all radial journeys on public transport have to go all the way into the CBD. The radial network has an important and growing role in serving intermediate destinations. Most residents of the City of Casey who travel out of their local area to work are only going as far as Dandenong, Springvale or Clayton; relatively few are heading all the way into the city.

MOTC goes on at great length about the need to focus public transport improvements on non-radial journeys, and then proceeds to commute \$2.9 billion in future concession payments from CityLink into expansion of the radial Monash Freeway while ignoring widespread calls for a much cheaper train line to Rowville which would serve the Monash corridor.

Non-radial journeys are mostly over short distances and can be facilitated through better integration of the existing network (eg. tram gap filling and more frequent cross-town bus services).

The East-West 'issue' has been over-analysed. Previous studies (such as the draft Northern Central City Corridor Study) found the majority of traffic and people from the Eastern Freeway is heading into the city and that only 15% of traffic (including trucks) is heading west towards the Tullamarine Freeway. Building a new road link will not suddenly cause city travellers to want to go to the western suburbs instead, but it will entice people to find reasons to make new trips between the eastern and western suburbs ("induced traffic"), and create new traffic congestion to delay travel into the city, adding to the half-dozen bottlenecks that will spring up throughout the inner northern suburbs, to replace the existing bottleneck at Hoddle Street. Heavy rail to East Doncaster is most obvious solution to travel demand from the north-eastern suburbs and is long overdue, having been on the drawing board since 1969.

### 2.6.5 Are Smartcards the answer?



Smartcards will not solve the biggest problems of the public transport system: infrequent services, and lack of staff for assistance, security and fare-checking. The Smartcard system, though probably having advantages through more user-friendly ticketing, will nonetheless cost almost half-a-billion dollars over ten years; money which would be better spent re-staffing the system, and improving service frequency.

### 2.6.6 Is it clear how the funding decisions were made? Were roads and public transport treated on a 'level playing field'?



No. It is not clear how the decisions were made, and therefore impossible to ascertain whether roads and public transport were treated equally. While there is plenty of discussion about the changing nature of transport demand in Melbourne, there is nothing that justifies why certain projects were included and others excluded. The public is not given any understanding of the benefit-cost ratio of any of the projects, nor is information provided about the evaluation methodology used to assess the projects.

### 2.6.7 Was the plan put together with public involvement?



No. While the government claims to have read and reviewed all proposals put before it by various community, local government, and business groups, at no stage did the government open the process to the public for feedback on a draft plan. There was no public consultation about the contents or the plan. This is in stark contrast to transport planning in cities like Vancouver or Brisbane and the release of a discussion paper during development of the Sydney Metro Strategy

### 2.6.8 Is the funding well directed?



No. The dissatisfaction of the PTUA is not with the quantum of the spending, but with how it is allocated, the timing and what is left out. Misdirected and excessive spending is not to be congratulated when there are so many pressing and deserving claims on state funds, in public transport as well as other areas such as education and health.

It should be noted that road spending in MOTC is in addition to Commonwealth and local government road spending, as well as private spending by toll road operators, and that the East West Needs Assessment is heavily geared towards the predetermined outcome of a massive freeway from the Eastern Freeway to CityLink and beyond. By contrast, public transport is currently unable to leverage funding from other tiers of government.

It is unclear how the MOTC Reserve will work, given only half the projected spending is allocated to the Reserve. This appears to be a PR gesture rather than a substantive policy measure: what difference is there in practice between establishing a pot of money and allocating an equivalent amount of money in successive annual budgets?

### 3 Actions under the microscope

#### 3.1 Action 1: Delivering for the future

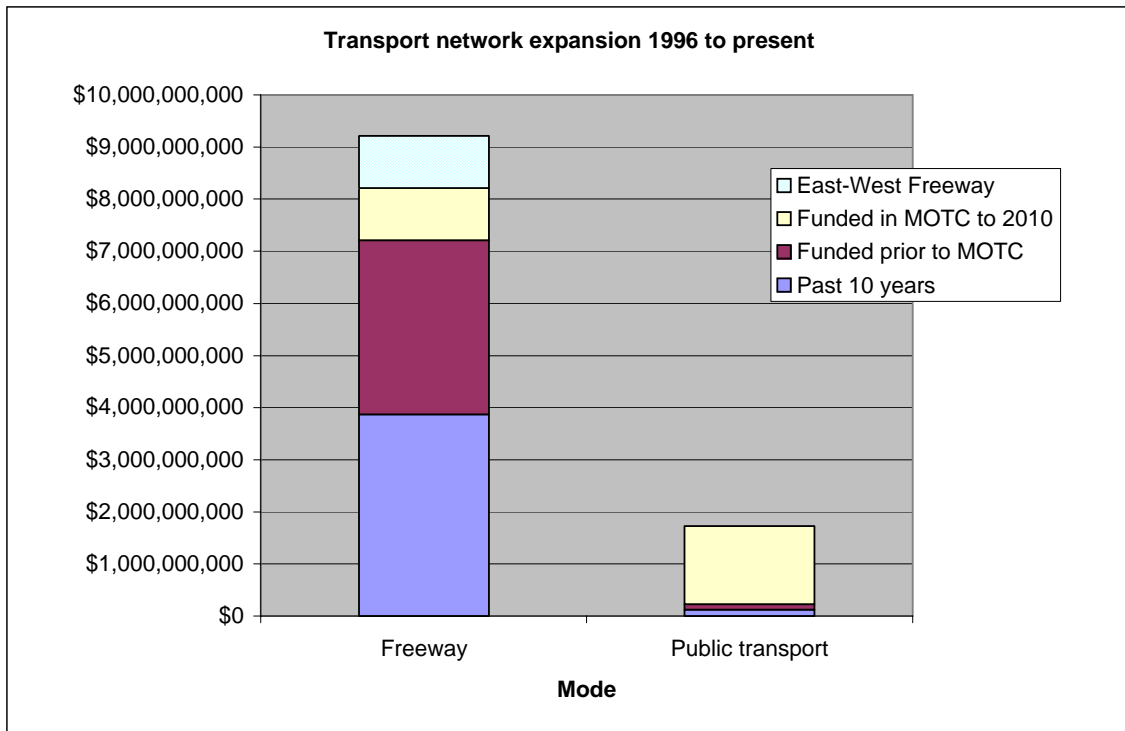
##### 3.1.1 Initiatives

Initiative	Rating	Comment
Establishing a "Meeting our Transport Challenges" fund of \$5.9 billion to fund the actions in the plan	✓	A long term funding framework has been lacking for a long time.  Many actions contained in the plan have not been matched with commitments in the 2006-07 Budget or forward estimates.
Comprehensive review of transport legislation	✓	As recommended in the VCEC report on congestion, it is important that the transport legislation ensures all bodies work together to the same objectives and enshrines social and environmental sustainability principles recognising the need to reduce motor vehicle travel, pollution and energy consumption.
Establishing a new position of Coordinator General of Infrastructure	?	It is still unclear what this new role will entail, and whether it will overcome the policy, planning and funding imbalances between public transport and roads, or ensure transport programs support urban planning objectives.

