

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

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SUPER SPRING FOR BIG BUILD ROAD AND RAIL UPGRADES

Road and rail upgrades that delivers better transport connections and supports tens of thousands of jobs are set to ramp up over spring.

Victorians are being asked to prepare for disruptions on four metropolitan rail lines, three regional passenger lines and St Kilda Road tram routes over Spring. Nine tram routes will be disrupted along St Kilda Road from late November, ahead of the new Anzac Station tram stop opening to passengers.

At the end of the works, with two new train stations opening, another two dangerous and congested level crossings removed and the beginning of rail laid through the Metro Tunnel – all part of the Andrews Labor Government's Big Build project.

On the road network, crews will work on 12 major upgrades culminating in the completion of construction at South Gippsland Highway, Childs Road, Western Port Highway and Golf Links Road. Craigieburn Road will be closed in September as almost four months of major utility relocation is undertaken in just 12 days as a part of the Craigieburn Road Upgrade.

Significant construction will prepare North East Link for major tunnelling, with drivers urged to be aware of partial weekend closures of the Greensborough Road and Watsonia Road intersection during September and October. Construction on Suburban Rail Loop East will also see lane closures in place on Clayton Road between Clayton Shopping Plaza and Clayton Hall until November.

Crews continue to widen the West Gate Freeway as part of the West Gate Tunnel Project, 24/7 works will see the Millers Road interchange upgrade near completion making it easier to access the freeway. The tunnel boring machines are forging ahead and Footscray Road work continues to take shape with weekend closures.

Two more level crossings will be removed at Robinsons Road in Deer Park and Gap Road in Sunbury boosting safety and easing congestion, while the new Preston and Bell stations will open. Work will continue at another 10 dangerous and congested level crossing sites across Melbourne.

Passengers on the Mernda Line will be impacted for 10 days from Friday 26 August as we prepare to run trains on a new elevated bridge and open the new Preston and Bell stations, as part of the project that removed four level crossings in Preston.

Buses will replace trains between Macleod and Hurstbridge for 14 days from Tuesday 6 September while crews work round the clock on the 3.5 kilometre Hurstbridge Line Duplication to allow more trains to run more often and reduce crowding on peak services. Direct buses from Eltham to the city will run during this time.

The Gap Road underpass will open to traffic in October freeing up Sunbury's worst traffic bottleneck three years earlier than first planned.

Crews have also started work at Surrey Hills and Mont Albert as they get ready to remove two level crossings at Union and Mont Albert Roads next year.

On the Frankston Line, works will continue to ramp up to remove two dangerous and congested level crossings at Glen Huntly. Express trains will be replaced with trains stopping all stations from mid-December until mid-2023, to minimise the amount of time the rail line is closed.

The final major construction blitz to remove level crossings at Union Road, Surrey Hills and Mont Albert Road, Mont Albert, will start early next year. Buses will replace trains on sections of the Lilydale and Belgrave lines from 17 February 2023 to May 2023 as part of the blitz, which includes building the new Union Station.

There will also be minor changes to services stopping in the City Loop on weekends in spring, while crews continue work to upgrade fire and emergency systems.

The spring construction boom continues across regional Victoria, with a fifth weekday return service between Warrnambool and Melbourne a step closer as signalling infrastructure installation and testing works take place.

Coaches will replace trains between Geelong and Warrnambool for nine days at the start of October and for most of November. The Shepparton Line Upgrade and Gippsland Line Upgrade projects continue with coaches replacing trains on both lines at times over spring.

Extra public transport services will be added to the timetable for major events during spring including The Royal Melbourne Show, AFL finals, Melbourne Marathon, T20 World Cup and the Spring Racing Carnival. Behind the scenes the Smarter Roads Program will allow real time traffic light changes to minimise driver's disruptions and smooth the way for replacement bus services on key routes.

Victorians are asked to check before they travel at bigbuild.vic.gov.au, as well as continue to wear a mask while on public transport.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

"Whether it's removing level crossings, building new stations, duplicating train lines, getting on with the Metro Tunnel or North East Link – we're building for the future and backing thousands of Victorian jobs."

"We thank Victorians for their patience as we get on and deliver the largest ever pipeline of transport upgrades in Victoria's history."

Quote attributable to Minister for Roads and Public Transport Ben Carroll

"Whether you drive or use public transport, we are continuing to deliver for Victorians with better road and rail infrastructure, improving traffic flow and making getting around the state easier."