CITY ROAD DRAFT MASTER PLAN

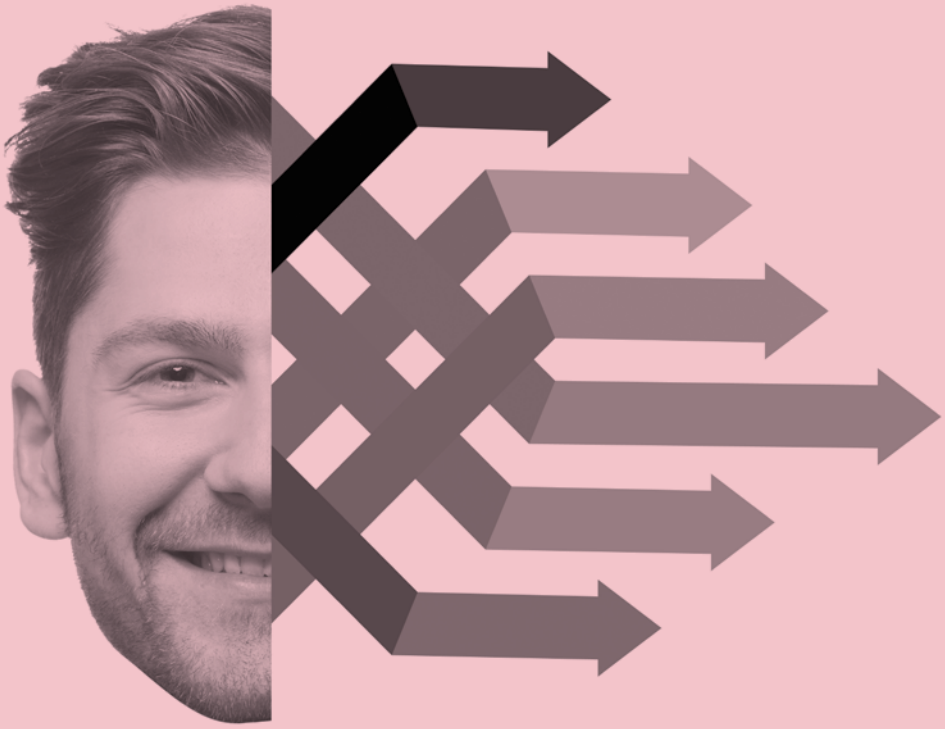
TRANSFORMING CITY ROAD INTO A SAFE AND WELCOMING PLACE FOR EVERYONE

SEPTEMBER 2015

PLANNING FOR FUTURE GROWTH

participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/cityroad

CITY OF MELBOURNE



A CONNECTED CITY

We manage movement in and around our growing city to help people trade, meet, participate and move about safely and easily, enabling our community to access all the services and opportunities the municipality offers.

participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/cityroad

CONTENTS

Issue 14 - City Road Draft Master Plan for community consultation (incorporating minor edits following Future Melbourne Committee)

September 2015

Disclaimer

To find out how you can participate in the decision-making process for City of Melbourne's current and future initiatives, visit **participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/cityroad**

MASTER PLAN SNAPSHOT

Why do we need a City Road Master Plan?

The need to improve City Road is now more important than ever.

As Southbank transforms into a high density central city neighbourhood, the role of City Road needs to change to ensure that it is a pleasant place to be as well as a street that is easy and safe to get around.

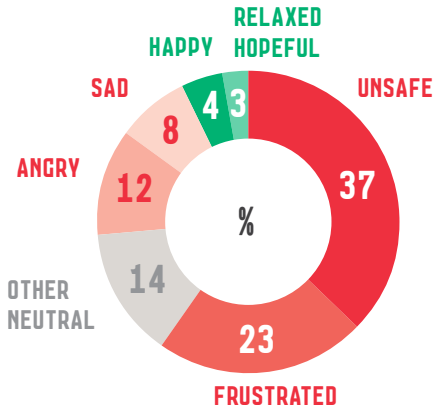


Figure 0.1: Experience of City Road shared online by emotion.
Source: Community Engagement 2014

What does the Master Plan aim to achieve?

The City Road Master Plan aims to transform City Road into a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

It addresses ways to better balance the road's two primary roles – as an important transport corridor for various modes, and a place that supports local street life that is people-friendly for all the residents, workers and visitors who use City Road.

It considers ways of making City Road more environmentally sustainable, contributing to a liveable and resilient city.

What does the Master Plan propose?

The master plan proposes six actions to deliver improvements to the road over a five year period.

Master Plan actions

1. TRANSFORM CITY ROAD WEST INTO A GREAT CENTRAL CITY STREET
2. REIMAGINE KINGS WAY UNDERCROFT AS A COMMUNITY SPACE
3. UPGRADE CITY ROAD TO BE SAFER AND EASIER TO GET AROUND
4. CONNECT CITY ROAD TO THE ARTS CENTRE AND YARRA RIVER
5. RECONFIGURE ALEXANDRA AVENUE AS A BOULEVARD
6. EXPAND THE BICYCLE NETWORK WITHIN SOUTHBANK

Figure 0.2: City Road Master Plan study area

What will be the benefits and impacts of the proposal?

The benefits of the proposed improvements to City Road are significant and will deliver a street that is safer, enjoyable to be in, more sustainable and distinctive.

Detailed traffic modelling has been undertaken to develop and understand the impact of the proposed actions presented in the draft master plan.

Whilst there will be some minor increases in vehicle journey times (see Part One and Part Three for more detail) the various benefits of the proposal are considered to outweigh these impacts.

SAFE AND EASY TO GET AROUND

700
metres of safe separated bicycle lanes on City Road

6
slip lanes removed for improved safety and increased pedestrian space

3
upgraded bus and tram stops and improved public transport priority

70
metres reduced walking distance between pedestrian crossings (from 240m to 170m)

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE

108
new street trees

30%
of public space to be water permeable surfaces

40%
tree canopy cover

A GREAT PLACE TO BE

9085
square metres of potential new public open space

1280
square metres of new footpath space

3
new signalised pedestrian crossings at Clarke Street, Balston Street and Alexandra Avenue

IMPACTS

1:37
minute increase to an average car journey from Cecil Street to Linlithgow Avenue in PM peak from 7:27 to 9:04 minutes

1:51
minute increase to an average car journey from Linlithgow Avenue to Cecil Street in AM peak from 5:29 to 7:20 minutes

40
on-street car parking spaces removed

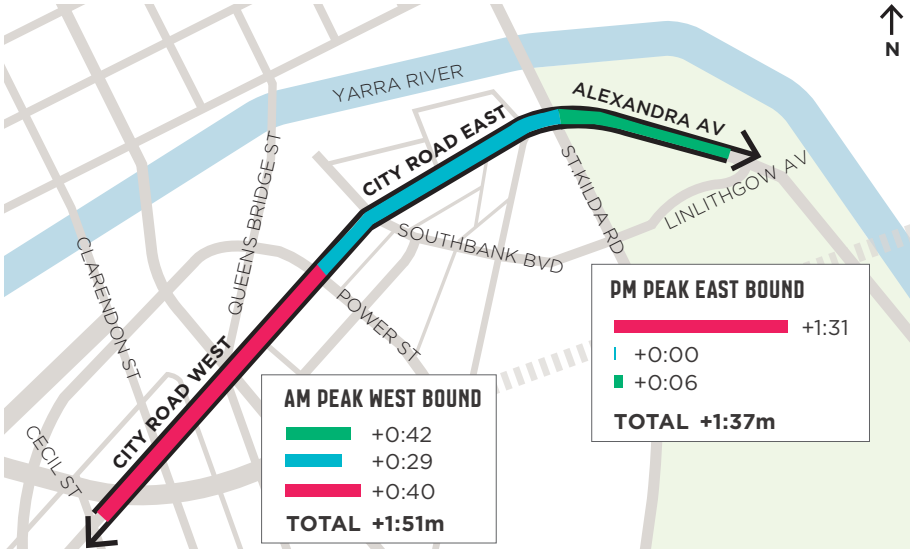


Figure 0.3: Potential increases in journey times in minutes between Cecile Street and Linlithgow Avenue, showing the two routes most impacted by the proposals. Source: GHD Traffic Modelling Report, July 2015

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Past community engagement

The draft master plan has been prepared following engagement with the community in 2014 as well as discussions with key stakeholders in Southbank.

During the community engagement activity in February - March 2014, we asked participants to share their experience of City Road.

The overall response from participants experiencing City Road as pedestrians, cyclists, public transport passengers or drivers was that CIty Road is an undesirable place to be and a difficult place to get around.

Ninety per cent of the experiences shared were negative with many feeling unsafe and frustrated.

We want to hear from you

We want to hear your thoughts on the actions in the draft master plan. Do you support the proposed actions? How could it be improved? Will these proposals improve your experience of City Road?

We have also identified areas at the Kings Way Undercroft and St Kilda Road that we think could be greatly improved. We want to hear your ideas on the kinds of uses and improvements that you think would transform these areas.

Your feedback will help inform the final City Road Master Plan.

Community engagement will be open in October 2015.

There are several ways to get involved:

- Comment online
- Drop in and chat to us at the Boyd Community Hub and/or come on a walking tour- refer to Participate Melbourne for details

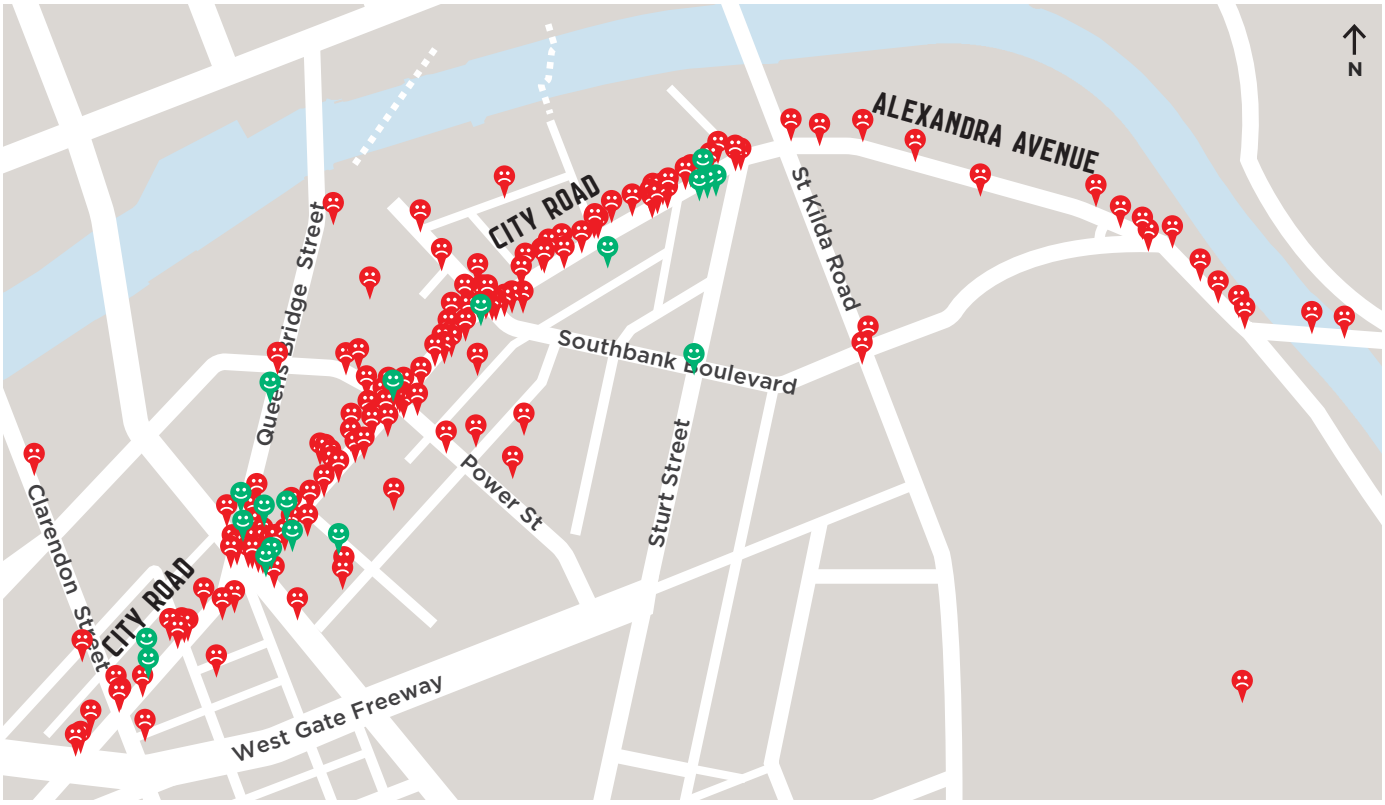


Figure 0.4: Positive and negative experiences of City Road shared by the community in 2014

To share your thoughts and to find out more about the City Road Draft Master Plan visit:

PARTICIPATE.MELBOURNE.VIC.GOV.AU/CITYROAD

To find out more about other projects happening in Southbank visit:

participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/shapesouthbank

A local resident shares their experience of City Road at Boyd during community engagement, 2014

Artist's impression of City Road looking west towards Balston Street, following improvements as outlined in the draft master plan

PART ONE

MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW

In this part you will find out:

- Why we have produced a draft Master Plan
- A summary of the proposed Master Plan actions

1. INTRODUCTION

Why do we need a Master Plan for City Road?

