

1.1 SUBURBAN RAIL LOOP UPDATE

(SMC: File No. F19-4382)

Responsible Director: Peter Panagakos

RECOMMENDATION*That Council:*

1. *Notes the status update on officer engagement with State agencies and Ministers set out in this report.*
2. *Writes to the Ministers for Transport Infrastructure, Priority Precincts and Planning and local State and Federal members to:*
 - a. *Reaffirm its strong support for the proposed station locations of Clayton, Monash and Glen Waverley and commitment to being an active participant in the integrated planning for the stations and their host urban environments.*
 - b. *Request that the State provide funding assistance to Council to:*
 - i. *Assist Council is developing and co-ordinating its meaningful participation in the SRL project; and*
 - ii. *Enable Council to undertake and coordinate the planning for urban areas and activity centres at and immediately around the proposed station locations.*
 - c. *Request that value capture and creation programs extend beyond State Government owned land and include mechanisms to return a portion of the value up lift arising from the SRL to Council for expenditure in urban and community infrastructure projects in and around the station locations.*
3. *Notes that soil investigations works to assist in finalising the alignment and station box locations will shortly commence across Monash.*
4. *Notes that Rail Projects Victoria has commenced an initial round of community engagement to raise awareness and gain early community feedback on the project.*
5. *Writes to Rail Projects Victoria, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, the Victoria Planning Authority and the Department of Transport requesting that they provide a combined confidential briefing to Council at the earliest possible time to explain to Councillors the SRL project, the key milestones dates and the process proposed for involving Council and the community in the project.*
6. *Writes to the Department of Transport and ask that they meet with officers to provide an update on the Caulfield to Monash Light Rail Project and its implications and synergies with the SRL project.*
7. *Notes that officers may need to expend monies in responding to issues or planning for matters related to the SRL project to ensure that Council is actively engaged in the project. The funding assistance requested in point 2.b of this report will offset some of these associated costs.*

INTRODUCTION

Council will recall that an officer's report was presented to the Tuesday 26 March 2019 Council meeting to bring to its attention the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) project and the implications for the City of Monash. That report directed officers to commence engagement with relevant Ministers and departments of the Victorian State government.

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the engagement activities undertaken with the State Government for the SRL project and to consider a series of requests that are designed to allow Council to fully participate in the SRL project and flow on development opportunities in and around the SRL stations proposed in Monash.

BACKGROUND

Announced in August 2018, the proposed SRL is scheduled to commence construction in 2022, with the section from Cheltenham to Box Hill as the first stage. This stage provides for 3 stations in Monash, Clayton (Super Hub) Monash and Glen Waverley. See *Attachment 1*.

The delivery of the SRL is being coordinated by Rail Projects Victoria (RPV), Department of Transport (DoT) and the newly created Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR).

At its meeting of 26 March 2019 it was resolved that Council;

1. *Writes to the Ministers for Transport Infrastructure, Priority Precincts and Planning and provide its support to the Suburban Rail Loop project in particular the designation of the Clayton Station and Activity Centre as a 'Super Hub', the opportunities to further implement the vision in the Glen Waverley Structure Plan through the undergrounding of the station and requests that the City of Monash be engaged in the planning of the South-East connection to the Suburban Rail Loop.*
2. *Writes to Transport Victoria, Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions and Rail Projects Victoria and requests a briefing on the status of the proposed South-East connection to the Suburban Rail Loop*

The report also noted that *"the importance and scale of these investments that requires Council to clearly articulate its aspirations and key asks in order to ensure that the projects deliver the opportunities, benefits and broad based uplift as a result of this investment."*

These investments also have significant positive implications for the Monash National Employment and Innovation Cluster (MNEIC), not to mention the economic and social benefits derived from the investment in the Clayton and Glen Waverley Activity Centres.

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

The SRL project is expected to result in considerable economic, social, cultural and environmental uplift, for the City of Monash

While the major infrastructure will occur in and around the Clayton and Glen Waverley Activity Centres and the Monash University precinct, benefits of this project will extend along and around the rail corridor, major transport routes and other commercial precincts and activity centres across the City of Monash and the broader south eastern region, bringing greater employment, access and amenity outcomes.

