

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Thursday, 25 November 2021

MASSIVE FUNDING BOOST MEANS SRL BUILD STARTS NEXT YEAR

Construction of Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) East will be underway next year – with the Andrews Labor Government detailing the start of our investment into the state’s biggest and most significant infrastructure project – that will create up to 8,000 direct jobs.

We’ve delivered a massive pipeline of road and rail upgrades across Victoria, and now we’re getting on with delivering the project that will change how and where we grow in the decades ahead.

Just like London and many other great cities of the world, Melbourne needs to become a ‘city of centres’ if it’s to grow in a sustainable way that preserves all that we love about it.

A child in primary school today won’t have to choose between leaving home or giving up studying at a top university because it’s too hard to reach. They won’t have to settle for a job they don’t love, because a better opportunity is too far away.

That’s why we’ll begin to deliver the project Victorians voted for.

The Labor Government is providing new funding of \$9.3 billion towards major works on SRL East to deliver 26-kilometre twin rail tunnels and six underground stations between Cheltenham and Box Hill as well as investment in new community projects and initiatives in the broader areas around the stations.

Trains will be running on SRL East by 2035, transforming Melbourne’s public transport network and better connecting people to jobs, health, education, retail opportunities and each other. Fast, efficient, high-tech trains powered by renewables will provide a turn up and go service – carrying around 70,000 passengers a day.

Commuters in Melbourne’s south east will experience much faster journeys on the underground line, saving up to an hour on a one-way trip. Trains will take 3-4 minutes between stations, and a journey from Cheltenham to Box Hill will be just 22 minutes.

Construction starts next year, with the Business and Investment case showing SRL East and SRL North will deliver \$58.7 billion in economic, social and environmental benefits, and will support up to 24,000 local jobs.

Today’s announcement provides certainty for project delivery and communities in Melbourne’s east and south east, paving the way for procurement of main works packages to start next year – and comes on top of the \$2.5 billion already provided for planning and development of SRL and for Initial and Early Works on SRL East.

The Government will continue to work with the Commonwealth and the private sector as this project progresses, with the creation of significant value capture opportunities as the build progresses.

The contract for this first phase of works – creating up to 800 early direct jobs – has been awarded to global construction and engineering firm Laing O’Rourke, which has agreed to exceed workforce and local content targets.

The huge package of works includes preparing sites for the launch of tunnel boring machines, moving and protecting underground services, ground improvement, geotechnical investigations and roads modifications.

The contract offers exciting opportunities for local industry and suppliers, including delivering in excess of 95 per cent local content.

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Around 14 per cent of the total hours will be undertaken by Victorian apprentices, trainees or cadets, with opportunities for women, Aboriginal and disadvantaged Victorians – contributing to the next generation of highly skilled workers.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“We told the Victorian community we will get this project started – and we’re getting on with it.”

“The Suburban Rail Loop is not just a rail line – it delivers opportunities for Victorians to live close to work, more access to education and services and supports thousands of new jobs at a time our state needs them most.”

Quote attributable to Suburban Rail Loop Minister Jacinta Allan

“We’re not wasting a minute on this vital project which will play a big role in our economic recovery – we’ve signed the contract to deliver Initial and Early Works on SRL East and we’ll be in the ground next year with up to 800 early jobs created.”

Quote attributable to Laing O’Rourke Australia Managing Director Cathal O’Rourke

“Laing O’Rourke is delighted to partner with the Victorian Government to deliver the SRL Initial Works and Early Works. As well as clearing the way for the main works, we will also provide new opportunities for Victorians to be involved in this city-shaping project and we appreciate the trust placed in us to deliver great outcomes for the community.”

Quote attributable to Box Hill Institute CEO and Managing Director Vivienne King

“As Victoria starts to open up, Suburban Rail Loop is an exciting development for people in Box Hill and for the thousands of students here at Box Hill Institute, one of Victoria’s oldest TAFEs.”