

## Victoria's Transport Plan

*"Victorian Premier John Brumby has unveiled the state's largest ever investment in transport but has refused to rule out tolls to help pay for the \$38 billion plan. The Brumby Government's long-awaited 12-year transport plan is dependent on Victoria securing an extra \$10 billion in new federal funding and increases in public transport fares."* **Ref: Mex Cooper, The Age, 8/12/08**

*"RACV general manager of public policy Brian Negus said the State Government had clearly listened to RACV's submissions and had included nearly all recommended projects in its plan."* **Ref: Reko Rennie, The Age, 8/12/08**

*"Melbourne will get a European-style bicycle hire scheme for short trips made around town. The Victorian Transport Plan has committed \$105 million for bicycle initiatives, with most spent on improving paths and lanes. Under the new Public Bicycle System, about 50 stations will be set up in the inner city housing 600 bikes. It is scheduled to be operational by 2010. ... Environment Victoria campaigns director Mark Wakeham said the strategy failed to guarantee falling greenhouse gas emissions from transport. New roads included in the plan would undermine the emissions benefits of investment in public transport and the vehicle fuel efficiency measures, he said. 'Any money that goes into another major road project is money that will not be spent on public transport and giving families green transport choices', Mr Wakeham said."* **Ref: Ashley Gardiner, Herald Sun, 9/12/08**

*"We commend the Government for promising investments in the outer suburbs and regional Victoria that will improve and extend rail services. And extra bus routes, especially in regional Victoria, are critical to ensure everyone has affordable transport. We also welcome overdue action to fix transport disadvantage in the western suburbs."*

**Ref: Cath Smith, The Age, 9/12/08**

*"Giving trams and buses priority on the roads will boost public transport, but more needs to be done. We have one of the world's biggest, yet slowest, tram networks — and need the best trams available."*

**Ref: Bernie Caroline, The Age, 9/12/08**

*"Public transport is lacking in many areas but the plan includes funding and studies for more than 100 kilometres of new motorways in the misguided belief that these will relieve traffic congestion."*

**Ref: Daniel Bowen, The Age, 9/12/08**

*"It is inevitable that a city like [Melbourne] will rely on cars for its transport needs. But it's the 21st century, and car emissions cause global warming. Melbourne's population is nearing 4 million, heading for 5 million, and its roads are congested as never before. The planners say that instead of building out, we should build up, creating a different kind of city where trains, trams and bicycles can take us where we need to go. And where is the Brumby Government on this? Everywhere. ... We are moving ahead at full speed, in both directions. Brumby declares the new Victorian Transport Plan 'transformational', and in a sense it is. In recent times, 80 to 90 per cent of the state's transport investment has gone into roads and only 10 to 20 per cent on rail."*

**Ref: Tim Colebatch, The Age, 9/12/08**



**Brumby's Magic Carpet Transport Solution**

### Age Reader Blog Comments, 8/12/08:

*"As expected, roads projects start next year, while the much-publicised rail tunnel starts in 2012. I won't believe it until it actually starts, but I won't be holding my breath."* **Ref: 'DC'**

*"Yet again the outer eastern suburbs miss out on rail extensions despite Rowville and Doncaster waiting patiently for unfulfilled promises over the last 30 years."* **Ref: 'Terrence'**

*"Hopefully we'll have hovercrafts by 2018! George Jetson was onto something there."*

**Ref: 'Stefan'**

*"I'll join in with all the armchair experts here and say we need to build a rail tunnel between my house, my work, my local supermarket and my local Fish'n'Chip shop.... and a bike path and a tollway and a freeway there too."*

**Ref: 'Wyn'**

**Comment:** The Victorian Government is to be congratulated for the many fine initiatives in its transport plan, in particular the investment in new tram, train and bus services, building new railway stations, giving trams priority and funding more transit police. Inevitably there are questions:

- Given pending Climate Change concerns, why is 50% or more being spent on roads?
- Why \$60m for Park and Ride?
- Will the new trams and trains be built locally?

