February 2017

Banyule City Council

Completing the Metropolitan Ring Road

North East Link Project Action Plan

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# Summary

The North East Link Project Action Plan (NELPAP) outlines Council’s commitment to work with the community to advocate for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road and to determine the Future of Rosanna Road. The NELPAP welcomes and values the contributions of all its community in achieving this outcome.

The NELPAP identifies four goals and nine actions which will address the issue of advocating for and facilitating discussion on the possible alignments for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road. The Plan will also play a part in determining the future of Rosanna Road.

Importantly, the NELPAP has been developed in collaboration with the North East Link Community Focus Group, which comprises a cross selection of ten community members, Banyule Councillors and Council Officers. The Action Plan also responds to the Banyule Integrated Transport Plan (BITP) action ‘*advocate for a North-East Link as a direct orbital link from the Metropolitan Ring Road to Eastlink’*.

The NELPAP is a 12 month plan that includes actions and projects that will be implemented during 2017.

# Background

Council has long recognised the need for and advocated for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road as a direct orbital link from Greensborough Bypass through to Ringwood. The completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road is Council’s highest transport priority. Banyule’s current arterial road network, including Rosanna Road and Greensborough Highway, is used as a link for freight and commuter traffic between the northern and western suburbs and the south eastern suburbs. Rosanna Road and Greensborough Hwy experience high levels of congestion, impacting on road user safety and the amenity of surrounding residents.

The completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road would connect the freight centres around Dandenong and the agricultural centres in Gippsland with the Hume Freeway and other interstate corridors.

In late 2016, the State Government committed $35 million to put together the business case for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road, including route selection, planning approval and tendering. The State Government has established the *North East Link Authority* to oversee the project.

Council has prepared itself for this vital project and engaged with the community, by establishing a community focus group to understand the local issues and assist in the development of an action plan advocating on the North East Link. The North East Link Project Action Plan (NELPAP) has been developed with the community focus group.

Completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road will have significant positive impacts and improve safety on roads in Banyule, particularly Rosanna Road and Greensborough Highway, which carry a disproportionately high volume of commuter and truck traffic. The North East Link Project Action Plan allows Council to address a myriad of issues associated with the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road including advocacy, route selection, community consultation and communication, and developing a vision for Rosanna Road. The North East Link Project Action Plan aligns perfectly with the strategic directions of Council’s Integrated Transport Plan and Safe Travel Plan.

# Development of the North East Link Project Action Plan

In July 2016, Council sought expressions of interest from residents and community members to join a community focus group to guide Council in the development of a North East Link Project Action Plan.

The North East Link Community Focus Group was formed, comprising ten community members, Banyule Councillors and Council officers to:

* Provide information to Council on issues around safety and amenity of Rosanna Road and Greensborough Highway from Banksia Street through to the Metropolitan Ring Road.
* Provide ideas and thoughts on how best to advocate for an orbital north east link between Greensborough and Eastlink.
* To respond to and provide advice on the draft Action Plan.

The community focus group met on two occasions – a workshop held in September 2016 and a further development meeting in November 2016. The Focus Group has worked together to develop a draft Action Plan, which includes a series of short term actions and projects that guide Council’s advocacy on the North East Link Project.

The actions of the NELPAP have been organised under four goals:

* Jointly advocate for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road.
* Facilitate and encourage discussion on potential alignments for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road.
* Determine the Future of Rosanna Road.
* Promote the Action Plan.

# National and State Policy Content

*The Transport Integration Act (2010*) sets out decision-making principles that are to be applied when specified organisations undertake transport planning. Where councils make decisions that impact upon the transport system, the Act requires that transport system objectives and decision-making principles be considered. Council planning must follow these principles when developing transport plans, including the North East Link Project Action Plan.

*Plan Melbourne* outlines growth and development priorities for Melbourne to 2050 and will have a significant impact on the future of planning and development in Banyule. This includes the North East Link connecting the Metropolitan Ring Road to the Eastern Freeway at Ringwood.

In December 2016, Infrastructure Victoria released its first 30 year *Victorian Infrastructure Strategy.* The North East Link has been identified as Victoria’s next priority transport infrastructure project, to be constructed within 10 – 15 years. The Strategy identifies that the link would enhance access to major employment centres, particularly the Latrobe NEC and the Epping, Ringwood and Broadmeadows MACs, through improved orbital road connectivity and improve the capacity of the freight network, particularly from the southeast and Gippsland.

The State Government has established the *North East Link Authority*, overseen by the Victorian Coordinator General, under the same model used to progress the Metro Tunnel, the Western Distributor and Level Crossings Removal, to oversee the project.

*Victoria – The Freight State* outlines the State Government’s long-term strategy to improve freight efficiency, grow productivity and better connect Victorian businesses with their markets, whether local, national or international.

*The Victorian Road Safety Strategy (2013*) sets a target to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on our roads by more than 30%. Realising this target would see Victoria’s annual road toll fall to below 200 persons. This will require a combined approach that targets the safety of the road environment, the vehicles in which people travel, and the behaviour of everyone on the road.

