

## More roads not the answer to Melbourne's congestion woes, VicRoads says

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**Nine of Melbourne's major thoroughfares are rapidly reaching capacity and the city cannot just "build its way out of congestion", VicRoads chief executive John Merritt says.**

Mr Merritt advised motorists to use public transport, ride a bicycle or find a new job closer to home to deal with the city's growing traffic congestion.

He said traffic projections showed Melbourne's rapid population growth would continue to cause "a lot of pressure on all of our transport systems".

And while it was important to continue to expand the road network, that alone was simply not enough, he said.

"We can't just build our way out of congestion," he said.

"We need to invest heavily in public transport, which we are, through Melbourne Metro and we need to encourage people to cycle or to walk and make that feel as safe and as practical as we can."

Victoria's Public Transport Minister Jacinta Allan said the Government recognised the problem and was investing in a "range of transport projects" to address the current needs, with a view to building capacity into the future.

"That's why removing the 50 most dangerous level crossings for example is important in terms of addressing road congestion," she said.

"It also means we can run more trains once those levels crossings are removed."

The Government today announced the Burke Road, Glen Iris, level crossing would be removed.

The State Opposition said the traffic figures showed there was a clear need for investment in building more roads.

Shadow attorney-general John Pesutto said it was an "indictment" of the Government's decision to scrap the East West Link project.

"We are growing at around 100,000 people a year and Mr Andrews' plan for our state is to say to Victorians put on your walking shoes or get on your bike," he said.

"It's not good enough."

### 'No one big answer' to Melbourne's traffic problem

Mr Merritt said one of the biggest challenges facing VicRoads was relieving the congestion along Hoddle Street and Punt Road.

"We're now carrying more people in that midday period on Saturday than we are at the equivalent times during the week and we have the extra challenge of the traffic not being in any one direction," he said.

"The challenge with Hoddle and Punt is the number of people who cross [it].

"While it carries a huge [amount] of north-south traffic, more people travel east-west across all those intersections, either in cars or on trams or on bikes, so that's what makes it such a challenge for us."

Mr Merritt said there was no one solution to fixing the city's traffic woes.

"There are significant, large projects but there is no one big answer to this, it is a series of pieces of work," he said.

"Then there are those changes in behaviour - getting people to use public transport and encouraging more people to ride."

**Topics:** states-and-territories, state-parliament, melbourne-3000

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