



## Call for govt to fund official PTV "every 10 minutes" train plan

**PTUA is calling on the State Government to fund the official PTV rail network service plan, which included trains every 10 minutes on most Metro lines by 2016.**

The upgrade would revolutionise train travel around Melbourne, by cutting waiting times and crowding outside peak hours, and making more trips viable by public transport, including those requiring a change of service.

The PTV plan, written in 2012, proposed that by 2016 there would be the following service levels off-peak and on weekends:

- 6 trains per hour to Sunshine, Craigieburn, South Morang, Macleod, Ringwood, Glen Waverley,

Sandringham, Newport (in addition to existing services to Frankston and Dandenong)

- 3 trains per hour off-peak to outer-suburban stations at Sunbury, Belgrave, Lilydale

The number of stations on the network with all-week frequent services would rise from about a quarter to about two-thirds.

Weekend traffic is now as bad as weekdays. Vicroads figures show that there is almost as much travel demand in the middle of the day, and on weekends as there is at traditional peak commuting times.

PTV's train plan isn't perfect, but implementing the 2012 recommendations would be a great step towards a frequent metro service around Melbourne.

Number of stations (outside inner area\*) served by 10-minute frequencies

Lines	Total stations	Current weekday off-peak	Current weekends	Proposed PTV plan 2016, 7-days
via North Melbourne	56	7	1	26
via Clifton Hill	38	6	6	31
via Burnley	48	1	17	30
via South Yarra	57	36	36	46
Total	199	50	60	134

\*Stations outside the CBD, Richmond, North Melbourne, South Yarra, which already have frequent services. Assumes weekday Werribee operating pattern would run 7-days.

## PTUA office

Ross House,  
247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne  
e-mail: [office@ptua.org.au](mailto:office@ptua.org.au)

## Internet

Our web site is at [www.ptua.org.au](http://www.ptua.org.au)

The PTUA runs email lists for member discussions, and to stay up to date with PTUA events. Members can also view archived newsletters online:

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

## Membership Enquiries

E-mail the office (see above).

PTUA members can obtain cheap yearly Myki passes – see [www.ptua.org.au/members/offers](http://www.ptua.org.au/members/offers)

## Committee

Anthony Morton – President  
Tim Long – Secretary  
Phil Bourke – Treasurer

Michael Bell  
Daniel Bowen  
Anna Morton  
David Robertson  
Bruce Sutherland  
Jennifer Williams

Geelong Branch:  
Paul Westcott – Convenor

Ballarat Branch:  
Ben Lever – Convenor

## Member meetings

Melbourne:  
Meetings will be advertised in PTUA News and on our website  
[www.ptua.org.au](http://www.ptua.org.au)

Geelong:  
First Saturday of every month (except January), 10:30am  
Mary MacKillop Room, St Mary's Parish Offices, cnr. Little Myers and Yarra streets, Geelong

Ballarat:  
Second Thursday of each month (except January), 7pm  
Freight Bar, corner Mair and Peel Streets

## Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the PTUA will be held on Thursday 9th November at 6:30 pm. in the Hayden Raysmith Room, 4th floor, Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne.

Nominations for committee must be received in writing by the returning officer no later than 3rd October. The nomination form is available on our website at [www.ptua.org.au/members/meetings](http://www.ptua.org.au/members/meetings), or contact the office for a paper copy. Nominations will only be accepted from the floor at the meeting if insufficient nominations are received to fill required positions.

A reminder that you must be a current financial member to attend and vote at the AGM, or to be nominated, or nominate someone for, the committee. You may renew your membership at the meeting if it is still current or no more than four months lapsed.

The guest speaker at the meeting will be William McDougall, a highly experienced transport consultant and modeller retired from SKM (now Jacobs).

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Edited by Anna Morton.

Newsletter contributors - Daniel Bowen, Ben Lever, Paul Westcott, Stuart Macintyre, Tony Morton.

