

LinkingVictoria

ISSUE 2

JUNE 2002



***Melbourne's newest
train station –
six months on***

Green light for Scoresby Freeway

Construction of Craigieburn Bypass begins

All-new trains fast approaching

LinkingVictoria



Welcome to the second issue of *Linking Victoria*.

The 2002-03 State Budget has strengthened the Bracks Government's commitment to revitalising our transport network – particularly in Melbourne's fast-growing outer suburbs and regional Victoria.

'Linking' Victoria is a theme that runs both throughout the budget and a number of existing State Government initiatives. Linking economies, linking regions, linking outcomes and – most importantly – linking communities.

Only a seamless, accessible transport network can create these links.

Some of the most significant transport commitments made in the 2002-03 Budget are:

- \$445 million to kick-start construction of the Scoresby Freeway
- \$55 million for a package of public transport initiatives along the Scoresby Integrated Transport Corridor
- \$42.6 million to extend the tram route along Burwood Highway to Vermont South
- \$105 million to extend the metropolitan rail network from Broadmeadows to Craigieburn
- \$44 million for 52 new and improved bus services in regional Victoria and Melbourne's outer suburbs
- \$9 million to upgrade the rail track between Warrnambool and Geelong.

In addition to these new commitments, a quick look through these pages will show just how much is already happening to our improve road, bus, train and tram networks.

Work on the Eastern Freeway extension to Ringwood is well-advanced, with three 'flyover' bridges already open to traffic; more than 20 kilometres of new road has opened along the Geelong Freeway; construction of the Craigieburn Bypass has begun; and a number of new bike paths have been completed.

The extension of the metropolitan rail line to Sydenham has been finished, with nearly 100,000 commuters already passing through the new Watergardens Station.

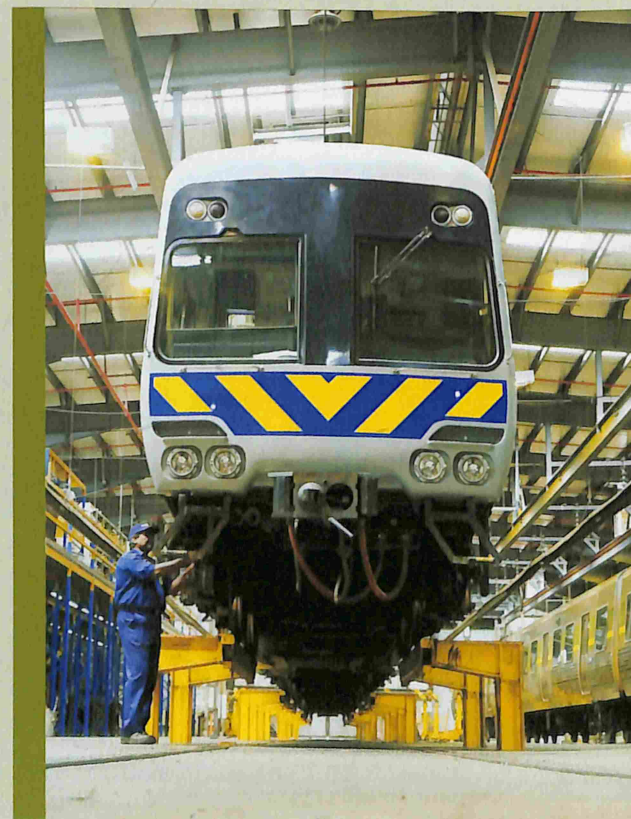
By September, 36 low-floor trams will be in active service throughout Melbourne and, by December, the first brand-new trains in almost a decade will take to the suburban rail network.

So while most of the Linking Victoria projects are large-scale and long-term investments, several of them are benefiting the community already.

Thank you for your interest in our transport network, and I look forward to bringing you more updates in the next issue of *Linking Victoria*.

Peter Batchelor MP

Minister for Transport



Coming to a platform near you



The new X'TRAPOLIS train at the Bayswater Train Maintenance Depot

Melbourne's passenger rail network will soon have its first brand new trains since the 1980s. The first state-of-the-art X'TRAPOLIS train, built for Connex Trains by Alstom, arrived at Webb Dock in April, and is undergoing rigorous safety testing before being put into service by December this year.

A total of 58 three-car trains will ultimately make their way onto the tracks, operating on Connex's rail network. The new trains will replace the ageing and non-air-conditioned Hitachi carriages, which have been in service since the early 1970s.

