CITY ROAD MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



JUNE 2014

PLANNING FOR FUTURE GROWTH melbourne.vic.gov.au/cityroad





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June 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The need for a City Road Master Plan

The City of Melbourne is leading the development of a draft City Road Master Plan that aims to better balance the road's two key roles as both an important transport link and a people friendly place. This project is a key action from the Southbank Structure Plan, 2010 and responds to the changing role of the road as Southbank grows.

Community Engagement

Community engagement was conducted from mid-February to mid-March 2014. The purpose of the engagement was to raise awareness of the project, develop an understanding of the community's current experiences of City Road and gather information to feed into the development of the draft master plan.

The community were invited to share their experiences of City Road online via an interactive map on Participate Melbourne and in person at the Boyd Community Hub during a one-week 'drop-in' in February.

Who got involved?

In total, 182 experiences were shared via the interactive map on Participate Melbourne by 103 different people (1.8 experiences per person).

In addition to describing their experience, people were asked a few simple questions including their age category, why they were on City Road, by what transport mode they were travelling and how the experience made them feel.

A summary of the key findings is outlined below:

- 90 per cent of experiences were negative and 10 per cent were positive experiences.
- The most common emotion generated by the experiences was unsafe (37 per cent) and frustrated (23 per cent).

- Participants ranged in age from the 15-19 age group through to 75+ with the highest level of participation from the 35-44 age group.
- Most experiences were shared by pedestrians (50 per cent) followed by cyclists (19 per cent) and drivers/car passengers (19 per cent).
- The majority of experiences were contributed by residents (66 per cent), followed by workers (12 per cent) and people passing through (9 per cent).

What did the community tell us?

The current design and layout of City Road present many issues for its users, as summarised below:

- City Road is an undesirable place to be with 90 per cent of experiences shared by residents being negative and 89 per cent of experiences shared by pedestrians being negative.
- City Road is a difficult place to get around for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and drivers).
- There is a strong desire to see improvements to City Road.

What are the next steps?

Information captured in the first phase of community engagement will inform the draft master plan to be released for community engagement later in the year.

The focus of the master plan will be on delivering public realm improvements within the road space and footpaths. It will explore options to change the layout and design of the road to address issues such as pedestrian safety, cycling access, transport movement & access, street character and quality, tree planting, water management and public transport provision.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

Southbank is the fastest growing suburb in the City of Melbourne, with a significant amount of large-scale residential and mixed use developments recently completed, under construction or scheduled. This amplifies the need to improve the quality of the public realm in City Road.

The City Road master plan will guide public realm improvements towards the creation of a civic spine in line with the Southbank Structure Plan, 2010. It will have to address issues relating to both transport and urban design and balance the needs of various users and stakeholders.

The City Road Master Plan is identified in Council's Annual Plan 2013/14 as Priority Action 3.7 - "Develop a City Road Master Plan in line with Southbank Structure Plan objectives".

Scope

The focus of the master plan will be on delivering public realm improvements within the road space and footpaths. It will explore options to change the layout and design of the road to address issues such as pedestrian safety, cycling access, transport movement & access, street character and quality, tree planting, water management and public transport provision.

Changes to planning controls that affect private land use and development are not within the scope of this project.

Study Area & Management

City Road is under the shared management of the City of Melbourne and VicRoads. It is a declared arterial route and provides an important connection between Port Phillip Bay and the city.

The study area includes the length of City Road within the City of Melbourne, from the West Gate Freeway in the west to St Kilda Road in the east. It also includes Alexandra Avenue to the intersection with Linlithgow Avenue. In total, the length of the road is approximately two kilometres.

Process

This project is being undertaken in four stages. Community engagement was undertaken as part of Stage 1. Stage 2 will involve the development of a draft master plan which, subject to the approval of the Future Melbourne Committee, will be available for public comment in stage 3. The feedback from the broader community will be considered and will inform a final Master Plan in stage 4.

Due to the nature and scale of the project, the City of Melbourne is working with a number of stakeholders. A Steering Committee has been established comprising representatives from VicRoads, the Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure (DTPLI), Public Transport Victoria (PTV), City of Port Phillip and City of Melbourne. Members of these organisations have been involved in two workshops to date to establish key priorities for their organisation, along with collective issues and opportunities for City Road.