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## North East Link Community Forum

**On 25th September, Manningham Council hosted a community forum on the proposed North East Link road. There were presentations by Frank Vassilacos, Strategic Planner, Manningham Council, and Duncan Elliott, CEO of the North East Link Authority (NELA). Then followed many questions from an audience of about 400 to a panel comprised of Duncan Elliott, Katie Watt, Director of Land Planning and Environment, NELA, and Roger Woodlock, Manager, Engineering and Technical Services, Manningham Council.**

Proposed Corridors A, B, C and D, interchanges and very high level detail can be found at [northeastlink.vic.gov.au](http://northeastlink.vic.gov.au) - this article won't repeat that detail. Although Duncan Elliott insisted no decision had been made on a preferred corridor yet, there was clearly a view in the audience that Corridor A (from Greensborough to the Eastern Fwy at Bulleen Rd) was the front runner, and the proceedings of the Forum reflected that. Even Duncan seemed to hint at times in that direction.

Frank Vassilacos' presentation gave a good summary of the dangers of the proposed road, and listed local facilities and options which need to be preserved. Although the lack of detail at this stage made specifics difficult, the focus appeared to be on Corridor A. He emphasised the importance of retaining the Eastern Freeway median strip for Doncaster Rail (big applause from audience) or a Bus Rapid Transit solution. He listed Heide Museum of Modern Art, the Veneto Club and the extensive school sporting facilities along Bulleen Rd as

needing to be preserved. Similar considerations apply to the other corridor options.

Duncan Elliott's presentation focused on why NELA believe the road is needed, and the process of building it. The plan is for a preferred corridor to be decided by the end of this year, then 12 to 18 months detailed planning, with a concrete plan to be taken to the next State Election. In addition to about 400 people at the meeting, over 7400 responses were received to a survey NELA put out, so clearly public interest is very high. According to him, most survey respondents wanted the road built, but with divergent views of where, and often a caveat of "not in my back yard". However, the audience at the Forum sounded much less positive, and a significant number were noisily hostile.

Maximising the number of vehicles which will use the road is clearly one of NELA's objectives. Mr. Elliott said Corridor A would attract a lot more vehicles than the other corridors. He said that with 200,000 more people to be housed in Melbourne's north in the next couple of decades, the road is needed to give those people access to jobs in Melbourne's east, and mentioned Camberwell and Box Hill, seemingly a hint toward Corridor A. He said that Corridor B couldn't have an interchange with Fitzsimons Lane because the road has to go under the Yarra in that area, and that this created a connectivity problem. He didn't say why the road had to be underground there, but could be above ground in other places.

Mr. Elliott also suggested the road will be designed to facilitate public transport, but gave no examples of

how. He said nothing would be done to "preclude the use" of the Eastern Freeway median strip for public transport, but it wasn't clear exactly what that meant.

He made the rather astounding claim that the road would be built to provide sufficient capacity until 2046, i.e. that the road wouldn't need to be widened before then. He also suggested that the Mullum Mullum Tunnels are not a bottleneck and won't need to be widened (according to some members of the audience they're a bottleneck now).

The questions from the audience focused strongly on Corridor A, with the majority probably coming from residents of Bulleen. In answer to questions about compensation to landowners, Mr. Elliott said land acquisition would be minimised as much as possible, but appeared to be trying to avoid commenting on compensation for properties adversely affected, but not acquired. There were questions about the provision of alternative sporting facilities to replace those lost to the road, or made unusable or inaccessible during construction, but no answers beyond assurances impacts would be minimised where possible. A number of members of the audience expressed frustration at the lack of detail on interchanges, since these will have major impact on the areas concerned.

Despite the frustration of many at the lack of detail, the Forum gave a significant feel for where NELA are heading. We can't see any benefit for public transport at all in this road. When the corridor decision is made, and as the detailed design unfolds, we'll learn where the worst impacts will be.

## **A look inside Melbourne's new trains**

**PTUA is participating in stakeholder consultation for the new "High Capacity Metro Trains", to be introduced on the Cranbourne/Pakenham line from 2019.**

The trains will be 7-cars long, with roughly the same number of seats as the current 6-car train fleet.

For more details and photos, see our web site: [www.ptua.org.au](http://www.ptua.org.au)



## Port Rail Shuttle Go-Ahead

**The PTUA welcomes the Andrews Government's long-awaited resolution in July to go ahead with the Port Rail Shuttle, a critical project to help level the playing field between road and rail freight at the Port of Melbourne.**

The relatively modest \$58 million price tag belies the importance of this project. It takes our legacy of underutilised rail infrastructure around the port area and inner west and brings it up to date with current practice in freight logistics. It's also to Melbourne's competitive advantage, catching up to where Sydney is now with its Moorebank multimodal terminal.

