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Feedback on Newport Level crossing removals, Maddox & Champion Roads

Level Crossings present significant safety risks to the general public and are also factors in service delays and cancellations. It is for these reasons that the Public Transport Users Association is generally supportive of Level Crossing removal projects, however, we do believe that upgrades should also deliver improved service to passengers and be coordinated in such a way that major disruptions are minimised as best as possible.

New station at Maddox Road

The PTUA has long believed that a new station should be constructed near Maddox Road forming part of the Altona Line service. Benefits include:

- better rail service access to properties both residential and commercial in the surrounding area
- reduced demand on Newport Station
- Destinations including Bayside P-12 Paisley Campus, Loft Reserve and the Newport Islamic Society all within a short walk of the station
- Mobil refinery and Millers Junction Shopping Centre within 2km of a station

These all present opportunities to improve walkability and active transport options in the west.

There is also currently a significant gap of 5.5km between Newport and Seaholme stations, unusual for locations in this proximity to the CBD. We believe this to be a historical oversight that is leaving local residents worse off and more car-dependent than their northern and eastern counterparts.

The PTUA implores the government to consider a station at this site - or at the very least build the project in a way that includes provision for a future station.

Champion Road closure

The PTUA is impartial to the closure of Champion Road to vehicular traffic, however, we do support the removal of the crossing, on the grounds of improving service reliability. We do believe that pedestrian and cycle access across the railway should be maintained at or very near Champion Road in some form.

Walking and cycling

Many other Level Crossing removals projects across Melbourne have provided excellent walking and cycling trails in addition to removing crossing and upgrading stations. These works have opened up suburbs and encouraged walking and riding, including to railway stations.

The PTUA would like to see similar infrastructure built in, providing active transport options for Williamstown North, Altona North & Newport.

We believe there is potential to increase walking within these suburbs with a shared trail built from Millers Junction shopping centre to Newport Station adjacent to the railway.

Planned disruptions to service

While recent upgrades to the rail system have been welcome, the lack of coordination of major occupations on the network has been unacceptable. Some metro rail lines have had constant planned disruptions for many years.

This ultimately degrades the public transport experience for passengers and makes it a less appealing travel option.

We are aware it is a policy of the current Andrews government to remove all level crossings from the Werribee by 2030. It is essential that these removals be staged to minimise rail closures - in particular the crossing removal at Maidstone Street should be coordinated with those at Maddox Road and Champion Road, to ensure that Werribee line passengers do not have to go through multiple major closures.

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