##### 3.1.2 Will the plan redress the past road bias in transport funding?

The following graph shows the level of capital funding applied to Melbourne's freeway and rail networks in the last 10 years, projects funded prior to MOTC, and those funded in MOTC. It shows that although Melbourne's rail network is getting a large (and misdirected) capital investment relative to previous investment, this is still dwarfed by major road investment. If the government's target is to increase public transport (and by inference train and tram) patronage, while reducing car mode share from 91% to 80%, then this clearly isn't reflected in the funding outcomes which are now 2:1 in favour of roads.





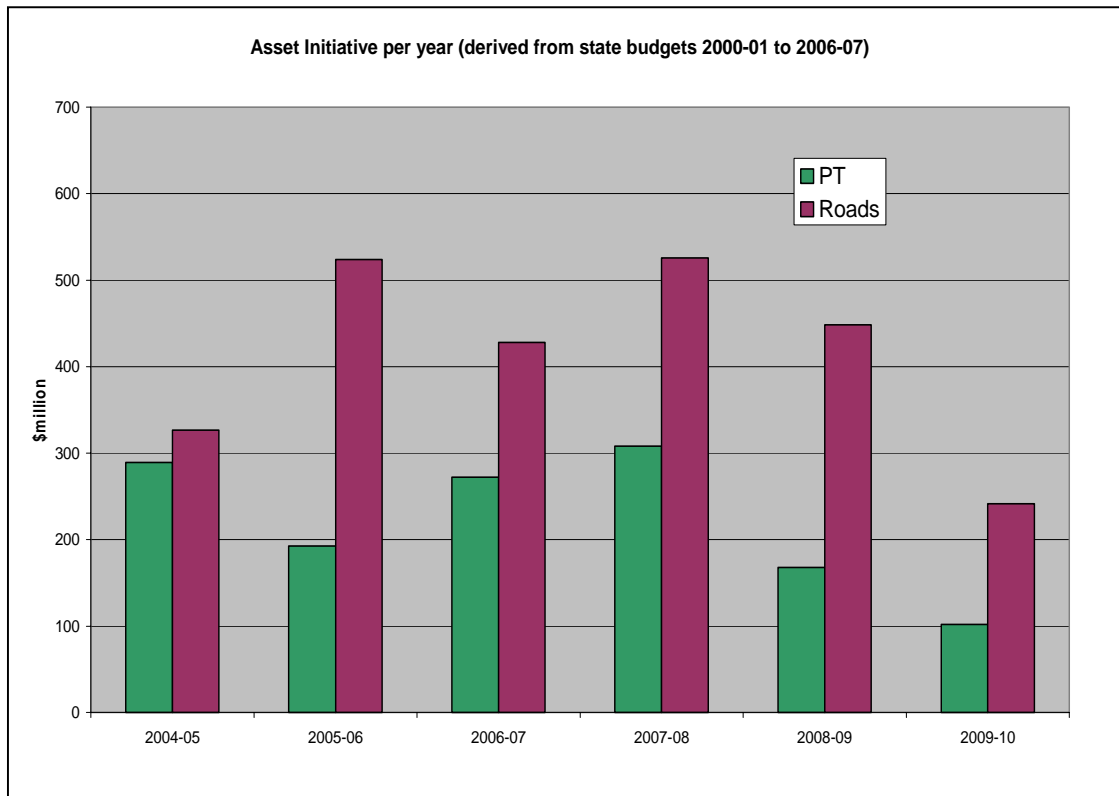
### 3.1.3 Where are the initial dollars going?

The 2006-07 state budget shows clearly where the government's initial priorities lie - roads for cars.

Of the \$6.4 billion allocated to public transport in MOTC, only \$868 million (13%) has been committed in the first four years. There is no money allocated to build any new rail track infrastructure, and no funding for tram projects at all. No new MOTC funded SmartBus services will start until 2007, and the local bus rollout will see less than 1/6 of the target recurrent expenditure spent in the first year.

Meanwhile, it is full steam ahead on adding lanes to the Monash Freeway, introducing reversible lanes on the Westgate Bridge, and upgrading other roads. \$786 million, or 32% of the \$3.8 billion allocated to roads will be spent in the first four years, and detailed planning is already well underway. Furthermore, the \$5 million East West Needs Assessment appears to be little more than preparatory work for a new freeway under the guise of a broader study.

The following chart shows asset initiatives committed in state budgets for roads and public transport. Clearly the bias towards road funding will continue for the next four years at least.



It is clear that prior to MOTC VicRoads had a ready made project for widening the freeways that could start straight away. The CEO of VicRoads has stated that approval was given six months prior to the MOTC release.




Meanwhile the Public Transport Division of DOI has yet to do any planning or design for the rail upgrades other than Dandenong triplication. This highlights the imbalance in the government's capabilities to plan road and public transport projects, and the need for institutional reform

#### **3.1.4 Will future transport policy, planning and funding eliminate bias towards roads?**



There is little evidence to suggest it will. While the government promises a new Coordinator General of Infrastructure, this role has not been well defined. Early indications are that this role will focus only on DOI and DSE integration. There is no clear evidence that transport policy and planning will fall under a single independent organisation, let alone that this organisation be publicly accountable. The VCEC Congestion Inquiry draft report recommends a move to a level playing field for transport policy, planning and funding. Certainly there is no evidence of this in the MOTC statement.

### 3.2 Action 2: Creating a cross-town transport network for Melbourne

### 3.2.1 Initiatives

Initiative	Rating	Comment
SmartBus Extension	 	<p>After rolling out a mere one route per year, a commitment to rolling out the full SmartBus network across the PPTN is welcome in principle, however the extended time frame and significant delays in the implementation of the orbital routes reduces the possible benefits and puts the initiative at risk of not being completed.</p> <p>There will be no operational upgrades to the red orbital until 2008. The Green orbital will not commence operations until at least 2009. The Yellow Orbital route is unlikely to commence operations until 2010. In fact, capital works on the Green orbital will not start until 2007-08, and no capital works have been committed for the Yellow or Blue orbitals in the next four years at all. [Refer to the summary table following.]</p> <p>The non-orbital routes are unlikely to start operations until at least 2013. This is 2 years after the Committee for Melbourne/Metlink plan that had 7 non-orbital routes in operation by 2011.</p> <p>Effectively, Melbourne will see one new SmartBus Orbital upgraded per year - the equivalent of around 2 routes per year. This is not a significant acceleration from current progress and well short of a major boost to cross-town services.</p> <p>There is no reason for delaying these service improvements by more than the lead time for new bus purchases, which we understand to be around 12-18 months at most.</p> <p>Hours and frequencies of these SmartBuses may not match connecting train and tram routes. The standard for weekend SmartBus frequencies is 30 minutes, while train lines in Melbourne operate at a 20 minute frequency.</p> <p> While not specifically funded in MOTC, the Wellington Road SmartBus is an inferior alternative to the long overdue Rowville rail extension. It duplicates train services and/or existing bus services over one-third of its length. Service between Caulfield and Chadstone would be better provided by a short and inexpensive extension of tram route 3.</p>

