

Media Release

Gabrielle Williams MP

Minister for Transport Infrastructure
Minister for Public and Active Transport



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SHAPING THE FUTURE OF BALLARAT'S BUS NETWORK

The Allan Labor Government is inviting Ballarat passengers to have their say on the future of their local bus network, with community consultation now open until 7 December.

Minister for Public and Active Transport Gabrielle Williams this week announced the start of community consultation on the first of the regional bus network reviews funded through the *2025/26 Victorian Budget*.

Locals are encouraged to participate in the consultation and share their ideas on ways to improve their public transport services which will help plan for a network that works best for the community.

Buses are central to local public transport in our regional centres and help to connect communities to improve access to jobs, shopping, healthcare and education. Online and in-person consultation for Ballarat starts today and will run until Sunday, 7 December.

The Ballarat bus network was reformed in 2017, however since that time there has been significant population growth and further growth expected through the Ballarat North PSP, changes to travel patterns and increased working from home.

We have also made regional fares cheaper and more Victorians are choosing to travel in the regions with more than 62 million trips taken on the network and over \$162 million saved by passengers.

There are more train and bus services running in and around Ballarat. We delivered 135 extra weekly train services and 73 extra weekly bus services following the completion of the Ballarat Line Upgrade and Ballarat Bus Interchange in early 2021.

In February this year, the Allan Labor Government delivered more than 180 extra weekly services to Route 10, extending the service to connect residents in the Lucas Estate to Ballarat Central, and Wendouree and Ballarat Stations.

In April this year, we delivered a further 33 additional weekend train services to the Ballarat line and more than 320 additional weekend bus services for Ballarat.

Major construction at Ballarat Station is currently underway, with upgrades to accessibility, safety and connectivity for all passengers on track for completion in 2026.

The review of bus networks across the state follows the announcement of free public transport for Victorians under 18 from 1 January, with more than one million young Victorians and their families set to benefit.

Since launching Victoria's Bus Plan, more than 122 local bus networks have been improved, giving Victorian communities access to more than 9,300 extra services each week.

Further information on the consultation can be found at engage.vic.gov.au/Ballarat-Bus.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Public and Active Transport Gabrielle Williams

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"We understand how important local bus networks are to our regional communities, which is why we have commenced consultation to hear what matters most to Ballarat travelers."

"We want local bus networks to offer an attractive travel option for regional communities, whether they are travelling to the local train station, to local shops or services, or to work, school or social activities."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"Engaging with the Ballarat community ensures our bus network reflects the needs of those who work, live and study in the area and are able to get where they need to go."

Quote attributable to Member for Ripon Martha Haylett

"We have expanded bus services in recent years to the growing communities of Lucas and Smythesdale in Ballarat's west, but we know there is more to do. This bus review is an opportunity for local families to tell us where they want to see further improvements to our network."

Quote attributable to Member for Eureka Michaela Settle

"Good transport connects people — it helps communities thrive. This review is about listening to locals and understanding how they want to move around and stay connected."