Community Engagement

The City of Melbourne conducted community engagement from mid-February to mid-March 2014. During this period, community members were invited to share their experiences of City Road via Participate Melbourne. Many people also joined in the conversation with City of Melbourne officers at the Boyd Community Hub during the week of the 24 February 2014.

All the information captured through the first stage of engagement will be used to inform the development of a draft City Road Master Plan.

This report provides a summary of the key findings from this first phase of community engagement.

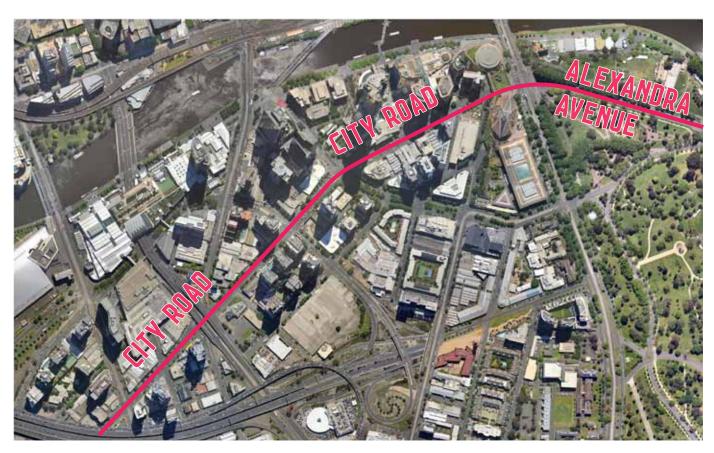


Figure 1.1: City Road Master Plan Study Area

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Engagement Approach

The purpose of the community engagement was to:

- Raise awareness of the City Road Master Plan Project.
- Develop an understanding of the community's current experiences of City Road.
- Gather qualitative data to feed into the development of the draft Master Plan.

To achieve these objectives the community engagement consisted of two main components:

- Participate Melbourne an online community engagement hub to allow broad participation. This featured an interactive map that allowed the public to share their current experiences of City Road in specific locations along the study area. This was open for contribution for one month from 17 February to 17 March 2014 and generated 1372 visits during this time.
- 2. A week-long 'drop-in' at the Boyd Community Hub during the week 24 February to 1 March 2014 which allowed the community to discuss the project with City of Melbourne staff and provide comments through Participate Melbourne, written surveys and post-it notes.



Figure 2.1: Engagement Postcard



Spreading the Word

The community engagement was promoted by the City of Melbourne through a range of mediums to reach as many people who live on, visit and use City Road as possible, including:

- Postcards and posters were distributed to the Boyd Community Hub, local businesses and residential towers along City Road.
- The City of Melbourne website directed visitors to the Participate Melbourne page as well as providing information about the Boyd drop-in.
- Promotion in the Boyd Community Hub E-Newsletter.
- Social media featured on City of Melbourne Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- Media Release 19 February 2014.

· E-mail to key stakeholders.

The project was also promoted by external organisations and media outlets including:

- An editorial in the Southbank News 'Changes ahead for City Road' 17 February 2014
- Article featured in 'Urban Melbourne' online blog 28 February 2014 entitled 'City of Melbourne wants people to share their City Road Experiences'.
- Promotion of online engagement by Bicycle Network Victoria in weekly electronic newsletter 'in the loop'.
- Promotion through CrowdSpot website and electronic newsletter to CrowdSpot networks (including Twitter and Facebook).

1372
ONLINE VISITS
TO PARTICIPATE
MELBOURNE

103

PEOPLE SHARED THEIR EXPERIENCE OF CITY ROAD VIA PARTICIPATE

14

PEOPLE PROVIDED
WRITTEN COMMENTS
VIA EMAIL/SURVEY

Interactive Map

The main community engagement tool was Participate Melbourne, which featured an embedded interactive map of City Road.

Participants were able to select a location to pin their experiences on the interactive map. These experiences appeared as green faces representing positive experiences and red faces for negative experiences.

Map features included the ability to zoom in to specific locations to see greater street detail, upload images, view other people's experiences and comment on, or support them. It also featured a live activity feed which allowed participants to keep up to date with the latest activity.