## Shipping News

*"Ferry transport in Victoria plays an important role for coastal communities and visitors. ... Existing ferry services rely on patronage by tourists or provide links where there are no other alternatives. The possibility of expanding ferry services on longer routes, or introducing ferries as part of the public transport network, has been of ongoing interest to several communities. A network of ferry services in Port Phillip Bay is unlikely to be viable. However, some proposals could warrant further consideration when more favourable circumstances exist."*

**Ref: Victorian Transport Plan, p.59, Water Transport and Regional Victoria**

**Comment:** It's good to see the government acknowledging the important role of ferries and the interest of local communities. This is significant step forward and has at last put Port Phillip Bay ferries on the agenda. Of course the cynic would say: 'why spent \$110 million on ferries when you can spend \$750 million on an eight lane freeway to Mount Martha?' On the other hand, we observe that governments in European cities are seeing the advantages of returning to their waterways for both the movement of freight and passengers. Meantime we'll be busy building more roads.

## NRMA on Cool Running

*"The NRMA estimates a car's air-conditioner can increase [fuel] consumption by 10 per cent. Research by the German technical testing authority TueV largely agreed with that percentage - but found that in stop-start city traffic, with large amounts of idling, a car's petrol consumption can actually double. The damage being done is not only to your wallet. Emissions from more than 14 million vehicles registered in Australia are one of the largest causes of greenhouse gases - for every litre of petrol used, 2.3 kilograms of carbon dioxide (the main greenhouse gas) are emitted into the atmosphere. However, there are times when it is better to crank up the fridge. 'At higher speeds, use of air-conditioning is better for fuel consumption than driving with open windows', according to the federal Department of the Environment. Open windows create significant air drag on your wind-tunnel-designed car and the air-conditioner functions more efficiently at high speeds."*

**Ref: Michael O'Rielly, SMH, 17/12/08**

## And Also ... (Aviation 101)

*"The only time you have too much fuel is when you're on fire."*

**Ref: [www.jokefile.co.uk/numerical\\_order/1087.html](http://www.jokefile.co.uk/numerical_order/1087.html)**

## Rail News

*"A high quality Melbourne-Brisbane rail route would unlock rail's energy advantages in a greenhouse gas-constrained world and secure rail's future, the AusRail 2008 conference has been told. Ken Davidson, a consultant, said that even with Australia's existing rail network, rail used only about 30 per cent of the energy used by an articulated truck. 'A good rail route would use only 15 per cent of what an efficient truck would need'. Dr Davidson said Australia's inadequate rail network and poor alignment meant rail did not compete with road in terms of transit time. But a Melbourne-Brisbane route, as proposed by private group, the Great Australian Trunk Railway (GATR), would overcome speed and energy issues. ...*

*"Dr Davidson said that under GATR, a standard superfreighter with 3600 tonnes should be able to travel Melbourne-Brisbane in 17 hours and 35 minutes 'This compares with 27-31 hours on the coastal route with about twice the fuel use', he said. ... The route would form the heart of a potential national, high-standard network that would 'transform rail in Australia'. The Australian Rail Track Corporation, which runs the interstate track, is doing a feasibility study, which it expects to complete by August, on the Melbourne-Brisbane rail link."*

**Ref: Philip Hopkins, The Age, 3/12/08**

## RACQ on Emissions

*"Governments have been urged to spend more money on public transport if they want to address the challenges posed by climate-change and oil prices. The RACQ [Royal Auto Club of Queensland] has told a forum in Brisbane that carbon emissions increase by about 30 per cent when traffic is congested. Toby Hutcheon from the Queensland Conservation Council says carbon pollution could be reduced significantly if at least half of south-east Queensland residents use buses, trains and ferries. 'Transport represents about 15 per cent of our greenhouse gas emissions and with peak oil and rising fuel prices it's going to become a better and better option for the future', he said."*

