

RESPONSE TO PETITION

Petition Number: 8123
Petition Sponsored by: Samantha Ratnam
Directed to: Gabrielle Williams MP
Tabled on: 18 April 2024

Petition Grievance:

The petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draw to the attention of the Legislative Council that there are 5.5 km without accessible tram stops on Sydney Road between Brunswick Road and Bakers Road, Coburg North.

Once the Upfield train line is closed to remove the train level crossing and build a Skyrail, there will be no accessible public transport along the Upfield corridor for at least 18 months. Where does that leave people with a disability, parents with prams, elderly people and anyone with temporary mobility restrictions?

Under federal legislation, public transport in all states was required to be fully accessible by the end of 2022.

Petition Action:

The petitioners request that the Legislative Council call on the Government to act on its legal responsibility to make the tram stops on Sydney Road accessible before construction on the Upfield train line starts. The tram stops must be permanent to guarantee transport users' safety and not to waste taxpayers' money with temporary stops.

Reply:

The Allan Labor Government is dedicated to ensuring Victoria's transport network is accessible for everyone, which is why we have invested in projects to improve accessibility for all modes of transport.

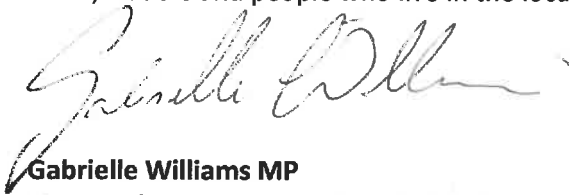
Melbourne's Tram Plan, sets out how the Government will continue to deliver a tram network for the future that puts passengers first and gets them to where they need to go. It identifies the best way to move forward for the network, services and tram infrastructure and ensures Melbourne's trams continue their critical role in moving locals and tourists alike.

A key component of the Tram Plan is taking a new corridor approach to planning tram stop upgrades. This work investigates options for streamlining the design and construction of accessible tram stops. Accessible tram stops are being developed with this corridor-by-corridor approach, with current priorities focussing on one corridor for delivery (La Trobe Street in the CBD) and three corridors for development (Droop Street, Footscray; High Street, Thornbury and Smith Street, Fitzroy). Stops in other areas and corridors will be considered as part of future development packages.

To date we have delivered 83 accessible tram stops, with a further pipeline of 24 stops in delivery, and planning for future corridors of level access stops underway. Earlier this year, we commenced community consultation for the La Trobe Street works, where we are on track to our commitment of 12 level-access tram stops at six locations by the end of the year. That's safer and more accessible stops right across stops at Docklands Stadium, Spencer, William, Elizabeth, Swanston and Exhibition streets on La Trobe Street – each fitted with raised platforms to provide level boarding with low-floor trams, new shelters, seating, improved lighting, and passenger information displays. The completion of this corridor will mean that nearly every tram stop in Melbourne's CBD is accessible for all Victorians. We've been working hard to

ensure that accessibility remains at the forefront of planning for every new station, stop, train and tram that we introduce to our public transport network.

I understand there has been recent advocacy from community and local government for the upgrade of the tram stops on Sydney Road to coincide with the construction of the level crossing works. The Department of Transport and Planning will continue working with the Level Crossing Removal Project and Merri-bek City Council around planning for the level crossing removals. The Sydney Road corridor is a critical transport link for Melbourne's northern suburbs and will continue to play an important role throughout the delivery of these level crossing removal works. Any significant changes to the Sydney Road corridor, including Route 19 tram stop upgrades, needs careful consideration and investigation to balance the needs of all transport users, traders and people who live in the local area.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabrielle Williams', is positioned above the printed name.

Gabrielle Williams MP

Minister for Public and Active Transport