Initiative	Rating	Comment
Local bus improvements	✓	<p>The extended operating hours will be useful as a safety net, but are completely inadequate for getting people out of cars. While some local bus routes will have frequencies upgraded, very few, if any, are likely to be 15 minutes or better, which is the level needed for mode shift.</p> <p>Seven-day local bus services</p> <p>The 'benchmark' service standard is hourly service until 9pm seven days a week. This is an improvement on the present situation where many routes fail to run at all on Sundays, on Saturday afternoons or any time after 6pm. However, the 30 to 60 minute frequency still limits their role to being charity services for those without access to cars. It does not address strategic priorities because the majority of Melburnians, who live beyond walking distance of railway stations and own cars, will not use such services. The 9pm stopping time is also insufficient to cater for evening activities such as after-hours work, study and socialising.</p> <p>Attracting 'choice' passengers requires a network of services with a minimum basic frequency of 10 to 15 minutes, such as exists in Toronto or Vancouver (and most European cities) and as is steadily being rolled out in Perth.</p> <p>By introducing new services with such low frequencies, the government has chosen the option with the highest cost but the smallest benefit. The low frequencies guarantee low revenue (particularly given most users attracted will be on concession fares), while the supporting infrastructure required is not significantly less than for a service that runs four times as frequently.</p> <p>The failure to reform routes also ensures that potential efficiency dividends are not realised. The consequent retention of "wandering minstrel" services running slow and meandering routes, combined with frequencies and service spans that remain inadequate to attract discretionary passengers, will do little to increase mode share or reduce traffic congestion as claimed on page 35 of MOTC. Therefore patronage among full-fare discretionary passengers will remain low and taxpayer subsidies to the private operators high.</p>

Initiative	Rating	Comment
		One possible consequence of the resultant low patronage will be its use as supposed proof that the service is not required and therefore an excuse not to improve services.
Doncaster Bus Upgrade	 	A service upgrade in this corridor is long overdue and greatly needed as evidenced by existing overcrowding. The lack of a significant increase in capacity until 2009 is a completely inadequate response given Eastlink will open before then and dramatically worsen traffic congestion on the Eastern Freeway. A 25 year vision would have committed to a railway line.

#### Summary of the rollout of Melbourne's Smartbus network

Based on information in state budgets and the MOTC statement

Route	Capital works commence	Operations commence	Approximate length (km)
Green - Springvale to Nunawading		2002	15
Oakleigh to Blackburn		2002	15
Red - Box Hill to Mordialloc	2003	2005	25
Wellington Road (Caulfield to Rowville)	2005	2007	23
Red - Box Hill to Altona	2006	2007	55
Green - Ringwood to Frankston	2005-06	2008	48
Green - Nunawading to Airport West	2008	2008	45
Yellow – Ringwood to Tullamarine	2008-09	2009?	53
Blue	2010-11	2011?	45
Green - remainder	2010-11	2012?	54
Remainder of Principal Public Transport Network	2011-12	Unknown	507

### **3.2.2 Will the plan improve transport in the Eastern Freeway/Manningham corridor?**

Yes, to a limited extent. The major initiatives in this area are SmartBus, and the 'Doncaster Bus Upgrade'. Three SmartBus routes will be implemented through this region (red, green and blue).

The Doncaster Bus Upgrade purports to "upgrade bus services along the corridor to a level of service comparable with rail", including:

- increased hours of operation
- increased bus frequencies, particularly in off-peak periods
- provision of on-road bus priority measures to deliver a faster and more reliable service
- provision of more Park & Ride opportunities and
- improved access by people with disabilities and restricted mobility

However, there are several drawbacks to this approach:









- The project does not begin until 2009, with no relief in sight for existing services that are already overcrowded and delayed by heavy traffic congestion in many locations in peak times, with current patronage growth running at 13% per annum [National Bus]. By the time the upgrade is implemented, Eastlink will have opened, delivering substantially more traffic along the corridor before there is any respite.
- Park and Ride has very limited ability to increase public transport patronage. A 400 space car park might at best allow an extra 500 people to travel by bus each day but it is likely many of the people using park and ride would have previously caught a bus from near to their home, and once a car leg is introduced into their travel pattern, the temptation to drive all the way on less congested days becomes much greater. Five hundred additional passenger trips are unlikely to have any significant impact when Eastlink delivers additional vehicles onto the already congested Eastern Freeway corridor.
- There is little increase in bus frequencies in peak periods, when overcrowding on buses is most severe. Of course, peak frequency increases are also the most difficult as they require capital outlay on additional vehicles and strain bus throughput capacity. This underlines the fact that buses are an inferior alternative to rail in this corridor.
- Without an increase in peak frequencies, there is little scope to relieve transport congestion in this corridor. We note that even the Bus Association's proposal recommended significant increases to peak hour frequencies. As evidenced by railway station carparks, park and ride spaces are highly likely to fill up in peak periods, providing no patronage feed during off-peak periods if the service relies on park and ride to deliver passengers.
- Bus-based solutions cannot match the capacity or speed advantages of heavy rail.

The other major item affecting this region is the East-West Needs Assessment, which is primarily looking at road based 'solutions' to the current transport issues in this corridor. The PTUA has long argued the problems in this corridor are the result of a lack of attractive and viable public transport alternatives to the motor car,

therefore very large car volumes travel along the freeway corridor, primarily to the CBD and surrounds. Only a small proportion of vehicles travel through to the west, (refer North Central City Corridor Strategy – Draft, August 2003, p8), thus nullifying the claimed basis for the East-West link. A high capacity heavy rail service that provides faster travel times than the car option has the potential to make a significant difference to transport congestion in this corridor, negating any need to build a new road link and freeing up buses for a high quality bus network through the north-east. However the East-West study seems determined to find road/car-based solutions to this issue.










### 3.3 Action 3: Boosting Melbourne's rail network

#### 3.3.1 Initiatives

Initiative	Rating	Comment
Rail Net	 	Misplaced spending does not solve current problems and displaces more pressing duplications, extensions, grade separations and stations.
		Particularly obtuse is the proposal to provide three tracks between Newport and Altona Junction but leave the Altona loop in its current single track state.
Additional peak services on some lines		Nice to see but minor improvements of this sort should be made as a matter of course.
Other station, stabling and signalling upgrades		Positive overall but the precise justification is unclear. Planning processes are not transparent.
Dandenong Triplication	 	Third tracks on Dandenong, as well as Werribee and Sydenham lines are an expensive way to increase line capacity that could be achieved by more cost effective means such as timetabling and signalling.
Clifton Hill loop reversal		<p>This measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- removes the conflict between trains entering and leaving the loop in the morning;</li> <li>- benefits passengers by removing the confusing midday change of direction;</li> <li>- provides consistency of operation so that passengers have a better chance of understanding whether their train is going through the loop or not.</li> </ul> <p>However, a piecemeal implementation without consultation will engender passenger resistance. PTUA recommends that a public</p>

