

TRANSPORT

TRANSPORT
VICTORIA
AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS

2006

OUR ELECTION COMMITMENT

Melbourne 2030 and the Melbourne Metropolitan Transport Plan acknowledges the need for a sustainable transport system but little has been done to achieve it or to plan for an economy in which, by 2030, oil is most unlikely to be as readily available or indeed as affordable as it is today

It also makes no sense to entrench reliance on freeways, car parks, the energy-intensive, single-occupant private car and on road-based heavy transport when Australia faces the need to massively cut greenhouse gas emissions. The Democrats are committed to:

Public transport

General

- Increase service frequencies - to a maximum of 20 minutes between services.
- Extend operating hours; both during the week and at weekends.
- Designate lanes and traffic lights for on-road trams and principal bus routes.
- Coordinate timetables across services.
- Restrict traffic on narrow tram roads where possible with some converted to pedestrian malls.
- Provide more customer facilities, eg. seats, shelters, shops and toilets.

- Locate new stations within existing shopping centres and business districts.
- Provide easy wheelchair access.

Buses

- Create a two-tiered bus system with frequent fast services along arterial roads connected with secondary services on side streets.
- Link major urban centres with bus services, eg. Glen Waverley & Knox.

Trams and trains

- Service growth corridors with more regular express trains, enhancing tracks and signalling to allow for this.



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The DEMOCRATS VISION for a transport system in Victoria is one that:

- is sustainable in the long term,
- better balances social justice, public health and economic considerations,
- is central to Victoria's urban planning in metropolitan and regional urban areas,
- integrates all the components of a transport system - public transport, the private car, walking and cycling, freight transport on road, rail, sea and by air,
- is efficient, accessible and affordable, and
- recognises the need to generate fewer greenhouse emissions and reduce dependence on petroleum.
- Extend tram routes to, eg. Knox City, Chadstone, Doncaster Shoppingtown, Glenroy, Caulfield and Bentleigh Stations.
- Maximise passenger convenience and tram usage with more appropriate tram stop location.
- Maximise opportunities to lease excess platform and railway siding space for commercial and retail purposes, as appropriate.

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This election commitment was updated on October 31, 2006
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- Provide new stations in commercial, educational and residential areas according to need, eg. Victoria University and West Newport and Southland Shopping Centres.
- Improve train services between centres such as Blackburn and Ringwood.
- Split the Dandenong train line at Huntingdale Station to create a new train service to Rowville via Monash University and Mulgrave.
- Extend the rail line from Epping to South Morang and Mernda.
- Create heavy rail service along the Eastern Freeway.
- Extend rail to Melbourne Airport via Broadmeadows.

Fares

- Introduce a four year moratorium on increases in public transport fares throughout Victoria.
- Retain the 'Sunday Saver' ticket.
- Extend discounted fares to international and interstate students.
- Establish a Public Transport Panel made up of transport experts, consumers and operators to study the feasibility of moving to free public transport in 2010.

Cycling and other transport modes

- Properly resource the State Principal Bicycle Network and develop a Bicycle Works Program, with projects prioritised and costed.
- Increase substantially both the number and the range of dedicated cycling tracks for greater safety and convenience.



- Improve on-road cycling-designated lanes through widening, smooth surfaces, intersection continuity and European-style separation from other transport.
- Provide adequate tamper and weather-proof individual bicycle lockers and scooter parking facilities in safe, well-lit locations at all train stations and major transport nodes.
- Encourage scooter and power-assisted bicycle use by legislating to increase the power limit to 300 watts, inline with NZ. This would also encourage state of the art EPABs and assist with mobility for the elderly.
- Give greater certainty to residents and investors by evaluating all road widening reservations and removing these reservations where appropriate, including the Punt Road reservation.
- Enhance signalling systems and track quality.
- Improve frequency of V-line services and amenities at railway stations in country Victoria.
- Extend regional fast rail projects providing that frequency and reliability are not sacrificed in favour of marginal reductions in travel times.
- Develop a very fast freight and passenger train service along the Eastern seaboard.
- Reconnect Web Dock to the rail network.
- Improve port shuttles and terminals and multi-modal hubs and interchanges.

Cars

- Reward energy efficient transport vehicle users with a sliding scale of registration fees.

Fuelling Transport

- Switch Victoria's bus fleet fuel from diesel to biodiesel, ethanol (100%), LPG or compressed natural gas (CNG) by 2008.
- Purchase only petrol/electric hybrid and dedicated LPG and CNG government fleet vehicles.

Moving freight

- Lay dual gauge rail throughout Victoria whenever freight railway tracks are re-laid.
- Accelerate rail line conversion to standard gauge and upgrade tracks to 23 tonne axle loadings.

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- Provide grants to assist in establishing CNG compressors at fleet and public refuelling stations.
- Encourage petrol retailers to make available to motorists biodiesel, 10% ethanol/petrol blends and re-refined used lubricating oils at all service stations.

Background

The Bracks Government spent \$1.3 billion in 2004/5 on managing, improving and expanding the Victorian road network, up \$100 million on the previous year.

Victoria's public transport is at last receiving State Government attention with the just-released Meeting Our Transport Challenges (MOTC) blueprint but occupancy, other than at peak times, is low, planning is still adhoc and new investment inadequate. Money has been spent on freeways and grand projects but little on infrastructure to extend public transport.

The bus network is inadequate and outdated. The State Government proposes to spend \$1 billion on an unnecessary triplication of the Dandenong line between Caulfield and Springvale but the money would be better spent on passing loops, upgraded metro signalling and on track duplication along single track sections for a better return, faster services and greater capacity.

Compared to other Australian cities, Melbourne's fares are high. A fare moratorium over the life of the next Parliament whilst simultaneously improving public transport services, would make the goal of 20% of all journeys to be

taken by public transport achievable.

A moratorium would move public transport to a more price-competitive position against private vehicles, particularly as petrol prices rise further. It will also give people confidence to change their transport habits and related decisions, such as buying a second car.

The State Government's May 06 Transport & Liveability Statement provides \$13m/year for cycling and walking facilities in Melbourne - almost double the current spending. This is welcome but still pales into insignificance compared to the billions spent on roads.

The state's Principal Bicycle Network has been grossly under-resourced and is unlikely to deliver on the national objective of a 30% increase in bicycle kilometres ridden. It has failed to create safe

cycling on all but a few recreational routes.

Many local council bike strategies and plans are theoretical documents that are big on generalisations and grand plans. They often lack specific practical steps on how to fit bicycle lanes and paths into roads and parks.

Bicycle Victoria Website
on Bicycle Strategies

According to projections, Victoria's freight movements will double by 2020. Rail is the most efficient means of moving large quantities of freight, particularly over long distances, but pricing policies have favoured road transport, particularly B-double trucking. Clear investment strategies are needed to fix Victoria's rail tracks which are unviable and in a state of disrepair in many places - even on the line between Melbourne and Sydney.



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