As well as describing their experience, participants were asked a few simple questions including their age category; why they were on City Road; by what transport mode they were travelling and how their experience made them feel.

The data captured allowed for a qualitative analysis of the issues experienced by different users and modes of travel and identification of clusters of negative experiences and problem areas.

All quotes within this report are taken from this community engagement exercise.

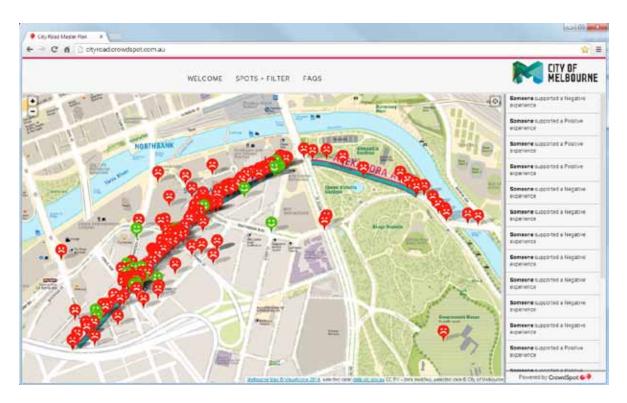


Figure 2.2: Final Interactive Map showing distribution of all negative and positive experiences along the study area and live activity feed on the right hand side of the screen



42
COMMENTS
ON OTHERS'
EXPERIENCES



Importantly, the interactive map started a public conversation around issues experienced along City Road and some of the potential opportunities for improvement.

Contributors went into great detail to describe their experiences. Some experiences generated numerous comments and supports, clearly striking a chord with other users.

The comments captured on the map start to show the many competing opinions and how any solution presented in the master plan will have to balance the needs of various road users.

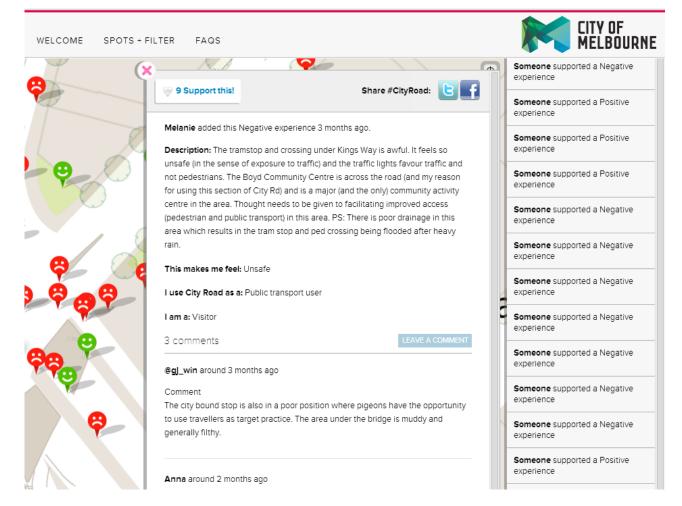


Figure 2.3: A negative experience on the interactive map

Boyd Drop-In

During the engagement period, members of the public were invited to a week-long 'dropin' at the Boyd Community Hub on City Road, where they had the opportunity to discuss the City Road Master Plan project with City of Melbourne staff.

An informal space was created in the foyer, with the main feature being the interactive map (Participate Melbourne) projected onto the wall.

Participants contributed their experiences using the computer and i-pad provided, handwritten surveys, as well as sharing any further thoughts on post-it notes on the City Road notice board.

Hosting the event at Boyd allowed for many interesting and insightful discussions with a broad cross section of the community - both those informed about the engagement and those passing by.

Many people commented on how Boyd had created a new heart for the growing Southbank neighbourhood thanks to the extensive range of community services offered and the popularity of the cafe for locals, workers and visitors. This sentiment came through in some of the positive experiences shared online.

The engagement generated a lot of interest from a well-informed and passionate user group who experience City Road in their day to day lives.







Figure 2.4 A word cloud from notes posted by the public during the drop-in

3. PARTICIPANTS

In total, 182 experiences were shared on the online map by 103 different contributors (average of 1.8 experiences per person).

Of those 90 per cent were negative and 10 per cent were positive.

The most common emotion generated by these experiences was unsafe (37 per cent) and frustrated (23 per cent) while the positive emotions (happy/relaxed/hopeful) were in the minority at only 7 per cent.

