



MEDIA RELEASE

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VTA welcomes North East Link PPP execution

The Victorian Transport Association has endorsed revisions to the North East Link that will see tunnels lengthened a further 1.9 kilometres in making the long overdue connection between the M80 and Eastern Freeways, completing the missing link in Melbourne's inner ring road.

In announcing an \$11.1 billion Public Private Partnership for the Spark consortium to build, operate and maintain North East Link for 25 years, the Victorian Government confirmed lengthening of the tunnels from the Eastern Freeway through to Watsonia, which will enable Greensborough Road to be transformed into a boulevard-like thoroughfare.

The heavily VTA backed North East Link project will connect the M80 Ring Road to an upgraded Eastern Freeway, providing an efficient connection for up to 135,000 vehicles each day, reducing travel times by up to 35 minutes, skipping 18 traffic lights on a trip to the airport.

Most importantly for freight operators, the North East Link will provide a seamless and uninterrupted connection from freight routes in the north of Melbourne through to industrial precincts in the city's south east, reducing truck traffic on Rosanna Road and taking pressure off the West Gate Bridge and CityLink.

"The VTA advocated forcefully for North East Link so freight and passenger vehicles have a more productive and efficient connection between the M80 and Eastlink and the Eastern Freeway," said VTA CEO Peter Anderson.

"We have been closely involved in consultations with the Victorian Government and local communities during the planning phase for the road's construction since the government confirmed North East Link would be built some years ago. Lengthening the tunnels will add to the already significant amenity improvements the project will deliver communities in Melbourne's north east by putting road traffic underground, reducing congestion on the existing above ground road network and creating space for new parks and recreational areas."

Anderson said the VTA would continue to work with planners to ensure heavy vehicles that are unable to use the tunnels are provided with safe and efficient alternative connections.

"During this early phase of planning it's critical that the road and traffic engineers get alternative over dimensional routes right for dangerous goods and livestock vehicles that cannot use the tunnels," Anderson said.

"This includes exit and entrance ramps that can safely carry oversize loads and dangerous goods vehicles, and upgrades to Rosanna Road and other gazetted freight routes that will be needed to carry certain types of freight. We commend the government for listening to the industry and the community and enshrining important design changes that will make North East Link an even better piece of transport infrastructure."

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