Actions from 26 March 2019 Council meeting.

After the March Council meeting officers wrote to the *Ministers for Transport Infrastructure, Priority Precincts and Planning* supporting the SRL project and the station locations in Monash. Following on from those letters of support the Chief Executive Officer, Director City Development and other senior officers met with:

- Jacinta Allan, Minister for Transport Infrastructure
- Melissa Horne, Minister for Public Transport
- Evan Tattersall, CEO of Rail Projects Victoria
- Alex Kamenev, Deputy Secretary, Precincts and Suburbs at Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

State Government agencies including the Major Transport Infrastructure Authority, Rail Projects Victoria (RPV), the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, together with the Victorian Planning Authority, all have a commitment to deliver community benefit.

At each of these meetings, officers confirmed our commitment to working with State Government to ensure sound planning and effective and timely delivery of project and associated investment, for the benefit of the City of Monash community and key stakeholders.

Other issues

In addition to confirming Council support for the project discussions, were also held on:

- Including Council representation in the proposed project governance structure
- Timelines for finalisation of SRL alignment and station box locations
- Significant Growth opportunities bring significant community and transport infrastructure challenges. Precinct/Structure Plans for Clayton and Glen Waverley require revisiting to cope with SRL Stations
- The need for Council to provide input and co-ordinate responses to the SRL project.
- Who will be planning for place around the station locations?
- The need to assist Council with funding to undertake planning for place around the station locations.

- The future growth from the creation of the stations will have significant impacts on existing infrastructure and generate need for new infrastructure to cope with increased residents, workers and trips.
- What planning is being undertaken to assess current and future infrastructure requirements?
- Broadening the scope of value capture beyond State government owned land to investigate private land to assist in infrastructure improvements in and around the station locations.

SRL alignment – investigative works

Officers have also recently been notified that contractors for RPV will shortly commence soil testing and other investigative works across Monash to assist in determining the alignment of the SRL. This would consist primarily of soil testing at a range of locations across Monash. At the time of writing this report there are no start dates for these works.

Caulfield to Monash Light Rail Project

Another project that is running parallel to the SRL is the Caulfield to Monash Rail Project. Officers understand that the Minister for Transport is currently finalising the Monash Light Rail Business Case and is due to be completed within the next few months. To date there has been no consultation on this project with Council. It is important that this project is not considered in isolation to the SRL project.

CONSULTATION

RPV (who are running the SRL project) recently commenced initial engagement with the Monash community through an online survey and drop in sessions. The purpose of this initial engagement is to obtain *“early indications of people’s knowledge and awareness of the project, what issues and benefits they perceive, and how they want to be engaged.”*

Three drop in sessions were also arranged for the follow dates and locations:

- Tuesday 9 July 2019 – The Glen Shopping Centre, 10.30am-2.30pm
- Wednesday 24 July 2019 – Clayton Station, 7am-9am
- Thursday 25 July 2019 – Glen Waverley Station, 7am-9am

As the project progresses there will be a rolling program of more detailed community engagement.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The SRL project and the social, economic and environmental benefits that will be derived from the anticipated level of investment is consistent with Council and State Government Policies.

Consistency with Council Strategies and Policies

Monash 2021: A Thriving Community (2010)

This long term strategy states (as relevant) that our community values convenience (we are in walking distance to all we need); a balance between residential, commercial and industrial development; good connections to bus and train services, and easy access by train/freeway; we have a friendly, community based atmosphere in shopping strips; and a safe place to live and bring up a family.