The X'TRAPOLIS has a carrying capacity of 794 per three-car set and will be equipped with air-conditioning, closed-circuit cameras, passenger information displays, and an emergency button that provides direct contact with the driver.

In May, M>Train took delivery of the first of 62 three-car Siemens trains. With similar features to the X'TRAPOLIS, the trains will be tested extensively before entering service from early 2003.

In total, the new stock represents an investment of more than \$650 million from the State Government.

Together with the low-floor trams and buses already in service, these new trains are another way public transport is being made safer, more accessible and more comfortable.

Train upgrade nearing completion

A major upgrade of Melbourne's Comeng trains – some of which have been in service since 1982 – is almost complete.

ALSTOM in Ballarat is refurbishing Connex's fleet of 90 three-car Comengs, equipping them with new seats, emergency buttons and closed circuit cameras.

M>Train is two-thirds through a similar upgrade of its 98 three-car Comeng trains. More than half the fleet has already been refurbished, with a train completed by EDI Rail every three weeks.

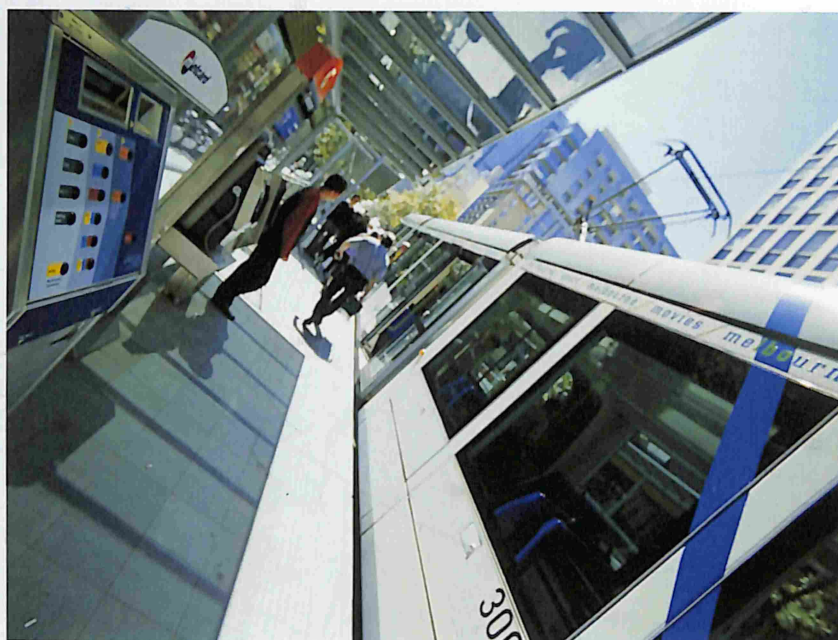
Building a better tram network

Tram Superstops

To improve the safety and accessibility of public transport, a new kind of tram stop is being constructed at strategic points around Melbourne. Superstops are raised platforms that make it easier for passengers to get on and off both older and newer trams – particularly people with prams, in wheelchairs or with impaired mobility.

Besides providing better accessibility, most Superstops feature wider platforms, glass shelters, detailed route information, better lighting and real-time updates showing when the next tram is due to arrive.

Superstops are being created on both the Yarra Trams and M>Trams networks.



With the introduction of new trams, improved stops and extended routes, Melbourne's tram network is in the midst of one of its biggest upgrades ever. By September this year, a total of 36 low-floor trams will be in service along Yarra Trams' route 109. And from November onwards, M>Tram will begin the roll-out of an additional 59 low-floor trams along its routes.

In total, the State Government has committed millions of dollars to make the world's third largest tram network also one of the best.

Completed Superstops

- Collins Street at Spring Street, Melbourne
- Collins Street at Swanston Street, Melbourne
- Swanston Street at Flinders Street, Melbourne.