The lack of rail connections to the Port of Melbourne led operator Qube Logistics to abandon the port and focus its operations in Sydney, where the Moorebank terminal provides full flexibility in road and rail-based container logistics. In Melbourne, the Port Rail Shuttle will allow direct rail access between the port and multimodal terminals ('inland ports') in Altona, Somerton and Lyndhurst.

Rail connections to more far-flung destinations will also be better provided for. We have the absurd

situation currently where bulk freight is railed in from regional Victoria – at a great saving of money, energy and emissions – but then has to be reloaded onto trucks for the last five kilometres into the dock area,

The shuttle must also be placed in context as the start of a wider rail strategy for the Port. We need to be serious about rail if the port is going to handle the freight volumes being talked about: this means reconnecting rail to Webb Dock, and looking at the whole access charging regime to level the playing field with almost 'free' road transport.

The Port Rail Shuttle also tops PTUA's list of high-value projects that compete directly with the destructive West Gate Tunnel for attention and funding. It won't have escaped anyone's attention that the rail shuttle was put on hold for three years just as these major road plans were being progressed.

Melbourne again has a choice before it. The West Gate Tunnel tilts the balance toward vastly greater numbers of trucks, while the Shuttle and its complementary rail measures are intended to reduce truck movements. Clearly,

the Shuttle affects the business case for the road and vice versa. If we are to be honest in planning for the public interest and keeping to the fine words of the Transport Integration Act, the road and rail alternatives ought to be evaluated side-by-side.

This is quite separate to the threat the West Gate Tunnel poses to city traffic and amenity more generally. The West Gate Tunnel is no 'freight road': it is quite plainly a radial commuter motorway for single-occupant cars into central Melbourne, of the sort that transport planners are supposed to have abandoned after the 1970s.

Submissions on the West Gate Tunnel EES by PTUA as well as the City of Melbourne, the Planning Institute of Australia and the Inner Melbourne Planning Association have raised concerns that freight on the new road will be overwhelmed by an explosion in private commuter traffic, to the detriment of local communities, and that sustainable public transport solutions were being overlooked in the rush to endorse a private toll road. This contrasts with the more targeted 'West Gate Distributor' proposal the ALP took to the 2014 State election.

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## Remember Doncaster

**It comes as no surprise to us that the north-eastern suburbs have Melbourne's worst traffic congestion (even if this conclusion is obtained by somewhat dubious methods). A major public transport solution for this region is long overdue.**

In early October, a proposal by bus operator Transdev to build and operate a rapid busway along the Eastern Freeway median was knocked back by the State Government. The reasons for this are unclear, and highlight the need for governance reform to ensure decisions are transparent and involve the community.

It may be the government was uneasy about Transdev's reported request for a 30-year exclusive PPP to operate the busway, which raises the very real concern that any rail development in the corridor might be precluded for a similar period, to future detriment. As things stand, however, we remain in the dark.

## Geelong branch report

**We now have a dislocation of weekend train and bus services in the Geelong region, as a consequence of the introduction of 40-minute rail service headways on 27 August.**

No-one, from the minister down, has tried to defend the situation, but it has been allowed to happen by a combination of ignorance and neglect.

Transport for Victoria, which was officially formed in April this year to coordinate Victoria's transport system, has failed its first test in our region.

While not many people use buses to connect with trains at weekends, it's obvious that even fewer will do so now - exactly the opposite result to that which TfV and PTV are supposed to achieve.

The Rail Futures Institute held a forum at Deakin University on 9 August, on problems facing the Geelong rail line, at which Branch convenor, Paul Westcott, was invited to speak. About 100 people attended.

One of the other speakers, Dean Ellis, coordinator of transport planning at Wyndham Council,

displayed an alarming map, showing the large number of approved suburban subdivisions in his city, most of which are centred on the Regional Rail Link corridor. There is going to be massive further growth there, putting even more pressure on the transport infrastructure.

That will add to demands to provide the other planned stations on the RRL. Indeed, Wyndham City has already asked PTV to build one of the planned stations adjacent to Tarneit, to take the pressure off what has rapidly become V/Line's second-busiest station.

It will be hugely detrimental, let alone unpopular, if Geelong trains still have to provide the services at any extra stations. The Geelong Branch's view, as stated by our convenor, is that no new stations should be built until effective separation of regional and suburban services has been achieved.

