



Tim Smith MP
Member for Kew

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Transcript:

Tony: You may have heard of this, the State Opposition, look it's generally the case they don't get a whole lot of coverage because they can't do a whole lot, their hands are tied to a certain degree. But Matthew Guy, the State Opposition Leader, is trying to change that. He's setting up a taskforce which will analyse our population growth. The taskforce will be chaired by Kew MP, Tim Smith, who joins us on the line now. Good morning to you Tim.

Tim: Morning Tony, how are you?

Tony: Yeah I'm well thanks. Hey, I reckon you've been in for less than one term, haven't you?

Tim: That's correct.

Tony: Yeah, I reckon you've set some sort of record for being ejected from the house

Tim: Well, you make a very reasonable point: it has been a robust first year in Parliament. Yes that's a perfectly reasonable observation by a media commentator such as yourself and also constituent, dare I say.

Tony: Yeah, well I am a constituent, that's right. But I, I reckon you had one Question Time where you were thrown out before the question was asked.

Tim: Well there was one Question Time where, and the Speaker and I get on very well with each other, the speaker's obviously from the Labor Party, but there was one question time where it was very early on in the piece and I was ejected, and we had a conversation after question time and I think it would be fair to say that he, he got the wrong person.

Tony: Oh right, ok, mistaken identity?

Tim: Mate mistaken..., I wouldn't claim to be the best-behaved in Question Time but in that instance I think I was hardly done by, and he, he graciously admitted this after the parliamentary questions had finished for the morning.

Tony: Alright, you just want to set the record straight. Now Tim, tell us about this taskforce that you're chairing and what it all means in layman's terms.

Tim: So basically, we're growing at 100,000 people every year, 92 % of that is in Greater Melbourne, and we think it's really important that the whole of the Victorian Government respond with a coordinated policy. Which is why Matthew's asked me to chair a taskforce. So in the lead up to the next Election, we have a policy for the whole of the Victorian Government that sets out to deal with this enormous advantage that we have with this massive population growth – but it's only an advantage if it's planned for properly. At the moment, we don't feel that this Government is planning for population growth properly and that's evidenced, for example, by decisions to cancel the East West Link and to exclude South Yarra station from the Melbourne Metro.

Tony: So is this effectively to set up a second CBD is it? Because Anthony Albanese has come out and said, you know, Box Hill is the one that the Labor Party is pinpointing from a Fed point of view, to establish that as our second – because if you go to places like Sydney, they have Parramatta, which is like a little Sydney on a very smaller scale – but we don't really have anything like that – Geelong , to a certain degree – but you wouldn't call it a suburb of ours, of Melbourne.

Tim: Well, during the previous government, Matthew Guy as Planning Minister brought down Plan Melbourne which was a planning document – I think without peer in this country – and it had brought in the concept of the 20-minute city. That included essentially 6 mini CBDs, Monash Clayton, Parkville, Latrobe Uni, Sunshine, East Werribee, Dandenong. Look Box Hill's already the third largest hub in Melbourne, anyway, behind the CBD obviously and Monash, and we obviously, it's essentially bipartisan, that we want to see multiple centres of jobs and population growth within greater Melbourne. But for Albanese to swing into town this morning and start essentially lecturing us about the need for Box Hill to be the second CBD – when it's his party that cancelled the biggest infrastructure project that would have helped the people of Box Hill in particular get into the CBD and out to the airport much, much, much quicker – in my mind is totally illogical.

Tony: See, look I've got nothing against Box Hill – I used to live there – and I think it is a thriving centre, and you know the tram line goes there now which was a huge plus there for them. So you've got a big bus network, you've got the railway station obviously, which needs a heck of an upgrade, you've also got the trams there. Now, I think Frankston is always so underestimated.

Tim: Absolutely, its common sense that we need to take the pressure off the CBD, and increase capacity in various different hubs for jobs and population growth around Greater Melbourne. I mean, Greater Melbourne as a geographic space from essentially Werribee to Frankston, is one of the biggest cities in the world. We're not a small city by any stretch when it comes to population. We're predicted to be, our population is predicted to almost double by 2050, but in terms of geographic size, our city is enormous when compared to the rest of the world, even in America. So yes, anything we can do to take pressure of the CBD is a good idea, so to the extent that what Mr Albanese is talking about this morning with infrastructure upgrades to Box Hill, well the previous Coalition government in Victoria was already talking about that through plan Melbourne.

But I reiterate Tony, I reiterate, and this is a really important point, it's *his* party that tore up a contract for the East West Link, and paid a billion dollars for the pleasure, and so the people of the

Eastern suburbs, my constituents, and people in Box Hill and further East, still hit a T-intersection at Hoddle Street every morning when they get off the Eastern Freeway.

Tony: Ah well it's a problem that's not going to go away for some time. Tim thanks very much for catching up this morning - Kew MP there Tim Smith, who's heading up this taskforce to effectively create these mini cities in cities that are already established but turn them into mini CBD's its certainly got merit to it.