

Media Release

20 April 2009

Bus breakthrough

The Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF) welcomes the red orbital SmartBus commencing Monday 20th April. The red SmartBus provides cross town links from Altona through Sunshine, Coburg, Preston, Northland, Doncaster, Box Hill, Chadstone, Oakleigh and Mentone to Mordialloc.

However, MTF Chair, Cr Jackie Fristacky, called on the Government to prioritise rolling out the SmartBus orbital network by 2012 – as originally planned in 2006, but cut back in the December 2008 Victorian Transport Plan.

The MTF, representing 18 Councils in metropolitan Melbourne, praised the Government finalising the red orbital SmartBus linking train services and activity centres across Melbourne suburbs. MTF Chair, Cr Jackie Fristacky said that “The historic radial network to the CBD is inadequate to meet the City’s mobility needs supporting its diverse district activity centres. An orbital network is essential to enable people to access jobs, education and services across Melbourne.”

The Orbital SmartBus is assessed positively by the MTF against the following public policy objectives in contrast to the Frankston Bypass.

Public Policy Objectives	Orbital SmartBus: red, green, yellow, blue \$660M	Frankston Bypass Peninsula Link \$750M - \$1B
Efficient land use (reduced urban sprawl)	✓	x
Reduced congestion: direct/downstream	✓	✓/x
Road cost savings	✓	x
Parking cost savings	✓	x
Consumer cost savings (transport costs)	✓	x
Improved mobility options	✓	✓
Improved traffic safety: direct/downstream	✓	✓/x
Employment generation	✓	✓
Reduced energy and emissions	✓	✓/x
Improved public health	✓	x

Cr Fristacky emphasized that “The Frankston Bypass rates poorly against public policy goals of landuse efficiency, cost savings and sustainability objectives compared with the orbital bus network.”

“Investment in public transport has multiple “efficiency” effects - job creation, economic, environmental and equity benefits. Transport improvements such as the orbital smartbus and rail extensions provide superior public policy outcomes over freeway expansion”, Cr Fristacky said.

Media enquiries:

Cr Jackie Fristacky, Chair Metropolitan Transport Forum
0412 597 794

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