The engagement generated involvement from the 15-19 age group right through to 75+, but the highest level of participation was generated by the 35-44 and 25-34 age groups.

Most experiences were shared by pedestrians (50 per cent), followed by cyclists (19 per cent) and drivers/car passengers (19 per cent).

The majority of experiences were contributed by residents (66 per cent), followed by workers (12 per cent) and people passing through (9 per cent).

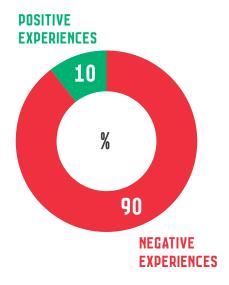


Figure 3.1: Percentage of positive and negative experiences shared online

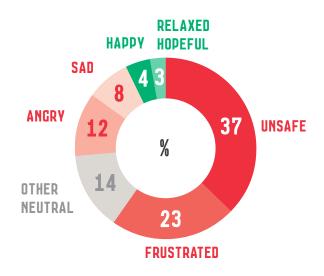


Figure 3.2: Percentage of experiences shared online by emotion

Who got involved?

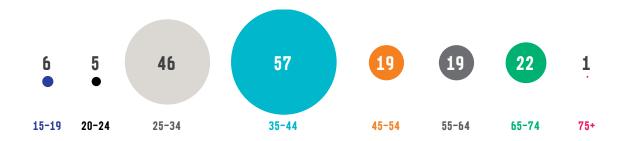


Figure 3.3: The number of experiences shared online by age of participant



Figure 3.4: The number of experiences shared online by mode of transport

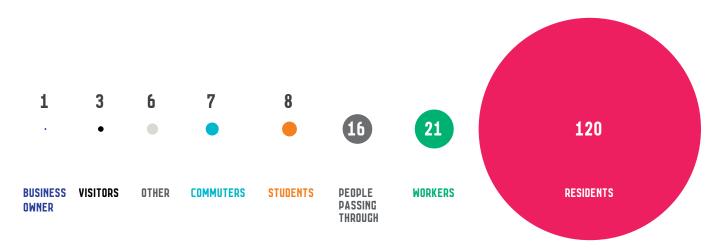


Figure 3.5: The number of experiences shared online by reason for visit

4. POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

People used the positive experience category to share actual experiences as well as ideas to improve City Road.

Some of those included praise for community facilities like Boyd and Testing Grounds (see overview opposite), appreciation of remaining industrial architecture, the street providing for a variety of lifestyles, the vibrancy of life in Southbank and proximity to transport and amenities. There was also recognition of recent improvements to the area but a desire to see more.

Roughly half of the 19 positive experiences recorded were outlining opportunities for improvements to City Road.

There was a strong desire to see more community services and facilities in City Road and Southbank to cater to the local resident population, such as open space, playgrounds, a supermarket and a post office.

Improving pedestrian amenity and connectivity, activating the space under Kings Way and providing bike lanes to allow people to cycle safely were all suggestions.

Boyd is a safe refuge, however more green parks are needed for kids.

Karen, resident

I chose to live in this building because of its proximity to transport and amenities like Boyd. Love the vibrancy and ease of life as a pedestrian.

Margaret, resident





Boyd Community Hub

The Boyd Community Hub opened its doors to the Southbank community in July 2012. Since then, they have received on average over 7000 visitors per month (approximately 230 per day) from Southbank and surrounding suburbs including South Yarra and South Melbourne.

Testing Grounds

At the eastern end of City Road is a recent project on the State-Government owned 'Y-Site' known as 'Testing Grounds'. It is a free, openair art space used for a variety of purposes by locals and visitors alike, including recreation space, workshops, art installations, music performances, a bar and food venue (with temporary food trucks). This concept has quickly gained popularity and created a community-focused facility in the eastern end of City Road.

Useful community services along the street front such as a post office, chemist, supermarket, doctor/dentist, hardware shop and restaurants which are easily accessible to the local residents would enhance the area.

Mark, resident

Using vacant land to create temporary public space like Testing Grounds is a fantastic idea. Initiatives like this is why I love Melbourne.

