

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Minister for Public Transport
Minister for Major Projects



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BUCKLEY STREET UNDERPASS TO OPEN MONTHS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

Trains have resumed on the Craigieburn, Seymour and Shepparton lines, after a construction blitz that will result in traffic flowing freely on Buckley Street through the new road underpass, months ahead of schedule.

At Essendon today, Minister for Public Transport Jacinta Allan joined Member for Essendon Danny Pearson and Member for Niddrie Ben Carroll to tour the construction site and watch architectural panels being affixed to the newly dug road underpass.

Manufactured in Laverton, a total of 150 panels weighing up to 5.5 tonnes each will line the road underpass.

Essendon continues to be a hive of activity with less than three weeks to go before Buckley Street reopens with almost 300 people working around the clock during the final construction blitz to remove the level crossing.

To build the new 270 metre road underpass, more than 20,000 tonnes of soil was removed as work to upgrade the central pedestrian underpass continues on the western side of Buckley Street. The pedestrian entrance on Rose Street is closed to enable work on the new Disability Discrimination Act compliant ramps, and stairs.

The new service roads now have kerbs, drainage, road barriers and asphalt while work is still to be completed on the footpaths, final road surface and landscaping.

Buckley Street will remain closed until the end of the month between Mount Alexander Road and Daisey Street and some local roads will continue to be closed intermittently over the coming weeks.

Members of the Andrews Labor Government's GROW Program have been integral members of the Buckley Street program team. The program is part of the Government's Major Projects Skills Guarantee and more than 50 people securing employment at Buckley Street.

The level crossing is among the worst in Melbourne with the boom gates down for around 78 minutes during the morning peak, leading to major delays on Buckley Street and surrounding roads, causing frustration to 11,000 people who drive through it each day.

Its removal will reduce travel times and make the area safer for school children and other pedestrians to move around the station precinct. Work will continue after the road reopens until the end of the year to complete landscaping and improvements to the station precinct.

Quote attributable to Minister for Public Transport Jacinta Allan

"The Buckley Street level crossing is on track to be the 29th level crossing removed, smashing our promise to remove 20 by the end of this year."

Quote attributable to Minister for Industry and Employment and Member for Niddrie Ben Carroll

"Another level crossing bites the dust – and as we remove them we support local industries, create jobs and most importantly make the community safer."

Quote attributable to Member for Essendon Danny Pearson

"I am proud that as we remove this dangerous and congested level crossing – we're also giving local people employment opportunities."

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