Initiative	Rating	Comment
		agency with transparent processes thoroughly reviews city loop operation and consults passengers, including those made worse off by any changes. With proper involvement as in Vancouver, the community may be more supportive.
Clifton Hill - Westgarth duplication	✓	Has the potential to provide reliability and frequency benefits to the Hurstbridge and Epping lines.
City Loop signalling	✓	Increasing the capacity of existing track is precisely the type of cost-effective measure that should be undertaken across the network, rather than spending hundreds of millions on projects like triplication to Dandenong.
West Footscray to Sunshine third track	?	
Sunshine to Watergardens signalling	✓	While this is a welcome measure we question why it was not done with the electrification of the track.
Laverton to Werribee signalling	✓	
North Melbourne station	✓	
Flinders Street upgrade and track modifications	✓	
Werribee stabling	?	
Old Geelong Road level crossing upgrade	✓	
Broadmeadows stabling	?	It is not clear why additional stabling is being located at Broadmeadows, when from 2007 the terminus will be at Craigieburn.
Upfield to Roxburgh Park	✓	Whilst PTUA supports this connection, we question why other areas completely lacking train services are not also included – eg Rowville, Doncaster and Mernda.
Sandringham second platform, stabling	?	It is unclear why a second platform is needed at Sandringham, given in past decades trains ran far more frequently than the current 10 minute peak frequencies. Even if frequencies were increased beyond the capacity of the existing platform, some trains could be terminated at Brighton Beach, which has a spare



Initiative	Rating	Comment
		platform, making vastly improved peak services possible without major infrastructure changes.
Cranbourne stabling		
Pakenham third platform, stabling		Will help avoid conflicts between terminating suburban and through V/Line trains.
Keon Park to Epping duplication		A long overdue upgrade, enabling more frequent services to Epping and beyond.
Epping to South Morang extension	 	South Morang extension, but not for ten years  With the growth in population out beyond Epping, this rail extension to South Morang (and preferably beyond, to Mernda) is needed as soon as possible to offer locals a viable, time competitive alternative on trips towards the city and inner-suburbs. The current TrainLink bus, while good on paper, has failed to meet the needs and expectations of the local community.
Newport to Altona junction third track		It is unclear why this section of track will be triplicated, but the section through Seaholme and Altona will remain single track, essentially limiting the Werribee line to a 20 minute frequency.
Richmond Station upgrade		Overcrowding during peak times, particularly in the interchange subways, has been evident since the city loop opened. Provided an upgrade will address these issues cost-effectively without major disruption, while also improving connectivity with tram and bus services along Swan Street and Punt Road and nearby sporting venues, this is welcomed.
New stations - Point Cook, Cardinia Road, Lynbrook	 	Some extra stations, but not until 2011  New stations will be welcomed by residents these suburbs, but should not be delayed for a further 5 years at least.

### 3.3.2 What is missing?



#### No other rail extensions

This is despite the statement on page 35 of MOTC saying the radial network should be extended.

It remains true that since 1930, there has not been a major rail extension in Melbourne to any suburbs previously unserved by rail.

Areas such as Rowville and Doncaster, which have been waiting for rail services for decades, will continue to wait. Growth areas that should have services from their start are also sadly neglected.

Melbourne Airport, despite continuing growth in passenger numbers and a large workforce, will remain without a rail service for the foreseeable future.



#### **No station at Southland**

Southland Shopping Centre represents a major activity centre of the middle-southern suburbs. It should be self-evident that a centre this size should be served by rail, particularly as the Frankston line passes immediately along the western side of the centre, and the lack of public transport (particularly at weekends) regularly creates traffic snarls in the area.





#### **No extensions to tram network**





Complete failure to address the dysfunctional situation of tram routes that terminate hundreds of metres short of railway stations. A tram gap filling program would have enabled the existing network to accommodate a wider range of travel needs, including non-radial and local travel, in line with dispersed activity patterns.

No commitment to complete the tram extension to Knox promised in 1999 and as committed in the 2000 budget.

### **3.4 Action 4: Improving metropolitan train and tram services**

#### **3.4.1 Initiatives**

Initiative	Rating	Comment
Late night trains and trams		<p>Later running on Friday and Saturday nights</p> <p>Given increasing activity at night, later running of regular trams and trains is to be welcomed. However it should be noted that in general, evening frequencies remain inadequate, with waits of 20-30 minutes making most evening trips uncompetitive with car travel.</p> <p>There will be few improvements to bus services in the late evening, with no plans to upgrade or extend the NightRider service.</p> <p>Areas dependent upon bus services, such as Manningham, appear to have missed out on late night service improvements.</p>
New trains and trams	 	<p>Refurbishments can extend fleet life and ensure new rolling stock is additional rather than replacement and hence able to be used to improve peak services. Given the Comeng fleet has been refurbished in just the last few years, it is not clear why it would need replacement so soon.</p>

Initiative	Rating	Comment
Control and communications: Metrol replacement		The new control and communications systems may help facilitate higher frequencies across the network without building third tracks, and provide better passenger information during disruptions. However, the cost estimate follows the same pattern as previous DoI projects under the Bracks Government: compared to earlier proposals for the same work, the price tag is significantly higher but the benefit appears to be the same.
Tram and bus priority		A very small amount has been allocated, and no funding is committed for tram priority in the 2006-07 Budget, despite the continuing record slow speeds of trams operating in mixed traffic. Tram priority implementation needs to be accelerated across the entire tram network.
St Kilda Road express tram lines		The concept of tram overtaking lanes seems to indicate the desire to run 'express' services from Malvern/Caulfield to compete with trains. Tram congestion on St Kilda Rd is better addressed with Zurich-style dynamic traffic light priority.
Likelihood of further tram stop deletions		Yarra Trams and VicRoads are still proceeding with the strategy of reducing the number of tram stops to simplify tram operations and advantage car traffic at the expense of tram passengers, despite research demonstrating that tram stop removal could induce additional motor vehicle traffic along tram routes and further slow down services.

### 3.4.2 What is missing?











#### **No improvement in off-peak train frequencies**

There is a complete absence of detail about what increases in train services will occur in the medium to long term, apart from the additional peak services and late night trains. So while there is a commitment to build a third track to Dandenong, there is no indication of how many trains are planned to run on the new tracks. This suggests that service provision is still being driven by infrastructure provision rather than the other way around.

Nothing is said at all about improving the frequency of weekday off-peak and weekend services. The government has again missed the opportunity to generate substantial mode shift by offering a high standard of service for non-work journeys at very little cost (given the infrastructure is already available). The first target should be 15 minute daytime frequencies on weekdays on all lines, as also recommended by the Committee for Melbourne transport plan.

### 3.5 Action 5: Delivering first class public transport for provincial Victoria

#### 3.5.1 Initiatives

Initiative	Rating	Comment
Regional bus services and interchanges	 	Better bus connections across regional Victoria
		Piecemeal upgrades to regional city buses
		Improved rail/bus interchanges
Mildura line upgrades		Maintenance is urgently needed on this and other regional lines, however MOTC provides no certainty of passenger services returning.
New and refurbished trains		
Rural school bus program		
Better taxi services		Needs to be in conjunction with improvements to public transport

#### 3.5.2 What is missing?





No commitment to new regional train lines

Despite earlier promises, the commitment to the return of passenger rail services to Mildura is nebulous, and the restoration of services to Leongatha seems to be off the agenda, despite being committed in 2001 budget. Recent positive reaction to improved regional service frequencies illustrates community support for useful services, however the opportunity to improve services to many small towns has been missed in the interest of providing 'flag-ship' express services to provincial centres. Many small towns have a reduced service since the introduction of the new timetables.

