

2. TRANSPORT AND MANAGING CONGESTION

Land-use development and transport planning are inextricably linked. The form of our urban environment has a direct impact on the cost of providing transport services and infrastructure. Likewise, the public transport system and road network shapes our city, determining where and how we live, work, learn and play.

In 2006, the Government released the \$10.5 billion *Meeting Our Transport Challenges* package of initiatives to build better transport connections, deliver major improvements to public transport, and to link long-term planning for Victoria's transport system with planning for our metropolitan area, regional centres, and local communities.

Since then, Melbourne's economic activity and population has continued to grow, contributing to increased transport demand and congestion on parts of the public transport system and the metropolitan road network. There is also increased demand for freight and commercial transport.

The Government broadly accepts the advice of the AEG to more actively integrate transport and land-use planning and development activities, and implement the *Victorian Freight Network Strategy* and a *Port Environs Framework* for the Port of Melbourne when completed.

Key challenges arising from the Audit are:

- ▶ Planning for Melbourne's long-term transport needs.
- ▶ Improving integration of transport and land-use planning.
- ▶ Planning for Victoria's growing freight needs.
- ▶ Providing more transport choice.
- ▶ Managing the road network and reducing congestion.

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PRIORITY ACTIONS AT A GLANCE

The Government will:

- ▶ Identify and implement priority projects under the Government's \$10.5 billion *Meeting Our Transport Challenges* plan to respond to demand.
- ▶ Develop an integrated, longer-term vision for Melbourne's transport system beyond 2035 that helps Victoria meet its greenhouse gas reduction target and builds on the Government's response to the *East West Link Needs Assessment*, due later in 2008.
- ▶ Implement the new \$112.7 million congestion plan, *Keeping Melbourne Moving*, to deliver traffic management and roadwork improvements to alleviate congestion, and deliver new walking and cycling infrastructure to provide more transport choice.
- ▶ Invest \$4 million to plan and protect future major transport routes, and ensure existing public transport services are integrated to provide greater access to employment opportunities.
- ▶ Work towards development of a new *Victorian Freight Network Strategy*, and a *Port Environs Framework* for the Port of Melbourne.
- ▶ Accelerate the planning and delivery of new or upgraded transport infrastructure and services to meet increased levels of demand on existing public transport services.
- ▶ Accelerate the planning and delivery of extensions to the public transport network to meet the needs of planned new communities in Growth Areas.

Planning for Melbourne's long-term transport needs

Related AEG Recommendation

The Government's commitments and directions in *Planning for all of Melbourne* address and respond to this recommendation from the independent *Melbourne 2030* Audit Expert Group.

Transport and freight (AEG Recommendation 4)

That the State Government actively integrates transport planning with land use planning and development.

This can be done by:

- Developing capacity and structure for major transport infrastructure developments, in synchronisation with land use planning, with a 30 to 90 year lead-time.
- Setting targets and implementing programs for reduction in car use as a complement to the target of 20 per cent of motorised trips being made by public transport by 2020.
- Prioritising actions to support a rapid modal shift over the next five years from car to public transport – tram, train and/or bus – and walking and cycling.

As the AEG Report notes, economic and population growth have impacted significantly on transport demand and led to increasing levels of congestion on parts of our public transport and metropolitan road networks.

Building new transport infrastructure to respond to growth requires long-term planning and significant public investment. It is therefore critical that State and local governments continue to plan for the future and develop integrated infrastructure plans for urban areas experiencing growth. This will enable more timely delivery of State and local government investment, and support the long-term efficiency and effectiveness of our transport network beyond 2035.

The Government is closely monitoring the outcomes of *Meeting Our Transport Challenges* initiatives to ensure they inform future project priorities and reflect changing service requirements, such as high public transport patronage, and road congestion.

The Government is planning the development and possible extension of the Principal Public Transport Network and the Principal Freight Network in the Growth Areas with the GAA to cater for increasing journeys to the jobs, services and activities of central Melbourne, as well as more dispersed travel and employment patterns in middle and outer areas.



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Planning for Melbourne's long-term transport needs is also critical to the development of the Government response to the *East West Link Needs Assessment*.

The Government will:

- ▶ Develop an integrated, longer-term vision for Melbourne's transport system beyond 2035 that helps Victoria meet its greenhouse gas emissions reduction target and builds on the Government's response to the *East West Link Needs Assessment*, due later in 2008.
- ▶ Invest \$4 million to plan and protect future major transport routes, and ensure existing public transport services are integrated to provide greater access to employment opportunities.

Improving integration of transport and land-use planning

Since the *Melbourne 2030* Audit commenced in 2006, the Government has taken significant action to improve integration of land-use development and transport planning through better coordination and engagement between all levels of government, the community and industry.

The recent creation of the Department of Transport indicates the Government's commitment to the delivery of public transport improvements that increase network capacity and address record growth in patronage. The new Department will have a strong focus on integration through the position of Executive Director, Integrated Transport Planning, which will have responsibility for developing the Government's response to the *East West Link Needs Assessment*.

In addition, in late 2006 the Director of Public Transport became a referral authority under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* for major residential, retail, commercial, office and industrial developments, and this is helping integrate land-use and transport planning at the local level.

The *Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines* for Growth Areas are also being refined to ensure improved integration of transport and land-use planning. Other arrangements such as the proposed *Public Transport Guidelines for Land-Use Development* may need to be refined or new models developed in consultation with the GAA and the local government sector as the Government continuously seeks to improve integration of transport and land-use planning.

The Government is also undertaking a review of transport legislation, with reform intended to provide for improved coordination of transport and land-use planning. The review is well advanced with legislation proposed for 2008.