Southbank is part of the rapidly growing central city. It has transformed since the 1980s from an industrial suburb into a thriving inner city neighbourhood. It is home to 18,250 residents, almost 900 businesses with 33,600 workers and is the centre of a globally recognised arts precinct.

City Road has been the main street of this suburb since European settlement when it was established as the original route connecting settlers to Port Phillip Bay. It is now the central spine of one of Melbourne's most densely populated central city neighbourhoods, which continues to grow with an additional 7000 people expected to call Southbank home by 2021.

Southbank has changed dramatically, but the design of City Road has not kept up with this change and the street fails to meet the needs of the local community.

The design of the street reflects its more recent industrial past, prioritising east-west vehicular movements rather than walking and cycling throughout the Southbank neighbourhood. It is a difficult street to cross, unsafe, noisy and poorly landscaped. While footpaths are generous in some locations, at intersections they frequently become narrow, congested and feel unsafe. There is no room for cyclists in the street and public transport stops are in poor condition.

The City Road Master Plan aims to balance the road's two primary roles – as an important transport corridor and as a place that supports a local street life, that is people-friendly and safe for all the residents, workers and visitors who use City Road. It also considers how to make central Melbourne more environmentally sustainable, contributing to a more liveable and resilient city.

This master plan aims to create a 21st century street; a street that locals can be proud of, a street that is comfortable to be in as a pedestrian, safe to cross, with welcoming and generous footpaths. A street that is characterised by beautiful trees and an active street life enabled through the provision of generous pedestrian space. This means balancing the various transport modes and ensuring it enables people to get where they need to go whether they are walking, cycling, driving or catching public transport.

The local community are strongly in support of improving City Road. The resounding opinion of the community during our engagement activity in February-March 2014 was that City Road needs to be significantly improved to meet people's needs and aspirations. The road has to transform from being an unwelcoming, unsafe and unpleasant traffic corridor, into a place that people choose to be.

This project delivers a key action from the Southbank Structure Plan 2010, and responds directly to the feedback that we heard about how the road is experienced from the initial community engagement in 2014.

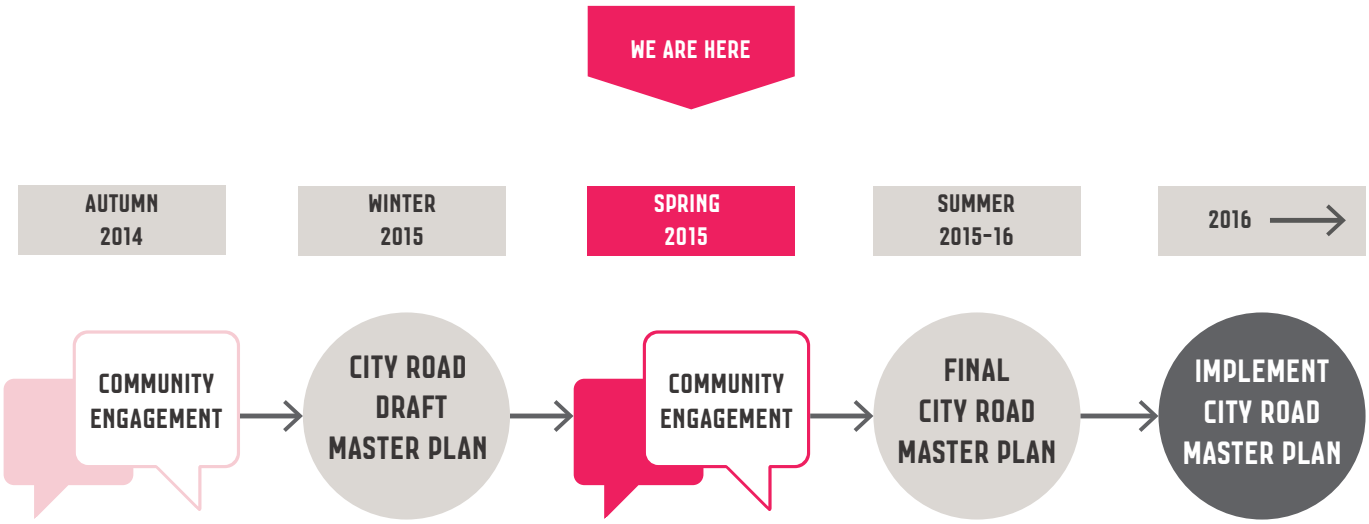


Figure 1.1: City Road Master Plan project timeline

How has the Master Plan been prepared?

The draft master plan has been informed by community feedback, detailed traffic modelling throughout Southbank, as well as ongoing discussions with key stakeholders such as VicRoads, the management authority for the road carriageway.

The design proposals consider traffic capacity requirements, arterial route functions and limitations presented by the need to fit multiple functions into the 30 metre wide reserve of City Road. The draft master plan presents the preferred response to different parts of the road.

For further detail on background material used to inform this draft master plan, please refer to the following documents available online at Participate Melbourne: Transport and Access Report, Community Engagement Summary, Issues and Opportunities Report and Traffic Modelling Report.

Which parts of City Road does this Master Plan affect?

The study area extends from Clarendon Street in the west to St Kilda Road in the east and includes Alexandra Avenue to the intersection with Linlithgow Avenue. In total, the study area is approximately two kilometres long (see figure 1.2).

The master plan considers the road in three sections:

- **City Road West -** Clarendon Street to Power Street.
- **City Road East -** Power Street to the St Kilda Road.
- **Alexandra Avenue -** St Kilda Road to Linlithgow Avenue.

Each section of the road presents different opportunities for improvement.

The public spaces near the Boyd Community Hub have also been addressed in this study area. These include the Kings Way Undercroft and City Road Park on the corner of Queens Bridge Street and City Road.

The lowering of City Road in the 1970s severed the historic connection of City Road to the city making it more difficult to access the city from Southbank. The connections between City Road and St Kilda Road (at the Arts Centre) have therefore also been reviewed.

Any upgrades to City Road west of Clarendon Street will be developed in future co-ordination with the City of Port Phillip.

Figure 1.2: City Road Master Plan study area

What can the Master Plan achieve?

The City Road Master Plan is a five year plan for delivering improvements within the road reserve (the traffic lanes and footpaths).

It proposes improvements to the layout and design of the road to better balance the priorities given to different transport modes - walking, cycling, driving and public transport as well as improvements to the character and enjoyment of the street, through footpath widening, tree planting, new paving and street furniture.

City Road will continue to play an important role in Melbourne's road transportation network. In particular, City Road east of Power Street provides a bypass from the Burnley Tunnel for oversized or placarded vehicles (trucks carrying goods that are not allowed through the tunnel).

VicRoads, the management authority for the road carriageway, has confirmed that this function will remain for the foreseeable future. As this master plan is a five year plan, it provides solutions that retain this placarded vehicle access while improving the performance of the street in other ways.

How will the Master Plan be delivered?

The need for partnerships

The needs and aspirations of the community are intrinsic to the delivery of the master plan.

Community engagement on this draft master plan provides the opportunity to get involved.

This project can only be delivered through partnership with other key organisations who are either responsible for the way the road is designed and functions or are directly impacted by the road design. These include:

- VicRoads
- Public Transport Victoria
- Arts Centre Melbourne
- Creative Victoria (Victorian Government)
- Yarra Trams and Bus operators
- City of Port Phillip

Linkages to other projects, plans and strategies

The draft master plan has been influenced by a number of current projects being undertaken by the City of Melbourne and other organisations. These include: Transforming Southbank Boulevard, the Arts Blueprint (Arts Victoria), Boyd Park and the Southbank Urban Forest Tree Precinct Plan (see figure 1.3).

The draft master plan aims to deliver on the goals and objectives of existing City of Melbourne strategies and plans, including:

- Urban Forest Strategy
- Open Space Strategy
- Total Watermark
- Zero Net Emissions
- Places for People
- Transport Strategy
- Walking Plan
- Bicycle Plan

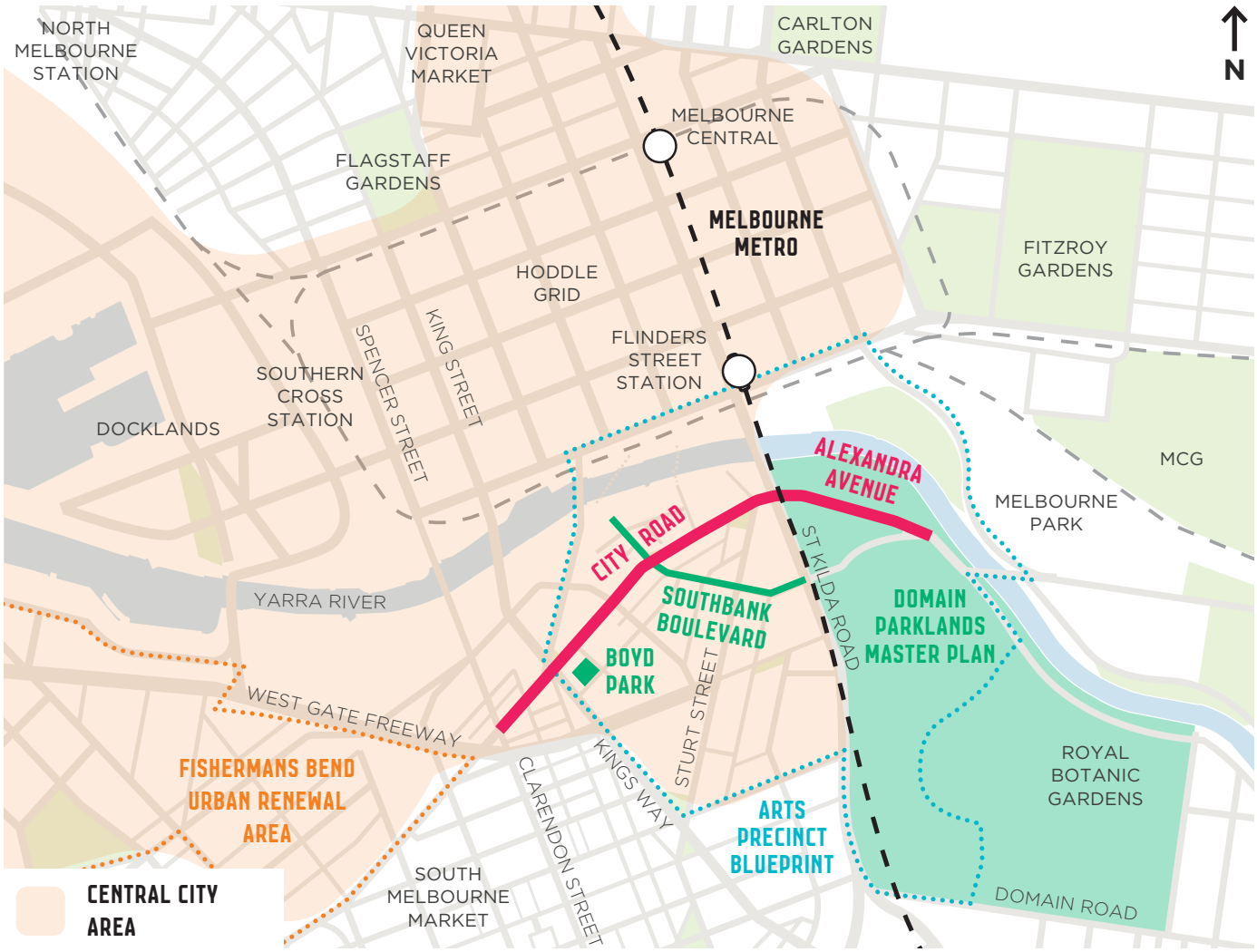


Figure 1.3: City Road and related projects within the wider central city context

2. MASTER PLAN ACTIONS

What are the draft Master Plan actions?

