

STATEMENT BY THE NORTHERN COUNCILS ALLIANCE

FOR RELEASE

28 March 2025

Federal Government backs \$7m business case for Upfield Line improvements

The Northern Councils Alliance (NCA) welcomes the Federal Government's investment of \$7.05 million to develop a comprehensive business case for the much-needed uplift of services in the Northern Growth Corridor, including on the Upfield and Craigieburn rail lines.

The Upfield Line serves the fast-growing communities of Merri-bek and Hume and is one of Melbourne's least frequent peak-hour services, often impacted by delays and cancellations. Further north, residents in the expanding suburbs of Mitchell, Whittlesea and Hume are primarily reliant on diesel V/Line services that are nearing capacity, without any provision for services to the city of Cloverton.

Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor of Merri-bek and Chair of the NCA, welcomed the announcement, emphasising the critical role of rail investment in shaping the region's future.

"This funding is a major step toward delivering vital transport infrastructure that will support Melbourne's rapidly growing northern communities, unlock economic opportunities and improve residents' quality of life," Cr Davidson said.

"Commitment from the Federal Government is a recognition of the urgent need for better rail services in Melbourne's north. It builds on years of dedicated advocacy by our seven member Councils, who work collaboratively to gain much-needed infrastructure for the community," Cr Davidson noted.

"This business case is a key recommendation of comprehensive research conducted by the NCA on rail, bus and active transport.

"As noted in [Connect Melbourne's North](#), the NCA's transport campaign, one of our top regional priorities is the duplication, extension and electrification of the Upfield line to Wallan.

“We are delighted that our advocacy has resulted in both parties prioritising funding for this important project. Investment is urgently needed to provide more trains, more often, for our growing community.

“We look forward to working closely with the government to ensure timely delivery of the project, which will deliver a better-connected transport network that enables our residents to access education, health, jobs and social connections.”

By investigating upgrades to the Upfield Line and its potential connection to the Craigieburn Line, this business case will provide a foundation for improved train frequency, better service reliability and enhanced public transport access for the Northern Growth Corridor, which is projected to accommodate 30 per cent of Melbourne’s future population growth.

More information can be found at our websites:

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

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