Planning for Victoria's growing freight needs

Related AEG Recommendation

The Government's commitments and directions in *Planning for all of Melbourne* address and respond to this recommendation from the independent *Melbourne 2030* Audit Expert Group.

Transport and freight (AEG Recommendation 4)

That priority is placed on completing and implementing the *Victorian Freight and Logistics Strategy* (started in 2002) and the *Port Environs Plan for the Port of Melbourne* (announced in 2004).

This would include:

- Potential for increasing rail freight.
- Identifying land for inter-modal hubs, to allow for freight redistribution.
- Clearly designated freight corridors, directing freight traffic away from sensitive areas, for more effective timing and allocation of road usage.
- Integrating freight considerations into all levels of transport and land use planning – including new growth areas.

It is estimated that by 2020, the city's road freight task will increase by more than 50%. There is also likely to be a four-fold increase in the number of containers handled by the Port of Melbourne by 2031.

Acknowledging these challenges, the Government shares the view expressed in the AEG Report that the development of freight infrastructure and strategy requires very long-term thinking and strong collaboration between State, local and Commonwealth governments. The proposed *Victorian Freight Network Strategy* will look to respond by identifying the economic, land-use and transport implications of planning road, rail, sea and air freight corridors, linkages, routes, and places; and improving their connectivity with key regional, interstate and international links.

The strategy will consider the long-term development of the Port of Hastings as a secondary port to absorb the overflow from the Port of Melbourne, and build on the opportunities for a more defined network of freight routes and places. This strategy is due to be considered by Government in the second half of 2008.

The draft *Port Environs Framework* for the Port of Melbourne is also expected to be considered by Government in the second half of 2008.

The Government will:

- ▶ Work towards development of a new *Victorian Freight Network Strategy*, and a *Port Environs Framework* for the Port of Melbourne.

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Providing more transport choice

Significantly reducing private car use and providing more transport choices for commuters are key objectives of the Government's transport policies and will help Victoria meet its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Public transport will continue to be the principal mode of travel for commuters to inner and central Melbourne, and programs that help people switch to public transport will continue. People have significantly changed their transport choices in the last two years due to a number of possible reasons including increased petrol prices, removal of metropolitan Zone 3 and reductions in V/Line fares, and the introduction of free travel on metropolitan trains before 7am.

As the AEG Report notes, walking and cycling also provide important transport choices and contribute to congestion relief, especially for journeys to work in major employment centres such as the CBD, and for travel to and from schools and tertiary institutions.

Currently, more trips (52%) take place by walking than any other mode in inner Melbourne – especially the CBD. In middle, outer and fringe areas the mode share is much lower, with only 17% walking.

Between 2001 and 2006, cycling to work in the City of Melbourne increased by 74%. This rapid growth is likely to continue, however, cycling still accounts for only 1.4% of trips across Melbourne, and only 2.5% of trips within the inner area.

Walking and cycling are clearly transport choices with capacity to grow and this will be encouraged with continued investment in walking and cycling infrastructure.

The Government is injecting more than \$6 billion of new funding over the 10 years from 2006 for public transport, walking and cycling improvements in the metropolitan area. Behavioural change and information provision campaigns that encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport, such as *TravelSmart* and the *Local Area Access Program*, are also being continued or expanded.

The Government will:

- ▶ Identify and implement priority projects under the Government's \$10.5 billion *Meeting Our Transport Challenges* plan to respond to demand.
- ▶ Invest \$28.2 million as part of the *Keeping Melbourne Moving* plan to encourage walking and cycling to work by further developing the bicycle and pedestrian network to provide more transport choice.
- ▶ Accelerate the planning and delivery of new or upgraded transport infrastructure and services to meet increased levels of demand on existing public transport services.
- ▶ Accelerate the planning and delivery of extensions to the public transport network to meet the needs of planned new communities in Growth Areas.



Managing the road network and reducing congestion

According to the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission, road congestion is costing the Victorian economy between \$1.3 billion to \$2.6 billion a year (*Making the Right Choices: Options for Managing Transport Congestion*, VCEC, March 2007). Areas likely to experience high levels of congestion are central and inner suburbs, some outer suburbs and some parts of the freeway network.

The majority of journeys to work are undertaken in a car or on road-based public transport. Urban road freight movements also compete for road space with private vehicles and road-based public transport, and are affected by congestion levels with a consequent economic cost.

An integrated approach to managing services and infrastructure is required to best manage congestion. Making the most efficient use of existing road space is critical, particularly during the peak periods, including providing greater priority to trams and buses on key routes to increase the capacity of the on-road public transport system and encourage and support behavioural change among commuters.

The Government recently announced a new \$112.7 million congestion plan, *Keeping Melbourne Moving*, which aims to ease congestion in the short term. Key aspects of this plan are to extend and standardise clearway times on key public transport routes to improve traffic flow during peak times; extend the targeted tram and bus priority program to improve the flow of road based public transport; expand VicRoads' Rapid Response Service to arterial roads to clear broken-down vehicles and other lane blockages; and provide more information to motorists to help them make smart travel choices.

The Government is also delivering the *Congestion Improvements Program* (\$30 million over three years) through VicRoads, which began in 2007. The program is targeting parts of the arterial road network that are strategically important and are currently experiencing significant congestion.

The Government is continually developing new road and public transport projects and programs to alleviate congestion across the network. These include the *ThinkTram*, *SmartBus* and *Bus Priority* programs; Tullamarine Freeway/Calder Interchange; the Monash Freeway – CityLink – Westgate Freeway project; the opening of EastLink; improvements on the AusLink network such as bypasses of Deer Park, Pakenham and Craigieburn; and walking and cycling programs.

The Government will:

- ▶ Implement the new \$112.7 million congestion plan, *Keeping Melbourne Moving*, to deliver traffic management and roadwork improvements to alleviate congestion.