Proposed Superstops

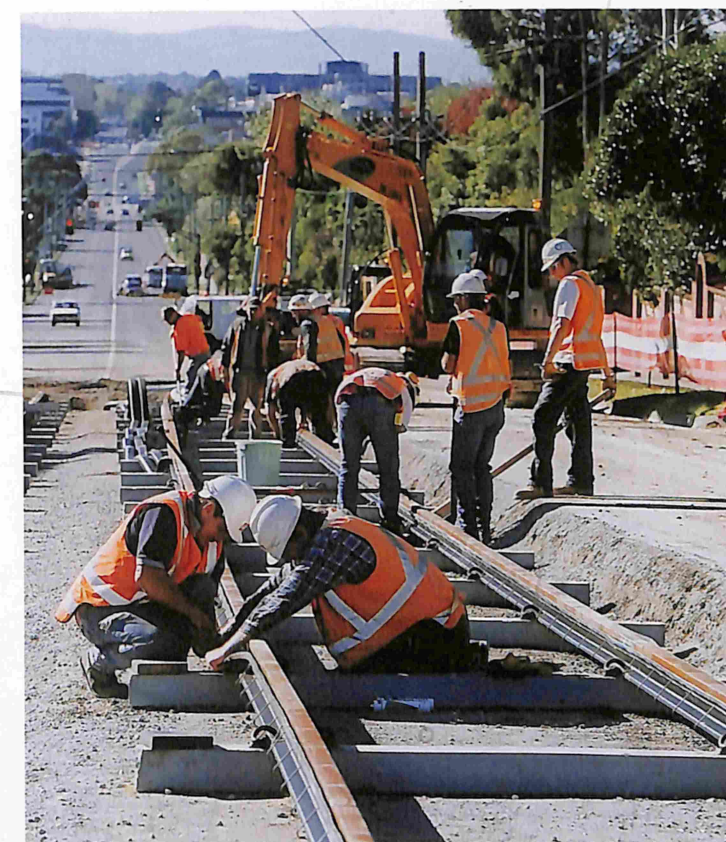
- Victoria Parade at Brunswick Street
- Beacon Cove, Port Melbourne
- Clarendon Street, Southbank
- Whitehorse Road at Elgar Road, Box Hill
- Whitehorse Road at Nelson Road, Box Hill
- Victoria Street at River Boulevard
- Victoria Street at Burnley Street
- Whitehorse Road at the Market Street terminus, Box Hill.

Extension to Box Hill

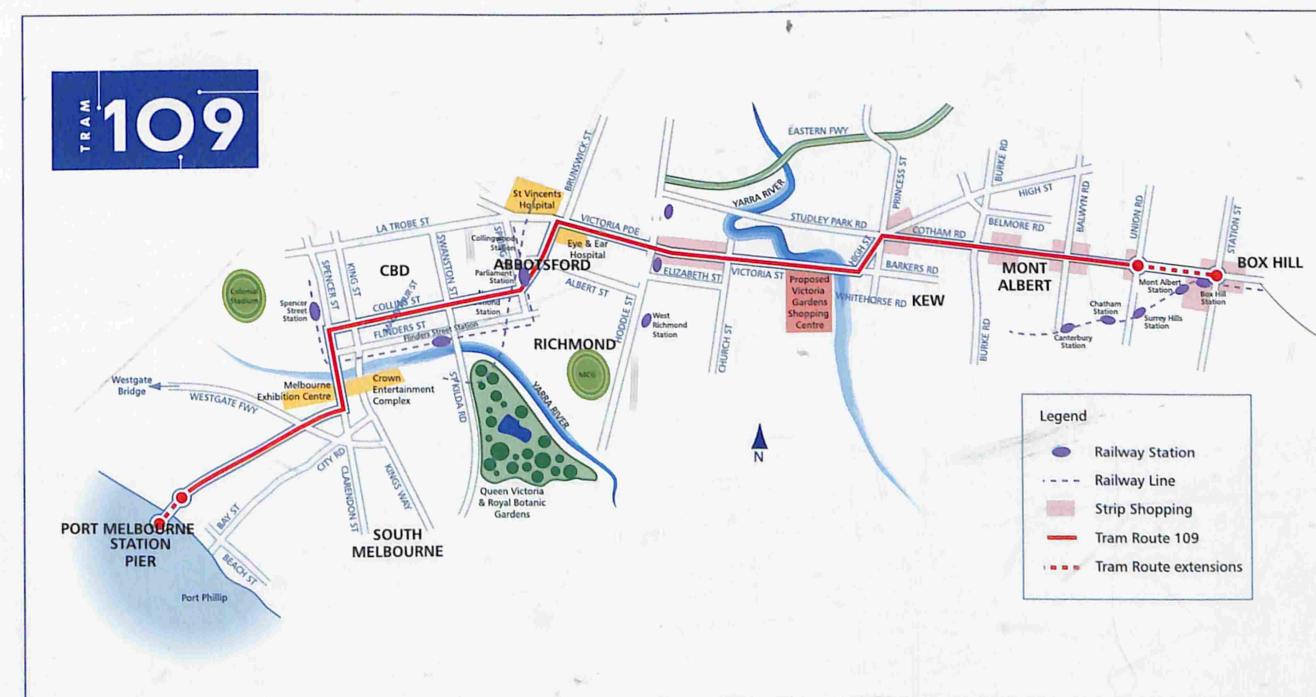
The 2.2 kilometre extension of route 109 along Whitehorse Road from Mont Albert to Box Hill is well under way. With the necessary land acquisition and clearing completed in March, work began on undergrounding powerlines and relocating infrastructure for services such as telecommunications and water.