# Banyule City Council Policy Context

The NELPAP clearly articulates Council’s commitment to advocate on behalf of its community and to promote the improved design of local neighbourhoods to enhance ease of movement and access to goods, services and employment as described in the *City Plan 2013-2017*, which outlines Council’s vision, objectives and key directions under five themes: **Participation**, **Performance**, **Place**, **People** and **Planet**. ‘Place’ describes the buildings, structures and spaces in which we live, work, shop and play. It is about our surroundings, how we interact with and move about within them. ‘Place’ also shapes our interactions with others and influences the quality and frequency of our social and economic activities.

The NELPAP also considers a range of other policies and strategies within the objective themes of **People**, **Planet, Participation** and **Performance**, including the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan,* the *Access and Inclusion Policy (*both under **People**), and the *Environmental Policy* (under **Planet**)

The *Banyule Integrated Transport Plan 2035 (BITP)* is a long-term strategic plan that helps guide transport and land use decisions in Banyule. The plan provides an overall framework to address transport issues, and create a more accessible, safe, liveable and sustainable community. It sets a long-term vision and includes high-level policies, and outlines strategies and actions to achieve this, including advocating for a North-East Link as a direct orbital link from the Metropolitan Ring Road to Eastlink.

*The Banyule Safe Travel Plan (2016-2026)* has a Vision for Pathways to safer journeys – moving people via people-friendly streets. The Plan aims to remove barriers to safe, convenient and confident journeys on foot, by bicycle, and by public transport. Additionally, it seeks active support and participation by individuals, community groups and business in efforts to achieve safe travel.

# Conclusion

The NELPAP has been developed collaboratively based on workshops and meetings held between Council and the North East Link Community Focus Group.

The NELPAP includes a series of short term actions and projects that have been developed by Council and the North East Link Community Focus Group to guide Council’s advocacy on the North East Link Project. The Action Plan has considered the relevant State and Local Policies and Strategies, including Council’s Banyule Integrated Transport Plan, in its development.

# Action Plan

“Completing the Metropolitan Ring Road”

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## Goal 1: Jointly advocate for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road

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|  | Task | Expected Results | Responsibility | Resources | Due Date | Status |
| 1.0 | Goal: Jointly Advocate for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road | | | | |  |
| 1.1 | Identify and agree on a catch-phrase for the North East Link project which reflects the orbital nature of the route. | Catch-phrase agreed and used for all advocacy | Focus Group | N/A | Dec 2016 | Complete |
| 1.2 | Seek support from neighbouring Councils for a working group to advocate for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road and other major transport improvements | Neighbouring Councils meeting and actively involved in advocacy | Banyule City Council | $ | Feb 2017 | Commenced |
| 1.3 | Identify and seek support from industry partners to jointly advocate for the planning and construction for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road. | Industry partners actively involved in advocacy | Banyule City Council | N/A | Feb 2017 | Commenced |

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## Goal 2: Facilitate and encourage discussion on potential alignments for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Task | Expected Results | Responsibility | Resources | Due Date | Status |
| **2.0** | **Goal:** **Facilitate and encourage discussion on potential alignments for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road** | | | | | |
| 2.1 | Advocate for Council involvement setting the scope and objectives in the route assessment and development of alignments for the North East Link Project. | Involvement in setting up of route assessment and alignment development. | Banyule City Council, North East Link Authority | $$$ | April 2017 | Commenced |
| 2.2 | Prepare material discussing benefits of the North East Link as an orbital route completing the Metropolitan Ring Road and present arguments of the benefit of an orbital link. | Build case for the North East Link as an orbital route completing the Metropolitan Ring Road | Banyule City Council | $ | April 2017 |  |

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## Goal 3: Determine the Future of Rosanna Road

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|  | Task | Expected Results | Responsibility | Resources | Due Date | Status |
| **3.0** | **Goal: Determine the Future of Rosanna Road** | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Work with VicRoads and the Community to develop a short term vision of Rosanna Road, including signalling and vehicle restrictions. | Key improvements for Rosanna Road | VicRoads/Banyule City Council | $$ | June 2017 |  |
| 3.2 | Develop a long term vision for Rosanna Road. | Key improvements for Rosanna Road | VicRoads/Banyule City Council | $$ | December 2017 |  |

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## Goal 4: Promote the Action Plan

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|  | Task | Expected Results | Responsibility | Resources | Due Date | Status |
| **4.0** | **Goal: Promote the Action Plan** | | | | | |
| 4.1 | Raise awareness of the work of the North East Link Community Advocacy Focus Group and the Action Plan. | Increased awareness of plans for the completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road | Focus Group, Banyule City Council | $ | April 2017 |  |
| 4.2 | Present the Action Plan to the State Government, VicRoads and other relevant Authorities. | Improved transport outcomes for the North East. | Focus Group, Banyule City Council. | NA | March 2017 |  |