



Hoddle Street to Burke Road

Design Update: Urban Design and Landscape Plan
October 2025



We're upgrading the Eastern Freeway with new express lanes, new Eastern Busway, smart technology and a connection to North East Link – slashing trip times and improving travel in Melbourne's east.

From Hoddle Street to Burke Road, we'll complete the final piece of the new busway along the Eastern Freeway, including connections for local routes at Chandler Highway in Kew, and build a new walking and cycling bridge over the Yarra River with 4.7 kilometres of new and upgraded paths to make it quicker and easier to walk or ride a bike to Yarra River parklands and the inner city.

Before we get major construction for this section of the Eastern Freeway Upgrades underway, we're exhibiting an Urban Design and Landscape Plan (UDLP) to ask the local community what they think of the look and feel of what's planned for their local area.

When complete, the Eastern Freeway Upgrades will connect seamlessly with the new 6.5 kilometre North East Link – linking Melbourne's east with the M80 Ring Road, slashing travel times by 35 minutes and taking 15,000 trucks off local roads a day.

Image above: Artist's impression of new Eastern Busway and Yarra River walking and cycling bridge, Kew

Eastern Freeway Upgrades near you

 **6km**
of new Eastern Busway lanes

 **4.7km**
of new and upgraded walking and cycling paths

 **New**
Yarra River walking and cycling bridge

 **6000**
new trees

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Artist's impression of new Eastern Busway bridge and walking and cycling path under Chandler Highway, Kew

In response to community feedback received through the project's Environment Effects Statement, the Urban Design and Landscape Plan includes design improvements to enhance walking and cycling connections, keep more existing trees and reduce construction disruption.

Eastern Busway

Dedicated bus lanes from Burke Road to Hoddle Street will complete the final piece of the new Eastern Busway along the Eastern Freeway. Local bus routes that use the freeway today, including routes to Alphington, Kew and Balwyn North, will also be able to get on and off the busway at Chandler Highway for faster trips to and from the city.

The busway will run on the north side of the freeway, with a bridge at Chandler Highway to take city-bound buses to dedicated busway lanes towards the Hoddle Street exit.



Artist's impression of new walking and cycling bridge over the Yarra River, Kew

New freeway lanes

One extra freeway lane in each direction will be added between Chandler Highway and Burke Road to improve traffic flow around the Chandler Highway ramps.

New Yarra River bridge and path

A new walking and cycling bridge over the Yarra River in Kew and 2.9 kilometres of new walking and cycling paths will give people more trip choices and better connections to walk or cycle to the inner city, as well as Yarra River parklands and trails.

The new path will connect the Main Yarra Trail at Chandler Highway to the Main Yarra Trail near Merri Creek in Fairfield, and provide a more direct option than the existing Main Yarra Trail along Yarra Boulevard. Connections under Chandler Highway and Yarra Boulevard will avoid road crossings.

Main Yarra Trail upgrades

The narrow section of the trail along the Eastern Freeway between Willsmere Park and the Burke Road Billabong will be made wider with improved path surfaces.

We'll also add a new section of trail to provide a shorter option than the existing winding route around the billabong, and fix missing links under Burke Road and Belford Road for a flatter and more direct trip.

New pedestrian path for Yarra Bend Park walkers

A dedicated path for pedestrians will separate cyclists from walkers in the busy area near Fairlea Reserve, including walkers using the River Circuit Trail.

New freeway exit ramps

The existing exit ramps at Burke Road and Chandler Highway will be re-built to make space for the new Eastern Busway lanes and walking and cycling path crossings underneath.

Belford Road bridge and Willsmere Park underpass upgrades

New barriers on the Belford Road bridge will provide safer crossings for pedestrians and cyclists, and upgraded lighting at the Willsmere Park underpass will help better connect the upgraded Main Yarra Trail, Darebin Creek Trail and Anniversary Trail.

