

# Media Release

**The Hon Jacinta Allan MP**

Deputy Premier

Minister for Transport and Infrastructure

Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop

Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery



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## MEGA YEAR WINDS UP ON VICTORIA'S BIG BUILD IN TRANSPORT

The Andrews Labor Government is celebrating a huge 2022 for Victoria's Big Build with a \$100 billion program of rail and road works now underway.

This year 40 million work hours have been clocked up on major rail and road projects across the state, with the Big Build directly providing jobs for nearly 20,000 people and indirectly supporting up to 50,000 across the Victorian economy.

Big rail projects including the Metro Tunnel, Suburban Rail Loop and Melbourne Airport Rail hit major milestones this year while major road projects including North East Link and the West Gate Tunnel powered ahead.

The first tracks were delivered and installed in the Metro Tunnel and a new signalling control centre was switched on at Sunshine, paving the way for High-Capacity Metro Trains to run on the new line when it opens in 2025.

Major milestones were reached when acoustic sheds at St Kilda Road and City Square – which were built to contain dust and noise from around-the-clock construction – came down. While Arden Station is also taking shape at street level in North Melbourne.

Passengers are now using the new Anzac Station Tram stop – the first piece of Metro Tunnel infrastructure to become operational when it opened this week.

The first stage of works on the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) East between Cheltenham and Box Hill also kicked off this year, and work began to build a new park and playground in Burwood as part of the city shaping project.

Early works also began on SRL Airport and images of what the new Melbourne Airport Station will look like were revealed. Commuters in Keilor East learned they will get a new station as part of the new airport rail link, and construction partners for the Maribyrnong River Bridge, Sunshine and Albion station elements of the project were locked in.

The Level Crossing Removal Project powered ahead with 25 more level crossings added to the hit list, making it 110 to go by 2030. By then, the Sunbury, Werribee, Cranbourne, Pakenham, Lilydale and Frankston lines will be level crossing free.

Eleven more dangerous and congested level crossings were removed this year – with 67 now gone for good – and five new or upgraded metropolitan stations opened.

The duplication of the Cranbourne Line finished almost a year ahead of schedule, allowing more train services to run during the morning peak.

Construction on the Hurstbridge Line Duplication is powering ahead, including duplicating track and building new stations at Greensborough and Montmorency. Trains are expected to be running along the new duplicated track and stopping at the new stations by the middle of 2023.

Tunnel Boring Machines, Bella and Vida, passed the halfway mark on the West Gate Tunnel Project this year. Almost 70 per cent of the outbound tunnel and nearly 80 per cent of the inbound tunnel are now complete.

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Above ground, most of the noise walls on the West Gate Freeway have been installed with 50 per cent of the new elevated road above Footscray Road done.

This year, the West Gate Tunnel Project team also built two new sports pavilions in the inner west and awarded \$1.3 million in community grants and partnerships.

Another 10 upgraded or new major roads opened to traffic this year including the historic Echuca Moama Bridge – a vital second Murray River crossing.

Major Upgrades on the Monash Freeway, South Gippsland Highway and the next section of the M80 Ring Road were completed.

The North East Link Project now has its own giant Tunnel Boring Machines to help build Victoria's longest road tunnels while a section of Greensborough Road was realigned to make space for tunnelling.

Major work ramped up from Watsonia to Bulleen, with earthworks and site compounds set up in preparation for tunnelling on the missing link in Melbourne's freeway network to start in 2024.

The Bulleen Park and Ride progressed, and the two preferred bidders for the next big elements of the North East Link were selected for the first section of the overhaul of the Eastern Freeway and the completion of the M80 Ring Road.

The regional communities of Huntly and Raywood celebrated new stations and the return of train services for the first time in decades thanks to the Regional Rail Revival.

The Warrnambool Line Upgrade allowed new services to run on the Warrnambool Line and the Waurin Ponds Station upgrade was finished, bringing more peak services to the busy Geelong Line.

The first VLocity trains started running on the Shepparton Line with upgraded stations opening at Nagambie, Murchison East and Mooroopna.

The Big Build is changing the face of Victoria with state-of-the-art infrastructure and community spaces, improving the way the state travels for generations to come.

It's been a huge 2022 on the road and rail projects shaping our state as part of Victoria's Big Build, with so much more to come in 2023.

#### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Jacinta Allan**

*"2022 has been a massive year on Victoria's Big Build and I thank Victorians for their patience and support as we continue to get the job done on dozens of rail and road projects across the state."*

*"We may be winding up for 2022, but we're not stopping yet – there's more to come on mega projects including SRL Airport, the Metro Tunnel, North East Link and West Gate Tunnel in 2023."*

#### **Quotes attributable to Major Transport Infrastructure Authority Director General Corey Hannett**

*"More than 40 million hours have been worked on Victoria's Big Build this year as we continue major road and rail projects across the state."*

*"Victoria's Big Build is not just providing better transport infrastructure for our state, it's providing great new outdoor spaces, transport hubs and community legacies for generations of Victorians to enjoy."*