

NEWS POST

RAIL FUTURES INSTITUTE INC - QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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PARRAMATTA LIGHT RAIL IS HERE

While Melbourne talks of a new Light Rail line between Caulfield – Chadstone and the Monash NEIC , Light Rail construction is surging ahead in both Canberra and Sydney. See page – 3 of this edition for the latest developments in our National Capital. The Autumn Edition of Newspost will give a similar update on Light Rail developments at Parramatta in the Western suburbs of Sydney.



Initial light rail consist delivered for Parramatta Light Rail

Photo - courtesy NSW Government

CONTRIBUTING TO RFI NEWSPOST

Members are invited to submit news articles, opinion pieces, letters to the editor plus reports of construction activities on transport projects. Submissions ideally should be no more than 800 words.

Members photos of current rail / tram activities are also welcome in jpeg or png format.

Contributions may be edited to fit the available space.

RFI reserves the right to edit / decline articles it considers not appropriate. Please forward all submissions to: secretary@railfutures.org.au

Opinions expressed in RFI Newspost are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Rail Futures Institute (Inc) . (RFI)

Editor - Val Sands

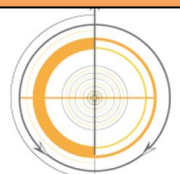
Publisher - David Hardy

Picture of the Quarter:



Night time photo showing an ARTC crane at Wangaratta removing the former pedestrian footbridge. Other current works at Wangaratta to cater for double stacked containers on the Melbourne – Parkes Inland Railway include a second platform on the Western side, a new pedestrian underpass, and a new Green Street road overpass at the Melbourne end of the station. The 1962 rail trench with its original standard gauge line will be filled in restoring direct street access to the station.

- Photo courtesy ARTC





PRESIDENT'S WORDS

MELBOURNE TRANSPORT PLAN

Having decided a few months back that RFI would publish in 2025 a thoroughly updated and revised Melbourne Public Transport Plan (MPTP) 2025 – 2060 as an updated version of our Melbourne Rail Plan (MRP) 2020 - 2050 (accessible on our website), the time has come for serious thinking about some of the key issues the new MPTP Plan will need to address. The reality is that the provision of public transport is not an end in itself but, when considered in the context of Melbourne's present and prospective development, how best can PT improve people's lives and contribute to environmental sustainability.

Some might ask why a smallish organization like RFI would take on such a daunting task? When RFI was founded back in 2013, we thought a key role for us would be to support and critique a Government Transport Plan – a mandatory requirement under the Victorian Transport Integration Act 2010. Unfortunately, there hasn't been one and there still isn't a plan! We have however set out on several occasions in an attempt to fill that vacuum.

As we embarked upon preparation of our MRP in 2017, we figured this would be easily completed within a year. In reality as it transpired it took almost 2 ½ years of serious effort by many before its final release in 2019, not long before COVID hit in 2020. In retrospect, the pandemic sucked most of the oxygen out of our advocacy efforts which we had hoped would gain wide exposure prior to the November, 2022 State Election. Nonetheless, during 2022 we received strong support from several Councils and other key stakeholders for our signature project proposal; East - West Metro Rail or EWMR.

For our forthcoming MPTP, we have reverted the branding to Melbourne Metro 2 or MM - 2, a title whose connotations will become more obvious and which, when explained, will be more readily understood. Our RFI members have already been given a taste of what this ambitious future project looks like with much more to come.

However, back to some key issues. The elephant in the room is our approach to the Suburban Rail Loop. Co-incidentally, and some time before any of us had heard of SRL, we had developed a Medium Capacity Transit (MCT) route from Monash University to Melbourne Airport via Burwood, Box Hill, Doncaster, Heidelberg, Bundoora and Broadmeadows much of which, because of terrain and environmental issues, would have to be underground. This was one of multiple MCT routes which featured in our MRP 2020 - 2050. Only a year later, this was largely replicated by the proposed Government SRL.



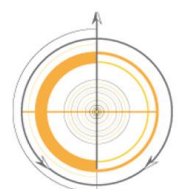
Some might even speculate they copied our idea! In any event, the State Government remains solidly committed to the SRL notwithstanding that many questions are now being asked regarding how it will be financed. In the context of our MPTP, it seems best that we too assume it will proceed to Box Hill by 2034, and continuing onto Melbourne Airport before 2060.

We expect that MM - 2 will be our signature project in the MPTP. It is of such a scale that full implementation will take at least two decades from now, optimistically assuming a commitment to progress the project is forthcoming ahead of the November 2026 State Election. Our proposal sees completion over four stages with the first completed in 2036 and the last in 2043. To the extent that initial commitment is delayed beyond late 2026, the entire MM - 2 project and its four stages would slip back in time.

Other significant rail projects likely to be in our MPTP are re-configuration of the City Loop which, having missed the opportunistic time slot aligned with MM - 1 completion, cannot now be reasonably completed before 2046, and *South-East FASTline*, a new line from the CBD to Dandenong via Caulfield, Chadstone and Monash which we have time lined for completion in 2055. The latter project might have been unnecessary had common sense future proofing prevailed in 2015 in designing the level crossing removals between Caulfield and Dandenong.

The MPTP will again have major sections covering heavy rail, MCT, the tram and bus networks, active transport and walking. We are fortunate to have a willing group of highly experienced and knowledgeable contributors ready to get started on the significant tasks to pull the MPTP together. We also have offers of peer review for sections of the Plan for which we are very grateful, with some preliminary work having already commenced. Some of our members will have specific suggestions or proposals which they would like included in the MPTP. Initially these should be forwarded by e-mail to me at president@raifutures.org.au I'll then endeavour to respond, either by phone or e-mail, as soon as I reasonably can. Looking forward to a productive 2024.

- John Hearsch





CANBERRA LIGHT RAIL NEWS UPDATE - Stage 2 A

The Canberra Metro consortium, comprising the CIMIC Group companies Pacific Partnerships, CPB Contractors and UGL, was late in 2023 awarded a contract to deliver and operate Stage 2A of Canberra's light rail network, connecting from the existing light rail network at Civic to a new interim terminus at Commonwealth Park. (The highly successful first stage already operating between Gungahlin in the north to Northbourne Avenue in Civic.)

Stage - 2A of the Canberra Light Rail project is jointly funded by the Federal and ACT Governments and is valued at \$ 577 million. Stage 2A will be "catenary free" (as an overhead wireless extension of 1.7 kms). This will be the third Canberra Light Rail package for Canberra Metro, and will operate using electricity from 100 % renewable sources. Construction will start early in 2024 with completion planned for late 2028.

Following on from the operating Stage 1 of the light rail network (Civic to Gungahlin), Canberra Metro is also currently delivering five (5) additional light rail vehicles with on-board energy storage batteries to allow for the extended wireless operation, without overhead wiring on Stage - 2A from Civic to Commonwealth Park. These extra vehicles will be housed at an expanded existing depot at Mitchell.



Stage - 1 Civic - Gungahlin Light Rail vehicle

The on-going staged extension of the Canberra Light Rail network will modernize the city's public transport system, connecting residential areas with employment centres and social and cultural hubs. The development of Light Rail delivering key Light Rail spinal routes radiating from Civic to key suburban modal interchanges will deliver an attractive and environmentally friendly alternative to thousands of daily car trips made by Canberrans.

The PPP model used to date in constructing Canberra Light Rail has proven highly successful, with Canberra Metro having mobilized a sustainable finance solution, a reliable delivery contractor and an experienced operations team jointly delivering a long term light rail network to serve our fast growing national capital.



Typical island platform stop on the Civic - Gungahlin route

Since Stage - 1 Civic to Gungahlin (11 kms and including 14 stops) opened in 2019 patronage has been above expectations with continued strong growth. Current service frequencies are up to every 5 minutes at peak times, and every 10 to 15 minutes at off peak times. In its first four years of operation a service an outstanding frequency reliability of 99.9 per cent has been achieved. Hours of operation are excellent too from 0600 to 2330 daily. Better still Stage - 1 was completed \$ 32 m under the project budget of \$ 675 m.

The recently contracted Stage 2A works from Civic down Commonwealth Avenue to Commonwealth Park are the next step in extending the Canberra Light Rail network initially to the Woden Town Centre. Here the Light Rail will at a totally NEW Woden Interchange connect with Urban bus routes radiating out to residential areas around Woden and South towards Tuggeranong.

Further planned stages over 25 years will see an ultimate key Spinal Canberra light rail network of:

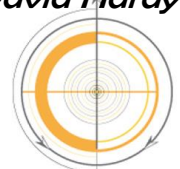
Stage - 3 Civic - Belconnen - Canberra Airport

Stage - 4 Woden - Mawson - Tuggeranong

Stage - 5 Civic - Dickson

Photos - Courtesy Wikipedia

- David Hardy





METRO – 1 DEDICATED BIKE LANES FOR GRATTAN ST.

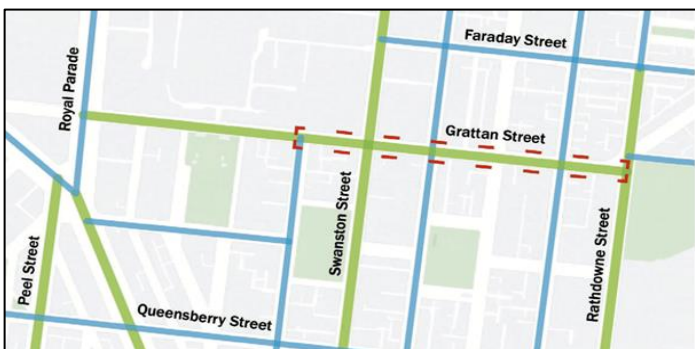
Work on construction of 1.3 kms of new dedicated bike lanes along Grattan Street in Carlton started early in 2024 and will take 3 – 4 months to complete. The City of Melbourne (CoM) signals a new enthusiasm in progressing its city-shaping bike lane program. These East < > West works in Grattan Street will link to the existing busy North < > South cycle lanes in Swanston and Rathdowne Streets.

With the forthcoming opening of the new Metro 1 station at PARKVILLE under Grattan Street in the University and Medical precincts, these new bike lanes will connect through to Elizabeth Street/Royal Parade, Peel Street, Flemington Road, and Arden Street. The Metro Tunnel and the CoM will separately provide the new separated bike facilities between Flemington Road & Swanston Street.

The project works will realize 1.3 kms of mainly kerbside bike lanes behind protective kerbing and parking bays (650m in each direction) along Grattan Street between Bouverie and Rathdowne Streets. Safety enhancements will also include new hook turns for motorists along Grattan Street at Cardigan, Lygon, and Drummond Streets. Additionally in Grattan Street, both road traffic lanes and bus stops will be re-configured to facilitate traffic flow.



Above: Showing NEW cross section with Grattan St bike lanes.



Above: Showing extent of dedicated bicycle lanes Grattan St.
- Images courtesy Bicycle Victoria

RECENT INDUSTRY

CEO APPOINTMENTS

On January 17, 2024 no less than four new CEO appointments were announced on the same day.

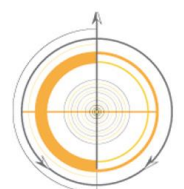
- Wayne Johnson will take over as the new CEO of the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC).
- Nick Miller was appointed CEO of the Federal Government's and ARTC Inland Rail project.
- Tim Parker was announced as the inaugural CEO of the Federal Government's High Speed Rail Authority.
- Craig Walker will take over as CEO of the existing Victorian Ports Authority.

AUCKLAND LIGHT RAIL AXED

On January 14 New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon announced that the former Government's Auckland Light Rail project would be scrapped. The proposed 24 km line was to have run South from the City Centre to the Airport, with a long tunneled section from Wynyard to Mount Roskill and then continuing on a surface alignment alongside the SH - 20 motorway to Auckland Airport.

The former New Zealand government had committed to building the Light Rail to Mount Roskill within four years of being elected, but after six years in office and with nearly \$ 230m spent not a single metre of track had actually been laid as at January, 2024. Auckland Light Rail Limited has been instructed to cease work immediately on the project, and to wind up the company.

The current New Zealand Government on cancelling the Light Rail project accompanied the announcement with the usual "spin and waffle" about reducing congestion, and creating more reliable and resilient transport, without giving any details as to how that might now actually be achieved. The main concern appears to have been spiralling costs up from an initial \$ 15 bn to \$ 29 bn. (The Auckland City Rail link under construction is not affected.)





METRO - 1 ARDEN STATION COMPLETED - January, 2024

The first of five (5) new stations on Melbourne's Metro 1 rail tunnel project was completed in January, 2024. Over the last six years construction of the new underground station at ARDEN has involved:

- Excavation of 330,000 tonnes of rock and soil
- Construction of the striking signature entrance archway and façade facing Laurens Street
- Pouring of concrete forming the stations two underground platforms
- Laying of track and installation of overhead catenary on the two platform tracks passing through the new underground station
- Installation of passenger escalators, lifts, PIDS and Victoria's first platform screen doors.

During the first weeks of January workers completed finishing touches underground including paving, seating and passenger information displays (PIDS). Above ground, work was completed on landscaping, paving, and the installation of signage, seating and bicycle hoops.

Work continues on completing the other four new underground stations at Parkville, State Library, Town Hall and Anzac – with Parkville expected to be the next station to be completed. Arden station's completion was brought forward so that station facilities could be tested fully before completion of the other stations on MM – 1.

Tests are now being undertaken at Arden to ensure that all station systems work and interface correctly including passenger information displays (PIDS), platform screen doors and ventilation systems. Arden Station will become the centrepiece of the new Arden commercial and residential precinct being developed in the area.



The impressive street level entrance at the ARDEN station in Laurens Street on the new Metro - 1 line.

Photo - Rail Projects Victoria

V/LINE ALBURY SERVICES FURTHER ENHANCED

Weekend passenger services on the Albury line have been further enhanced from late February, 2024 with the addition of an extra Albury – Melbourne return trip operating on both Saturdays and Sundays both as train/coach services via Seymour.

The new Weekend services have been provided by rationalizing existing Weekday coach/train services via Seymour with a single coach only now operating both the 0511 Albury – Seymour service (connecting with the 0801 Seymour - Melbourne train), and the 1613 Seymour – Albury service (connecting from Melbourne with the 1436 Down Seymour train.)

SOUTHERN CROSS - SEYMOUR - ALBURY

0707 Sat/Sun	VLP Train	1043
0830 Sat/Sun	XPT Train	1149
1204 Sat/Sun	VLP Train	1540
<u>1356 Sat</u>	<u>(VLP Train/Coach via Seymour)</u>	<u>1819</u>
1433 Sun	VLP Train	1816
<u>1636 Sun</u>	<u>(VLP Train/Coach via Seymour)</u>	<u>2059</u>
1802 Sat/Sun	VLP Train	2138
1950 Sat/Sun	XPT Train	2305

ALBURY - SEYMOUR - SOUTHERN CROSS

0408 Sat/Sun	XPT Train	0730
0645 Sat/Sun	VLP Train	1027
0845 Sat	VLP Train	1230
<u>0912 Sun</u>	<u>(VLP Coach/Train via Seymour)</u>	<u>1337</u>
<u>1031 Sat</u>	<u>(VLP Coach/Train via Seymour)</u>	<u>1457</u>
1251 Sat/Sun	VLP Train	1633
1510 Sat/Sun	XPT Train	1830
1727 Sat/Sun	VLP Train	2145

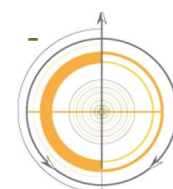
ALBURY - WANGARATTA

Sat	VLP Coach	Depart	1829	Arrive	1924
Sun	VLP Coach	Depart	2109	Arrive	2204

WANGARATTA – ALBURY

Sat	VLP Coach	Depart	0926	Arrive	1021
Sun	VLP Coach	Depart	0807	Arrive	0905

BLUE – NSW XPT Train PURPLE – VLP Train
 RED – VLP Train/Coach via Seymour Black – VLP Coach
UNDERLINED - Additional services from 19/02/2024





V/LINE DEFIBRILLATOR PROGRAM EXPANDED

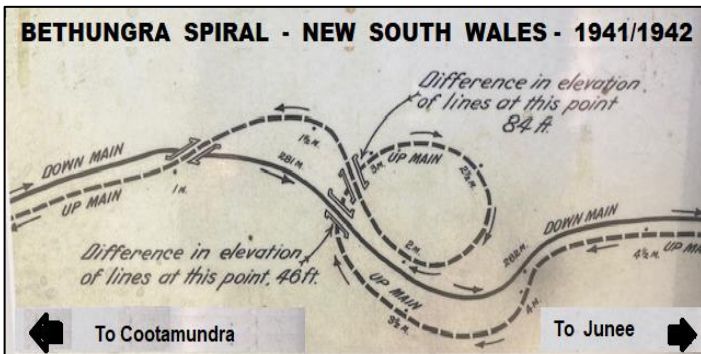
The State Government recently announced that works are now in hand to complete installation of heart defibrillators on all V/Line passenger train consists. Currently all V/line platforms at Southern Cross and all 47 staffed V/Line regional stations are equipped with defibrillators.

Of the full fleet of V/Line passenger train consists covering loco hauled trains of N/Z and H cars, and DMU trains of V/locity and Sprinter carriages to date 90 defibrillators have been installed. The program is now to be both accelerated and expanded to fit all V/Line passenger train consists with the lifesaving heart defibrillators.



ABOUT THE VALUE OF \$\$\$ and CAPITAL WORKS COSTS

In 1941 the New South Wales Railways started work on duplicating the 58 kilometre long single line section between Cootamundra and Junee. The works included construction of the heritage listed (April, 1999) Bethungra rail spiral used to ease the gradient for Sydney bound trains to 1 in 75, while the still used original single line from Sydney has a 1 in 40 downhill gradient. The works were completed in around two years at a total 1941 cost equivalent of \$ 2,138,000 with a peak work force of 600.



By comparison the current Victorian works to duplicate just 8 kilometres of track between South Geelong and Waurn Ponds including new stations at South Geelong and Marshall, bi-directional signalling on both tracks and grade separations at West Fyans Street and Surf Coast Highway, have a total cost of around \$ 950 million !!!



Letter to the Editor

Users of Victorian rail services, both suburban and rural, should be aware that the map displayed on stations and on trains which purportedly shows all rail passenger services in Victoria is deficient: in that the section between Ararat and Nhill where passengers can travel on "The Overland" paying Victorian fares.

I have raised this issue with politicians, bureaucrats including PTV and the best answer that I have received so far is that because the train service which takes passengers to Nhill (and on to Adelaide) is privately operated, it is therefore not included on the map.

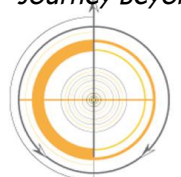
A close examination of the same map shows SkyBus, a privately run service between the City and Tullamarine Airport and which does not charge Myki fares. Both the Victorian and South Australian Governments contribute millions of dollars annually in subsidizing operation of "The Overland". Finally, the two weekly trains are included in public V/Line timetables between Melbourne and Nhill.

Why this farcical situation is allowed to continue bewilders me. The map is updated each time a new station is opened and so a Ministerial directive should be given that this bi-weekly service be displayed on maps and that there be publicity in the media to promote it. This should have the highest priority as a New Year's resolution. And if nothing is done, there is potentially material for part on an episode of Utopia.

Rod Watson. RFI Member (as sent to "The Age".)



Photo courtesy - Journey Beyond



V/LINE - BUSTITUTIONS

- *Max Michell*

A recent media release attributed to a State Minister went as follows - "The Allan Labor Government is delivering critical upgrades to the Shepperton Line (Spin Doctor's – spelling !!!), as works progress to deliver more frequent and reliable trains to communities in the Goulburn Valley."

But surely a five week shut down of the Seymour – Shepparton line and a concurrent two week shut down on the Seymour line represent a failure of reliability far more significant than anything the non 'upgraded' tracks might be expected to produce ? In fact the railways themselves (one or all) are the biggest cause for failure of reliability that there is - just ask any Rail Freight Operator or regular V/Line train traveller if one has any doubt.

An organization I am associated with recently planned to run a tour train from Seymour to Geelong during April. Every weekend in April (other than Easter) was a "no go" because of scheduled V/Line shutdowns south of Manor Junction or MTM shutdowns within the central Melbourne area. So then we looked at Bendigo in March. Same result - Bendigo is shutdown for two weekends and also involving the intermediate weekdays as well.

If, enabling multiple day shutdowns can be achieved by using buses as substitutes for trains why do we need to retain the regional rail passenger service at all ? Smarten up the bus system, and just abandon all pretence that we have a reliable, resilient regional rail passenger network and shut it down !

However the reality is that the railway is an integral part of our contemporary society, and particularly with rampant urbanization; fundamental to the way we live and work and can't be simply sidelined because of the institutional inability to manage it. We need a change in the way in which we manage the railway and the political imperatives that so often get in the way of good management. The recent 'flat fare' directive was a classic case of a political decision that had no back up funding to supply complementary infrastructure, additional standard gauge carriages or staff resources to support the predictable jump in patronage.

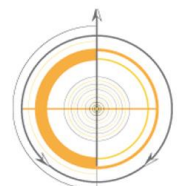
The starting point surely has to be for management to consistently "think like a passenger" (getting out of the office and being a passenger is always a good start !) - to understand what makes a journey reliable and pleasant and what makes it otherwise. Clearly that is not currently the case. From there we can identify a range of possibilities - some almost at no cost and some incurring additional cost.

The following dot points, in no particular order, identify some strategies that potentially could enhance V/line reliability and robustness:

- Accumulate shutdowns between infrastructure managers into single periods of highly productive work
- Installation (or replacement) of infrastructure to provide a high degree of redundancy in the event of wayward running (loops, crossovers, sidings etc.)
- KPI's that really reflect the passenger experience and relate to reality; a key management guide to quality rail operation.
- Bi-directional running on double tracked sections with frequently spaced crossovers.
- Incentivizing infrastructure managers and contractors to minimize shutdown times and penalize excess shutdown times.
- Prioritizing night time works where practical, undertaking as much work as reasonably possible to minimize day long shutdowns.
- Looking at using alternative routes and multiple tracks to by-pass work sites without having to shut whole lines (e.g temporary fencing between tracks to allow work on one track while the other continues in limited operation)
- Setting up track and signalling to minimize delays arising from speed reductions for crossing, cross moves, diverging moves and other impediments to consistent running.
- Managing stand-by crews and rolling stock so that short notice replacement trains can be operated when rostered trains run late or become defective.
- Reviewing options to limit third party delays - emergency services, trespassers, weather related events. In most such cases these involve a divergence of priorities, with rail passengers being well down the list.

The sad fact is that Victorian regional residents, who have much to gain from a reliable rail passenger service, are far too often having to make their own reliable alternative travel arrangements because of un-reliable bustitution of trains by V/Line. All too often due to extended periods of "no trains", in others due to the far too frequent incidence of cancelled, late or trains terminating/originating short of their scheduled destination / origin station. Whatever the outcome V/Line is clearly not currently serving regional communities in the way they are entitled to expect.

The over-riding objective should be to run as many of the scheduled trains as actually possible and to do so with a high degree of predictability.

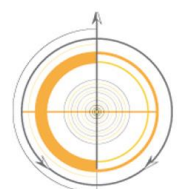




UPDATE ON NEXT BIG BUILD PRIORITY RAIL PROJECT RFI PROPOSAL METRO – 2



- NEW Metro line from the South West via the CBD to the North East
- NEW Metro Trains passenger service between Spotswood and Sunshine
- Interchange between **Metro 1 - BLUE** & **Metro 2 - RED** at BOTH Sunshine and Parkville stations, and with **Metro - 1** to Melbourne Airport
- Connects the South West via Spotswood and Fishermans Bend Precinct, Southern Cross, Flagstaff, Parkville and Fitzroy to the North East
- Interfaces at Southern Cross with V/Line regional trains and coaches
- Interfaces at Southern Cross and Flagstaff with other suburban lines
- Interfaces with CBD Tram and Bus networks at key train stations
- Connects at SUNSHINE station with V/Line South Western, Western, Northern, Goulburn Valley & North Eastern train services
- Extends MTM trains to Epping Central, Epping North, Aurora and WOLLERT, and to WYNDHAM VALE and MELTON
- Provides MTM train services between WERRIBEE, Werribee South, Black Forest Road and WYNDHAM VALE
- Delivers extra V/Line capacity with reduced travel times
- Reduces bus traffic in Lonsdale Street of the CBD.



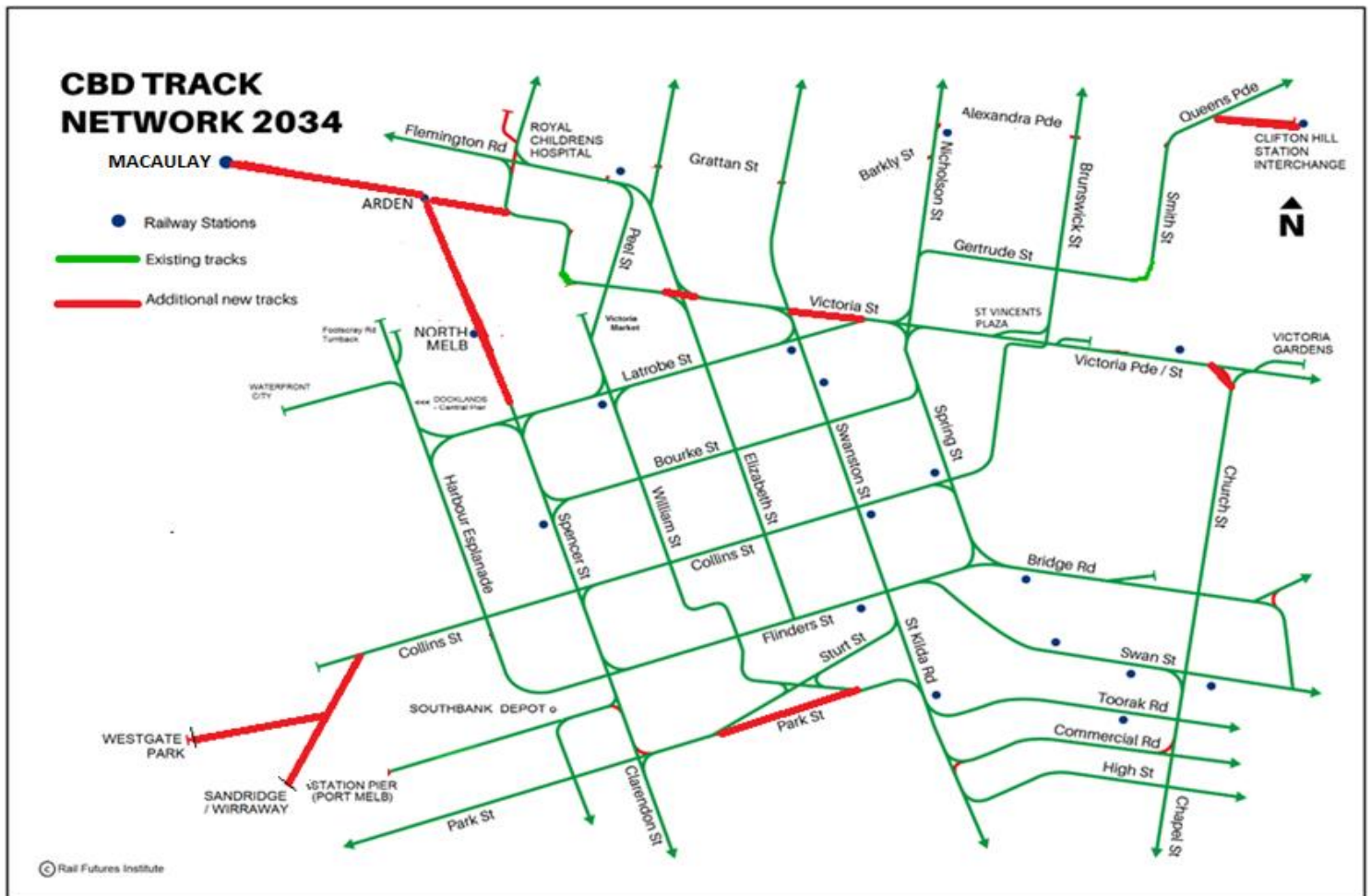


A REAL (RFI) TRAM PLAN - SHORT to MEDIUM TERM

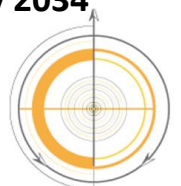
With the opening of Metro – 1 in 2025 RFI proposes both an extended and upgraded CBD and Inner Suburban Tram network to increase the carrying capacity of the tram network and offering a much wider range of trip choices outside of the existing limited choices.

This re-structured tram network would :

- Offer increased carrying capacity, and better fleet utilization
- Separate cars and trams to a much greater degree, reducing tram travel times
- ADD missing track sections in Park St (South Melbourne), Victoria and Arden Streets
- Link the CBD to both North Melbourne and Arden stations, and with each other
- Extend the CBD tram network into the FISHERMANS BEND and ARDEN precincts
- Offer hundreds of new trip options in developing a CBD and Inner Suburban GRID network of Train, Tram and Bus services operating to Turn Up & GO frequencies with extended hours of operation, seven days a week
- NEW CBD tram trip options outside of the existing North/South and East/West trips
- Progressively enhanced DDA compliance for both tram fleet and stops

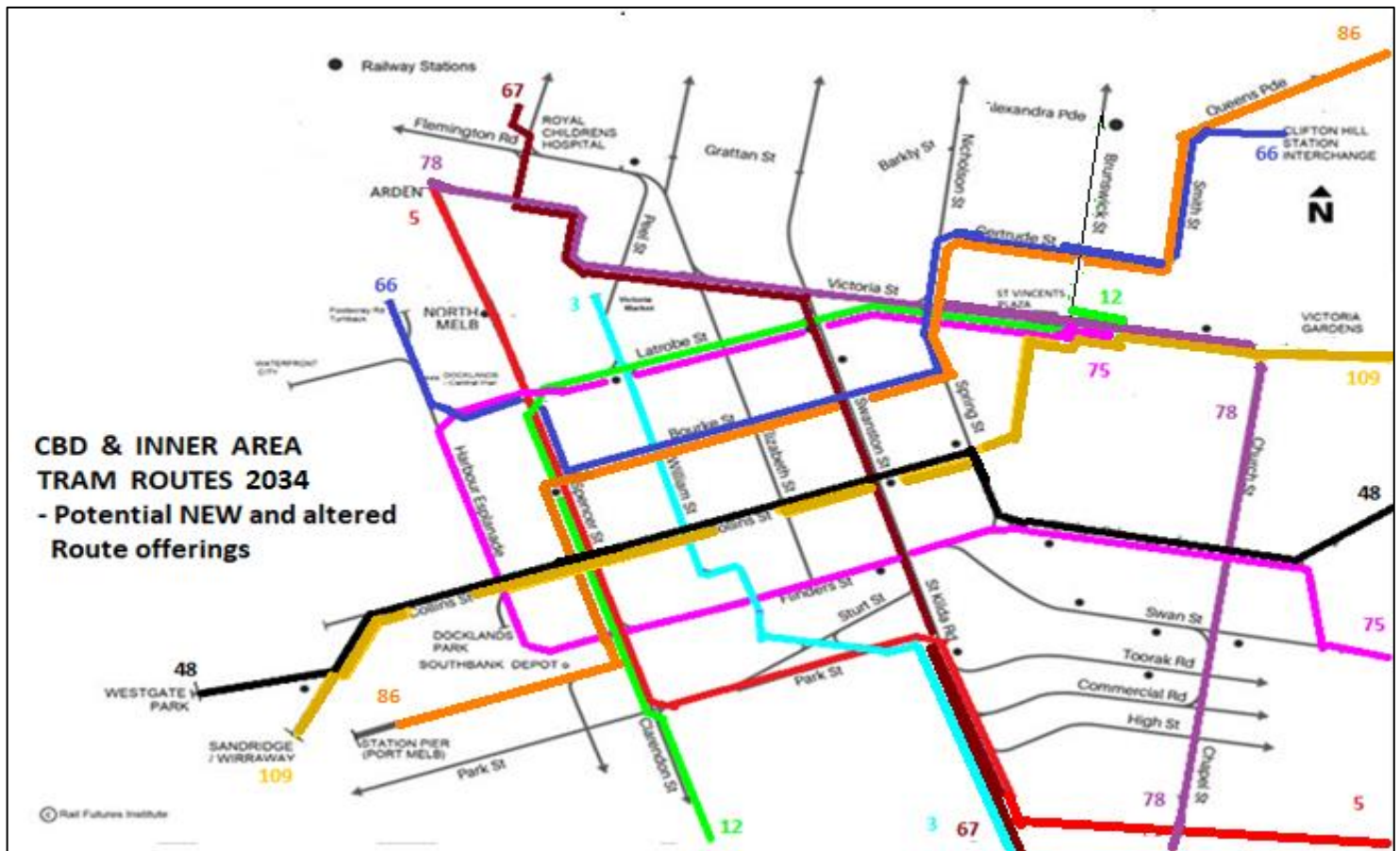


Above diagram showing existing and proposed additional CBD tram trackage by 2034





THE RFI TRAM PLAN - SHORT to MEDIUM TERM DIAGRAM SHOWING NEW & ALTERED INNER / CBD ROUTINGS NEW CROSS CBD ROUTES AND OUTER CBD TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES



ROUTE - 3

VICTORIA MARKET – William St – Kingsway – Anzac – St Kilda Rd – EAST MALVERN RS

ROUTE - 5

ARDEN RS – Nth Melb RS – Southern Cross – Sth Melbourne - Park St – Anzac RS – St Kilda Junction - WINDSOR (Dandenong Rd / Chapel St) - MALVERN (Wattletree Rd)

ROUTE - 12

St VINCENT'S PLAZA - Latrobe St - RMIT – Spencer Street - Southern Cross – South Melbourne – Clarendon St - Albert Park - St KILDA (Fitzroy St)

ROUTE - 48

WESTGATE PARK - Docklands – Collins St - Richmond – NORTH BALWYN

ROUTE - 66

E – GATE – Docklands - Southern Cross – Bourke St Mall – Fitzroy – CLIFTON HILL RS

ROUTE - 67

RCH PARKVILLE – North Melbourne – Victoria Market – RMIT - Town Hall - Anzac – St Kilda Rd – CARNEGIE RS

ROUTE - 75

St VINCENT'S PLAZA - RMIT - Melbourne Central – Docklands - Flinders St RS – MCG – VERMONT SOUTH

ROUTE - 78

BALACLAVA – WINDSOR (Chapel St / Dandenong Rd) - South Yarra – Cremorne – North Richmond – St Vincents Plaza - RMIT – Victoria Market – North Melbourne – ARDEN RS – Arden Precinct

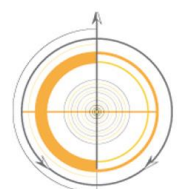
ROUTE - 86

PORT MELBOURNE - Southern Cross – Bourke St – Fitzroy – Clifton Hill – BUNDOORA RMIT

ROUTE - 109

SANDRIDGE – Docklands – Collins St – St Vincents Plaza – North Richmond – Victoria Gardens – Kew Junction - BOX HILL

(Existing Routes NOT shown above continue as now within the CBD area.)





THE COMBINATION OF ALTERED AND EXTENDED TRAM ROUTES 5 & 78 CREATE AN INNER SUBURBAN / CBD TRAM LOOP LINKING 7 TRAIN STATIONS & 22 TRAM ROUTES