Construction started in April, with laying of tram tracks, installation of overhead cables, road widening, and upgrading of intersections. Development of the new terminus at Market Street is also under way.

Once completed in September 2002, the \$22 million extension link to Box Hill Station, the largest transport interchange in suburban Melbourne, will make getting in and around the eastern suburbs easier for thousands of Victorians.



Workers lay tracks along the first section of the new route.



Building a better tram network

Victoria Gardens upgrade

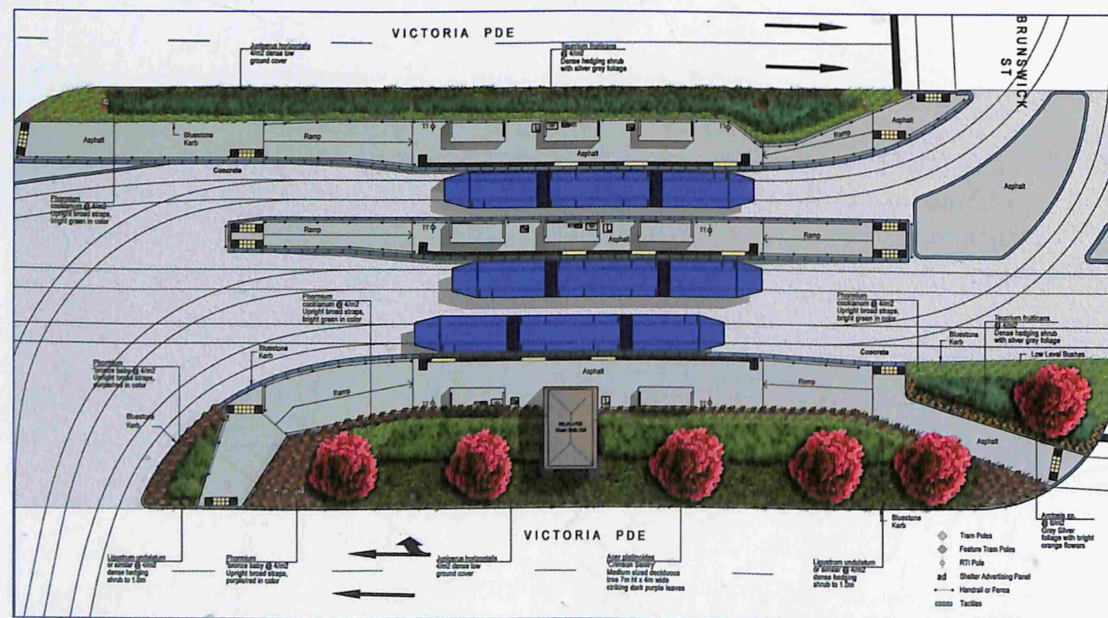
As part of the Tram 109 project, the State Government is planning a \$6.8 million upgrade of infrastructure at the eastern end of Victoria Street at Victoria Gardens, on the fringe of Melbourne's CBD.

A 320-metre long central reservation will be created in Victoria Street between Yarra Boulevard and Burnley

Street for the exclusive use of trams. Together with road widening, this initiative will greatly reduce conflict between cars and trams, improving travel times and the reliability of tram services.

Dedicated bicycle lanes – to encourage alternative forms of travel – will be created as part of the upgrade, along with improved car parking on the north side of Victoria Street.

The State Government is working with Yarra Trams and developers of Victoria Gardens to reduce traffic congestion and tram delays at this eastern end of Victoria Street. Work along this section began in April this year, and is expected to be completed by late-November.



Concept plan of the new superstop at Victoria parade and Brunswick Street.