The draft master plan proposes six key actions to improve the road design and layout. These actions respond to the changing conditions along the length of the study area.

1. **TRANSFORM CITY ROAD WEST INTO A GREAT CENTRAL CITY STREET**
2. **REIMAGINE KINGS WAY UNDERCROFT AS A COMMUNITY SPACE**
3. **UPGRADE CITY ROAD TO BE SAFER AND EASIER TO GET AROUND**
4. **CONNECT CITY ROAD TO THE ARTS CENTRE AND YARRA RIVER**
5. **RECONFIGURE ALEXANDRA AVENUE AS A BOULEVARD**
6. **EXPAND THE BICYCLE NETWORK WITHIN SOUTHBANK**

A summary of these actions is provided on the following pages. The full details of the proposals are contained in Part Three of this document, along with how they will be delivered.

What are the transport priorities and requirements?

The street improvements outlined in the draft master plan respond to different transport requirements along City Road and Alexandra Avenue.

Due to changing conditions and space limitations along the road, not all transport modes can be accommodated in each section. Figure 1.4 shows the existing major routes for each mode, illustrating how different users of the street connect into and through City Road and Alexandra Avenue.

A summary of how transport modes are accomodated in the draft master plan is noted below.

Pedestrians

Walking is the predominant mode of transport for all trips in central Melbourne, in the order of 86% (Walking Plan, City of Melbourne 2014).

The City of Melbourne seeks to deliver an environment in which pedestrians are prioritised and supported by a safe, attractive and engaging urban environment (Road Safety Plan 2013-2017, City of Melbourne).

Pedestrian amenity and safety is the highest priority along the full length of City Road.

Generally the footpaths are of sufficient width. Opportunities to improve access and safety for pedestrians are focused on making it safer and easier to cross City Road and Alexandra Avenue.

This includes improvements at existing intersections to minimise crossing distances as well as providing new crossing points along the road in targeted locations where there is existing or future demand.

Cyclists

The City of Melbourne is committed to becoming a cycling city with safe and connected bicycle routes. This involves delivering a connected cycling network, building high quality routes for local cycling trips, increasing participation in cycling and making cycling safer (Bike Plan 2012-16, City of Melbourne).

There is currently very limited bicycle access within and through Southbank. The draft master plan recognises the importance of providing safe bicycle access for the Southbank community, as well as the need to connect Southbank to surrounding areas and key routes.

Due to competing transport needs, it is not considered possible to continue bike lanes along the full length of City Road.

Instead, a bicycle route is proposed via City Road, Balston Street, Kavanagh Street and Southbank Boulevard (see Action 6 p84 for further details).

Public Transport

The importance of public transport in Southbank will increase as development intensifies, resident and worker populations grow and Fisherman's Bend is developed as part of the expanded central city.

The draft master plan does not propose changes to the existing transport network but aims to maintain or increase public transport priority. Pedestrian access for public transport passengers will also be a focus for street improvements.

Cars

Car access will be maintained for the full length of the study area. Proposed changes aim to minimise impact to vehicle capacity and journey time. Access to all private car parks will be maintained.

Trucks

Access for placarded vehicles and over dimensional vehicles will be maintained east of Power Street as an alternative route to the Burnley Tunnel in line with VicRoads requirements. The draft master plan aims to mitigate the impact of these vehicles on other road users.

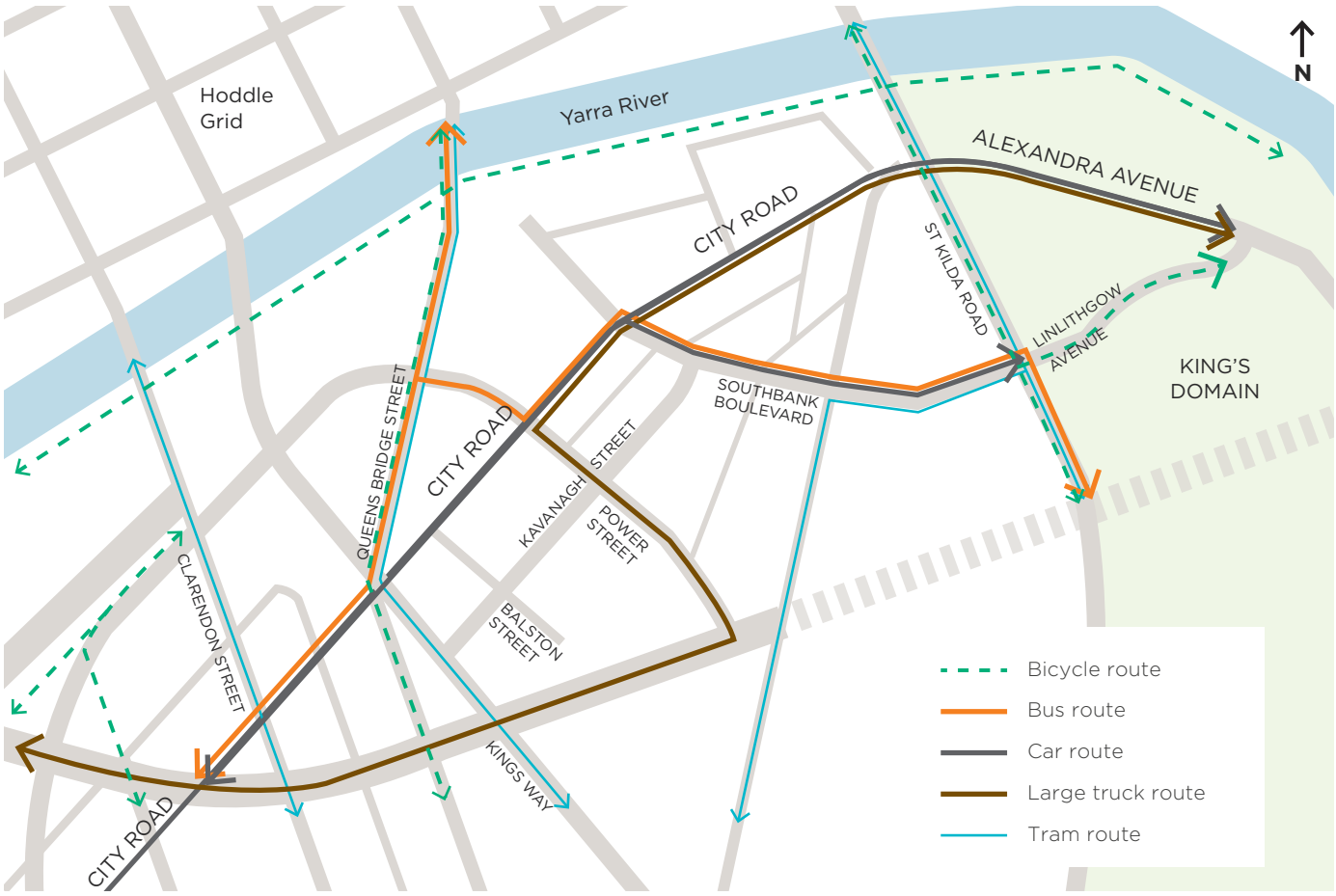


Figure 1.4: Existing transport routes on City Road and Alexandra Avenue in the broader Southbank context