Garrath, resident

5. NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

An undesirable place to be

During the community engagement, the City of Melbourne asked participants what the main reason was for their visit to City Road. Overwhelmingly, people who commented the most were local residents -120 of a total of 182 comments were made by residents. Of these comments, 90 per cent expressed a negative experience of City Road. Predominantly, these residents were commenting on their experience as pedestrians in the street. In their comments, they emphasised that City Road is not a desirable place to be in. The predominant emotions expressed by this group were unsafe (32 per cent), frustrated (22 per cent), angry (16 per cent) and sad (10 per cent).

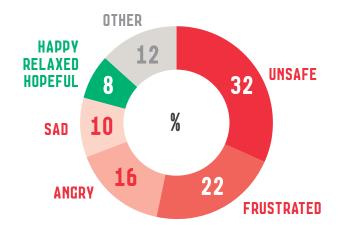


Figure 5.1: Emotions expressed by residents on City Road (120 comments)





Walking from Whiteman Street (home) to the Boyd Centre - the "journey" is not a relaxing and pleasant experience as a local resident. There is no feeling of a planned clustering of retail versus food versus office mix. It is a very mixed bag of businesses that do not relate. Importantly, there is no green space or pedestrian friendly pathway to make the "journey" to the Boyd Centre a pleasant one for local residents.

Local Journeyman, resident

The noise from the many trucks using City Road is offensive, not only in terms of its decibel level, but also its occurrence throughout the day and night. Truck access to City Road should be restricted, only permitted between the hours of 7am and 7pm.

Dan, resident

The tramstop and crossing under Kings Way is awful. There is poor drainage which results in the tram stop and pedestrian crossing being flooded after heavy rain.

Melanie, visitor

This stretch of road should be planted with the same type of plant, shrub or tree to give it a distinctive feel to tie it all in together as one street. It also needs some street furniture or lighting that has a more residential feel.

Rodney, resident

"

"

A difficult place to get around

We asked participants what their mode of transport was when using City Road. In order, the people who chose to comment were pedestrians (50 per cent of comments), cyclists (19 per cent) and drivers (19 per cent). A smaller number of comments were also received from motorcyclists, public transports users and others (transport mode not specified).

As ninety per cent of all comments were negative, it is fair to conclude that across all transport modes, there is discontent with the experience of people getting around and through City Road.

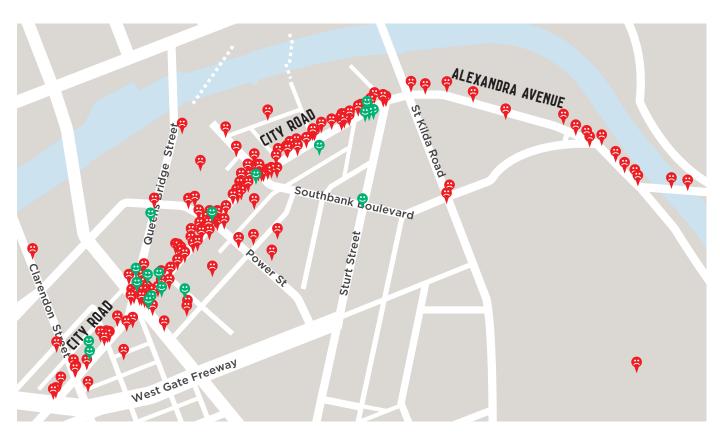


Figure 5.2: Locations of experiences shared on online map



The area around the tram stop under Kings Way is extremely neglected, but highly utilised. With no convenient crossing, pedestrians and public transport users have to dash across the road without a clear line of sight where traffic is coming from.

Leonora, resident

If cycling north, turning right onto Balston St is hectic on a bike - hard to get across to the right hand lane, and then stuck in the middle of the road between two busy lanes of traffic.

HJ, commuter

I'm a very experienced cyclist, but this intersection (City Road/ Queens Bridge Street) is one of the scariest in Melbourne.

Steve, passing through

The traffic build up here (Alexandra Avenue) is consistently congested and causes motorists to take risks. The left lane turning over the bridge is banked up, while the toll lane is often unused. Drivers are stopping, weaving, veering out suddenly. This is a poorly planned road.