### 3.6 Action 6: Building better road connections

#### 3.6.1 Initiatives



Initiative	Rating	Comment
Outer metro roads		\$1.2 billion to expand capacity of arterial roads  It is appropriate where required to provide levels of road access in the outer suburbs equivalent to that available in established suburbs, however it is counterproductive where the effect is to entrench suburban traffic sewers that induce congestion and detract from urban amenity.
Regional roads		\$690 million to upgrade regional roads and bridges

#### 3.6.2 Integrated transport - a one way street?

Transport Minister Peter Batchelor recently stated that *"selective investment in road projects simply won't address the massive challenges facing Australia's metropolitan transport infrastructure"*. The PTUA wholeheartedly agrees with this view. An integrated approach to transport would ensure that public transport infrastructure has equal call on all transport funds earmarked for outer metropolitan and regional areas. We applaud recent moves by Knox City Council to submit an integrated transport wish list that does more than look at roads in isolation. The State Government's response to Knox City Council's application will be a key litmus test of the Government's attitude to genuinely integrated transport.

### 3.7 Action 7: Delivering a better link between the east and west of Melbourne

#### 3.7.1 Initiatives

Initiative	Rating	Comment
Monash-Westgate widening		A huge amount of money to be spent that will induce additional traffic (thus filling the road up again and dumping more traffic onto inner city streets) and work against public transport mode share. Meanwhile, more sustainable options for the corridor have been overlooked (Rowville rail, enhanced western train services).
East West Needs Assessment		The issue of an East-West freeway connection has already been addressed by the Northern Central City Corridor Study (draft) in 2003, which concluded that given the vast majority of traffic from the Eastern Freeway was heading to the inner city and CBD, not towards the Tullamarine Freeway, a connecting tunnel was not worthwhile. The NCCCS draft identified measures that would

Initiative	Rating	Comment
		decrease car trips in the area by 15%, by increasing cycling and public transport usage however these have not been fully implemented.

### 3.7.2 Is the government planning to build a new East-West road link?

Despite criticism by the road lobby that MOTC promises only a study rather than a commitment to a new freeway link, it appears that planning is already well advanced on a new road, but the announcement has been deferred until after the state election. The MOTC overview document quite clearly states that it is the government's view that an alternative road link is needed to the Westgate-Monash freeways.

*In late 2006, the Government will commence a needs assessment of the east-west corridor and develop options to address future demand along the corridor.*

*The assessment will provide a comprehensive basis for future planning of alternatives to the Monash-Westgate route. It will consider not only private and commercial traffic, but also how public transport could be integrated into the corridor. The assessment will investigate and make recommendations to the Government on the full range of options, including light rail services along the Eastern Freeway, new bus services and interchanges, and other potential solutions.*

*(Overview, p33)*






Quite clearly, the study is about alternatives to the Monash-Westgate route. Since the Monash-Westgate route is a road route, by definition an alternative will have to be road route, probably a new freeway through or under Fitzroy and Carlton at a cost of many billions of dollars (it would dwarf the entire public transport funding in the MOTC statement).

Public transport is mentioned, but only as something that could also "be integrated into" the corridor. The obvious comparison is with the Scoresby "Transport Corridor", which was also claimed as 'integrated' despite the public transport component being little more than window dressing for the Scoresby Freeway (now Eastlink).

The PTUA believes the need for a massive new freeway project could be avoided entirely if the many 'captive' car-based commuters on the Eastern Freeway were provided with a non-car alternative in the form of a high capacity, high speed heavy rail line to Doncaster. However the scope of the study appears clearly biased towards a road solution, and in the words above specifically excludes the option of conventional rail. Light rail along the Eastern Freeway connected to Melbourne's existing tram network could simply not provide the capacity or speed advantages of conventional rail, and putting this forward as the public transport benchmark for options in the corridor clearly tilts the analysis in favour of a new motorway.

### 3.8 Action 8: Promoting smarter, healthier travel choices

#### 3.8.1 Initiatives

Initiative	Rating	Comment
TravelSmart		Marketing can never be considered a substitute for spending money on improving services that will sell themselves. Given the lack of planned service improvements, this funding should be reprioritised.
Cycling and walking: "Improved" pedestrian facilities		This is often a euphemism for imposing further restrictions on pedestrians through fences and signals that reinforce the dominance of motor vehicles in public spaces. Wording in the statement gives us no comfort in this case.
\$70 million for the Principal Bicycle Network		
Local area access demonstration program		
Flexible transport solutions		Providing better services and making better use of vehicles in remote communities is strongly supported.

#### 3.8.2 What is missing?










#### Inadequate provision for cycle-and-ride

Cycling continues to grow in importance for local trips, including public transport commuters who live out of walking distance to frequent services and who do not wish to park-and-ride. Bicycle lockers and cages have become more prevalent at some stations in past years, but are still not ubiquitous at stations, despite being relatively cheap and compact in comparison to car parking.

### 3.9 Action 9: Creating accessible, connected communities

#### 3.9.1 Initiatives

Initiative	Rating	Comment
DDA compliant stops		More platform stops and DDA compliance work  Attention must be paid to design of stops to ensure that access and interchange is not compromised, eg. by moving stops away from intersections. Given the funding allocation, priority must be given to cost-effectiveness in platform stop design.

Initiative	Rating	Comment
Metro park and ride		<p>Expansion of park-and-ride</p> <p>Counterproductive, because park-and-ride cannot cater for more than a minority of train travellers. The real question is whether the train system is limited to serving primarily those who can walk to the station (as in Melbourne) or whether it serves people from a broad catchment who travel to the station by connecting bus or tram (as in Toronto) or bicycle (as is common in Europe). Because trains are such a high-capacity mode, no successful train system can build enough car parking to enable the majority of its passengers to travel by car to the station. Should service frequencies ever increase to the level needed to meet Melbourne's transport needs, the ability to provide adequate car parking is even less possible.</p> <p>Park-and-ride frustrates passengers and undermines the real measure required (feeder buses) because it increases road congestion around railway stations, in which in turn impedes operation of feeder buses.</p> <p>Reliance on park-and-ride proves that the bus feeder network is inadequate and does nothing to reduce the need for (often multiple) car ownership in car dependent areas.</p> <p>Park and Ride is very land and cost inefficient (as noted in Train Plan), costing upwards of \$1,000 per car space to build, and works against the encouragement of higher density, non-car focused activity around stations.</p>
Metro interchanges		Melbourne's often low quality transport interchanges will benefit from upgrades
Free travel for Seniors		While this will clearly benefit seniors, experience shows that greater returns can be achieved by investing in better services, rather than making existing services cheaper.
Transit cities		While government expenditure is earmarked for the transit cities program, the actual provision of public transport services has not followed to the same level of priority.
Rail reservations		MOTC preserves corridors for Epping North and Werribee transit corridors.
Road reservations		Continuing the long-standing imbalance between the planning and implementation of roads and that of public transport, a detailed list of road reservations illustrates where this government's priorities really lie.



Initiative	Rating	Comment
Taxi services	✓	Taxi services are a supplement to public transport, especially for people with disabilities and/or without night services. While public transport is not available to a large proportion of Victoria's population, taxi services are an important stopgap measure.

### 3.9.2 Does the plan support Melbourne 2030?

Overall, no. Melbourne 2030, the government's metropolitan plan for 'sustainable growth', relies for its success on significant increases in use of public transport, walking and cycling. The 20/2020 target - a necessary (though not sufficient) pre-requisite for Melbourne 2030 to have any chance of success - seems to have been completely abandoned in MOTC.

