

Embargoed until 4 August 2016

A Transport for Melbourne and RMIT Public Forum

The Victorian State Government has committed to a number of major infrastructure projects but what's the plan for Melbourne transport and how do these projects fit in?

New community group [Transport for Melbourne](http://www.transportformelbourne.org/) (TfM), together with the [RMIT Centre for Urban Research](http://www.rmit.edu.au/urban-research/) (CUR) are bringing together key leaders in transport reform in a public forum 'Transport for Melbourne: What's the Plan' discussing the fundamental issues affecting transport planning with the aim of improving community consensus.

CUR Director Professor Jago Dodson said that a city of eight million will not be liveable without a shift in transport planning towards modes of travel and infrastructure that take up less space and move more people.

"To make this shift we need institutions that are capable of adapting to the future of Melbourne, not simply extending business as usual," he said.

Guest speaker and Professor of Public Transport at Monash University Graham Currie said that there is a need to move away from single large "trophy" infrastructure projects that benefit the few towards a systemic policy that addresses the needs of the many.

"We have a significant opportunity to create a world class transport system in Melbourne but a focus on politically motivated 'trophy' projects will do little to address the long standing systemic problems we face into the future," he said.

"The time is overdue for all the relevant and overlapping advocacy groups to come together to set agreed priorities to push government for a best practice integrated and efficient transport network in Melbourne," said Former Professor in Urban and Environmental Planning at University of Melbourne Nicholas Low.

Chair of TfM Roger Taylor believes that community advocacy groups need to be strong in agreement on what is vital for a Melbourne transport plan and its aims.

"Traditionally governments have relied on their departments for policy and professional advice - yet now we see them increasingly looking to outside organisations for advice and the delivery of services," he said.

"This is why a community voice that reflects the interests and needs of the public is important, and requires broad community support if government is to listen and take us seriously."

In order to change current transport planning thinking as a unified community, Transport for Melbourne proposes:

1. We need to think differently about transport – i.e. as a whole system that is an integral part of a city plan
2. Transport itself needs an overall integrated plan for trains, trams, buses, walking and cycling as well as the car
3. We need to look at public transport in terms of a "customer service" that competes with the car
4. We need to challenge the view that transport solutions are invariably thought of in terms of infrastructure
5. We need to challenge both the process and basis on which transport priorities are assigned
6. We need to adopt an independent evidence based approach to transport planning and policy and be more concerned about the quality of governance and planning transparency.

The event will be held from 5pm to 6.30pm on August 4 2016 at [Swanston Academic Building](http://www.rmit.edu.au/academic-buildings/swanston/).

About Transport for Melbourne

Transport for Melbourne is a small think tank and advocacy group of transport professionals whose mission is to promote a better understanding of transport issues that Melbourne faces now and how these can be better addressed by applying lessons learnt from cities that have been confronted with similar problems and become models of international best practice. [Read the draft charter online](#). TfM regularly collaborates with other transport and land use advocacy groups including Rail Futures, the Victorian Transport Action Group, Metropolitan Transport Forum, the Public Transport Users Association and the Town and Country Planning Association.

For media enquires: [Roger Taylor](mailto:Roger.Taylor@transportformelbourne.org) or (03) 98131529 or visit [Transport for Melbourne](http://www.transportformelbourne.org/).