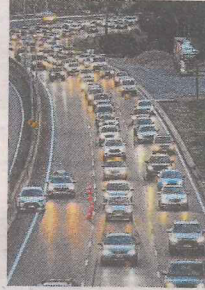


**UNVEILED** Bold plan for buses to break freeway gridlock

# JAM BUSTERS



LYDIA KELLNER

A LANE of the South Eastern Freeway and Glen Osmond Rd would be dedicated to buses during peak hour as part of a plan to ease traffic woes for commuters between the Adelaide Hills and CBD.

Two high-frequency bus services to the city – from

Bridgewater and Mt Barker – in the morning and a return journey in the evening would take less than an hour.

The idea is included in Regional Development Australia Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island's key recommendations from a Hills public transport study.

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08 NEWS

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Reversible and dedicated lanes proposed to break gridlock

## Hills are alive with the sound of quick buses



Regional Development Australia is proposing a dedicated bus lane on the notoriously congested South Eastern Freeway. Picture: Brenton Edwards/AAP

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It recommends running articulated buses on the South Eastern Freeway and Glen Osmond Rd via a "rapid transit lane". Glen Osmond Rd would use reversible lanes to increase the number of lanes in peak-hour flows. On-street parking would be banned in both directions.

The bus services would operate at least every 15 minutes from 7am to 10am city-bound and 4pm to 7pm Hills-bound on weekdays and every 30 minutes at weekends.

The Bridgewater to Adelaide route would stop at Aldgate, Stirling and Crafer, while the 37km Mt Barker to Adelaide route would stop at Hahndorf and Verdun.

**Growing congestion on Hills transport corridors is gradually eroding quality of life**

Damien Cook

This would be supported by upgraded or new park 'n' ride facilities in the Hills and bus queue lanes at key intersections in the CBD.

Other infrastructure options to help deal with traffic constrictions include a reconfiguration of the intersection of Glen Osmond, Cross and Portrush roads and a potential commuter tunnel between Adelaide and the Toll Gate. Another recommen-

dation includes expanding the on-demand bus trial in the Mt Barker Council area to Adelaide Hills Council.

Regional Development Australia Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island chief executive Damien Cook said rapid buses were the most "realistic approach" to getting more people off the road.

"Growing congestion on Adelaide Hills transport corridors is gradually eroding quality of life for residents and visitors, and productivity for businesses and services," Mr Cook said.

"While we recognise and value existing work of government in this space, we cannot rest on our laurels because population growth,

particularly around Mt Barker, is adding to congestion every day."

Mr Cook said while buses would provide a solution to address population growth in the immediate future, consideration should be given to investigating a business case for passenger rail.

It is a notion supported by the SA Transport Action Group, which will host a public transport forum on passenger rail at Wallis Cinema in Mt Barker on October 11.

Group chairman John Hill said he did not believe buses alone could meet the transport demands of a rapidly growing Mt Barker.

The town is home to about 39,000 residents but is ex-

pected to attract a further 12,000 people by 2036.

"So what we're saying is that if the state government is serious about public transport in the area, then both forms of transport should be considered as rail is such an obvious solution and significant part of the commuter task here in the Hills," Mr Hill said.

Transport Minister Corey Wingard said a state government study was investigating the possibility of a high-performance rapid bus system between the Hills and CBD with park 'n' ride facilities. "The department has advised that public rail to the Hills would cost roughly \$12bn and the journey would take around 80 minutes," he said.