

Submission to the Melbourne 2030 Audit

Eastern Transport Coalition

24/09/2007 03:18:02PM

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Direction 8: Better transport links

Ensuring a Prosperous and Active Community

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Improved public transport linkages are required to make public transport the mode of choice when travelling to and from destinations. Transport is a means for allowing the community to participate in employment, educational and community opportunities and is required to ensure both a prosperous and active community.

Whilst Melbourne 2030 identified a number of potential transport improvements, government investment in network expansion and service improvement has been lacklustre. For example Melbourne 2030 identifies the Knox tram extension as a case study for integration between transport and land use planning; this tram extension is still yet to be completed and no government commitment has been made to undertake the works.

Furthermore, Meeting Our Transport Challenges, while providing a blueprint for Melbourne's transport needs, has a differing life expectancy to Melbourne 2030 and also fails to view transport as a driver for urban revitalisation. Likewise, Melbourne 2030 speaks extensively of the PPTN, however Meeting Our Transport Challenges fails to provide an implementation timeframe or funding program to complete the PPTN.

Recommendation:

Expand and accelerate the implementation of the principal public transport network, so that all main roads are provided with frequent, direct and readily available public transport.
Extend tram routes so that they terminate within urban centres (example: route 48 to Doncaster Shoppingtown and route 75 to Knox City) this will prevent the need for bus services to duplicate tram routes.
Extend bus lanes or high occupancy vehicle lanes onto roads located on key bus routes, including the SmartBus network.

Rationale:

While public transport patronage may be increasing, in real terms the proportion of trips taken by public transport versus car use, has remained relatively static. Given that frequency of service is a key driver to encourage patronage (as evidenced by the success of frequent SmartBus services) there needs to be significant improvements before public transport can be seen as a mode of choice in the outer east.

Policy 8.1: Upgrade and develop the Principal Public Transport Network and local public transport services to connect activity centres and link Melbourne to the regional cities

A commitment to the PPTN is required.

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

The Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN) ensures connectivity of activity centres throughout metropolitan Melbourne. While the urban planning aspects of activity centres are being realised, the development and expansion of the PPTN has been slow in comparison.

The State Government needs to consider all public transport in the development of the PPTN including the need to extend tram routes so that they terminate within designated activity centres. Rail extensions need to be considered when serving major centres that require high capacity transport links. Major interchanges, such as Ringwood and Dandenong Station, need to be upgraded.

Bus services form a major component of the PPTN, yet significant bus improvements, other than a few SmartBus routes have not been forthcoming. The frequency and operating span of bus routes located within the PPTN need to be significantly improved to ensure that public transport is a mode of choice for other travel outside of the traditional CBD bound trips.

Furthermore, transport plans, such as Meeting Our Transport Challenges, need to provide an implementation timeframe for the completion of the entire PPTN, above the four orbital bus networks.

Recommendation:

Upgrade the Ringwood and Dandenong Station and modal interchange.
Utilise the bus service review process to delineate between principal and local bus routes.
Significantly improve the frequency and service span of bus routes located within PPTN routes.
Confer with local government and respective transport strategies to consider expansion of the PPTN concept.

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Establish a State Government policy direction that stipulates the proportion of households that should be within 800m of a PPTN route.

Rationale:

Melbourne's bus network, with route duplication and circuitous structures, serve to confuse passengers and provides an inefficient modes of travel. Through creating a two-tiered bus network, passengers will be able to gain higher confidence in the bus network and separate branding can occur for PPTN routes to emphasise the higher level of service.

Policy 8.2: Improve the operation of the existing public transport network with faster, more reliable and efficient on-road and rail public transport

Priority for public transport is required

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

The speed of Melbourne's public transport network is decreasing, resulting in journeys that are uncompetitive with car travel. Priority for public transport is required, such as the provision of bus lanes and express rail services outside of traditional peak periods.

In particular, the provision of additional express services would serve to help shift some travel from peak periods into times were capacity does exist.

Recommendation:

Provision of express services outside peak periods, particularly in shoulder peak periods.

Improve the weekday off-peak rail services to a maximum headway of 15 minutes.

Improve the peak period bus headways to 15 minutes.

Coordinate train and bus timetables to improve the efficiecnyn of public transport services.