PROPOSED ACTIONS

PURPOSE: TO TRANSFORM CITY ROAD INTO A SAFE AND WELCOMING PLACE FOR EVERYONE

1. TRANSFORM CITY ROAD WEST INTO A GREAT CENTRAL CITY STREET

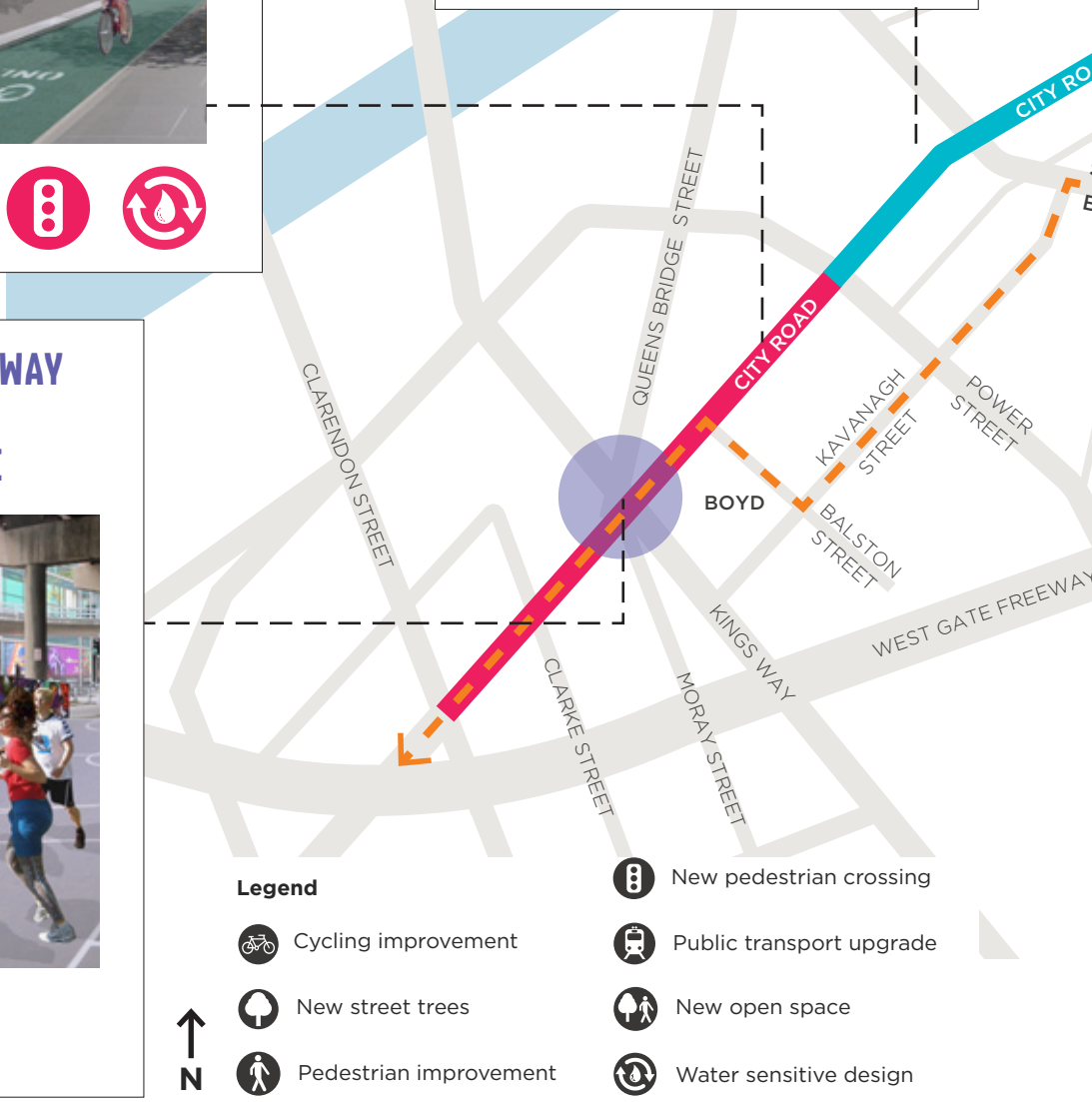
SEE PAGE 43

2. REIMAGINE KINGS WAY UNDERCROFT AS A COMMUNITY SPACE

SEE PAGE 58

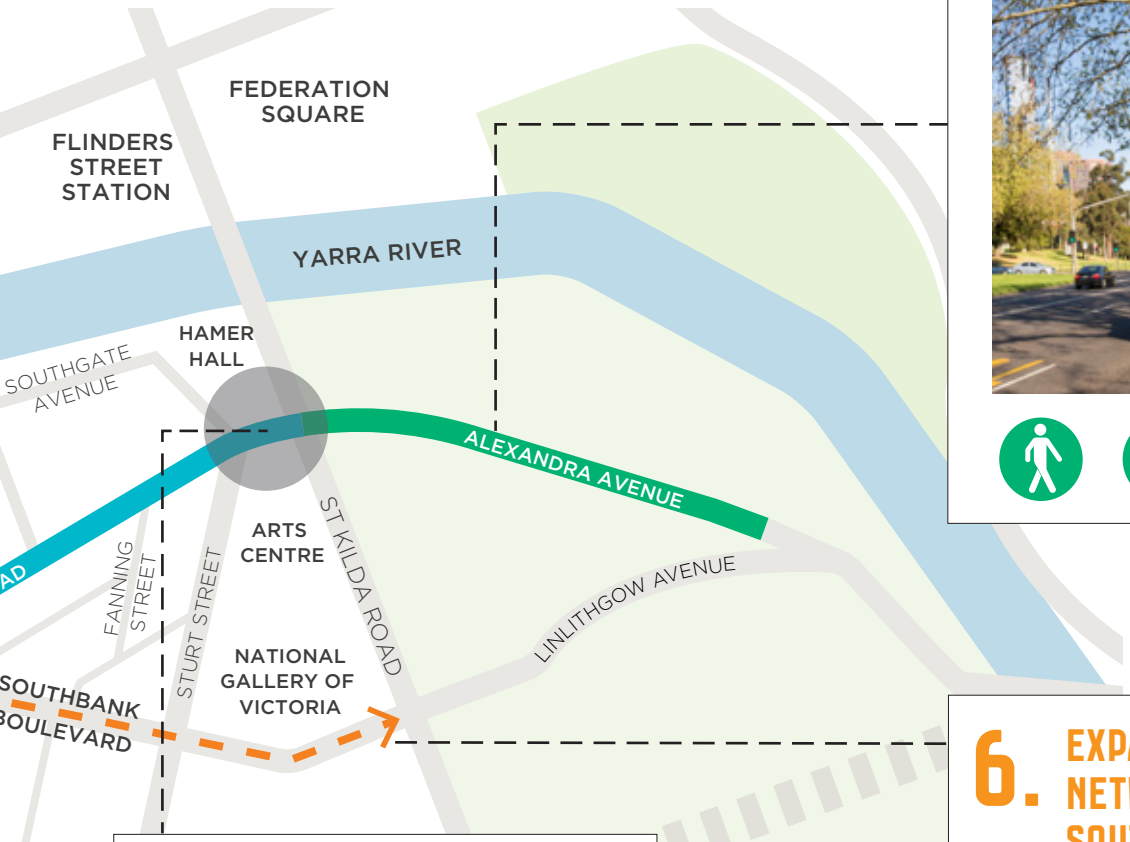
3. UPGRADE CITY ROAD EAST TO BE SAFER AND EASIER TO GET AROUND

SEE PAGE 66



Legend

- Cycling improvement
- New street trees
- Pedestrian improvement
- New pedestrian crossing
- Public transport upgrade
- New open space
- Water sensitive design



5. RECONFIGURE ALEXANDRA AVENUE AS A BOULEVARD

6. EXPAND THE BICYCLE NETWORK WITHIN SOUTHBANK

4. CONNECT CITY ROAD TO THE ARTS CENTRE AND YARRA RIVER

Figure 1.5: Summary of proposed actions, the full details of these are contained in Part Three

What are the proposed changes to City Road?

Figure 1.6 shows the changes to City Road and Alexandra Avenue proposed in the draft master plan. These relate to the road reserve specifically (footpaths and carriageway).

The majority of changes are concentrated in City Road West between Clarendon Street and Power Street in response to detailed analysis of existing traffic conditions (refer to pages 20 and 21).

City Road East and Alexandra Avenue experience higher traffic volumes due to their arterial route function which is reflected in the level of changes proposed in these segments of the road.

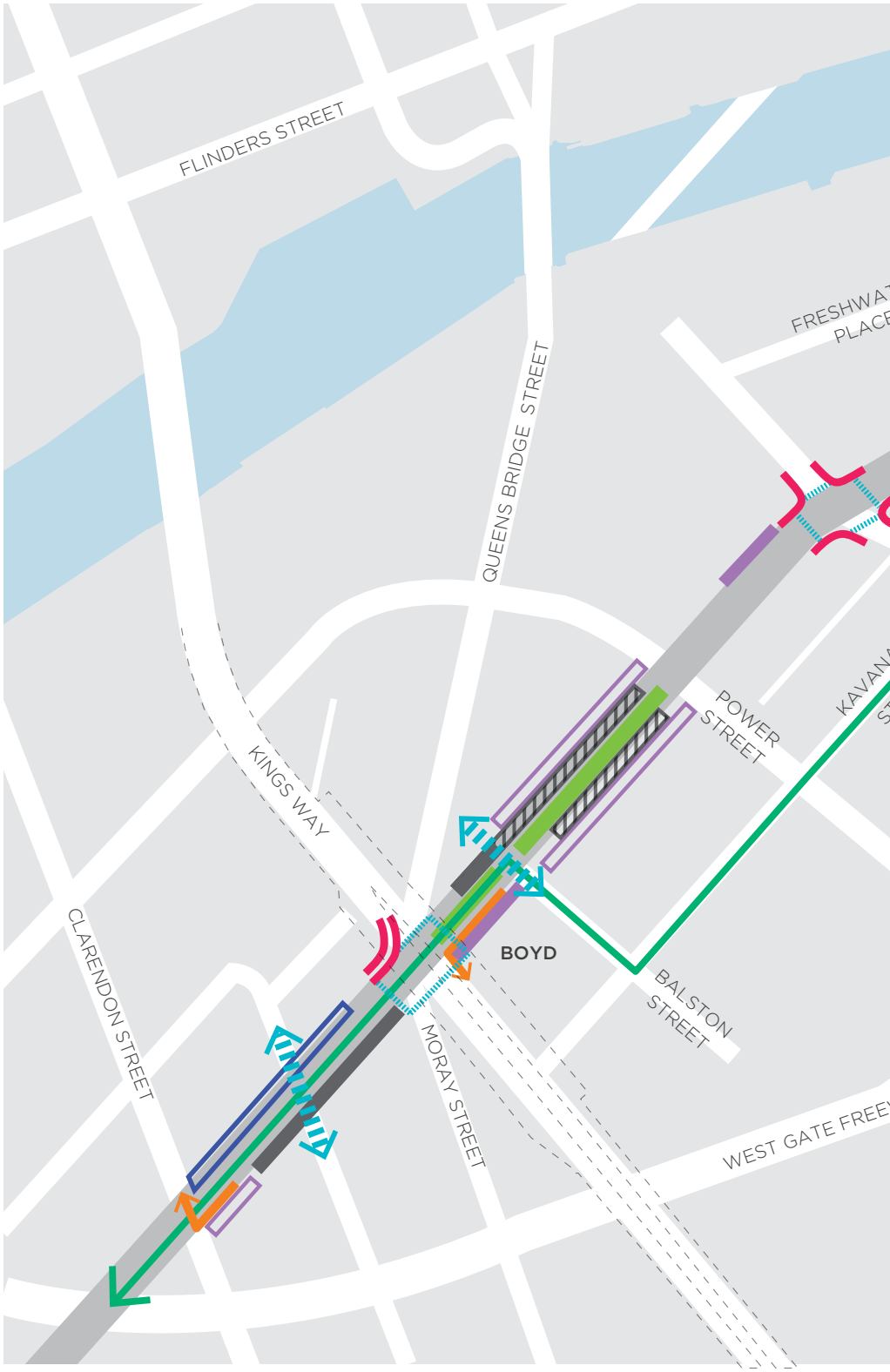
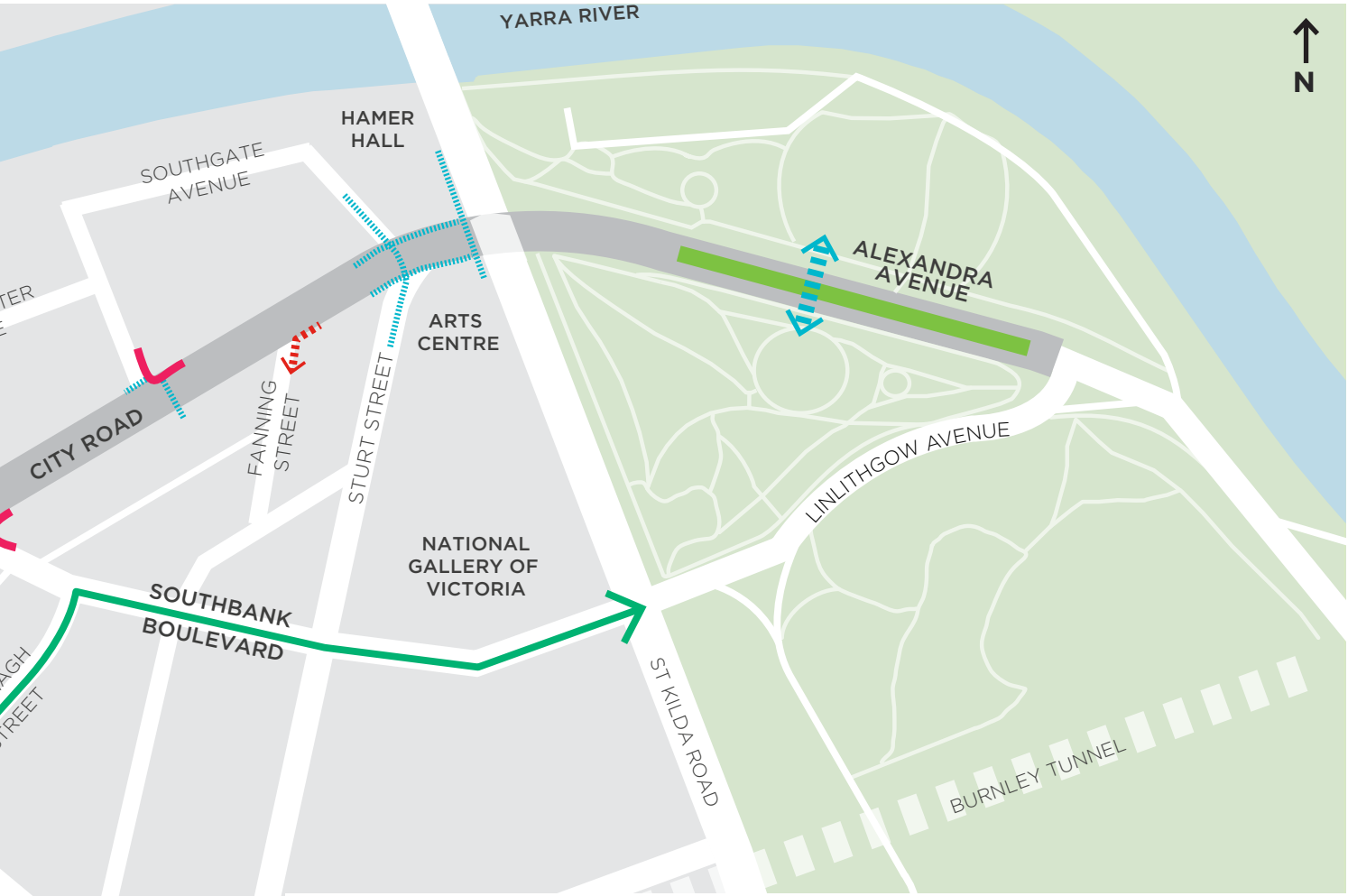


Figure 1.6: Map showing the proposed changes to City Road and Alexandra Avenue



PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

- New pedestrian crossing
- Improved pedestrian connections

BICYCLE ACCESS

- On road bicycle lane

FOOTPATH ALTERATIONS

- Increase in footpath width
- Increase in footpath width in some sections
- Minor reduction in footpath width

PARKING ALTERATIONS

- Removal of all carparking
- Removal of some carparking

ROAD ALTERATIONS

- Removal of slip lane (increase in footpath)
- Removal of dedicated turning lane (turning movement still possible from alternate lane)
- Removal of left turn into Fanning Street
- Planted median strip

Existing traffic conditions

Traffic volumes

There is significant variation in traffic volumes in different segments of City Road and Alexandra Avenue. This has been taken into consideration in the design proposals in this draft master plan.

Figure 1.7 demonstrates how City Road's arterial route function as a bypass to the Burnley Tunnel, results in far greater traffic volumes east of Power Street, compared to City Road west of Power Street. Approximately 45,600 vehicles per day travel along Alexandra Avenue, compared to 22,500 per day on the least trafficked section of City Road West. These variations in traffic volumes along City Road highlight that there are greater opportunities for improvements west of Power Street in the shorter term.

Crashes

There have been a number of crashes in City Road, particularly at intersections which are often very large and confusing. This includes two fatalities as shown in figure 1.8. Improved safety is a key driver for the draft master plan and all proposals aim to improve safety for all City Road users.

