# Solving Melbourne's transport crisis

# State must change track as commuters vote with their feet



RAIN operators have announced two patronage records that confirm what

reported that

A commuter from the 1950s would be shocked to see how little the train network has grown. Back then public transport took priority dominated culture as year after year road funding greatly exceeded capital spending on public

years. The Government has since brought forward some elements; the purchase of new trains, refurbishment of others, training of drivers and surfacement of 30-year-old control are needed now, especially as con muters face. paying even more for petrol if the ail price hits \$US100 a barrel as some analysts predict.

Two years ago The Age argued the time had come to bite the bullet and divert funding from

## Blowout in overcrowded tra **EXCLUSIVE**

Thursday 30 August 5.30pm for 6.00-8.00pm

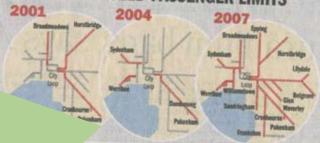
Supper Room Melbourne Town Hall

Speakers include:

boom in patronage in Melbourne's middle and outer suburbs. Across the network, patronage has climbed by 18 per cent in two years, with growth expected to continue.

Bureau of Statistics figures released on Tuesday show Melbourne has the coulation growth of any Ausmen 2001 and 2006. 4 by 273,000.

### LINES THAT EXCEED PASSENGER LIMITS



cy found that the Sydenregistered the biggest on the Upfield and Williamstown es were up by 15-20 per cent; on the Cranbourne, Pakenham, Epping, Sandringham and Broadmeadows lines by 10-15 per cent; and on the Frankston, Hurstbridge, Werribee and Alamein lines by 5-10 per cent. Traffic on the Glen Waverley, Lilydale and

Belgrave lines grew by less than 5 per

Last year the State Government announced its \$10.5 billion long-term plan to improve Victoria's transport. About \$7.5 billion of that was earmarked for public transport.

The Government has pledged to build extra tracks to Dandenong and eliminate bottle-necks in the City Loop and at Clifton Hill - an important junction for the Epping and Hurst-

The purchase of 10 new trains has also been brought forward and plans are under way to refurbish the 30-year-old Hitachi fleet.

Passenger growth in Melbourne's east remains just above previously projected figures. The Belgrave, Lilydale and Glen Waverley lines have all recorded less than 5 per cent growth in the 12 months to May.

The Government has plans to add extra tracks on the Sydenham line.

But the infrastructure improvements are medium to long-term solutions, meaning the commuter crush will continue.

In October, a new suburban timetable will be introduced which includes an additional 39 services every weekday.

Public Transport Users Association president Daniel Bowen said it was obvious the rail system had been neglected. "There's been no substantial increase in the fleet in decades and there's been virtually no changes to the timetable since 1999," Mr Bowen

"We are running less trains in peak hour than we did in the 1980s.

#### Evidence based transport planning

**Dr Paul Mees**, Senior lecturer in Transport and Land Use Planning, University of Melbourne and author of Melbourne's Future Transport Options, (MCC, 2005)

WEN MOYNIHAN

#### Implications of global warming and peak oil for transport

**Cr Janet Rice**, Chair, Metropolitan Transport Forum, Councillor and former Mayor, City of Maribyrnong

#### Transport funding – myth and reality

Peter Fitzgerald, Infrastructure expert and author of Review of Partnerships Victoria *Provided Infrastructure,* (Vic Gov, 2004)

#### Where to from here?

Cr Janet Rice, Metropolitan Transport Forum Angela Munro, Citizens for a Liveable Melbourne

#### Organised by the Metropolitan Transport Forum with Citizens for a

Liveable Melbourne in association with the Municipal Association of Victoria, Victorian Local Governance Association, Blue Wedges, Friends of the Earth, Green Wedges Coalition, PTUA, Institute for Sensible Transport, Koonung/Mullum Forestway Association, Protectors of Public Lands Victoria, Western Region Environment Centre and Environment Victoria.

## RSVP

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