Monash Council Plan (2017-2021)

The following are relevant strategic objectives and strategies from the Council Plan:

A liveable sustainable city

- Strengthening our strategic policy and local planning framework
- Advocacy for enhancement of the National Employment Cluster
- Increasing our community engagement and education about town planning

Inviting open and urban spaces

- Ensuring the walkability of our city
- Improving our green open spaces and linking up our bicycle trails
- Enhancing our activity centres with an increased focus on the moveability and prioritisation of pedestrians

An inclusive community

- Delivering integrated planning and community strengthening

Responsive and efficient services

- Enhancing community consultation and involvement in our decision-making

The Council Plan identified the following relevant priority projects:

- Enhancing the Monash Planning Scheme by reviewing the scheme and by undertaking structure plans for Huntingdale and Mount Waverley. (Related strategic indicator: number of structure plans completed)
- Advocacy for the Rowville Rail and Huntingdale Station redevelopment.
- Improve our activity centres and pedestrian movements therein.

Other relevant Draft Strategies

The following adopted strategies are also relevant to the Clayton and Huntingdale Precinct Plans. Recommendations within these strategies should align with future precinct plans:

- Monash Integrated Transport Strategy

- Monash Economic Development Strategy
- Monash Open Space Strategy
- Monash Urban Landscape and Canopy Vegetation Strategy

Monash Planning Scheme

Clauses from the Monash Planning Scheme that are relevant to Clayton include:

- Clause 11.06 – Metropolitan Melbourne
- Clause 17 – Economic Development
- Clause 21.05 (MSS) – Economic Development
- Clause 21.06 (MSS) – Activity Centres
- Clause 22.03 – Industry and Business Development and Character Policy

State Government Policy Context

Plan Melbourne

There are numerous references and policy directions throughout Plan Melbourne that highlight the importance of the MNEIC, specifically.

“Direction 1.1 Create a city structure that strengthens Melbourne’s competitiveness for jobs and investment”

“Policy 1.1.4 Support the significant employment and servicing role of Health and Education Precincts across Melbourne”

“Policy 1.17 Plan for adequate commercial land across Melbourne”

“Direction 2.2 Deliver more housing closer to jobs and public transport”

“Direction 2.4 Facilitate decision-making processes for housing in the right locations”

“Direction 3.1 Transform Melbourne’s transport system to support a productive city”

“Policy 3.1.2 Provide high quality public transport access to job rich areas”

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Whilst there are no immediate financial implications with this report, for Council to participate in the SRL process in a comprehensive and meaningful manner will require the prioritisation of some existing resources and potential additional resources to co-ordinate a whole of Council involvement in the project. This is critical to ensure that the project brings the most value to the community of Monash and Council is able to actively participate in the planning in and around the station locations.

In the medium to longer term the SRL stations will likely be a catalyst for significant increases in land value and consequently increased development expectations in these hubs. It is therefore important the planning for the “place” around these stations commence as early as possible and the State government and their agencies provide direct financial assistance to Council undertake and co-ordinate the precinct planning in and around the station locations.

CONCLUSION

Not since the construction of the Monash Freeway has the City of Monash seen such significant city-shaping investment from the State or Federal Governments, with the legacy of this investment set to benefit the city for a long time to come.

It is the importance and scale of these investments that requires Council to clearly articulate its aspirations and key asks in order to ensure that the projects deliver the opportunities, benefits and broad based uplift as a result of this investment.

The alignment and station locations are currently being finalised. Once these have been finalised the planning for place around the stations will need to be undertaken to ensure that community benefits from the SRL project is maximised. Council is best placed to lead and coordinate these place planning projects provided that the State provides direct financial assistance to Council for this role.