New trees and plants

More than 6000 trees and over 400,000 shrubs, groundcovers and grasses will be planted to help return areas where construction is needed with improvements.

Trees and plants will be planted along new and upgraded walking and cycling paths, including at Yarra Bend Park, at entries to the new walking and cycling bridge over the Yarra River, to help screen and filter views of noise walls and to create greener interchanges at Chandler Highway and Burke Road.

We'll be planting species that are native or indigenous to the area to suit local ground and growing conditions and to enhance existing habitat corridors.



Artist's impression of new walking and cycling path through Yarra Bend Park, Fairfield

The new and upgraded walking and cycling connections, together with other improvements for the Eastern Freeway Upgrades from Burke Road to Springvale Road will mean you can walk or ride a bicycle from one end of the Eastern Freeway to the other without stopping at a single set of lights.



Artist's impression of Eastern Busway bridge at Chandler Highway, Kew



Artist's impression of Eastern Busway and walking and cycling path under Burke Road, Kew East

BIG BUILD EASTERN BUSWAY

Eleven kilometres of dedicated bus lanes along the Eastern Freeway from an upgraded Doncaster Park and Ride to Hoddle Street will work with the completed Streamlining Hoddle Street project to make bus journeys to and from the city faster and more reliable for more than six million trips a year.

The upgraded Doncaster Park and Ride, together with a new Bulleen Park and Ride open now, will double the number of commuter parking spaces and improve connections for pedestrians and cyclists.

- Travel speeds up to 100km/h
- Up to 30% faster trips
- Two park and rides – Bulleen and Doncaster
- Double the number of car parking spaces

Find out more at bigbuild.vic.gov.au/eastern-busway



Building in the centre median

The upgrades will use existing space in the middle of the freeway to build inwards. This will avoid widening the freeway beyond its existing outside edges.



Artist's impression of new noise walls at Chandler Highway exit, Kew

Designed to meet Victoria's toughest traffic noise standard

The upgraded Eastern Freeway, North East Link and M80 Ring Road Completion are being designed and built to meet a stringent noise standard of 63 decibels during the day. This is consistent with the highest level of traffic noise protection in Victoria.

In response to community feedback, we'll also meet a quieter standard of 58 decibels at night – a first for a road project in Victoria.

The noise standard for the upgraded freeway will be met using a range of measures including six kilometres of noise-reducing asphalt to better manage noise at the source and 1.9 kilometres of new noise walls.

Where existing walls can be kept to avoid removing trees and minimise construction disruption, they will be repaired where needed, and painted to remove graffiti and improve their appearance.

Where new noise walls are needed, they will be between three and eight metres tall and be built using recycled plastic in textures, colours and patterns inspired by the local

environment including earthy soil and rock.

Recycled plastic is a highly dense material with excellent sound absorption qualities and makes the project more sustainable.

It also means new noise walls are lighter, so they can be installed more easily, with less heavy machinery and less disruption.



Artist's impression of new noise walls, trees and plants and upgraded Main Yarra Trail at Willsmere Park, Kew East

Tree planting program

To build the new freeway and busway lanes, noise walls, and walking and cycling connections, trees will need to be removed where we're working.

We'll be working to keep as many trees as possible, and for every tree removed at least two will be planted. This includes extensive planting along the new and upgraded paths and to filter views of noise walls.

We've also started planting trees early in local places nearby including parks and reserves along and near the Eastern Freeway.