Marielle, resident

"

The Pedestrian Experience

Key Findings

- City Road is perceived as a significant pedestrian barrier, separating Southbank into two halves, in particular, disconnecting the Arts precinct from the Yarra River precinct.
- The predominance of traffic (noise, physical proximity) dramatically influences the pedestrian experience of City Road.
- Generally perceived as an unsafe and frustrating experience for pedestrians.

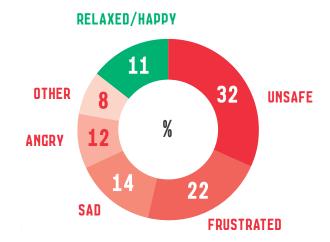


Figure 5.3: Emotions expressed by pedestrians on City Road (91 comments).

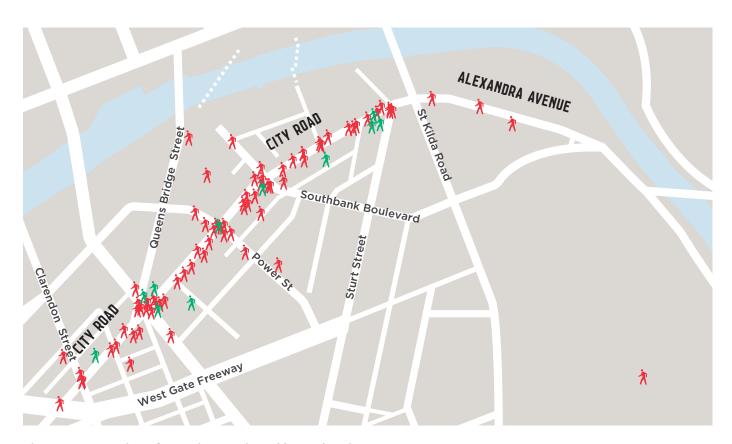


Figure 5.4: Location of experiences shared by pedestrians



A summary of the issues affecting the pedestrian experience are outlined below.

- Intersections are particularly challenging for pedestrians - slip lanes increase crossing distances and reduce safety.
- The walking environment is generally unpleasant and unwelcoming. Key features that contribute to this experience are:
 - Few benches, bins, water fountains, open space.
 - Poor quality materials and finishes.
 - Inconsistent width of footpaths.
 - Poor amenity of undercroft spaces and lack of lighting (West Gate Freeway, Kings Way, St. Kilda Road).
 - Visual clutter of overhead power lines.
- Perception that vehicles frequently speed, particularly on approach from Alexandra Avenue through St Kilda Road underpass and fail to see pedestrian crossing outside the Mantra hotel.
- Lack of way finding signage this is exacerbated by the irregular street pattern in Southbank that makes it difficult to navigate through the suburb.

- There are few crossing opportunities resulting in people crossing at unsignalised points (e.g. Clarke Street, Alexandra Avenue).
- Frequency of driveway crossovers this includes access to off-street car parking which creates potential conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.
- Poor connection from St. Kilda Road to City Road.
- High level of noise from freight and other vehicle traffic.
- Flooding, particularly at western end of City Road.
- Few permeable surfaces along City Road.
- · Lack of consistent tree planting.
- Footpaths blocked off 'temporarily' by construction of new developments .
- Pedestrian crossing delays at intersections due to long traffic light cycles which prioritise vehicle flow.
- No automatic pedestrian crossing activation.

I feel unsafe using the pedestrian crossing outside the Mantra hotel. You have to make sure the cars are actually stopping before you cross, as I have seen many that don't see the lights and drive through the red.

Jane, resident

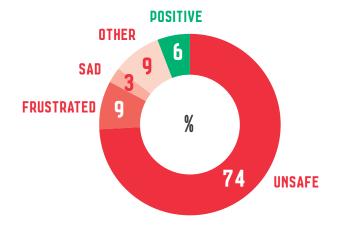
Walking along City Road to Boyd is unpleasant. It doesn't feel like a pedestrian access area. The traffic is high, noise is high, the pollution is evident - therefore it is not a pleasant experience to walk down with children.

Marielle, resident

The Cycling Experience

Key Findings

- No dedicated cycle infrastructure on City Road or Alexandra Avenue.
- Generally perceived as unsafe for cyclists.
- Identified as an alternate east-west route to the congested Southbank Promenade but currently not designed for this role.



I don't use City Rd on my bike, as I feel unsafe, but I would love to be able to.

