



Leadership for the West

9 December 2009

### **Transport Expansion Welcomed But...**

The Brumby Government's Transport Plan, launched yesterday, will overhaul the West's aged road and rail infrastructure while extending the current rail system to cater for the growing population living in Melbourne's West.

Anton Mayer CEO of LeadWest said today that he was delighted that the State Government acknowledged, through the Transport Plan, that Melbourne's West required urgent investment in rail and road infrastructure.

"While I am thrilled that the Brumby Government's Transport Plan will deliver 16 of the recommendations from Sir Rod Eddington's report into the East West Link Needs Assessment, the only criticism I would say is that we don't have five to ten years to wait for most of these projects, particularly given the population boom we are experiencing," Mr Mayer said.

While it is noted that the Transport Plan represents the biggest expansion to Victoria's transport system in 100 years, many of essential projects required to better connect Melbourne's outer West with the rest of the State, are reliant on funding from the Commonwealth Government through the Infrastructure Australia fund.

"Projects such as the Melton Rail Upgrade (electrification), the West Gate Bridge Alternative along with the Melbourne Metro project to connect Footscray to St Kilda Rd (Stage 1) are completely reliant on the Federal Government partnering with the State Government. This funding is by no means assured.


"I am absolutely supportive of the Transport Plan and what it will deliver for our State in terms of creating jobs, supporting economic growth and cutting travel times. However, given that Melbourne's West was little more than dairy and grazing fields 50 years ago and today it's Victoria's fastest growing Region, there is urgency in the need for better road and rail infrastructure to keep up with the changing face of the West.

"Waiting eight years at a minimum to see any investment or work begin on the electrification of the Melton line and four years to see an alternative to the West Gate Bridge is too long," Mr Mayer said.

LeadWest is a peak advocacy body that was formed to provide leadership to the West in addressing its challenges and capitalising on its advantages, to be a representative voice for the West, especially to State and Federal Government. LeadWest's goal is to help the West realise its great potential as a dynamic and enjoyable place in which to live, work and visit.

#### **For further information please contact:**

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