**Ref: ABC News, 2/12/08**



**Petrol Station and Freeway, Houston, 2002**

Picture: Peter Bacon Hales

### The Italian Piazza

*“On a recent trip to Italy I observed that the piazza is the core of every town or city. But how did these spaces come about and why are they so successful? Is it scale? Is it surveillance? Is it a random location forced by the intersection of travel routes? Or is it the impact of an historical footprint on urban form? Historically, towns and cities have a cultural heart, the meeting and market place where people will congregate. This cultural heart in most cases reflects the belief and lifestyle of the people.*

*“The cultural heart in Italy, one could argue, is the presence of the church. Roman Catholicism is the most common religion in Italy, with the Pope located in Rome. Many churches, both large and small, are located within each town. Mass is well attended and was even more so in the past. Almost every church has an outdoor piazza adjacent to the building. During peak times, people will spill out of Mass and into these spaces. After church, locals will talk to each other in the square and catch up on local news. Knowing your neighbour seems to be an essential aspect of Italian culture. The piazza is essential to the quality of life of the people.*

*“Italians enjoy sharing food and many markets can be found in and around the towns and piazza spaces. The piazza, also traditionally a market space when agriculture was the dominant trade, is the place where people would meet to purchase food and other goods. The historical trade of food and other essential goods was the beginning of retail, however people also gained the benefit of mingling with neighbours and being a part of their community. The essence of the piazza is a combination of cultural belief, trading of goods and meeting with other people. It is what the community is really about.”*

**Ref: Lisa White, SCAPE Newsletter: The Flyer, November 2008**



**New electric trolley bus in Wellington, NZ, 2008  
It's good to see investment in this technology**

### Dublin City Centre

*“A walk across Dublin’s historic centre is a walk through a series of interconnected rooms. The city has a sense of controlled breadth and a larger sense of volume through linear quays, symmetrical squares and even a few “geometrically aware” streets. Its cranky streets, tight lanes, and sweeping curves provide character and a warm feeling of enclosure. The collision of the two, where one grand room meets a small enclosed room, creates a punctuated sense of arrival into each. The urban energy hums in harmony with a constant ebb and flow between the two. This draws the urbanist from one place to the next, always in pursuit of the city’s next move. The rhythm is intoxicating.”*

**Ref: Mike Lydon, Planetizen, 9/3/08**

### Electric Cars in Hawaii

*“Hawaii is to become the first US state to create a transport infrastructure that will allow cars to run almost entirely on electricity. The plan involves building up to 100,000 charging stations in car parks and streets by 2012 and importing electric vehicles manufactured by a joint venture between Nissan and Renault. Motorists who buy the cars will be able to purchase mileage plans - including recharging services and battery swaps - or use the charging stations on a pay-as-you-go basis. Linda Lingle, the Governor of Hawaii, said the program would help the six large islands in the state to meet the goal of reducing the use of fossil fuels by 70 per cent within the next 30 years. About 1.3 million people live in Hawaii, most of them in Honolulu. The islands import 90 per cent of their oil from countries such as Saudi Arabia, an arrangement that costs an estimated \$7US billion a year. ‘Today is a part of the execution of our energy independence (strategy), and our getting off the addiction to oil’, Ms Lingle said.”*

**Ref: Chris Ayes, The Times, 4/12/08**

### Car Award

*“This year’s carsguide Best Green Car – the Audi A3 Sportback TDi e – is not a hybrid nor does it run on electricity. ... In the TDi e there is a specific tuning of the electronics of the 77kW 1.9-litre turbo diesel engine and, in the five-speed manual box, there is a lengthening in ratios for the third and fifth gear resulting in optimised fuel efficiency, particularly when the driver follows the recommended gear selection as displayed on the dash. The TDi e has also been lowered, aiding aerodynamics, and is fitted with aerodynamic plastic covers for the 16-inch wheels shod with low-friction Michelin rubber to reduce rolling resistance between the tyre and the road.”*