Crucially, the government's plan fails to connect Melbourne 2030's Activity Centres with high-capacity, high-frequency public transport services. This is no more evident than at the car-based shopping centres at Southland, Chadstone and Doncaster, all of which are designated Principal Activity Centres. Even though Southland resides immediately adjacent to the Frankston rail line, the government appears to have abandoned any plans to build a station to serve it. This comes despite previous commitments to feasibility studies. Clearly if the government cannot even build a train station anytime in the next 25 years at a Principal Activity Centre already on a train line, it does not have faith in its own metropolitan strategy.

Similarly, while Chadstone and Doncaster will have access to the new orbital bus routes and improved Eastern Freeway buses announced in MOTC, the sheer number of people travelling to these Principal Activity Centres (particularly after the expansions planned under Melbourne 2030) means that public transport will be consigned to an insignificant share of travel as long as these centres remain without rail access. An inexpensive 2500 metre extension of the route 3 tram via East Malvern station would provide a high-capacity light rail service to Chadstone supplementing the Warrigal Rd SmartBus; Doncaster, meanwhile, is the destination for long-awaited extensions of the rail system via the Eastern Freeway and Lower Templestowe, and of tram route 48 from North Balwyn. None of these extensions are proposed or even mentioned under MOTC.

The outcome to be expected from all these omissions is that expanded shopping centres will be swamped by additional car traffic, outweighing the trips diverted to the new bus services. It will then be difficult for the government to evade the accusation that Melbourne 2030 has facilitated the growth of car dependence under the guise of transit-oriented development.

The PTUA however acknowledges that some aspects of the plan will provide incremental improvements to public transport and therefore support Melbourne 2030. Firstly, the expansion of the SmartBus network as part of the plan will provide important links between Activity Centres and between these centres and their neighbourhoods. However, the rollout is still very slow, with work on non-orbital SmartBus routes not starting until 2011. Thus many Activity Centres will lack quality public transport options for at least the next five years, entrenching car dependency in the mean time.

Secondly, progress has been made in regard to increased urban development around designated Transit Cities. There has on the other hand been a systematic failure to boost transport services to provide genuine transport choice for both existing and future land uses. For example, while all Transit Cities are located along designated rail lines, no effort has been made to schedule additional trains to encourage their usage, despite the fact that research within the DOI clearly stipulates that it takes a minimum 15 minute service frequency to create modal shift from car to public transport. This modal shift is required to ensure that traffic congestion is mitigated within areas earmarked for higher urban densities. With the designated Transit Cities being located on rail corridors and well provided with road access it is both reasonable and necessary to expect more frequent and more readily available public transport services, to reinforce the benefits and the merits of the Transit Cities programme.

Given that current arrangements are clearly inadequate, there is a pressing case for institutional reform to integrate land use planning and transport provision at a holistic level, following the important international example set by Vancouver. The failure of existing institutional arrangements is evident through the disjointed departmental ownership and implementation of the Transit Cities programme. As noted in the VCEC draft report on congestion, the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) is responsible for the Transit Cities programme and Activity Centre planning, while DOI retains responsibility for transport. This has led to haphazard decisions on public transport planning and service provision. It is equally important that transport does not undermine planning objectives.

### **3.10 Action 10: Building a safer, more secure network**

#### **3.10.1 Initiatives**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Late night staff, system upgrades, 7 new premium stations	✓	Additional staff welcome, but inadequate and should be focussed on customer service/safety, not just revenue protection
Level crossings	✓	Some level crossing upgrades  Not enough eliminations. Double counting previously budgeted amounts

#### **3.10.2 What is missing?**

MOTC fails to directly address the disproportionate presence of pedestrians and cyclists in fatality and injury statistics compared to best-practice examples such as the Netherlands. While the provision of a formal bike network is important, transport and urban planning must also recognise the role of informal bike routes and the need to ensure that the urban environment is safe and accommodating for cyclists and pedestrians wherever they travel.

## 4 Transport for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

### 4.1 A new paradigm

In the past four years, Melbourne has slipped in the rankings of the world's most liveable cities. To ensure Victoria remains functional and liveable, attention must be paid to the transport network upon which the state is built. While Melbourne's transport system has very good basic infrastructure compared to similar cities across the world, the delivery of the system is one of the poorest. The current planning and operations model is not working. Adding a Coordinator General and running buses slightly later into the evening will not achieve 20/2020. It will not produce a sustainable transport system that is an attractive alternative to the car, it will not reduce greenhouse gas emissions or congestion and it will not contribute to making Victoria more liveable. More concerning is that we are not being offered a cost-effective solution to these real challenges.

A decisive change is needed, where it can make a difference.

#### Guiding Principles

Public transport should be considered as an integrated network of complementary services providing good mobility that is competitive with private cars in terms of speed, convenience and cost. Such a network is founded upon an extensive backbone of fast, high capacity train services that are interlinked and fed by coordinated tram and bus services that receive priority over other road users. All of these services should be frequent and full-time.

The system should be made user-friendly for people of all ages so that it becomes an accessible mode of choice for families, elderly people and people with disabilities.

A network that is built on these principles will enable patronage to grow beyond its current bias towards peak hour radial journeys. A coordinated, integrated public transport network would offer a viable alternative to the private motor car for travel anywhere, any time across greater Melbourne.

### 4.2 Management

The only way to achieve meaningful and lasting improvements to transport is to overhaul the way the system is managed and implemented. What Victoria needs are policies that encourage people to use public transport and planning that take a holistic view of the state network. With these in place Victoria should start to see balance in the funding of infrastructure projects so that long neglected public transport infrastructure gets the upgrades and extensions that successive governments have avoided for the past few decades.

#### 4.2.1 A vision for a new institutional arrangement

Instead of expanding the bureaucracy, the PTUA recommends a new model for Victoria based on successful international models. To quote from Simon Mann in *The Age* 23/10/06:

*In 1999, the Kennett government privatised public transport, promising competition would deliver dramatic service improvements. In reality, there is no competition and Victoria has been left with a tangled mess of private, semi-government and government bodies owning and managing the system.*

*With much of the old culture gone, one option is the establishment of a lean, disciplined team of transport planners, engineers, service staff and marketing experts charged with making optimal use of the enormous sums of money spent on public transport. The priority for such an agency would be a state-of-the-art, customer friendly service. TransPerth in Western Australia shines as an example of a modern, publicly owned transport agency improving the system.... The model we choose for the future should be the one most likely to get the most people using the best public transport at the best value for money.*

The PTUA believes that the key elements of a public transport authority should be

- public accountability;
- independence - at a level comparable to that which VicRoads currently enjoys; and
- efficiency - a planning body rather than operational, requiring many fewer staff than the current approach.

#### **4.3 Coverage**

Melbourne's train network only reaches about one third of Melbourne's residents, leaving the majority of Melburnians reliant on buses for public transport. Bus services in Melbourne are arguably the worst of any capital city, with very low frequencies, limited hours of operation and complete lack of service on Sundays on most routes. A public transport system with such poor geographic coverage and limited operation cannot be regarded as a convenient alternative to the private motor car or likely to attract anything close to 20 per cent of motorised journeys. Given these limitations, most people will opt to drive if they have the choice, further adding to congestion, pollution and oil consumption.