Views from the platform

Daniel

Kate

The low-floor trams are much easier for people with disabilities, because its so easy to get on and off them. And with the shelter, you can stay out of the rain while you wait.

I've noticed tourists using the new trams, and their reaction has been really positive. I think they look really good.

Victorians encouraged to get 'travelsmart'

'If you drive a car regularly, consider for a moment how often you use it when you may not need to.' This question is being put to thousands of Victorians through a new State government initiative called TravelSMART.

Launched last April, the TravelSMART Communities program encourages people to identify the simple choices they can make to change their travel behaviour, reduce car dependence and help the environment.

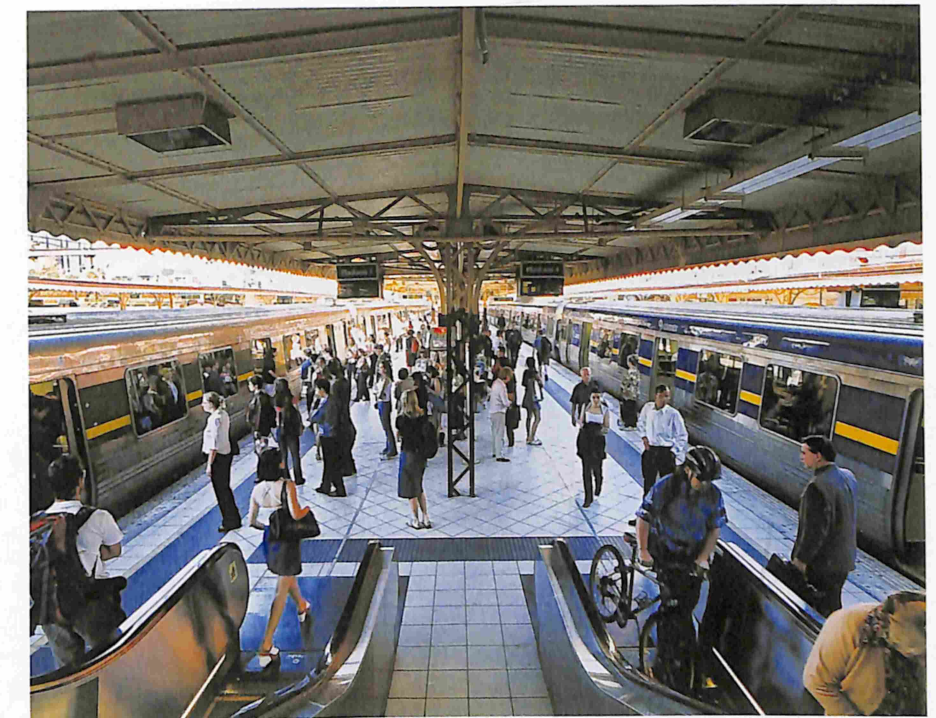
So many of the trips we make in the car each week could easily be done instead on public transport, by cycling, walking or even rollerblading. Becoming TravelSMART is as easy as deciding to leave the car at home and catch public transport to work, even if only for one or two days a week. Alternatively, you could walk down to the local shops instead of driving.

It's also about using the car less, which you can do by combining a trip to the shops with other activities.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Department of Infrastructure, Carlo Carli, says changing a couple of trips a week can make a big difference to the environment. 'By giving some prior thought to which trips needn't involve the car, I've now become 'TravelSmart' and have started cycling, walking and catching public transport more often.

'Now it's just part of my routine, and the added bonus is that I've become fitter and lost weight,' he said.

Communities within three Melbourne municipalities have been chosen to trial the project – the suburb of Elwood in Port Phillip, the Anstey Village area in Moreland, and an area of Dandenong surrounded by the major transport corridors of Princes Highway and Stud Road. In total, around 4,500 Melburnians will participate in the initial trial.



TravelSMART not only helps people to get fitter and improves their health and bank balances, it is also designed to ensure that communities remain sustainable.

The average car releases an average of five tonnes of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere every year. In 1999, road transport was the source of 15 percent of Victoria's total greenhouse gas emissions. As a result, programs such as TravelSMART will be critical to help address these statistics and encourage a major shift in travel patterns and behaviour.

Once the trial in Melbourne is complete, the TravelSMART program will be extended to other areas across the State.

In addition to the launch of TravelSMART Communities, the TravelSMART Work program was also successfully launched last year and TravelSMART Schools will be implemented in mid-2002.