

MEDIA RELEASE
MONDAY 24 AUGUST 2020

BRACKS, BRUMBY, RYAN JOIN FORCES FOR CITY DEAL AMID COVID-19 CRISIS

“A City Deal for the North and West Melbourne region was urgently needed before COVID-19... it is even more critical today.” – Former Premier of Victoria, the Hon Steve Bracks AC

“With the population in North and West Melbourne tipped to reach 3 million by 2040, we need to kickstart the economy in this region, and this Plan is the key to doing just that.” – Former Premier of Victoria, the Hon John Brumby AO

“Investment in the North and West will be critical to the economic response to, and recovery from, COVID-19 – not just for our region, but for the state, and for the country.” – Senator for Victoria, the Hon Scott Ryan

Former Victorian Premiers the Hon Steve Bracks AC, the Hon John Brumby AO, and President of the Senate and Senator for Victoria the Hon Scott Ryan today launched the *North and West Melbourne City Deal Plan 2020-2040*, a 20-year proposal of projects and investment for the region.

The *North and West Melbourne City Deal Plan 2020-2040* aims to kickstart economic recovery in one of the fastest growing regions of Australia, reboot business, boost social and economic inclusion, and leverage existing strengths in health, food production, manufacturing and logistics.

One in 12 Australians and one in three Victorians live in the North and West Melbourne region.

In an unprecedented collaboration, 13 local Councils represented by LeadWest and the Northern Councils Alliance, La Trobe and Victoria Universities, and economic development bodies NORTH Link and the West of Melbourne Economic Development Alliance, have joined forces to develop shared priorities for the North and West Melbourne region.

The North and West Melbourne region has been hardest hit by the pandemic, against a backdrop of some of the highest unemployment rates in Victoria. More than 60 per cent of Victoria’s cases of COVID-19 have been recorded in Melbourne’s North and West, with businesses heavily reliant on JobKeeper to sustain staff.

“A City Deal for the North and West Melbourne region was urgently needed before COVID-19... it is even more critical today,” former Premier and Member for Williamstown, and Chancellor-elect of Victoria University, Steve Bracks, said.

“Before the pandemic, 300,000 jobs were going to be needed to match the projected population growth in the region. Even more jobs will be needed now.”

“This proposal for 66 transformative and enabling projects is a blueprint for the region to respond to the impacts of the pandemic, and, over the medium-term, to create a job-generating plan to deliver economic prosperity in Melbourne’s North and West.”

Former Premier and Member for Broadmeadows, and now Chancellor of La Trobe University, John Brumby said this is the first time the North and West has come together with a single economic vision, with bipartisan support.

“With the population in North and West Melbourne tipped to reach 3 million by 2040, we need to kickstart the economy in this region, and this Plan is the key to doing just that.”

“So far, around 80,000 jobs have been lost in the North, with thousands more employees on reduced hours, and almost half of the businesses in the West have lost more than 25 per cent of their revenue compared to same period last year as a result of COVID-19,” Mr Brumby said.

Senator for Victoria Scott Ryan said the region is of vital economic importance, containing Melbourne Airport, the Port of Melbourne, the national freight rail terminal and the Hume Freeway.

“For our nation to succeed, the North and West Melbourne region needs to succeed,” Senator Ryan said.

“Investment in the North and West will be critical to the economic response to, and recovery from, COVID-19 – not just for our region, but for the state, and for the country.”

To read the *North and West Melbourne City Plan Deal 2020-2040*, visit: www.nwmcitydeal.org.au

Media Enquiries: Evelyn Ek – 0412 887 853

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About City Deals

City Deals allow Commonwealth, State and local governments to work together to drive national priorities tailored to local needs, develop plans for growth and commit to shared actions.

The Federal and State Governments committed to developing a North West Melbourne City Deal in 2019 and asked local communities to develop a plan for what it might look like.

The *North and West Melbourne City Deal Plan 2020-2040* is a community effort to arrive at a joint list of investment priorities for the region. The next step in progressing the deal is to seek formal Memorandum of Understanding arrangements at a Commonwealth, State and local government level.

The Plan

The *North and West Melbourne City Deal Plan 2020-2040* includes 16 transformative and 50 enabling projects that will unlock economic development opportunities across the eight key precincts of Broadmeadows, Cloverton/Beveridge, Cobblebank, Epping, Footscray, La Trobe, Sunshine and Werribee.

The proposed 66 projects align to four priorities for the region – Future Economy; Transport and Connectivity; Health and Wellbeing; and Liveability.

Major Projects for the North and West of Melbourne

The Plan includes intergenerational investment projects, some of which are underway or planned, while others are brand new.

They include:

- The Melbourne Airport Rail Link – which would create up to 15,000 jobs and transform Sunshine to become an economic powerhouse for Melbourne’s West.
- The Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal – which will be crucial to the success of Inland Rail, and provide 18,000 jobs.
- The La Trobe University City of the Future Redevelopment – which would create 20,000 jobs, and education facilities for more than 40,000 students.
- More public transport, including extended bus networks and the Suburban Rail Loop, which would connect Melbourne’s middle suburbs to priority growth precincts.