Increased patronage of public transport, particularly in outer growth areas, can only be achieved by extending the coverage of the rail network and providing more frequent services for more of the time for trains, trams and buses.

## 5 Conclusion

### 5.1 Our challenges to Government

In order to have a credible 'fix' for Melbourne's transport problems, the government needs to outline a process for ensuring that any proposals for public transport are actually delivered on time and on budget, and for ensuring that road measures and public transport measures are assessed on a level playing field and according to proper 'liveability' and 'sustainability' criteria.

The way forward becomes clear when comparing Melbourne with Vancouver and Perth, which are both advancing toward their mode share targets and moving up the 'liveable city' rankings. Melbourne has more train tracks per person than either, it has a popular tram system (which these other cities lack), it is spending more per capita on transport, and it has a higher population density. There are no urban form or infrastructure issues that stand in the way of Melbourne achieving 20% of travel by public transport in less time than Vancouver or Perth. Yet it is clearly taking longer. A straightforward process of elimination reveals the management of transport as the only significant obstacle to further progress in Melbourne.

The PTUA and its allies have made extensive studies of cities around the world where public transport has succeeded in attracting people that have the option to drive and not just people that have no practical alternative. A characteristic feature of most such cities is that transport services are planned and managed by an efficient public agency, that takes clear responsibility for timetables, fares and routes, that conducts its affairs in public and that regularly involves the public in its planning processes.

Melbourne by contrast is a privatised mess of diffused responsibilities, with an army of bureaucrats responsible for administering contracts rather than planning services, and private operators who are focussed on value for overseas shareholders rather than service for passengers. Planning decisions are made in secret, with the public involved only after the fact, and planning information treated as commercial-in-confidence. There is not the continuous process of assessing travel needs and fine-tuning services that exists in other cities.

Given all the above, the PTUA believes that real progress will only be made when Melbourne's public transport management changes from the current privatised arrangements to coordination by an efficient public agency, with the same authority and Ministerial access now granted to VicRoads. An opportunity for achieving this at minimal cost is presented by the expiration of the train and tram franchise contracts in 2008, and the renewal of bus contracts occurring progressively from this year.

A statement that purports to be the government's 25 year vision for transport and liveability, in order to be credible, needs to at least outline a strategy for managing public transport operations after 2008: the present statement is silent on this point. It must respond to the challenge of achieving mode share targets in an environment where car travel is convenient and popular and freeways have continued to expand faster than the rail network: the present statement does not refer to the 20/2020 mode share target and commits Melbourne to continued car dependence. Further, it must explain how Melbourne is to move toward getting the same value for money from its transport system as Vancouver gets: the present statement proposes massive spending for no significant movement in mode share.

In short, the government must now go back to the drawing board and produce a transport vision that delivers liveability and sustainability for Melbourne and Victoria.

## **5.2 Priority actions for Government**

### **5.2.1 Melbourne's 10 Priorities for Public Transport Infrastructure Investment**

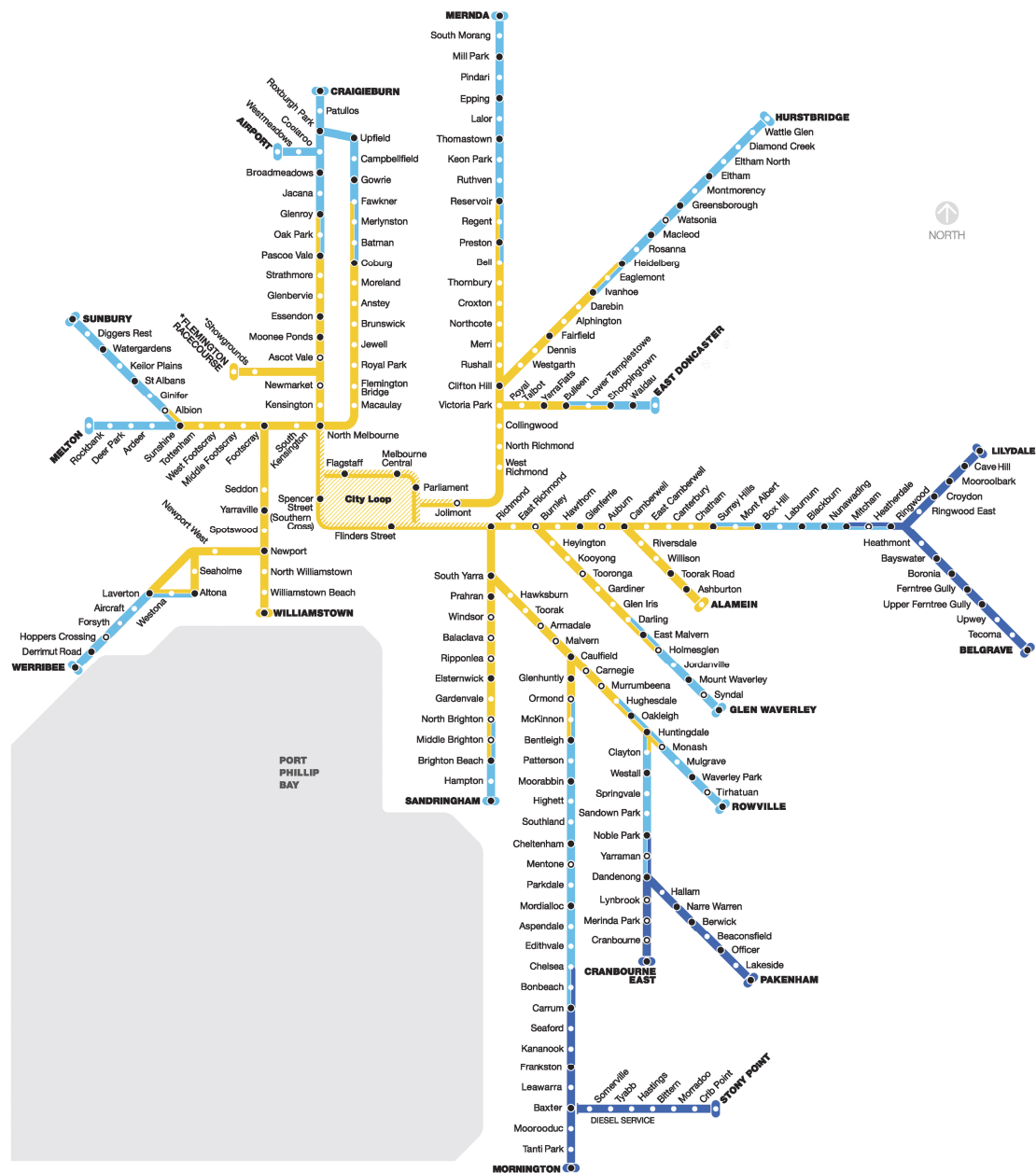
1. **Increase rail capacity** and journey speed on congested routes through operational, timetabling and signalling improvements, and duplication of single track lines.

A study by internationally recognised experts on public transportation systems into the infrastructure and operating practices of the Melbourne rail network, should be undertaken to identify any impediments to increased train frequencies in Melbourne and recommend measures to mitigate such impediments where they exist.

2. **Extend train lines** and construct additional stations to service urban fringe growth areas, illustrated in the map below.