**Ref: Eco Voice eNews # 58, 10/12/08**

## TOD in Western Australia – Pt 2

*“Statutory planning for TOD (Transport Oriented Development) [in WA] is governed by Development Control Policy DC 1.6, which has the following objectives:*

- *To promote public transport as an alternative to car travel and enhance mobility in the community, particularly for those who do not have access to a car.*
- *To ensure the optimum use of land close to railway stations, bus terminals, transport interchanges and corridors containing frequent public transport services for residential, commercial and other intensive uses.*
- *To maximize accessibility to rail and other public transport services, in particular high-frequency bus routes.*
- *To maximize accessibility by rail and other public transport to a range of work, shopping, and other urban activities.*
- *To facilitate safe pedestrian and cycle access to and from public transport services and a range of activities focused around them.*
- *To promote the development of a more sustainable urban form.*
- *To promote designs for public transport that minimise any adverse impact on local amenity arising from public transport operations.*
- *To ensure adequate consideration is given to public transport access by planning authorities, consultants, and developers.*

*“With respect to TOD, DC 1.6 is one of the most innovative policies ever written across Australia and the United States. It spells out, albeit in general terms, the need for local government to plan for high-density and mixed-use development around major transport nodes. DC 1.6 encourages mixed land uses within strategic regional centres, especially major office development, major retail facilities, high-density housing, sporting stadiums, and major entertainment venues. It also encourages increased residential densities and commercial and mixed uses within the TOD precinct of all major public transport infrastructure nodes. It specifies that medium- to high-density residential development should accommodate groups that are dependent on public transport, such as the elderly, the socioeconomically disadvantaged, and those with disabilities. The policy also encourages uses that allow for retail and office space and recreational, educational, and entertainment activities within TODs.*

*“The policy specifies against low-intensity commercial uses, such as showrooms and warehouses; low-density residential, public utilities, and drainage reserves; and large areas*

*of undeveloped public open space in areas where TOD would be appropriate.*

*“DC 1.6 specifically calls for higher residential densities and reduced car parking provisions in town planning schemes<sup>9</sup> to encourage walking, cycling, and use of public transport. It recommends the implementation of TOD through the update of town planning schemes. Local governments are required to update their town planning scheme once every five years, and through this process the WAPC, which uses DC 1.6 to guide its decisions, may encourage them to plan for higher density and mixed-use development. DC 1.6 also calls for a pedestrian-friendly, attractive urban environment with safe streets that have buildings adjacent to sidewalks, quality sidewalk design, and safe at-grade pedestrian crossings. DC 1.6 also encourages the adoption of design standards in which the built environment contains shade trees, verandas, and pedestrian amenities. Street networks should be interconnected and accessible within TODs and include a number of ‘destinations’ such as cafés and neighbourhood centres.*

*“In addition to DC 1.6, a number of other policies also encourage the integration of land use and transport planning with the aim of achieving more compact and mixed-use development in Western Australia. The Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS) identifies reserves for future rights-of-way. The Metropolitan Centres policy identifies a hierarchy of locations for retail and commercial development at regional and district centres.”*

**Ref: John L. Renne,**  
**Smart Growth & TOD at the State Level, 2008**  
**Journal of Public Transportation Vol 11, No 3**  
<http://www.nctr.usf.edu/jpt/pdf/JPT11-3.pdf>

## New Ideas in LA

*“Los Angeles will get \$210 million in federal money to ease freeway congestion and improve bus service .... U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters said in a statement that it is the largest grant to ease congestion the department has awarded to any city to date. Peters said the funding would help local leaders in their efforts to convert existing carpool lanes to high-occupancy toll lanes, with tolls adjusting according to congestion levels. ‘Los Angeles’ willingness to try something new will mean less traffic, better transit and a cleaner environment’, she said.”*

**Ref: Nita Lelyveld, LA Times 11/12/08**

## And Also ...

*“California law prohibits a woman from driving a car while dressed in a housecoat.”*

**Ref: <http://www.strangefacts.com/laws.html>**