

Monday, 15 January 2024

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Arden Station – the first of five new stations making up the Metro Tunnel – is now complete and ready for testing before the underground rail line opens a full year ahead of schedule in 2025.

Premier Jacinta Allan and Acting Minister for Transport Infrastructure Steve Dimopoulos today announced the end of construction at Arden Station, which forms the heart of a central and connected precinct located two kilometres from the Melbourne CBD that will be home to up to 34,000 jobs and around 20,000 people by 2051.

Sitting on a former industrial site, Arden Station features a soaring brick arched entrance, skylights to let natural light flow 14 metres underground, and Victorian-first platform screen doors for safe access to trains.

The modern station includes bike parking spaces, drop-off zones, accessibility carparks and will be within walking distance of the North Melbourne Recreation Centre, Arden Street Oval and the route 57 tram.

Across the precinct, the Labor Government is investing more than \$5 billion to expand both the Royal Melbourne Hospital and the Royal Women’s Hospitals, forming part of a new biomedical and health sciences hub that will be easily accessible from the station, giving every Victorian easy access to some of the world’s best health services.

Since construction began in 2018, thousands of workers have excavated 330,000 tonnes of rock and soil, installed 3,000 lights and laid 104,000 locally manufactured bricks.

Arden Station’s completion was accelerated to start testing systems and provide a template for the remaining stations. In recent weeks, crews have laid down Arden’s finishing touches – with landscaping, seating, paving, bicycle hoops and passenger information displays now in place.

The Metro Tunnel will connect the busy Sunbury, Cranbourne and Pakenham lines via a new tunnel under the city, creating an end-to-end rail line from the north-west to the south-east, freeing up space in the City Loop and creating capacity to run more trains more often.

The project, and its new High Capacity Metro Trains, will make room for an extra 121,000 peak-hour passengers every week – an increase of 45 per cent – saving people up to 15 minutes on a journey to Parkville and 25 minutes to St Kilda Road.

The Liberals called the Metro Tunnel a “hoax” and claimed it was all “smoke and mirrors” with “lots of words but nothing...happening”. Lacking any vision for the future, they called Arden “a giant vacant railyard, where no one lives” and said the project was going to be a “disaster”. In 2017, they even tried to block the project in Parliament.

In 2023, the Liberals said the Metro Tunnel was a “good” project that had “always experienced full-throated, bipartisan support from the Liberal Party.”

Quote attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

“The Metro Tunnel will save commuters hours every week and change the city forever.”

“I thank and congratulate the thousands of workers who have been employed on this site since the beginning, and the many thousands more who are building rail lines and roads right across Melbourne and regional Victoria.”

Quote attributable to Acting Minister for Transport Infrastructure Steve Dimopoulos

“The Liberals said it was a hoax, but here’s Arden Station in all its glory – and there’s four more of them to come.”