

30 April 2010

Speed up public transport investment say councils

The Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF), representing 18 Melbourne councils on transport issues, has challenged the State Government to speed up public transport investment to match Victoria's swelling population.

MTF Chair, Cr Jackie Fristacky, said the pace of public transport must be significantly increased to match surging growth in Victoria's population. That 80% of Melbourne does not have effective access to tram and rail services, will only be increased by the proposed expansion of Melbourne's urban growth boundary.

'Responding effectively to the infrastructure requirements of growth suburbs and an expanding population is the crucial issue in the forthcoming budget.

'For Victoria, that means speeding up investment in public transport. There are many excellent proposals in the Victorian Transport Plan (VTP) but implementation is too slow.

'Central infrastructure like public transport must keep pace with population growth. The budget needs all current project timetables to be advanced in the face of the urban population surge.

She challenged the state government to make public transport a priority in Tuesday's budget by accelerating implementation of the Metropolitan bus reviews and extending rail and tram services.

'Using public transport for work and school in lieu of driving can save Victorian families \$8,000 a year,' she said.

Cr Fristacky said 'investment in public transport should be a top priority for the State given its impact on access to jobs and services.'

'Public transport is an essential response to both population and economic growth,' she said.

'The MTF challenges the Government to ensure 30% of motorised trips by public transport by 2030, and 50% by 2050', Cr Fristacky said.

The MTF represents 18 Councils covering 2 million people in metropolitan Melbourne.

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