- Extension of Epping line to South Morang and Mernda
- Train line along Eastern Freeway and onto East Doncaster
- Electrification to Baxter and Mornington
- Train line to Rowville
- Sunbury electrification and interchanges
- Southland train station and bus interchange
- Newport West train station
- Werribee line stations
- Lynbrook train station
- Coolaroo train station
- Campbellfield train station

## The Real Transport Challenges: A Call for a Vision



Meeting Melbourne's rail needs – the new train network

3. **Connect all principal, major and specialised activity centres** by train, tram or SmartBus with a minimum 10-minute frequency and with better traffic priority for trams and buses.
  - Tram priority program  
Following successful trial implementation on Sydney Road, provide trams with genuine priority on the road through dynamic signal priority enabling faster and more frequent services with the existing rolling stock.
  - Bus priority program  
Provide buses with genuine priority on the road through dynamic signal priority enabling faster and more frequent services with existing rolling stock. This would include, for example, priority measures within the CBD and HOV lanes throughout major arterial roads (e.g. Springvale and Stud Roads).
4. **Upgrade suburban bus services and frequency** (at least every 15 minutes), as direct services 7 days a week to at least 10pm.
5. **Accelerate delivery of measures to achieve disability compliance** across the system, and access for all by extending services to all Melbourne residents and jobs.

#### 6 Tram extensions

For the most part, the following extensions are relatively minor and do not involve expansion of the tram network *per se*, but simply improve connections between trams, train and buses.

- Extend Route 3 to East Malvern station, and then onto Chadstone
- Extend Route 48 from North Balwyn to Doncaster Hill
- Extend Route 8 to Hartwell
- Extend Route 57 to East Keilor
- Complete Route 75 extension from Vermont South to Knox
- Extend Route 16 to Kew Junction
- Extend Route 6 to Ashburton station
- Extend Route 109 to Box Hill station
- Extend Route 72 north to Doncaster Road, and then onto Ivanhoe station
- Extend (Route 72) south along Burke Rd to Caulfield
- Extend Park St South Melbourne track to St Kilda Rd
- Extend Route 67 to Carnegie station

#### 7. Secure bicycle parking at more train stations

Improve the catchment of existing train infrastructure at minimal expense without wasting large areas of land under car parking. Secure bicycle facilities would promote a non-polluting form of transport with additional benefits for health and fitness for passengers.

#### 8. Central planning & timetable coordination

Door-to-door journey times could be significantly reduced by minimising the time spent waiting for connecting services. Coordination of connecting services would enable the public transport system to operate as a true



network, and relieve parking pressures near railway stations. Models such as the *Verkehrsverbund*, or “Transport Community”, of central Europe or Vancouver's TransLink provide examples that could be followed in Melbourne.

#### 9. Coherence between land-use planning and transport

The government of Western Australia has successfully integrated its transport and land use planning within a single department. We believe Victoria is ripe for similar reform and recommend that all strategy setting, policy and planning related to land use and transport be consolidated within the one department with all expenditure allocated using comprehensive triple bottom line cost-benefit analysis.

As the Victorian government's Infrastructure Planning Council found, current institutional arrangements hamper the integration of economic, social and environmental objectives in transport planning:

*"Transport planning is a subset of the overall broader plan and a coordinated and integrated approach to transport planning is required.... The current institutional arrangements especially the separate budget for road funding and the separation of VicRoads from the other transport functions within the Department of Infrastructure, have not encouraged such a holistic view."*

*(Infrastructure Planning Council, Final Report, September 2002)*

VicRoads should be abolished as a separate entity and its responsibilities brought within the combined planning and infrastructure department proposed above. This reform could ensure greater integration of transport and land-use planning and reduced waste on supporting multiple government agencies.

#### 10. Level crossing eliminations

Whilst Sydney has virtually no level crossings, Melbourne's level crossing elimination program was abandoned in 1969 in favour of freeway expansion. A programme of gradual removal of crossings should be re-instated, with the following priorities based on benefits for pedestrian amenity, reliability of existing bus and tram routes, and potential for increased train frequencies:

- Springvale Rd, Nunawading
- Glenferrie Rd, Kooyong
- Toorak Rd, Malvern
- Glenhuntly Rd, Glenhuntly
- Clayton Rd, Clayton
- Burke Rd, Gardiner
- Springvale Rd, Springvale
- Riversdale Rd, Camberwell

##### 5.2.2 Not a priority

Major new road projects, other than in designated growth areas at the urban fringe.

### 5.2.3 3 ways the state government can implement these priorities

1. Implement integrated budgeting, planning and triple-bottom line decision making for transport projects.
2. Set timelines and estimated budgets for these priorities. Commit to these as the basic building blocks of an implementation plan for 20/2020: achieving 20% of motorised trips on public transport by 2020.
3. Advocate for a greater role for Federal Government in public transport investment, for example by putting up major public transport projects for Auslink funding, by allocating 20% of federal fuel taxes and petroleum resource rent tax to public transport investment, and by tax reform in support of public transport usage.

## Appendix

Numerous papers have been released recently describing the changes that each organisation would like made to Victoria's transport system. Rather than prepare yet another such paper, the PTUA recommends the following documents as sources for a real vision to meet our transport challenges:

Organisation	Document and source
PTUA	<i>Five years closer to 2020: A plan to get transport back on track</i> <a href="http://www.ptua.org.au/publications/fiveyearplan/">http://www.ptua.org.au/publications/fiveyearplan/</a>  <i>It's Time to Move</i> <a href="http://www.ptua.org.au/publications/">http://www.ptua.org.au/publications/</a>
Coalition for People's Transport	<i>Transport and Liveability: The Path to a Sustainable Victoria</i> <a href="http://www.melbourneontrack.org.au/publications/">http://www.melbourneontrack.org.au/publications/</a>
Metropolitan Transport Forum	<i>Most Liveable and Best Connected</i> <a href="http://www.mtf.org.au/n/resources/presentations_from_mtf_report_launch_8th_november_.html">http://www.mtf.org.au/n/resources/presentations_from_mtf_report_launch_8th_november_.html</a>
Metropolitan Transport Forum and the Councils of Banyule, Darebin, Manningham, Melbourne, Nillumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra	<i>Keeping People Moving in Metro Melbourne's North East</i> <a href="http://www.mtf.org.au/n/resources/northeast.html">http://www.mtf.org.au/n/resources/northeast.html</a>
Committee for Melbourne	<i>Five Year Public Transport Priorities: Breathing New Life into Melbourne's Public Transport</i> November 2005 <a href="http://www.vcec.vic.gov.au/CA256EAF001C7B21/WebObj/Submission34-CommitteeforMelbourne/\$File/Submission%2034-Committee%20for%20Melbourne.pdf">http://www.vcec.vic.gov.au/CA256EAF001C7B21/WebObj/Submission34-CommitteeforMelbourne/\$File/Submission 34 - Committee for Melbourne.pdf</a>
The Australasian Centre for Governance and Management of Urban Transport (GAMUT)	<i>Putting the Public Interest Back Into Public Transport</i> <a href="http://www.abp.unimelb.edu.au/features/PublicInterest.pdf">http://www.abp.unimelb.edu.au/features/PublicInterest.pdf</a>