Implement bus lanes for bus routes located on the PPTN.

Remove duplication of bus routes to ensure efficient travel options.

Rationale:

Frequency is the key to improving public transport usage and also for shaping the times that people travel, in particular to help alleviate peak period overcrowding. Priority for public transport, particularly for buses, will also assist in improving the image of the bus network.

Policy 8.3: Plan urban development to make jobs and community services more accessible

Public transport as a driver to planning outcomes

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Infrastructure investment, particularly in public transport can encourage urban development within existing activity centres. Infrastructure investment should be seen as the precursor to encouraging urban consolidation and revitalisation.

Local government has undertaken significant steps to encourage development within activity centres, however out of centre development is still occurring and stricter state government controls are required to prevent this.

In areas where out of centre development has occurred public transport services need to be provided, particularly in linking these areas to nearby activity centres particularly the Transit Cities of Box Hill, Ringwood and Dandenong.

Recommendation:

Expand the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN) so that it covers all main roads.

Accelerate the implementation of the PPTN and upgrade the Ringwood and Dandenong station and modal interchange.

Rationale:

Investment in public transport infrastructure can assist in identifying the areas where urban development should be encouraged and as such should decrease the proportion of out of centre development.

Policy 8.4: Coordinate development of all transport modes to provide a comprehensive transport system

Creating an integrated network that provides a comprehensive form of sustainable transport

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

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The existence of a coordinated and well integrated public transport network should be a given within a city like Melbourne. A harmonisation of frequency and operating span between train, tram and principal bus routes is required to ensure a coordinated network that minimises waiting times.

Recommendation:

Provide consistent headways and operating spans between train, tram and principal bus routes.
Redesign the bus network to ensure direct and easy to understand travel.

Rationale:

Melbourne's public transport system needs to operate as an integrated network, rather than three modes in isolation. An integrated network served by coordinated services and convenient interchange facilities would also minimise the need to drive to stations and allow public transport to be used for an entire transport journey.

Topic 7: Environment

Public Transport is Good for the Environment

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Melbourne 2030 commands the environment a significant beneficiary of good policy.

Vehicle carbon emissions contribute between 18% and 20% of metropolitan Melbourne's greenhouse emissions.

Improved public transport provides genuine vehicle modal choice. Fast, efficient, time and cost competitive public transport provides real choices for people.

Knox City Council undertook a study into a proposed rail line to Rowville. The study found that during peak times, a rail service to Rowville would take thousands of cars off Wellington Road per hour. The rail line would create an enormous environmental dividends, such as reducing greenhouse emissions and carbon monoxide from the atmosphere.

Recommendation:

The Victorian Government should more appropriately align it's greenhouse reduction policies to it's transport funding policies.

Increased rail capacity through duplication and triplication of existing lines, new rail lines to Doncaster and Rowville and the upgrade of the Ringwood and Dandenong station and modal interchange will provide an improved service and ease the serious congestion on east / west roads.

Improved bus frequency and services will provide choice to people in local areas, particularly given that 40% of all private vehicle journeys are undertaken within 5 km's of the family home.

Rationale:

A historical underinvestment in rail capacity has aided a 'car culture' in metropolitan Melbourne. This would be corrected by duplicating rail infrastructure in areas such as the Belgrave and Lilydale lines.

Topic 12: Planning

Integrating transport and planning

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Public transport is critical to the success of Melbourne 2030 particularly to reinforce the status of activity centres and to encourage public transport as a mode of choice. Travel behavioural patterns are formed as residents move into an area and providing public transport at the onset of these developments will allow residents to shape their travel behaviour around sustainable forms of transport.

While Meeting Our Transport Challenges provides a strategic direction and implementation program for transport within Melbourne it is not consistent with Melbourne 2030, given that MOTC has a lifespan of 15 years and has little reference to growth areas.

Recommendation:

Accelerate the implementation of the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN).

Ensure that main roads in Melbourne are provided with frequent, direct and readily available public transport services.

Extend tram 48 to Doncaster Hill to facilitate efficient public transport movement between the suburbs of Balwyn, Kew and Doncaster.

Extend tram 75 to Knox City Centre to cater for activity centre travel.

