

## EASTERN TRANSPORT COALITION

Incorporating Greater Dandenong, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges Councils.



Postal Address: Eastern Transport Coalition, Knox City Council, 511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South 3152

7 February 2008

Letter sent to both Ministers and copies to list of MP's below

Lynne Kosky Minister for Public Transport Level 16, 121 Exhibition Street Melbourne, 3000	Tim Pallas Minister for Roads and Ports Level 16, 121 Exhibition Street Melbourne 3000
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Dear Minister

On behalf of the Eastern Transport Coalition I would like to make the following submission for your consideration in the 2008-2009 State Budget.

With rising fuel prices, rising greenhouse gases and a rising cost of living the single thing that the State Government can do to help working families and the planet is increase expenditure on public transport.

The relationship between the environment, cost of living and public transport is an argument that has been acknowledged by the State Government, particularly in the policy Meeting our Transport Challenges. Whilst we applaud that policy, more needs to be done.

The state's current long term housing policy, Melbourne 2030 also requires action. Councils that are members of the ETC broadly support Melbourne 2030 but also want to see expansion of public transport options. Increased public transport is critical if Melbourne is to remain a liveable city as it will reduce the need for each new dwelling to have a car, or, if on outer fringe two, three or four cars.

We firmly believe that this is the time for action to be taken. The election of the Federal Labor Government provides an unparalleled opportunity for cooperation on the most pressing issues of our time. At both levels governments have similar views and policies and this should be exploited to achieve cooperative funding outcomes for public transport.

### RECOMMENDATION 1

#### Advocate for AusLink to include the funding of urban public transport

In the first instance we need to change our transport funding priorities on a national level.

The State of Victoria should once again advocate for AusLink to include urban public transport as an option.

In 2006 this was the position of the State. At that time the Minister for Transport stated;

*"The current AusLink program will not fund the most important metropolitan transport infrastructure because it lacks an integrated approach.*

*"The traditional approach to providing AusLink funding via transport corridor studies will still produce good outcomes for regional areas.*

*“But we need a different way of looking at our cities, which are already straining under the pressure of traffic congestion and a growing freight transport task.”*

*“We need to consider how public transport can play a greater role in passenger travel, as increasing fuel prices are forcing people to consider different travel options.”*

## **RECOMMENDATION 2**

### **Provide funding for the implementation of 3<sup>rd</sup> track to Dandenong**

Through MOTC the State committed to increase capacity of the Dandenong line by building a 3<sup>rd</sup> track to Dandenong.

We understand that the planning for this project has been substantially completed and it is therefore time to provide funding for the implementation of the project.

## **RECOMMENDATION 3**

### **Fund full feasibility studies for rail to Rowville and rail to Doncaster**

Providing a heavy rail connection from Huntingdale station to Rowville along the median of Wellington Road to Stud Park Shopping Centre at Rowville would remove thousands of private vehicles off the road network.

The project has been proposed for 40 years and not proceeded with, despite the fact that it would help ten's of thousands of students travel to Monash University along with commuters to the CBD.

The City of Knox has undertaken a pre-feasibility for the project which has been provided to the Government.

Similarly, the rail to Doncaster may be described as the most obvious missing link in the city's rail network. There is obviously space along the Eastern Freeway median to provide heavy rail from Victoria Park to Doncaster and beyond.

## **RECOMMENDATION 4**

### **Fund feasibility studies for expansion of rail capacity to Belgrave/Lilydale**

Population in the outer east is growing and the road based transit options are being improved through the construction of EastLink. With EastLink being completed this year it is time for the State to turn its attention to providing a similar level of increased functionality and services for public transport users in this area.

Duplication of single lines and the addition of a third track in other locations along the Belgrave and Lilydale lines will assist flexibilities in train operations, improve safety and service levels.

## **RECOMMENDATION 5**

### **Outline a funding program for transport interchanges**

A functioning and well patronized public transport system requires excellent passenger amenities, at the start of the trip, during the trip and at the end of the trip. Passengers need to be able to seamlessly transfer from their buses or trams to trains or visa versa.

Financial commitment is needed for improvements to interchanges at Ringwood and Box Hill as a priority to improve passenger amenity and safety.

## **RECOMMENDATION 6**

### **Improve bus services by finalising bus reviews across ETC region, commit to funding the outcomes and promoting existing and new services**

The State has determined that bus services will provide for a large amount of the capacity to cater for the public in the outer east. For that reason we have been very supportive of the bus reviews and the program in MOTC to increase operating hours.

It is therefore reasonable to seek a commitment that when the current reviews in Manningham, Monash and Whitehorse are completed the State will fund their implementation.

We would also like to seek a commitment to bus reviews in the other ETC member Councils, Knox, Yarra Ranges, Dandenong and Maroondah.

It is also important to tell the local community about the Smart Bus and strongly promote how to use them. Increased advertising to promote the service, and subsequent service improvements would help achieve that aim. The ETC would like to assist, in a non financial manner, with such promotion.

Please also refer to the attached fact sheets that further explain each project.

I would also like to request the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our budget requests. You can contact me on 0438 029 932 to arrange a time.

Yours sincerely

**Cr Mick Van De Vreede**  
**Chairperson**  
**Eastern Transport Coalition**

Attached: ETC Factsheets 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5