Jane, resident



Figure 5.5: Emotions expressed by cyclists on City Road (35 comments).

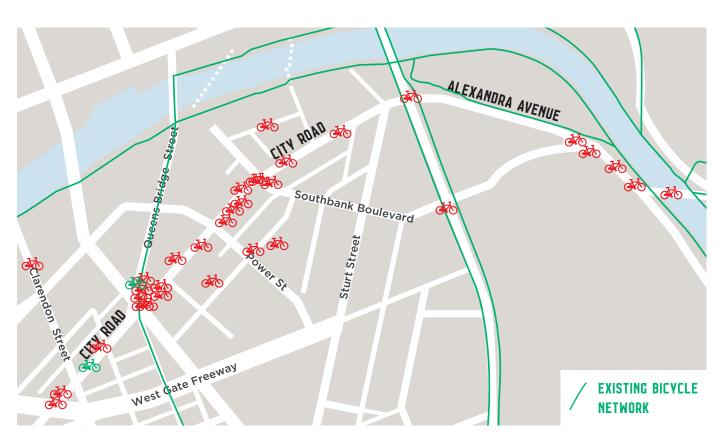


Figure 5.6: Location of experiences shared by cyclists



A summary of the issues affecting the cycling experience are outlined below.

- There is currently no dedicated bicycle infrastructure/ lanes on City Road or Alexandra Avenue.
- Southbank Promenade is over crowded with pedestrians and cyclists. An alternative east-west route is required for commuter cyclists.
- Poor cyclist safety from lack of dedicated cycle infrastructure and fast speed of vehicles.
- Some cyclists use the footpaths.
- Bus lane shared with bikes in City Road (east bound).

- · No intersection priority.
- Poor signage for cyclists in City Road/ Alexandra Avenue and connecting streets.
- Existing bike lane on Queens Bridge Street ends before City Road intersection leaving cyclists feeling vulnerable.
- People want to cycle but currently feel unsafe doing so.
- Desire to see better east-west bicycle connections through Southbank, particularly once Ferrars Street Primary School opens.

Bike Paths are lacking along City Road and are needed on both side of the road so that people can travel safely with a clean and healthy means of transport.

Angelo, resident

Better connections and a cycle lane from Swan Street Bridge along City Road to South Melbourne, would encourage me to use this route on the way home from work instead of dodging pedestrians along Southgate and Southbank Promenade.

@gj_win, resident

The Public Transport Passenger Experience

Key Findings

- Limited public transport provision on City Road with no connections to South Melbourne (key destination for locals' everyday shopping needs).
- Interchanges and public transport stops generally perceived to be poor quality, unsafe and lacking visibility.
- Public transport stops not Disability Discrimination Act compliant.

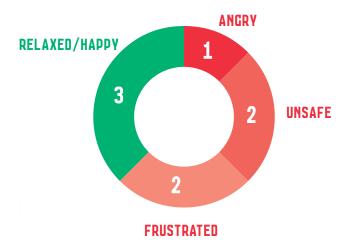


Figure 5.7: Emotions expressed by public transport passengers (8 comments)



Figure 5.8: Location of experiences shared by public transport passengers



A summary of the issues affecting the public transport passenger experience are outlined below.

- Generally limited public transport in comparison to Hoddle grid.
- Public transport does not connect people to key destinations (e.g South Melbourne Market).
- Lack of way-finding at transport interchanges.
- Quality, safety and visibility of public transport interchanges is generally poor (bus stops and tram stops).

- · Poor efficiency of services.
- Tram stops are not Disability Discrimination Act compliant.
- Tram stops under Kings Way are very unpleasant and subject to flooding.
- Public transport is better to the west of Power Street where there is access to two tram routes and buses.
- There is limited public transport east of Power Street.

No public transport that directly connects the Arts Precinct to South Melbourne Market and Port Melbourne / Bay Street.

There are a number of older residents in Southbank who depend on public transport.

Local resident

City bound tram stop feels dangerous at night time.
Pigeons use tram travellers as target practice. Not well lit. I often will choose to walk to Flinders and then get a tram and walk an additional 30 mins home than wait for the 55 tram which takes me to my door.