Artist's impression of Chandler Highway interchange, Kew

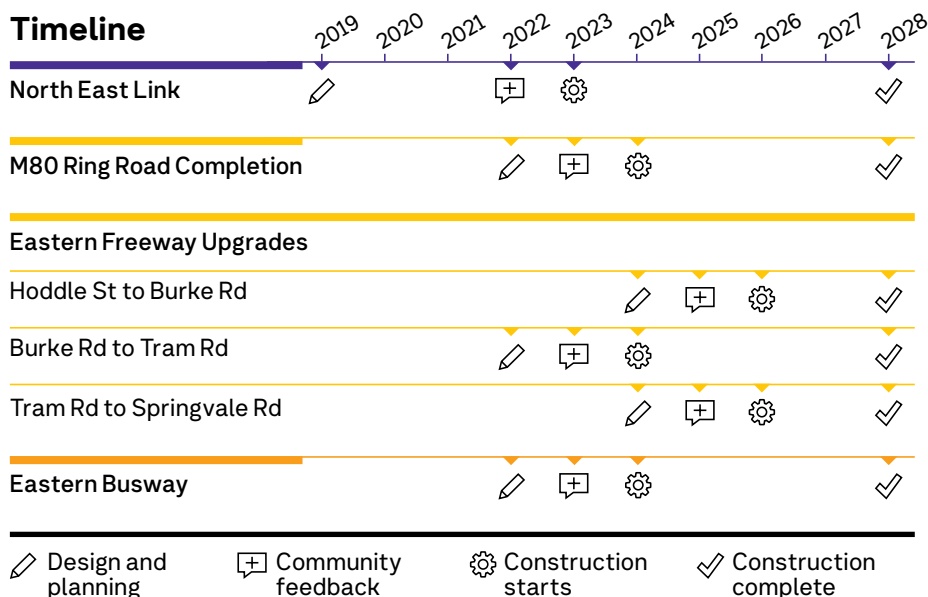
Upgrading the Eastern Freeway

The Eastern Freeway Upgrades are being delivered in stages and planned to open around the same time as North East Link and the connecting M80 Ring Road Completion.

Work to build the first stage of the upgrades from Burke Road to Tram Road, including the connection to North East Link, is well underway.

While we're further refining the design from Hoddle Street to Burke Road this year through the UDLP, you'll see us out and about getting ready for major works to begin in 2026.

Timeline



Returning improved spaces after construction

To build the Eastern Freeway Upgrades from Hoddle Street to Burke Road construction compounds are needed at key locations along the freeway, including at Burke Road and Chandler Highway.

When construction is finished, we will be returning these areas with trees and plants, including for the new walking and cycling connections.

Work to start setting up construction compounds is starting from late 2025.



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Artist's impression of new Eastern Busway and walking and cycling path under Chandler Highway, Kew

Have your say

Comment on the Urban Design and Landscape Plan

The UDLP for the Eastern Freeway Upgrades from Hoddle Street to Burke Road is on exhibition now.

The UDLP has maps and drawings of the project design and an explanation of how it meets strict requirements the community helped develop through the Environment Effects Statement (EES) process.

Making a submission is your opportunity to help refine local design elements for your area including new and upgraded walking and cycling connections, new trees and plants and designs for new noise walls.

We'll be using what we hear to finalise the UDLP before submitting it to the Minister for Planning for approval and getting major construction underway.

Where to see the plan

You can see a copy of the UDLP online from 27 October to 16 November 2025 at engage.vic.gov.au/bigbuild.

You can also visit an information display and talk with our team, or see the UDLP at local libraries throughout the exhibition period.

To find a UDLP display location near you visit engage.vic.gov.au/bigbuild

Urban Design and Landscape Plan

How to make a submission

Make your submission online at engage.vic.gov.au/bigbuild by 16 November.

If you need help accessing the UDLP, or to make a submission, please contact us on **1800 105 105** or at contact@bigbuild.vic.gov.au



Sunday 16
November 2025

Key dates



2017 Strategic planning

Community feedback helped understand existing traffic and transport issues and opportunities



2018-2019 Environment Effects Statement

Community feedback helped set requirements for the project design



2025 Urban Design and Landscape Plan

Community feedback will help refine the project design ready for construction



2026 Major construction starts

We'll be keeping you updated as works progress

bigbuild.vic.gov.au/roads

contact@bigbuild.vic.gov.au



1800 105 105 (call anytime)



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