

People across Melbourne will be paying CityLink tolls for an extra 10 – 12 years to fund the construction of yet more toll roads that won't solve traffic congestion.



Are toll road spaghetti junctions our vision for a liveable Melbourne?

Melbourne prides itself in being a liveable city. Yet over the past 30 years, we have underinvested in its public transport, and built freeways and toll roads that don't work. We know you can't solve congestion by building more toll roads – our travel speeds are just getting slower. The government knows this too, with its own modelling showing that travel times on the West Gate Freeway, the Bolte Bridge and Geelong Road will be *slower* after the West Gate Tunnel toll road is built than they are today.¹

Why is transport planning for Melbourne left to Transurban?

Transurban, the powerful road-building corporation that owns most of Australia's toll roads, holds sway with government. Transurban makes money by building toll roads that do nothing but shift traffic problems on to a new bottleneck. The solution to that new bottleneck is yet another toll road. This has happened again and again: with CityLink, EastLink and now the proposed West Gate Tunnel and North East Link.

Instead of doing the work themselves, Premier Dan Andrews and Treasurer Tim Pallas have outsourced transport planning for Melbourne's west to Transurban. In a secretive process, Transurban dismissed alternatives, such as more public transport, a new rail tunnel from Newport to Southern Cross Station, or widening freight routes such as Sunshine Road.²

Never likely to use the West Gate Tunnel? You'll be paying for it anyway.

Legally, Transurban has to stop charging tolls on CityLink as early as 2025. But in order to fund the West Gate Tunnel, the government wants to allow Transurban to toll CityLink for an extra decade. This means that people who never go to Melbourne's west will continue paying Transurban every time they use CityLink, for years and years. It's a deal that's worth billions of dollars to Transurban, which already brings in nearly \$2 million a day from CityLink tolls.³

What will the impact be on the climate?

The West Gate Tunnel is expected to create 457,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases from construction alone.⁴ But that's just the start of the story. The project would get more people into their cars, with 60,000 cars using the tunnel every single day, outweighing the reductions in cars on the West Gate Bridge and other roads.⁵

What plan do The Greens have?

The Labor Government wants to spend \$1.5 billion of Victorian taxpayer's money on a toll road that won't even solve our traffic congestion problems.⁶ This is money that could otherwise be spent on public transport and getting more freight off trucks and onto rail.

There's a massive demand for better public transport options in the west. When the Tarneit Train Station opened in 2015, people flocked to it, quickly making it the busiest V/Line station after Southern Cross. We need a fast and reliable public transport system that includes frequent buses connecting to trains.

Public transport can move people in a way that roads just can't. A train line can carry 40,000 people per hour in both directions, while a freeway only manages 24,000, and that's when it's a massive 12 lanes wide. It's also surprisingly cheap – the overall economic cost per passenger kilometre is much lower for public transport than roads. Making it happen is also affordable because the immediate need isn't more infrastructure, it's better buses and more frequent trains.

We're not saying people have to give up their cars. We're saying they deserve choice. We must invest in better public transport for Melbourne's west and its rapidly growing population. It's a much more long-term solution than building a freeway, widening it, then widening it yet again as it continues to fill up.

When it comes to trucks, we certainly need to ban trucks from residential streets in the inner west, but we don't need an expensive toll road to make it happen! We could bring in truck bans now, or with truck ramps off the West Gate Freeway, for a fraction of the cost of the West Gate Tunnel.

We also need to move into the 21st century when it comes to how we get freight out of the port. The Port of Melbourne is Australia's biggest container port, and we still move most containers on trucks, one container at a time. The smart solution is to put containers onto rail, where they get taken out to three distribution hubs around Melbourne. Most of the infrastructure is already in place for this and finishing it off -- through the Port-Rail Shuttle project -- would cost just 1% of the cost of the West Gate Tunnel.

Melbourne's transport planning is too important to leave to companies like Transurban that are only interested in making profits. It's time for long-term transport solutions for our city!

Submissions to the Labor Government's report on the West Gate Tunnel (the Environment Effects Statement) are open until 10 July.

**For more information on the West Gate Tunnel, and to make a submission, go to:
www.thetollroadwontwork.org.au**

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¹ Figure 199, page 331, and Figure 204, p. 334, Technical Report A - Transport, Part 1, GHD Pty Ltd.

² West Gate Tunnel Project, Environmental Effects Statement, Volume 1, Chapter 3, p. 3.

³ Robins, B, "Transurban profits as revenues rise twice as fast as traffic volumes", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 October 2016 <www.smh.com.au/business/transurban-profits-as-revenues-rise-twice-as-fast-as-traffic-volumes-20161013-gs1cqi.html>

⁴ West Gate Tunnel Project, Environmental Effects Statement, Executive Summary, p.ES-22.

⁵ p. 256 and figure 158, p. 251, Technical Report A – Transport, Part 1, GHD Pty Ltd.

⁶ 2016/17 Victorian State Budget, p.3 Budget Paper 4: State Capital Program