Natalie, worker

The Driving Experience

Key Findings

- Generally perceived as a frustrating experience.
- Confusion at intersections around lane selection/way-finding, particularly at Southbank Boulevard and Power Street.
- Conflicts between local access to off-street car parking, traffic flow and pedestrian activity.
- Lack of short-term parking near Boyd.
- Queuing to go over Swan Street Bridge has significant congestion impacts for Alexandra Avenue and back to City Road.

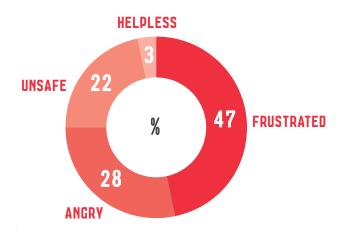


Figure 5.9: Emotions expressed by drivers on City Road (34 comments)

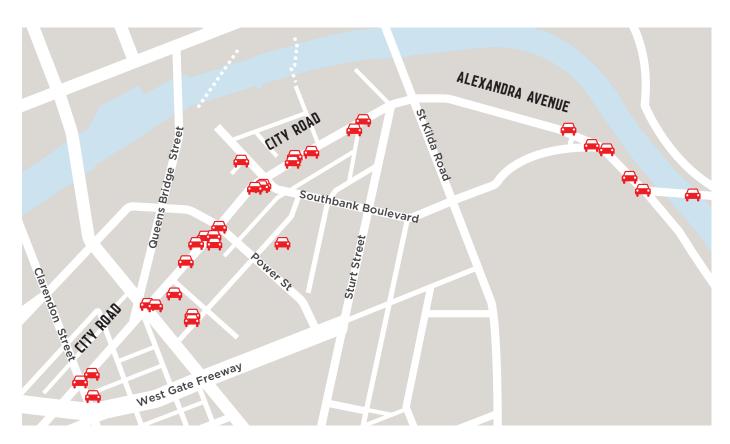


Figure 5.10: Location of experiences shared by drivers



A summary of the issues affecting the driving experience are outlined below.

- There is a lack of short-term parking for Boyd users.
- Entry into apartment building car parks off City Road is challenging for drivers.
- East of Power Street, City Road is used as an alternative to the CityLink Burnley Tunnel for placarded vehicles and over sized vehicles. It is also the alternative route in times of tunnel closure.
- City Road and Alexandra Avenue form a major CityLink exit into the Central City. Consequently, there are far greater traffic flows on these sections of the road often resulting in congestion during peak periods.
- Drivers often experience confusion over which lane to be in at intersections.

- Perception that vehicles frequently speed on approach from Alexandra Avenue and through St Kilda Road underpass.
- Drivers emerging from St Kilda Road underpass have difficulty knowing which lane to be in to enter the Hoddle Grid.
- Swan Street Bridge congestion causes queuing up of traffic along Alexandra Avenue with drivers trying to merge into left lane at last minute.

Nobody knows which lane to be in at these junctions (Power Street) - the people who want to go straight ahead either get caught in the left turning traffic or sent off to the right as we wanted to avoid the left turners. Very confusing!

Lisa, resident

Insufficient traffic capacity on Swan Street Bridge causes queuing back along Alexandra Avenue blocking the intersection of Linlithgow Avenue.

Dave, worker

6. NEXT STEPS

Information captured through the first phase of community engagement will inform the draft master plan to be released for formal community engagement later in 2014.

The master plan will also be informed by key stakeholder priorities and must be considered within the context of a number of background documents, the work of various organisations over the past 10 years including:

- Southbank Plan, 2006 (Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure)
- SmartRoads Network Operating Plan, 2012 (VicRoads)
- Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area Draft Vision, 2013 (Places Victoria)
- Montague Structure Plan, 2012 (City of

Port Phillip)

- Yarra River Corridor Pedestrian and Cycling Safety Plan, 2013 (City of Melbourne)
- Plan Melbourne, 2014 (Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure)
- Melbourne Arts Precinct Blueprint, 2014 (Arts Precinct Working Group, State Government of Victoria)
- Southbank Developer Contribution Plan -Public Realm Design Intent for Streets and Local Centres, 2014 (City of Melbourne)

The City of Melbourne has also commissioned a new study to further understand the current traffic and transport issues and opportunities.

Register with Participate Melbourne to be kept informed of the City Road Master Plan project -





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