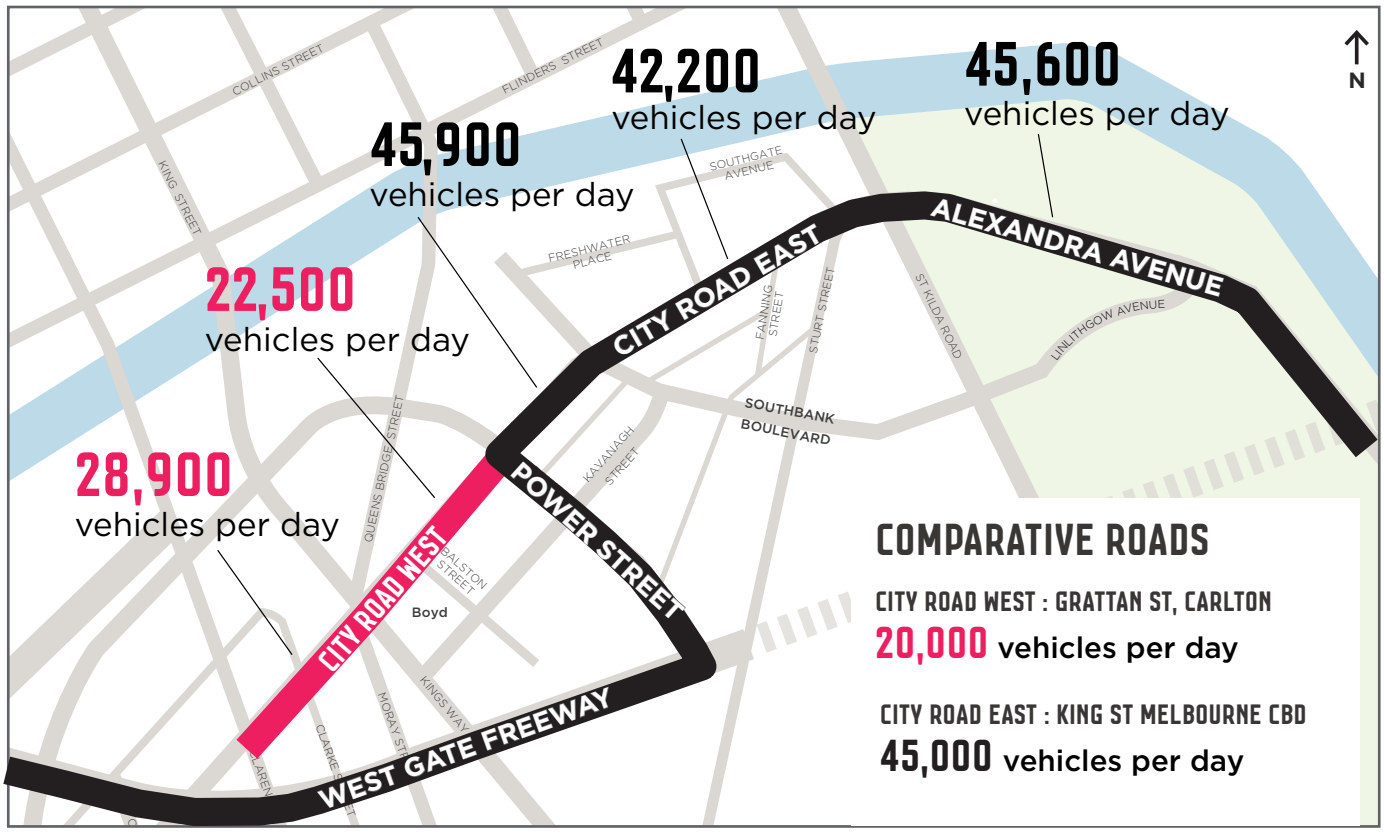


Figure 1.7: VicRoads Traffic Volumes 2013. Source: GHD Traffic and Access Study, May 2014

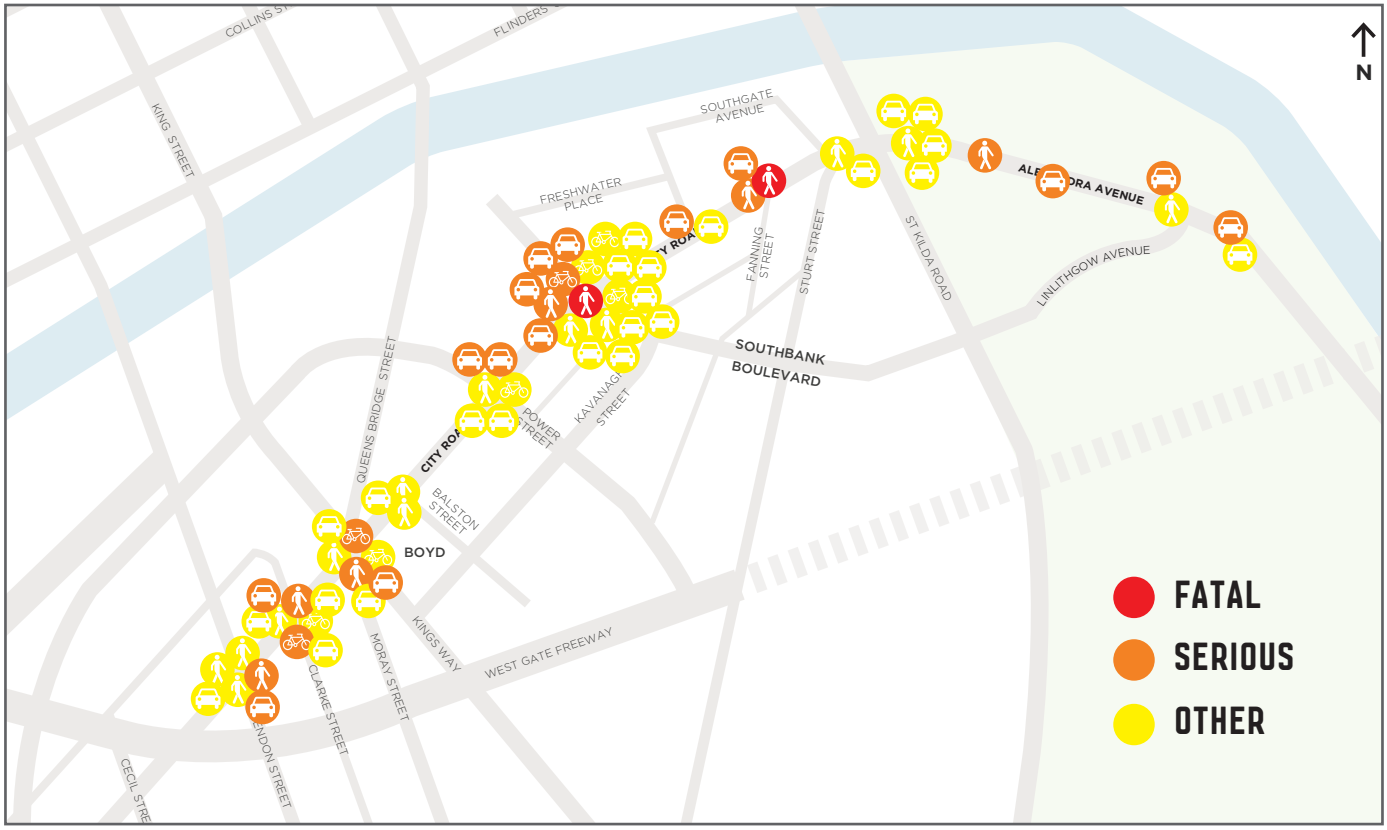


Figure 1.8: VicRoads CrashStats 2008-2012 for City Road. Source: GHD Traffic and Access Study, May 2014

How will the draft Master Plan affect traffic?

Traffic modelling method of assessment

Detailed traffic modelling has been undertaken to develop the street layout proposals presented in the draft master plan and to understand their impact on traffic movement. Proposals aim to minimise impacts on traffic movement where possible to retain the key arterial route from Power Street to the east.

One way of understanding the likely impact of these proposals is by measuring the increase or decrease in average (median) journey times. Variations in journey times are presented alongside each proposal in Part Three of the draft master plan.

Limitations to traffic modelling

While traffic modelling can be a useful means of understanding the trade-offs involved in transforming City Road, its limitations need to be recognised. Traffic modelling does not account for other likely affects of improvements to City Road.

These may include changes in individual travel behaviour such as shifting to a different mode of transport or choosing an alternate route.

Another limitation to modelling the impacts of proposed changes is the volatility of existing conditions in Southbank. City Road, and Southbank in general, is a heavily trafficked and highly congested area where observed journey times vary significantly.

For example, two runs of the same route at the same time of day can vary in duration from three minutes to eight minutes, as demonstrated in figure 1.9.

Therefore, a modelled increase to an average (median) journey time is, in reality, likely to be absorbed within the spectrum of existing journey time variability.

Potential increase in journey times

Increases in journey times will be most significant in City Road West as shown in figure 1.10.

The two routes most impacted by the proposed changes are:

- Travelling east bound in the PM peak from Cecil Street to Linlithgow Avenue which could increase the average journey time by 1:37 minutes from 7:27 to 9:04 minutes.
- Travelling west bound in the AM peak from Linlithgow Avenue to Cecil Street which could increase the average journey time by 1:51 minutes from 5:29 to 7:20 minutes.

Minor journey time increases are expected in the AM peak east bound (an additional 30 seconds to the average journey) and in the PM peak west bound (an additional 43 seconds to the average journey).

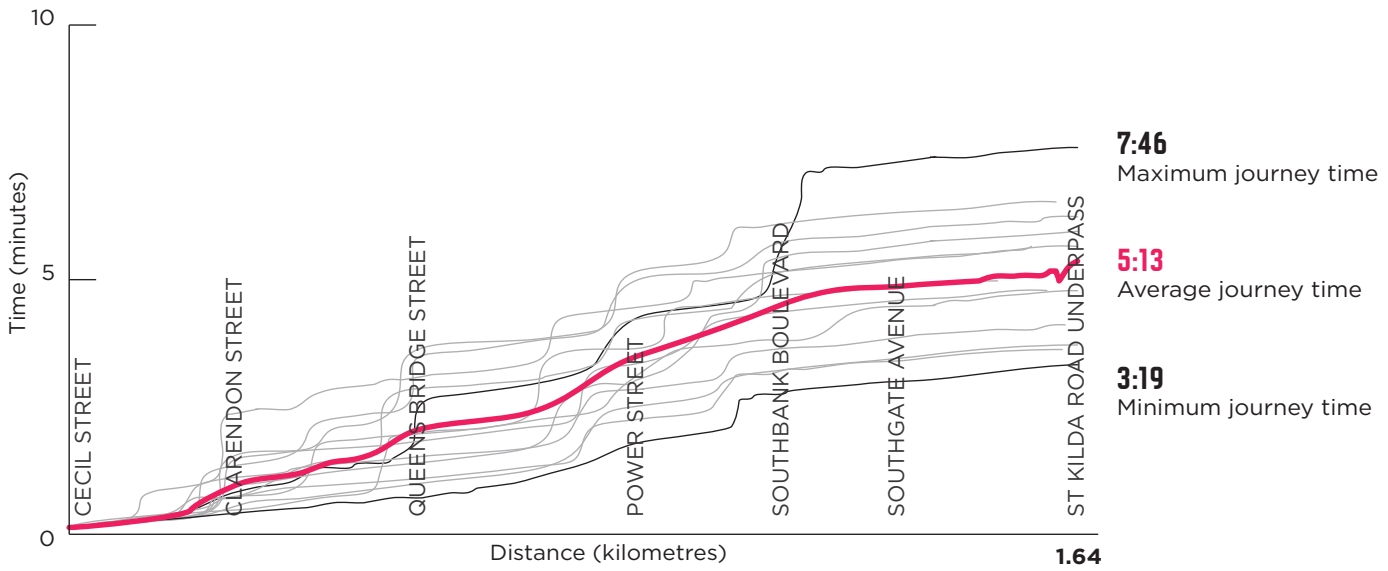
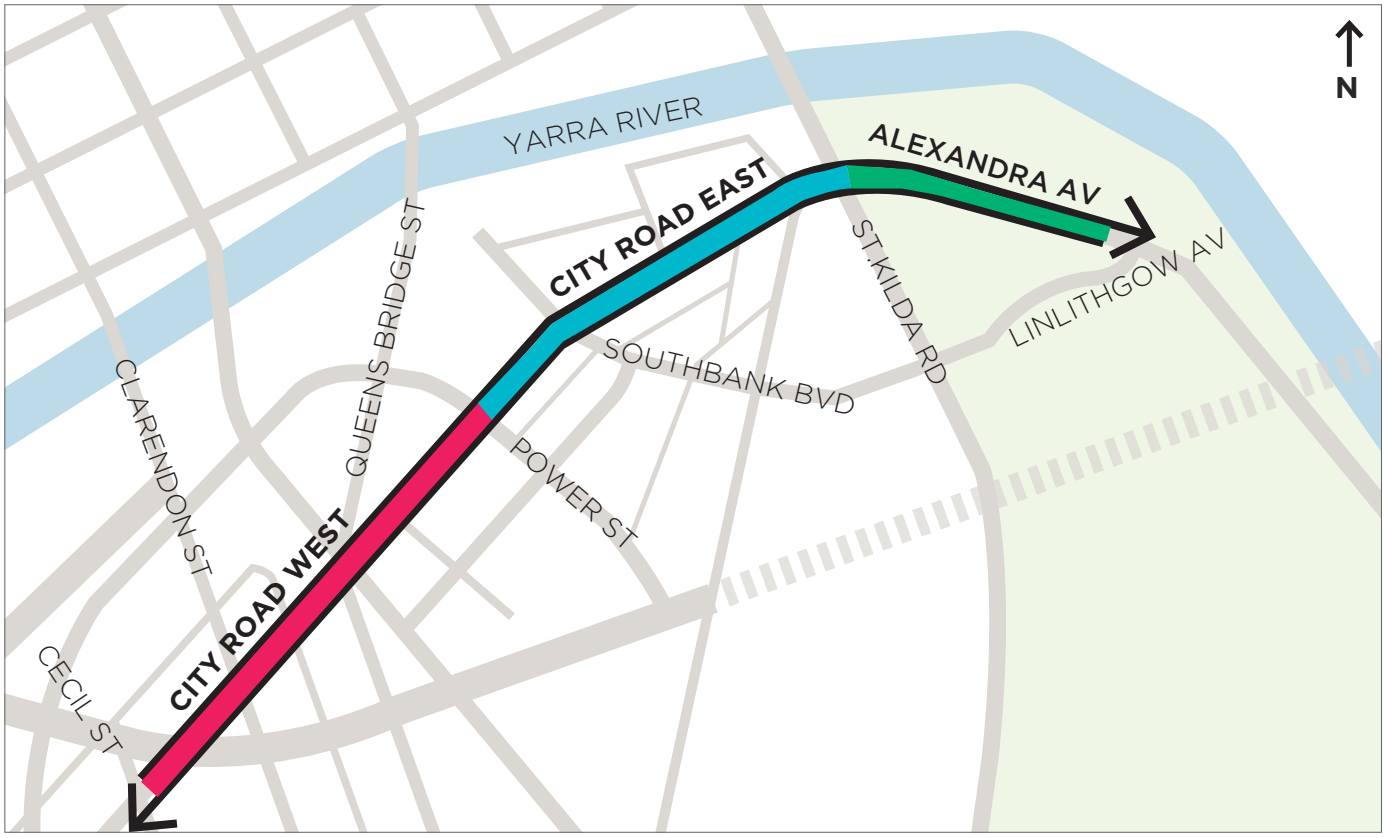


