

Extend rail services in Melbourne's western growth areas

Recommendation 74



- \ The Western Rail Corridor Upgrade project will provide a metro style train line for growing communities in the western growth corridor, as well as providing additional services in the south-eastern growth corridor.
- \ Bacchus Marsh and Melton V/Line train services are projected to be overcrowded in coming years with insufficient capacity on Melton and Bacchus Marsh services to meet the significant passenger demand emerging at new stations between Melton and Rockbank.
- \ Following the opening of the Metro Tunnel, Cranbourne/Pakenham Corridor train services are projected to be overcrowded in the early 2040s.
- \ Rail projects consistently perform well in reducing public transport crowding, either through providing additional services, new transport connections or relieving crowding across broader network services. Infrastructure Victoria's assessment of the Western Rail Corridor Upgrade indicates that the project provides strong benefits in reducing public transport crowding.
- \ The recommendation in Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021–2051 recommends completing a business case to deliver these works and provide additional capacity to support the Western Growth Area in the next two years.
- \ The project will increase rail capacity for growing communities in the local government areas of Melton, Mitchell, Casey and Cardinia. These growth areas are projected to continue to grow rapidly and collectively accommodate hundreds of thousands of new residents by the mid-2030s.
- \ This project would be the next step following the committed project of introducing higher capacity V/Line trains on the Melton corridor to the west, and further high capacity metro trains to the south east.
- \ The upgrades also benefit regional Victoria by relieving overcrowding and unreliability for those travelling to and from regional centres including Geelong and Ballarat on V/Line services.
- \ Train passengers from Bacchus Marsh will experience a significant reduction in overcrowding on services, as the new electrified services reduce demand for regional trains to access the Western Growth Area. This will have a positive impact on services from the west of the state with improved network performance and reliability on V/Line services for passengers from Ballarat, Ararat and Stawell.
- \ The strategic assessment provided a strong case for this project, which addresses the population and network challenges of the western growth areas. Additional train services as well as larger trains will provide a significant capacity uplift for passengers along the Melton corridor.
- \ Our modelling indicates that more people may want to live in growth areas due to changes in behaviour and technology. Expanding rail to these outer suburbs and growth areas will be even more important to support the growing population and enable greater public transport use.



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