TriPLICATE the rail line from Box Hill to Ringwood to provide a more efficient service to those living in the outer east.

Ensure that public transport services are provided at the onset of new development and as existing centres are being re-developed.

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Provide infrastructure such as tram extensions, train extensions, station redevelopments and new stations, as well as bus lanes in accordance with urban development.

Upgrade the Ringwood and Dandenong stations and modal interchange.

Rationale:

The concept of focusing development in and around Activity Centres has its benefits as higher density development can often be more readily accommodated in these areas. There is still however significant growth outside of activity centres and the State Government needs to make continuous improvements to public transport services in these areas to cater for growth and also for travel to and from designated activity centres.

While councils have undertaken a lot to cater for an increased population with regards to housing, there has not been work to ensure that there is the provision of public transport within these areas.

Topic 13: Public Transport

Public Transport infrastructure and service improvements need to keep pace with higher density development.

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Time efficient and competitive public transport infrastructure and services will alleviate problems associated with excessive private vehicle usage in metropolitan Melbourne.

The costs associated with traffic congestion are enormous and pose a threat to the prosperity of Melbourne's residents. The recently announced findings of the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission suggest the costs associated with traffic congestion cost the Victorian economy billions of dollars annually.

The ETC believes that more substantive investment in public transport infrastructure and services will serve to alleviate the costs associated with excessive private vehicle use.

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Public Transport usage has grown by some 20% in the most recent years. Much of this growth is due to increased rail journeys during peak periods.

The Victorian government released 'Meeting Our Transport Challenges' in 2006. The report delineates plans to improve public transport in metropolitan Melbourne over the next decade.

Whilst the report proposes many and varied changes to the public transport network, it does not deliver proposed rail extensions that, inter alia, would serve to reduce the substantial costs associated with road congestion.

The ETC acknowledges and supports the intent of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). To validate the intent of the UGB, services within the boundary need to be adequate to cater for increased demand on public infrastructure.

This is particularly the case with regard to transport. Demonstrating this point is that there are no rail lines to Rowville or Doncaster. Both of these primary activity centres fall within the UGB, yet they remain under serviced when it comes to public transport infrastructure and services.

Areas nominated by government to host increased housing density should be appropriately serviced to accommodate that demand.

Melbourne 2030 determined a target of 20% of all journeys be taken by public transport by 2020.

Whilst there has been an increase in public transport usage, the ETC notes the increase is not due to new capacity expanding infrastructure to the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN) or improved service provision.

Modal share between private motorised vehicle use relative to the use of public transport has relatively remained static since the implementation of Melbourne 2030. Effectively, this means no progress has been made to achieve a 20% penetration of public transport modal share since the inception and implementation of Melbourne 2030.

Recommendation:

All new major residential developments and redevelopments should be subject to a 'public transport test'. The test will serve to ensure that adequate public transport infrastructure and services exist to enable improved transport choices;

The Victorian government should immediately begin planning for a targeted expansion of the PPTN to ensure that outer metropolitan suburbs enjoy the same level of transport choice as inner metropolitan suburbs; and

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The Victorian government should embark reviewing all metropolitan bus routes to provide efficient connectivity to and between all activity centres across metropolitan Melbourne.

Rationale:

Melbourne 2030 is designed to more appropriately plan for the growth, development and servicing of metropolitan Melbourne in the coming years.

Whilst the intent is commended, it is imperative the State Government ensures that services are available to accommodate such growth and development.

The primary objective of Melbourne 2030 is to ensure that appropriate growth and development take place.

This objective will not succeed unless services and infrastructure appropriately match the needs of the community.

Topic 18: Transit Cities

Sustainable Transport reinforcing transit cities

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

The concept of Transit Cities, where there is a focus on urban revitalisation and higher densities around public transport hubs, has merit but it needs to be reinforced by a committed State Government.

While thirteen transit cities have been identified in Victoria (with nine located in metropolitan Melbourne) only Dandenong has been provided with long-term capital works funding, although funding for Footscray Station was recently announced for the Footscray Transit City project.

Local government has been supportive of transit cities and have often been required to undertake an educative role to communities that are somewhat wary of higher density development. While local government has been undertaking significant implementation of transit city policies, particularly in regard to planning and encouraging higher densities, a commitment from the State Government has been lacking.