Figure 1.9: Example of the variation in travel times experienced on City Road from Cecil Street to St Kilda Road (PM peak).
Source: GHD Traffic Modelling Report July 2015



AM PEAK EAST BOUND	AM PEAK WEST BOUND	PM PEAK EAST BOUND	PM PEAK WEST BOUND
+0:28	+0:42	+1:31	+0:00
+0:01	+0:29	+0:00	+0:27
+0:01	+0:40	+0:06	+0:16
TOTAL +0:30m	**TOTAL +1:51m**	**TOTAL +1:37m**	**TOTAL +0:43m**

Figure 1.10: Potential increases in journey times in minutes between Cecil Street and Linlithgow Avenue.
Source: GHD Traffic Modelling Report, July 2015

PART TWO

WHAT MAKES A GREAT STREET?

In this part you will find out:

- How Southbank is changing and the story of where it has come from
- Key priorities to consider for City Road

Street dining on Lonsdale Street, Melbourne

The role of the street

Streets make up the majority of the public spaces in our city, yet we often don't think of them in this way. Typically, streets are regarded as movement corridors, particularly for private vehicles. The reality is that streets perform a far greater role than moving vehicles.

Streets are destinations as well as journeys. They provide opportunities to gather, stroll, socialise, perform, dine, sit, relax or exercise. They provide important space for nature in the city and offer places of respite from the built environment.

They are spaces that allow for the delivery of goods and people to businesses, work places and homes.

Streets provide the interface between the public and private places in our city. They are the front door and the address that help us navigate and experience the city. They have their own identity, character and status.

Streets also allow us to get around. Whether it be in a private vehicle, a work vehicle, on foot, by bike or public transport, pushing a stroller or walking a dog.

In order to make City Road a great central city street that meets the needs of the present and future, we need to ensure that it can perform all of these roles. To do this it needs to be:

- Safe and easy to get around
- Environmentally sustainable
- A great place to be

3. A CONNECTION TO THE PAST

The public realm plays an important role in the way people experience, value and remember a city. Public spaces have their own histories and they connect the experience of the place today to its past.

Pre-European Settlement

The area that we call Southbank today was inhabited by Indigenous people for thousands of years prior to the arrival of Europeans in 1835.

The low lying wetlands south of Birrarung (Yarra River) provided a rich source of food for the clans of the surrounding region. Due to its topography, Southbank is still prone to flooding today.

1830s - European Settlement

City Road has claims to being the first 'street' in Melbourne. Soon after European settlement, a walking track between Port Phillip Bay and the newly laid Hoddle grid was established along a dry creek bed, later formalised as City - Sandridge Road. The Sandridge Railway opened in 1854, moving goods to and from the port.

1840s - Royal Botanic Gardens

In the 1840s, land south of the Yarra overlooking Melbourne was reserved as parkland. The Royal Botanic Gardens were set aside in 1846 as parkland and work commenced to transform the Domain into a public park shortly after.

1850 - 1950 Establishment of industrial precinct

Throughout this century, Southbank (formerly South Melbourne) became an industrial precinct, with City Road providing an important connection to the central city. Land use along City Road included warehouses, manufacturing and mechanics' workshops (see figure 2.3)

Alexandra Avenue was constructed in 1901, a wide boulevard with four separate lanes and Alexandra Gardens were laid out shortly after.

Figure 2.1: Melbourne circa 1850s facing north with the wetlands of Southbank visible in the foreground.
Source: State Library of Victoria

Figure 2.2: Alexandra Avenue circa 1940s-1950s.
Source: Rose Stereograph Co, State Library of Victoria

Figure 2.3: Draffin Bros electric hot water service at 43-47 City Road (now Opera Australia) circa 1930's.
Source: State Library of Victoria

Figure 2.4: The intersection of City Road and St Kilda Road connecting at grade prior to the lowering of City Road circa 1945.
Source: State Library of Victoria

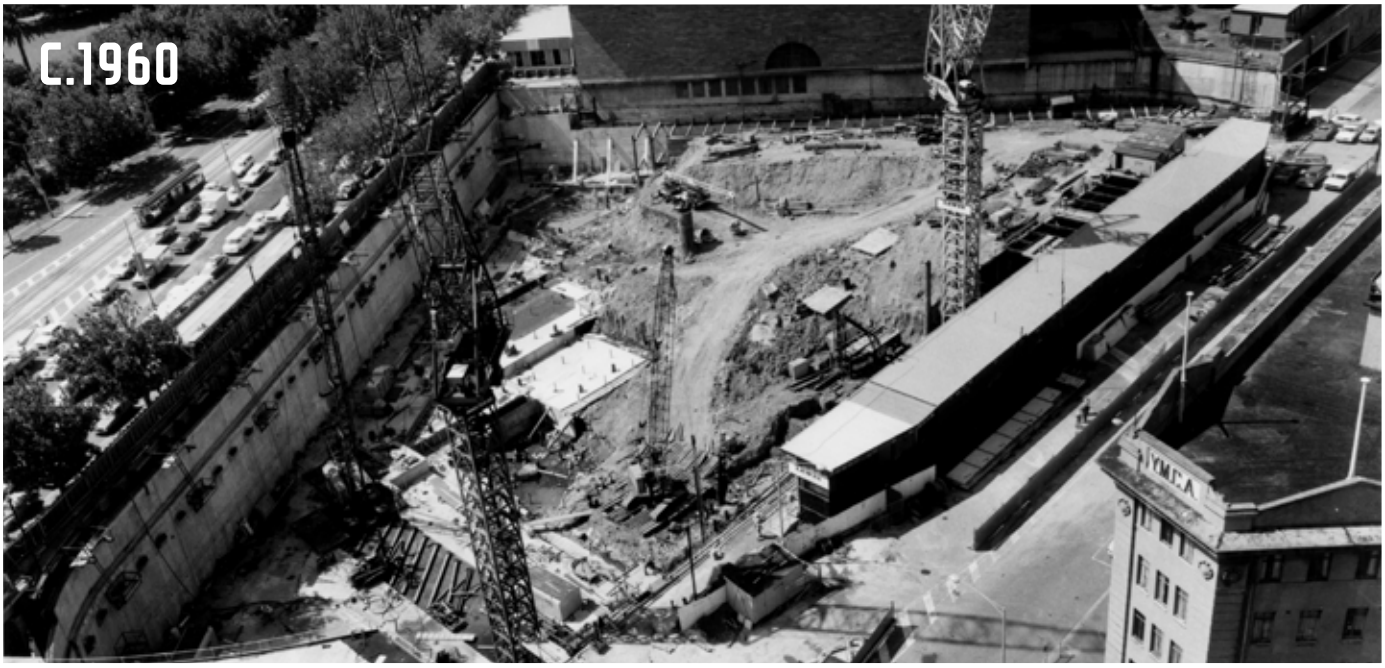


Figure 2.5: Arts Centre during construction with St Kilda Road to the left of image circa 1960s. Source: Arts Centre Melbourne Performing Arts Collection.

1950/60s - City Road disconnected from central city

Swan Street Bridge opened in the 1950s, connecting Alexandra Avenue to the sports precinct for the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games.

In the 1960s, as part of the Roy Grounds' Master Plan for the arts precinct, City Road was tunnelled below St Kilda Road. This severed its historic connection with St Kilda Road, Princes Bridge and the Hoddle grid (see figures 2.4 and 2.5). The Arts Centre Precinct opened in the 1980s.

In 1961 the Kings Way overpass opened, creating a new southern entrance to the city and forming a perceived barrier between Southbank and South Melbourne.

Late 20th Century - urban renewal

The urban renewal of Southbank from an industrial area into a commercial and residential precinct began in the 1980s with the opening of the Southgate Complex and high rise office towers along the Yarra River. Crown Casino opened in 1997, continuing the trend of development fronting onto the Yarra River and turning its back to City Road.

21st Century - booming suburb

CityLink and the Burnley tunnel commenced operation in 2000, establishing City Road East as the alternative route for placarded vehicles and all vehicles in times of tunnel closure.

The Southbank Structure Plan 2010 (and former Southbank Plan 2007) set a vision for the ongoing renewal of Southbank as part of Melbourne's expanded central city which saw the rezoning of the land to Capital City Zone in 2013.

The iconic Eureka Tower, at 297 metres in height was completed in 2006 and is currently the tallest building in Melbourne. The approved Australia 108 development to be built on the corner of City Road and Southbank Boulevard will soon take over this title.

Figure 2.6: Southbank and City Road circa 1980's. Source: State Library of Victoria

City Road in 2015: the front door to thousands of residents and workers

City Road as the front door to thousands of residents and workers

In the past decade the number of residents and workers in Southbank has drastically increased, particularly on the blocks fronting City Road (see figures 2.7-2.10). There are now over 5000 homes and over 20,000 jobs.

This influx of residents to the area reinforces the importance of City Road as a street that must serve the broad needs of its local population and act as a safe front door to the thousands of new homes along its length.

City Road has evolved over time as Southbank's role in the city has changed.

Improvements to City Road need to be respectful of the past and provide opportunities for today's residents, visitors and workers to connect to the history of the city and the place.