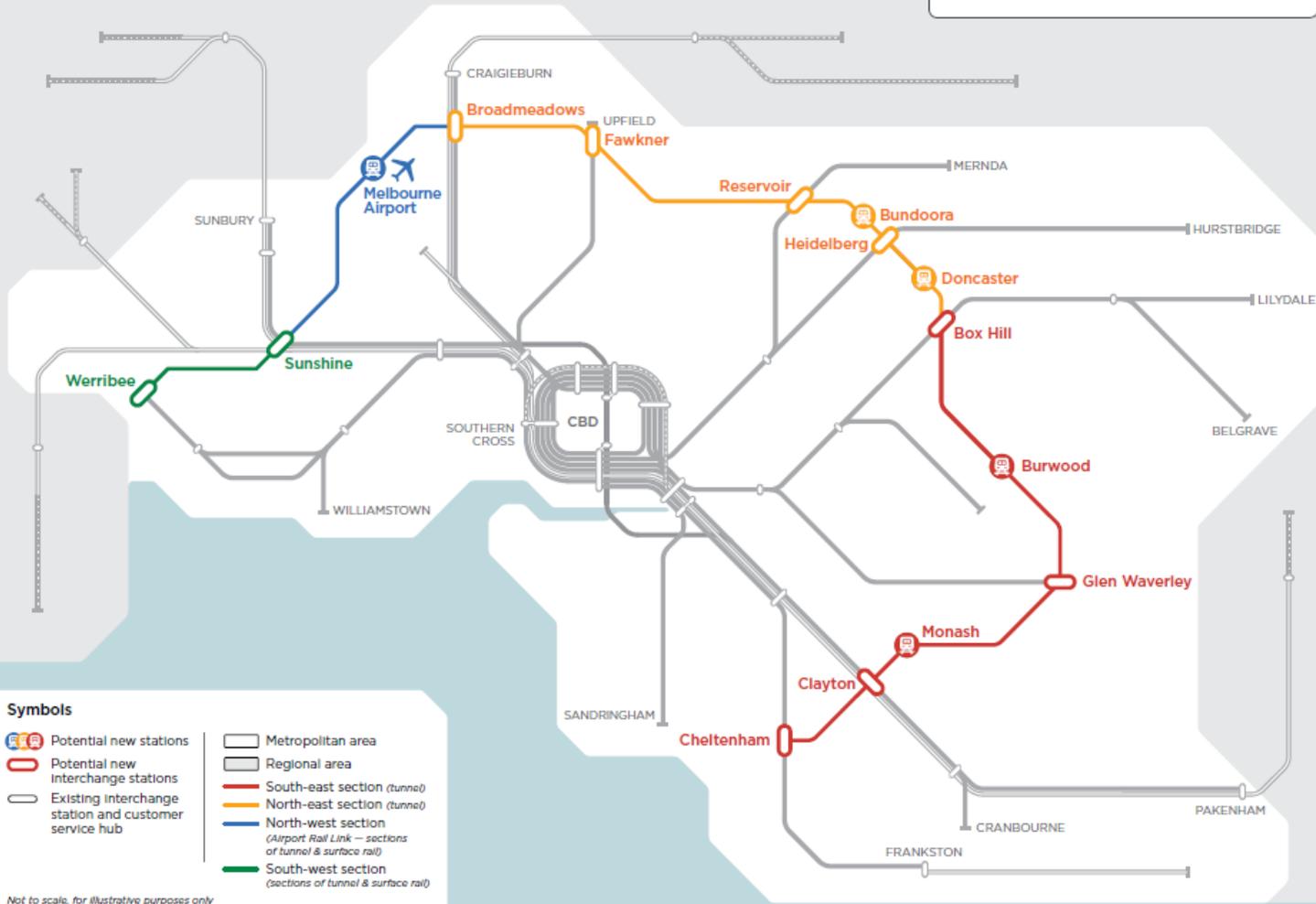
Staging options

The target to begin work on the Melbourne Airport to Sunshine section of the project as part of the Airport Rail Link is 2022.

Delivery priority

In the east, connection of major NEICs, education, health and retail precincts would be the key focus with the south-east section between the Frankston line and Box Hill considered the priority for delivery. Work could commence by end-2022.

A full business case would consider the best staging approach and sequencing within sections.



Symbols

	Potential new stations		Metropolitan area
	Potential new interchange stations		Regional area
	Existing interchange station and customer service hub		South-east section (tunnel)
			North-east section (tunnel)
			North-west section (Airport Rail Link - sections of tunnel & surface rail)
			South-west section (sections of tunnel & surface rail)

Not to scale, for illustrative purposes only