

STATEMENT BY THE NORTHERN COUNCILS ALLIANCE

FOR RELEASE

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Melbourne's north welcomes commitment by the Federal Coalition of \$2m for Upfield line

The Northern Councils Alliance (NCA) welcomes today's Coalition announcement of \$2 million to spearhead critical improvements to the Upfield rail line.

The funding is for a scoping report that will plan for the duplication, electrification and extension of the Upfield Line.

"This announcement is a wonderful recognition of the many years of advocacy by the NCA, member Councils and the broader community," said Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor of Merri-bek and Chair of the NCA.

"In 2024, the NCA launched the transport campaign '[Connect Melbourne's North](#)' to raise awareness of the need for increased investment of transport in Melbourne's north, with one of our priorities being the duplication, extension and electrification of the Upfield Line"

"We are very pleased to support this announcement and oversee the scoping report, which will underpin future commitments to rail infrastructure for our growing communities in Melbourne's north.

"Investment is urgently needed to provide more trains more often and a better experience for our community, and enable residents to access education, health, jobs and social connections."

Servicing the people of Merri-bek and southern Hume, the Upfield Line has one of the least frequent peak period services in Melbourne's rail network and is plagued by delays and cancellations. Duplicating the section between Gowrie and Upfield Stations will remove significant bottlenecks and improve frequency for passengers.

Further north, many residents in our growth communities in Mitchell, Whittlesea and northern Hume are currently only serviced by diesel V/Line services, which are nearing capacity earlier than predicted. Connecting the Upfield Line to the Craigieburn Line will allow full utilisation of the Upfield tracks, becoming the major corridor for suburban services for Wallan and reducing car ownership in the Northern Growth Corridor.

The significant residential, commercial and cultural development areas of Beveridge and Cloverton also lack train stations. Construction of a station at Beveridge will provide public transport to this emerging community, as will a station at our future city of Cloverton, which is anticipated to become one of Melbourne's most significant retail, commercial, employment and service precincts.

Melbourne's north is a region that is growing fast and will ultimately be home to more than 1.5 million people by 2036.

The NCA has been calling for major rail investments that will resolve issues around train and other transport services across the region. This public commitment of funding for a scoping report is a first step to timely delivery of vital transport infrastructure improvements.

The scoping report will potentially cover the timeline, project objectives, scope, stakeholder analysis, technical feasibility and requirements, environmental impact, high level economic impact, social impact, regulatory requirements, future patronage forecasts, travel patterns, land use assessment, risk assessment and financial viability, along with a high-level cost estimation. The report would also identify appropriate next steps and provide a set of recommendations.

The Northern Growth Corridor is projected to accommodate 30 per cent of Melbourne's future growth over the coming decades. Key rail investments are needed to resolve critical constraints on train services and to unlock the potential of Melbourne's north.

More information can be found at our websites:

www.northerncouncils.org.au and www.connectmelbournenorth.com

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