An unpleasant surprise was also revealed by Mr. Ellis, who has been at Wyndham council for a decade, and was closely involved with the planning of the RRL.

Despite what we were led to believe when the RRL was being constructed, the infrastructure between Deer Park West and Wyndham Vale has mostly not been built to allow for four tracks.

To save money, it only accommodates the current two tracks plus a parallel roadway for maintenance vehicles. To add another two tracks, which is the medium to long term intention, will require all the new road overbridges to be extended. That makes much more difficult our advocating for the provision of the extra tracks which should have been built in the first place.

Apparently, one of the developers has asked that another road overpass be provided near Tarneit station. The state government has insisted that, as part of the required developer contribution, the overpass be built to allow four tracks.

When the developer pointed out that the RRL Authority hadn't been required to do that, the government replied that was irrelevant, because the Authority was a state instrumentality and so wasn't bound by the same rules.

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## Mordialloc Bypass to undergo EES

**In a positive development for the Mordialloc Freeway campaign, the State Government has announced that an Environment Effects Statement will be undertaken for the project.** This creates the opportunity to formally air the

significant environmental consequences of this road for the significant Braeside/Dingley wetlands, as well as its effects more generally in inducing congestion, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

The campaign is being led by local community and environment groups including the Friends of Braeside Park, Residents Against the Mordialloc Freeway and Green Wedges Coalition. <https://ramf.blog>

## Ballarat branch report

### Local lobby group Committee for Ballarat launched their #59minuteballarat campaign at Ballarat station in September.

The headline-grabbing goal of the campaign is to have a peak express that takes less than an hour, however there is a lot more to it – they are calling for Melton to be added to the Metro network by 2026, and the full duplication of the Ballarat line by 2030. These infrastructure improvements would not only make express services easier to run (and make stopping services faster than they are now) but would allow much-increased frequencies, reduce crowding in the Southern Cross-Melton section, and dramatically improve punctuality and reliability – all key issues on the Ballarat line at present.

The campaign has generally been well-received by local media, commuters and councillors, but we're yet to see anything substantial from state politicians in response. With Labor having already committed funds to the first batch of duplication, and the Liberals talking a lot about their decentralisation policy, hopefully the 2018 election will see some firm commitments from both sides to keep the momentum going.

Members are encouraged to use the #59minuteballarat hashtag on social media to talk about how these improvements would help their lives. The PTUA is keen to

emphasise the diversity of trips on the Ballarat line, so inter-peak and counter-peak travellers are especially encouraged to share their stories.

Six months in, we've yet to see any relief from the issues with Ballarat's bus network. A new timetable was introduced in August to coincide with changes to V/Line's timetable, but disappointingly, this just tweaked the times to maintain existing connections with trains, and didn't address any of the substantive



A Ballarat bus.

issues. A month later, one route was redrawn – Route 10 (Alfredton to Ballarat via Wendouree) no longer travels via Creswick Road, and instead cuts across to Doveton Street where it mirrors the existing Route 13's path through Soldiers Hill.

Soldiers Hill had its services decimated by the changes in January, so purely from a network-map perspective it's good that there's now twice as many buses running in the area. However, the

timetable is so awful it renders the change useless – both routes run hourly, and instead of being staggered half an hour apart, they run at exactly the same time. So absurdly, instead of a combined thirty-minute frequency, it's basically still an hourly frequency.

Community agitation with the new network is still simmering away, and Ballarat Council recently passed a motion to push PTV to comprehensively review the network as soon as possible. There is a lot of low-hanging fruit and issues that can be fixed without spending additional money on services, so hopefully these issues can be solved in the near future.

Due to some feedback about the time & location of Branch meetings, a survey was recently sent out to find the best time, day and location for meetings. The consensus seems to be that the existing arrangements are working, so meetings will continue to be held at Freight Bar at 7pm on the second Thursday of the month. There will be no Branch meeting in November; members are encouraged to attend the AGM instead.

# PTUA News

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#### PTUA office

247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne  
e-mail: [office@ptua.org.au](mailto:office@ptua.org.au)

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#### Join us

If you are reading a friend's newsletter and would like to join and help the fight for better public transport, it's \$50 per year (\$25 concession). Contact the office, or see [www.ptua.org.au/join](http://www.ptua.org.au/join)

Responsibility for electoral comment in PTUA News is taken by Tony Morton, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne.