



MEDIA RELEASE 6 November 2008

## Road user groups back RACV transport fix

Members of the Road User Collaborative (RUC) today threw its' support behind RACV's vision for critical road, rail and public transport infrastructure required to keep Melbournians mobile.

RACV's *Outer Melbourne Connect* blueprint - detailing specific projects required sooner rather than later in outer Melbourne – has been evaluated by RUC, which comprises the Victorian Transport Association, Yarra Trams, Victorian Taxi Association, Victorian Motorcyclists Union RACV & other Representative Groups.

Victorian Transport Association Chief Executive Officer, Philip Lovel, said Members of the RUC now called on the State Government to support *Connect* and ensure the projects were delivered under the imminent Integrated Transport report.

*Connect* lists new road, rail and public transport projects, including 85 arterial road projects across outer Melbourne totaling \$3.2 billion, suburbs needing new or expanded bus services, and level crossings requiring grade separation.

RACV Public Policy General Manager, Brian Negus, said RACV believed the State Government should first seek Federal funding for the appropriate road and public transport projects before delivering the remainder of the backlog with an ongoing program of works through the private sector.

"These works could be built within about five years and paid for via "shadow tolls", where a private contractor constructs roads then recoups costs from government during a 20 to 30 year period based on vehicle usage of roads," Mr Negus said.

"Let me make this crystal clear: a shadow toll is *not* an extra tax, in fact there would be no additional charge to motorists using these new roads."

Mr Lovel said that the State and Federal governments had both stated they wanted to boost the economy and jobs via infrastructure spending.

"*Connect* is an ideal vehicle to achieve this outcome; outer Melbournians are increasingly choosing to work closer to home, and many industries have relocated to the middle and outer suburbs to benefit from the ready land supply and growing workforce," he said.

"The car remains the main mode of transport for outer Melbournians and cross-town bus services remain inadequate to service the community."

Mr Lovel said the RUC members also believed the State Government should waste no time embracing the "shadow toll" funding concept.

"If the Government acts proactively, we could potentially complete 30 years worth of much needed infrastructure in as little as five years, providing a boost to road safety, the economy, employment market and productivity. We simply cannot afford another 20 years of drip feeding only a handful of improvements each year," he said.

■ View the *Outer Melbourne Connect* report at:

<http://www.racv.com.au/wps/wcm/connect/Internet/Primary/road+safety/roads+%26+traffic/improving+victoria+n+roads/outer+melbourne+connect/>

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