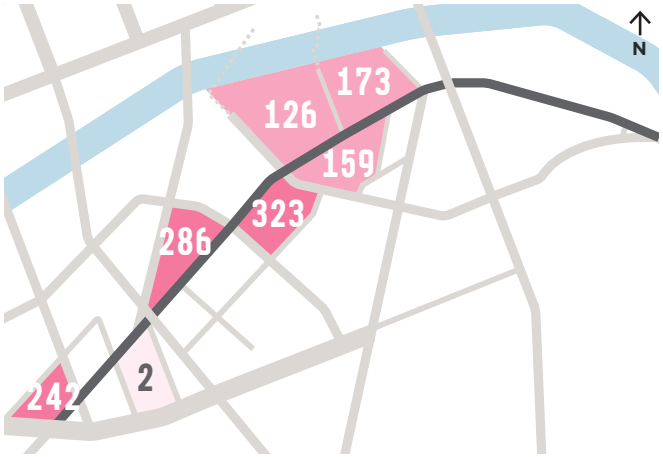


Figure 2.7: Number of homes within the blocks fronting City Road in 2002. Source: CLUE 2002

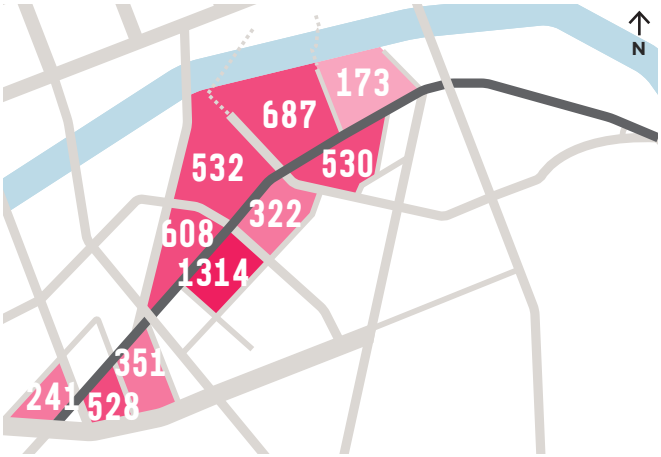


Figure 2.8: Number of homes within the blocks fronting City Road in 2012. Source: CLUE 2012

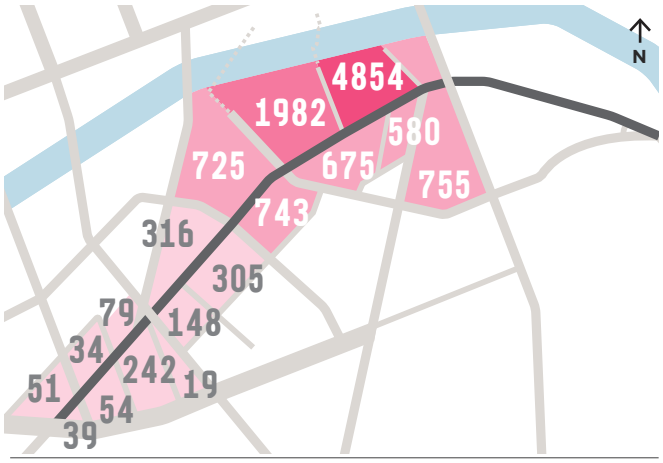


Figure 2.9: Number of jobs within the blocks fronting City Road in 2002. Source: CLUE 2002

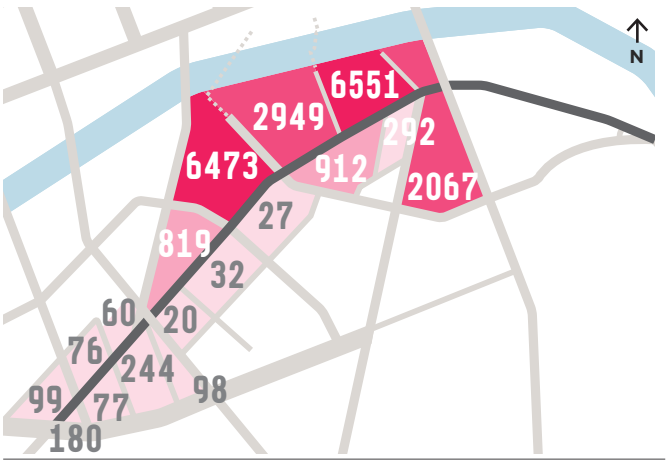


Figure 2.10: Number of jobs within the blocks fronting City Road in 2012. Source: CLUE 2012

4. MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE

Since urban renewal began in the 1980s Southbank has become the fastest growing suburb in Melbourne. This has brought increased numbers of people living, working and visiting the area.

City Road, however, has not transformed to meet the needs of these people. It is still primarily designed to move vehicles in an east to west direction and continues to act as a significant barrier to north - south movement, effectively dividing Southbank in two.

Population growth and development is set to continue at a rapid pace with several significant potential development sites yet to come forward. This growth emphasises the need to improve the quality of the public realm and connections through the area and to the Hoddle Grid which is the key destination for most residents.

The growth of Southbank cannot be looked at in isolation of the Fishermans Bend urban renewal area which is connected to Southbank through CIty Road. The 455 hectare site is forecast to accommodate a residential population in the order of 80,000 and approximately 40,000 jobs.

In 2011, 34 per cent of Southbank residents walked to work. A further 24 per cent walked to public transport. This means that there were approximately 4000 people walking around Southbank as their primary means of transport during peak periods.

Trends suggest that the proportion of people travelling by foot and public transport is likely to significantly increase along with a greater number of workers and visitors to the area.

By 2032, we can expect well over 20,000 people walking around

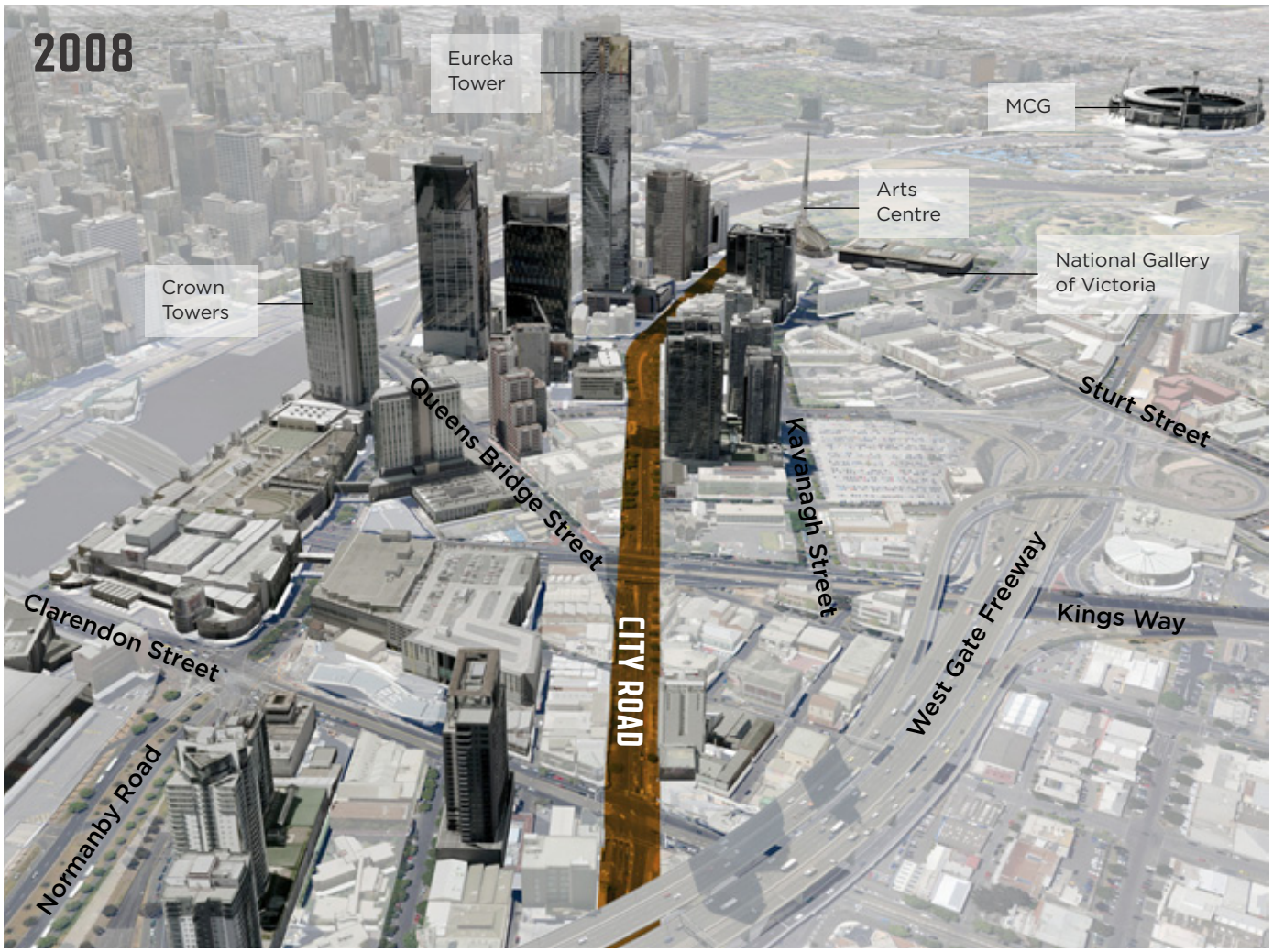


Figure 2.11: The evolution of Southbank from industrial precinct to central city (2008)

Southbank and City Road every day during the peak morning and evening periods.

City Road will need to accommodate this significant increase in foot traffic in order to ensure that people can easily and safely access their jobs, homes and other services.

PEDESTRIANS

4000 2011 → **20,000+** 2032

Figure 2.12: Estimated increase in residents walking to work in Southbank

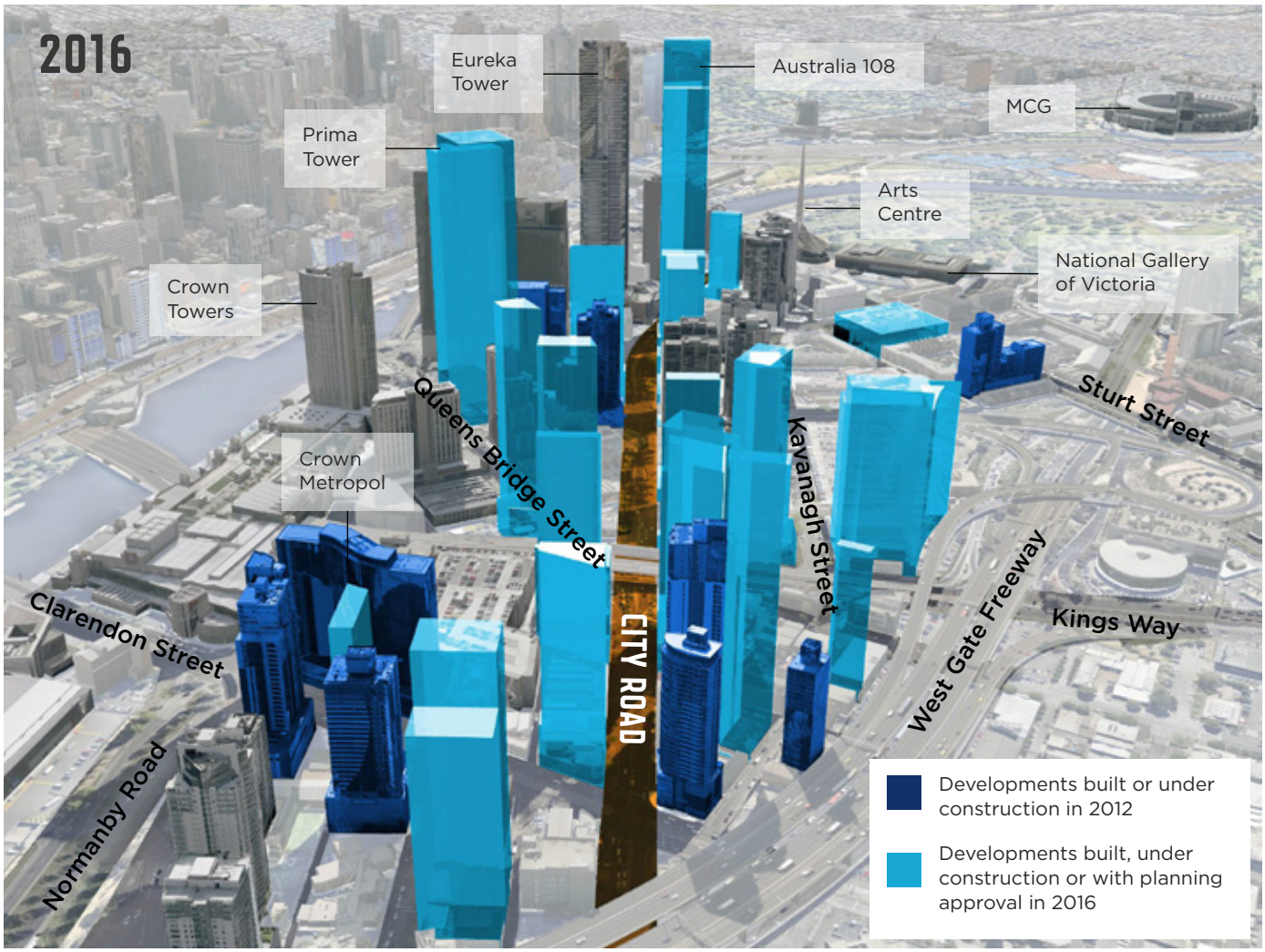


Figure 2.13: The evolution of Southbank as the densest suburb in Melbourne

5. BALANCING PRIORITIES IN A LIMITED SPACE

Cities are defined by their streets and great streets support their context. Melbourne has some exemplary streets- Swanston Street, Lygon Street and Brunswick Street are all examples of vibrant streets, each with its own distinct character and identity.