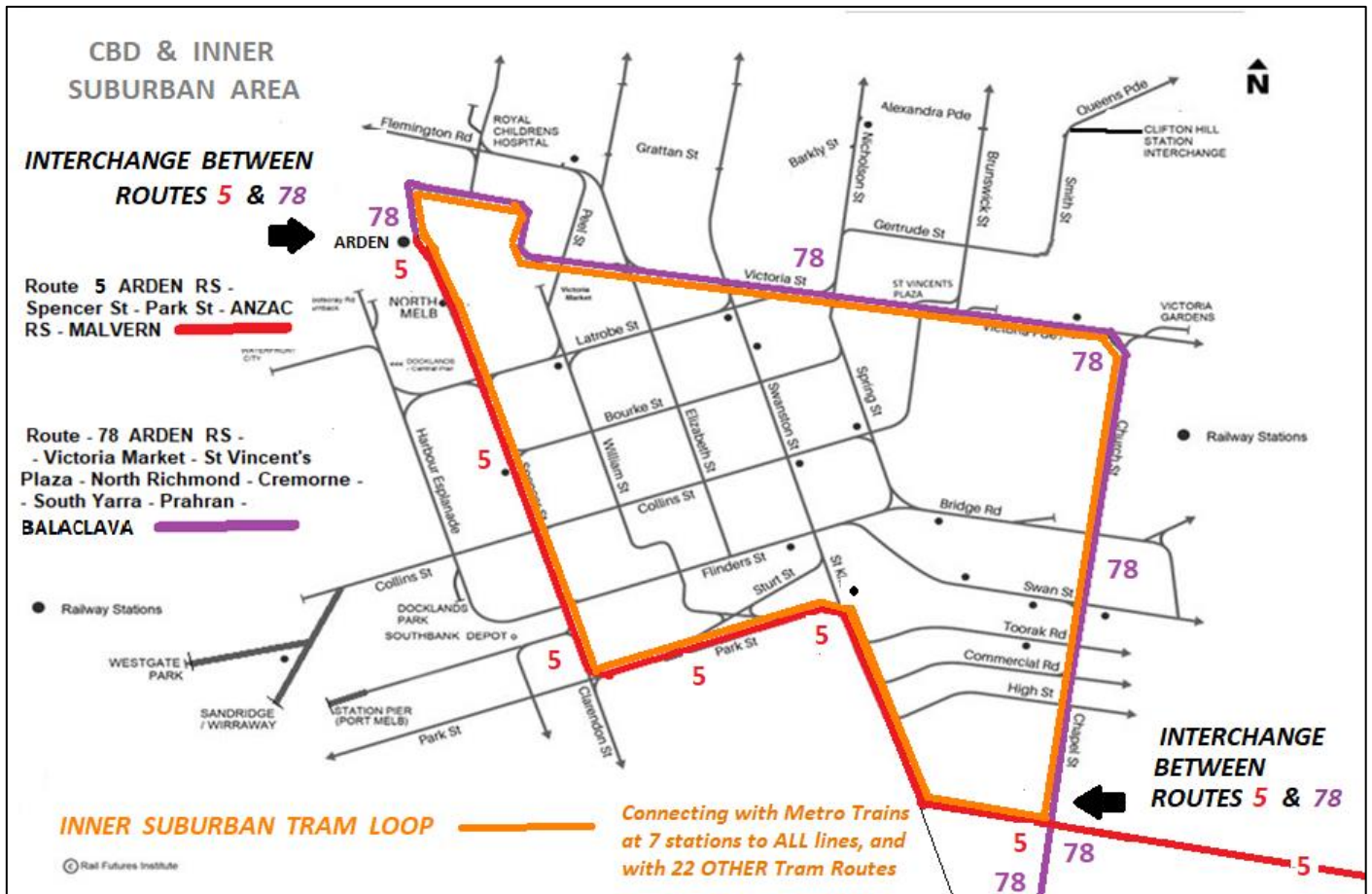


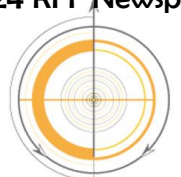
Photo - courtesy Bob Wilson

STOP PRESS

As this edition went to press advice was received of tram track works to proceed from mid 2024 at two CBD intersections shown in the RFI proposals in the CBD track diagram shown on page - 9.

- Substantial re-arrangement of tracks and connections at the intersection of Swanston and Victoria Streets at the City Baths will be undertaken.
- Installation of cross connection in Victoria Street at Elizabeth Street so as to allow for continuous tram travel along Victoria Street.

Full details will be in the Autumn, 2024 RFI Newspost





NEWS PIX FROM AROUND THE TRAPS



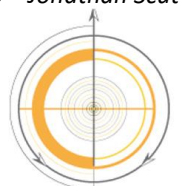
Down Long Island steel train at Mc Kinnon

- Photo Rod Watson



A collection of aged broad gauge motive power at Kensington B-76, T-356, B-75 and S-317

Photo – Jonathan Scutt





NEWS PIX FROM AROUND THE TRAPS



Concept photo of new Countrylink Spanish train for Sydney/Melbourne & Sydney/Brisbane services.

Photo – NSW Government



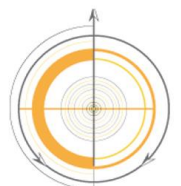
Concept First Class interior of new Countrylink Spanish train for Sydney/Melbourne services.

Photo – NSW Government



The first six cars of the new longer distance variant of the new NSW Regional / Interstate trains arrived from Spain mid February – 2024 seen here at Port Kembla (NSW).

Photo – Courtesy BRAG





NEWS PIX FROM AROUND THE TRAPS



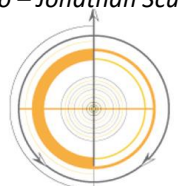
SSR grain train at the Port of Melbourne

Photo – Doug Spike



Preparatory works proceed for the new station at Ringwood East, early, 2024.

Photo – Jonathan Scutt





RAIL TRIVIA QUIZ

ANSWERS to TRIVIA QUIZ QUESTIONS In the Spring Edition of Newspost :

1. I travel on tram # 5106, and alight at a stop. Then from the very same 'platform' I catch tram # 3533. Which two tram routes have I travelled on ?

Tram # 5106 is one of the five bumble bee trams running exclusively on Route 96. Tram # 3533 is one of 38 x D1 short articulated low floor trams all of which operate out of the Malvern depot. As such they can be seen running on Routes 5, 6, 16 and 72. The only route where Malvern Depot routes share track and platforms with Route 96 is Route 16 between St Kilda Station/ Canterbury Rd and Luna Park. Therefore the answer is Routes 96 and 16.

2. There is one structure (a goods shed) on the North Eastern line dating back to 1873 - the date that line section opened. This structure still has much of the original building material in it. Where is it ?

The Euroa good shed (now disused but still largely intact) was built in 1873 with a stone/masonry base and timber clad in galvanised iron for the upper works (still with its British manufacturers stamp on most of the galvanized iron sheets). It was a design replicated also at Violet Town and Benalla but, the goods shed at Euroa is now the sole survivor. As far as is known it is the only remaining original building still in place on the North Eastern line. In December, 2023 Heritage Victoria placed an Interim protection order on the structure. It will now be interesting to see how the ARTC accommodate retention of this historic structure within complex works currently underway at Euroa to accommodate future operation of double stacked container trains on the Inland Railway route between Melbourne – Albury – Illabo and Parkes.

3. There are four different suburban train types currently running in Melbourne. All can currently be seen at Flinders Street station. Which train type will be the first to disappear from Flinders Street station ?

The four Metro train types are Comeng, Siemens, Xtrapolis and HCMT. The Comeng type is the first that will disappear from the system as a whole but at Flinders Street the opening of the Metro - 1 in 2025 will take the HCMT trains out of that station entirely - so the answer is that the last trains on the scene at Flinders Street will be the first to disappear from early 2025. (All HCMT trains will from Metro – 1 opening operate via the new Metro -1 tunnel by passing both Southern Cross and Flinders Street.)

4. The Victorian S class (diesel electric) locomotives originally had eighteen (18) members in total. Two were destroyed in the Violet Town collision (1969). Of the remainder how many still exist, and how many of those remain in commercial (as distinct from Heritage) service ?

Of the 16 still surviving S class locos after 1969, twelve remain in existence. S 308 is a museum exhibit, S300, 301, 303, 306, 307, 310, and 313 are in preservation (mostly heritage) and largely operable, while S302, 311, 312 and 317 are all in regular commercial service. So the answers are that 12 still exist, and 4 are still in active service.

- **QUIZ Questions and Answers supplied by Max Michell.**