Given the State policy direction of encouraging public transport usage within transit cities, it is imperative that the Government invests in public transport infrastructure and services that will encourage public transport usage within urban centres.

As such, it is critical that the implementation of the PPTN be accelerated and that service provision of public transport be orientated around transit city hubs to allow communities to use public transport as the mode of choice into and out of transit cities.

Recommendation:

Allocate long-term capital works funding for each designated transit city.

Fund improvements to Ringwood Station within the upcoming State Budget.

Advance planning for the Box Hill transit interchange redevelopment.

Re-design the bus network to ensure that transit cities are provided with frequent and readily available public transport.

Improve train frequencies along the Belgrave/Lilydale and Pakenham/Cranbourne lines above the current half hour frequencies. This will reinforce the status of the transit cities as a public transport hub.

Rationale:

Public transport improvements are critical to ensuring that sustainable forms of transport are the mode of choice within transit cities. While councils are providing a focus for sustainable transport within footpath construction and council planning, service frequencies need to improve to provide transport choice.

Melbourne 2030 aims to make the designated transit Cities destinations for employment, residence and entertainment. As such these destinations require a developed public transport network to provide people with the ability to use sustainable transport in arriving and departing from these urban centres.

Topic 19: Transport

20% modal share a key goal of transport

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

On 14 March 2007, the Victorian Treasurer released the government's response to an inquiry into managing transport congestion. The inquiry was conducted by the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission.

The report found that road congestion in metropolitan Melbourne costs the Victorian economy \$1.3 billion annually. This estimate is conservative compared to other researchers, some who hypothesise the figure as high as \$4 billion annually.

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With growth in road freight transport expected to double in the next ten years, demand and associated costs on our road network is expected to increase substantially. The residual impact of this increased demand will mean greater congestion, increased economic costs and higher levels of pollution.

The transport sector poses immense challenges for governments.

The only solution to these challenges is to provide fast, efficient and affordable public transport services to greater Melbourne.

Expansion of the road network without capacity expansion in the rail network directly conflicts with the objective to increase public transport patronage.

It is acknowledged that road networks also need to be well resourced, but not at the expense of greater investment in public transport.

To achieve it's stated objectives, the Victorian government needs to ensure public transport becomes competitive with private vehicles in terms of time and cost efficiency.

Recommendation:

That the Victorian government reaffirms it's stated Melbourne 2030 commitment to increase public transport modal share to 20% of all motorised journeys by 2020;

That the Victorian government sets progressive targets to reach its stated objective of reaching 20% public transport modal share; and

That the Victorian government undertakes annual progress review assessments to determine where it is at with regard to meeting its transport challenges.

Rationale:

Proper benchmarking and annual reporting is required to ensure progress and achievement of the 20% modal share goal. This goal is critical to creating liveable communities, particularly given the impact of rising petrol prices and the repercussions on housing affordability.

While it may be tempting for the State Government to consider this target as aspirational, it should in fact be viewed as a mandatory component of Melbourne 2030.

Your Organisation's Comments

Additional Information.

Comment:

Please be advised that a reference number has be provided to submit additional documentation to accompany this submission. The reference number is 0002436.

The additional documentation has been sent to audit.submissions@dse.vic.gov.au on the advice of a DSE officer, and should be read in conjunction with this submission.

Executive Summary

Date Created: 13/09/2007 Edited On 21/09/2007 01:28:24PM

The Eastern Transport Coalition (ETC) commends the intent of Melbourne 2030 and offers suggestions to improve its operation and implementation.

Melbourne 2030 recognises the importance of public transport in metropolitan Melbourne.

The policy however does not mandate the provision of improved public transport infrastructure and services to more appropriately facilitate increased population growth in higher density communities.

The ETC advocates that higher density development should be encouraged, as long as public transport services and infrastructure are improved to facilitate such growth

Noting that public transport patronage has increased by 20% in the preceding two years, the ETC believes the importance of providing improved public transport services is imperative to the government and the people it serves.

The government's stated objective of achieving 20% public transport usage of all motorised journeys by 2020 is commendable; without greater investment in public transport infrastructure and service provision however this will

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unachievable.

Cover Letter (optional)

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