In every street a limited amount of space is allocated to different, and sometimes competing, uses and functions. Outdoor dining, street trees, vehicles and bicycle lanes all take space.

It was clearly demonstrated in our 2014 community engagement on City Road that the road is seen by all users - drivers, pedestrians, cyclists - as poorly performing and in significant need of a redesign (igure 2.14).

Trade-offs must be made in the design of any street to find the right balance for its particular context.

More space for pedestrians and cyclists may result in less space for parking. Intersections that favour cars may make it more challenging for pedestrians to cross safely and efficiently.

In order to make City Road a great Melbourne street, we need it to be:

- Safe and easy to get around
- Environmentally sustainable
- A great place to be

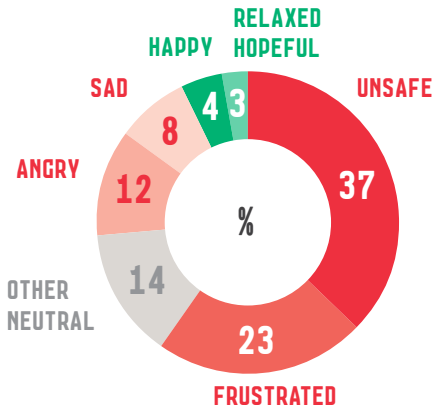


Figure 2.14: Experience of City Road shared online by emotion.
Source: Community Engagement 2014

Safe and easy to get around

The following elements are evident in streets that are comfortable, connected and convenient for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport passengers and drivers.

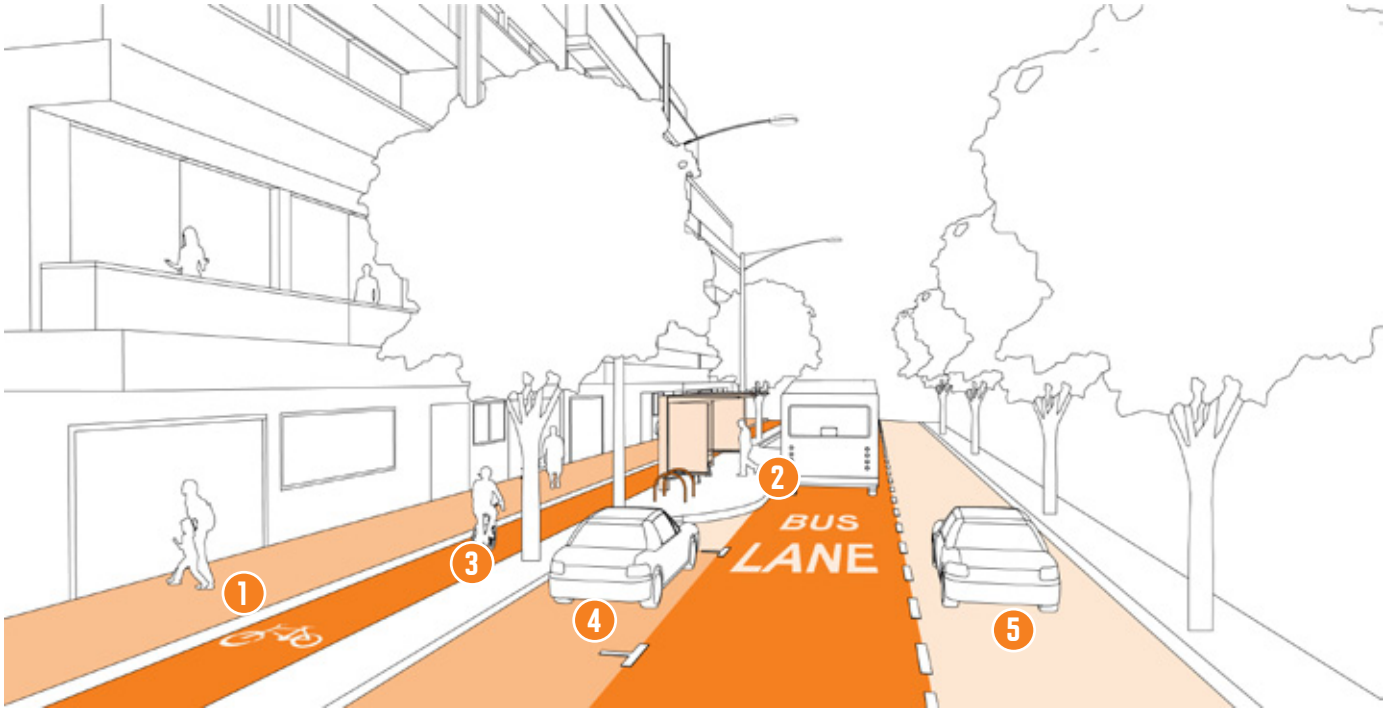


Figure 2.15: Street design elements that prioritise the efficient movement of different modes of transport

1 Pedestrian access

- Safe and direct pedestrian access encourages walking as the primary transport mode.
- Sheltered and well-lit public transport stops create a safe and comfortable place to wait.
- Adjusting traffic signals to reduce pedestrian waiting time minimises the incentive to cross illegally and unsafely.
- Medians can help to create pedestrian refuges to assist in crossing the street.

2 Public transport priority

- Bus and tram priority lanes allow for a more efficient public transport network. Encouraging public transport use can help minimise traffic congestion.

3 Bicycle infrastructure

- High quality bicycle lanes that are separated from traffic help create a safe and legible network for cyclists of different abilities.
- Improving bicycle infrastructure encourages more people to cycle and can reduce traffic congestion.
- On-street bicycle parking provides a convenient place for cyclists to access local businesses, residences and services.

4 On-street car parking

- On-street car parking improves access to local businesses, residences and services.
- On-street parking between cyclists and road traffic (with a sufficient buffer) can improve cyclist safety.
- Parking movements can encourage slower traffic speeds and make the street safer for pedestrians.

5 Speed limits

- Reducing the traffic speed limit can improve safety and access for all road users.

Environmentally sustainable

The following elements are evident in streets that address the changing climate by harnessing water, reducing urban heat, increasing vegetation and prioritising sustainable transport.

Figure 2.16: Street design elements that prioritise sustainability and water management

1 Increased tree canopy

- Increasing the street tree canopy helps to reduce the 'Urban Heat Island Effect', making the city cooler.
- An increased tree canopy increases the absorption of carbon dioxide, improving local air quality.

2 Healthy and diverse trees

- Improving tree health and increasing the diversity of species increases the ecological resilience of our urban forest.
- A healthy and diverse tree canopy provides a more diverse habitat for wildlife.

3 Water sensitive urban design

- Increasing permeable surfaces and decreasing the extent of asphalt helps mitigate flooding issues and storm water pollution.
- 'Urban Heat Island Effect' is reduced through the use of surfaces such as grass, ground planting and permeable paving.
- Natural water filtration improves soil quality and tree health and reduces overall water consumption.

4 Sustainable transport modes

- Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport improves the efficiency of transport on the street and minimises emissions.

A great place to be

The following elements are evident in streets that are lively and attractive with a variety of activities, shops, residences and services that draw people to visit and encourages them to linger.

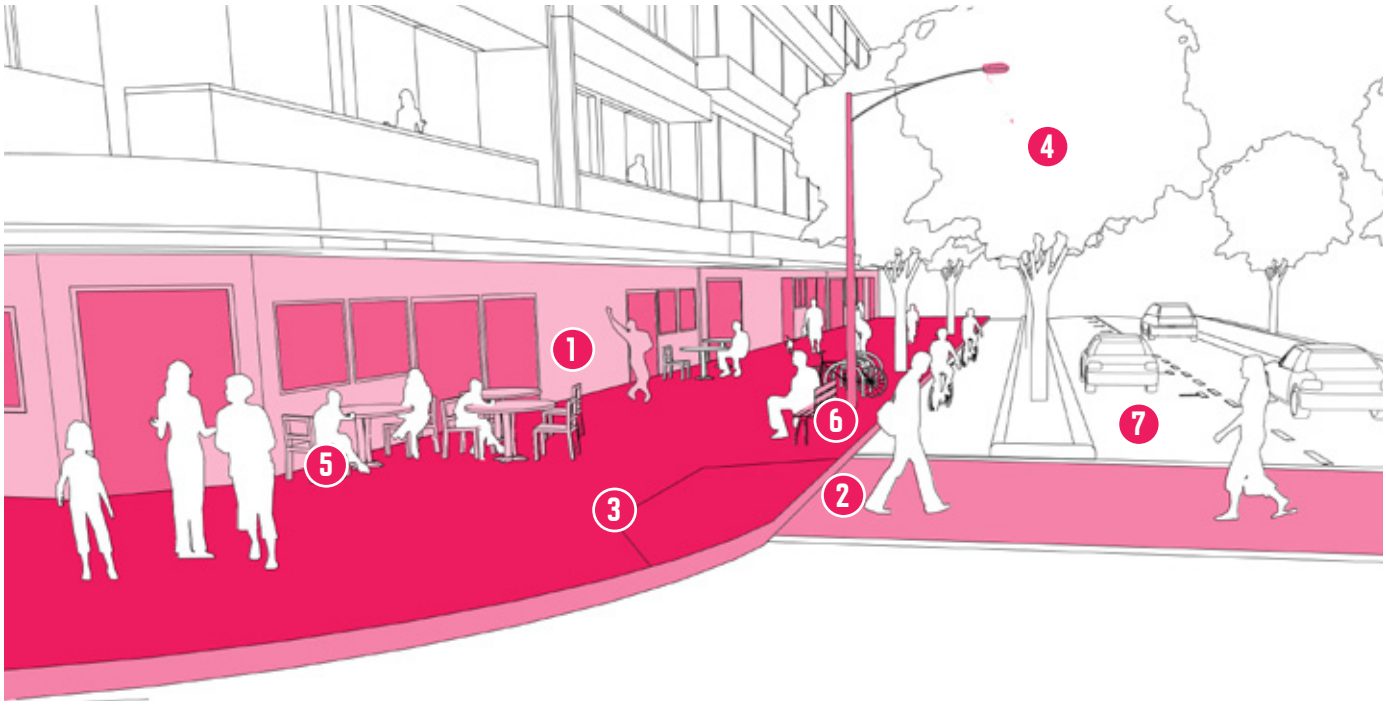


Figure 2.17: Street design elements that prioritise activity and street amenity

1 Active building frontages

- Visually interesting building frontages with windows and regular entrances encourage active street life.
- Fine grain development allows for a variety of retailers, hospitality and services.
- A strong connection between the street and the buildings along it encourages more 'eyes on the street', improving safety.
- Awnings along building frontages provide protection from sun and rain.

2 Pedestrian crossings

- More frequent crossings improves safety, walkability and connections.

3 Wide footpaths

- Wide footpaths reduce crowding and allow for a variety of activities to take place such as on-street dining.
- Percieved increase in footpath width is created by locating cycle lanes and medians adjacent to footpath.

4 Street trees

- A generous tree canopy provides shade in summer and creates a pleasant place to meet and socialise.

5 Street activities

- Street vendors, buskers and public art add to the atmosphere and overall experience of the street.
- Different activities along the street encourage people to gather in public spaces.

6 Street furniture

- High quality street furniture provides places to relax and experience the street life.
- Street furniture can include benches, bicycle parking hoops, drinking fountains and lighting.

7 Mitigating traffic impacts

- Reducing the speed limit can help to minimise noise pollution and improve safety and comfort for all road users.
- Slowing traffic speeds can promote on-street activity and local businesses.