

Management report to Council

Agenda item 6.1

Faraday Street Public Toilet

Council

Presenter: Roger Teale, General Manager, Property, Infrastructure and Design

26 July 2022

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement to install a new public toilet in the preferred community location on Faraday Street, east of Lygon Street, located in the centre of the road adjacent to the decommissioned underground heritage public toilet.
2. The underground heritage public toilet was decommissioned because it was regarded as unsafe due to it being an underground unattended toilet facility and was not compliant of current DDA standards.

Key issues

3. Residents have reported that public urination and defecation has become a problem in the surrounding area and requested that a new public toilet be installed in the vicinity of the closed public toilet to help address this issue. Traders in the precinct have not been in favour of a new public toilet in close proximity of businesses, citing impact to trade and to the overall ambience and environment of the area.
4. Community consultation was undertaken in March 2019 proposing to install a public toilet in the centre of the road of Faraday Street, west of the intersection with Lygon Street. This location was chosen for its convenient location for Lygon Street visitors, its proximity to existing services and for cost effectiveness.
5. In response, 23 emails were received from businesses, residents and patrons expressing concern about the proposed location.
6. A second round of community consultation was then undertaken in mid-2020 on four proposed locations as follows:
 - 6.1. Location 1 - Faraday Street at the Cardigan Street intersection (east side)
 - 6.2. Location 2 - Faraday Street at the Lygon Street intersection (west side)
 - 6.3. Location 3 - Faraday Street between Lygon and Drummond streets (mid-block adjacent to decommissioned toilet)
 - 6.4. Location 4 - Faraday Street at Drummond Street intersection (west side)
7. Location three was the most popular location, preferred by 37 per cent of respondents (refer to Attachments 2 and 3).
8. An advantage of location three is its close proximity to the decommissioned toilet as required services are easily accessed and will provide easy access for Lygon Street foot traffic.
9. Disadvantages include the loss of two on street centre road car parking spaces and seven motorcycle parking spaces which are currently located on the northern side of the decommissioned heritage public toilet.
10. With the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 realised and in order to prioritise the recovery of businesses in the area, the project was placed on hold, with the newly purchased toilet held in storage.
11. It is now proposed to proceed with the installation of the new toilet with the total project cost of \$210,000 funded through 2022-23 financial year Capital Works Budget.
12. Subject to the final location being approved, works are scheduled to be completed by April 2023.

Recommendation from management

13. That Council approves the installation of a new public toilet on Faraday Street, east of Lygon Street, located in the centre of the road adjacent to the decommissioned underground heritage public toilet (location 3 in attachment 2 from management).

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 5)
2. Community Consultation – summary of feedback received on all four options (Page 4 of 5)
3. Preferred Location – Option Three (Page 5 of 5)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. There are no direct legal implications of endorsing the proposed location of the public toilet installation.

Finance

2. Council has allocated capital works funds from the FY 2022/23 Capital Works budget for this project.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

4. Work Environment: given the previous underground toilet had been decommissioned due to health and safety concerns in 2016, the community since has experienced inappropriate behaviour as a direct of the lack of toilet facility I immediate area.
5. Community Health and Safety: by approving this request, Council will minimise anti-social behaviour toward local business owners from the public requires use of their private toilet facilities. The new above ground toilet facility proposal also incorporates DDA compliance making it accessible and safe for community use.

Stakeholder consultation

6. In total, CoM received responses from 96 individuals. 73 respondents contributed to the consultation via the Participate Melbourne online engagement portal. The survey followed a simple structure, asking five questions in addition to the request for the participant's email address. Email submissions were received from 7 respondents and 18 respondents completed a face-to-face survey at the Church of all Nations.
7. Survey Respondents were asked to select their preferred location for a new toilet on Faraday Street. Location 3 was the most popular choice, refer to Attachment 1.

Relation to Council policy

8. The design and functionality of the new toilet will be in accordance with Council's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-24 and fully compliant with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth).

Environmental sustainability

9. In developing this proposal, environmental sustainability has been considered in the toilet unit itself, with environmental controls to be in place during the installation of the toilet and required services.

ATT 2 - Community Consultation - summary of feedback received on all four options

Location one 15 per cent stakeholder approval.
 Feedback sample:
 I have chosen this location because it is a busy area that will not interfere with the aesthetics of a busier location such as next to restaurants and other businesses.

Location two 23 per cent stakeholder approval.
 Feedback sample:
 Close enough to service both ends of Faraday Street as well as the Lygon Street precinct without being too close to residential homes.

Location three 37 per cent stakeholder approval.
 Feedback sample:
 This is the best of all options as it is discrete, accessible and provides the least visual impact on the heritage location. It aligns with prior use of this location and has the least negative impact.

Location four 24 per cent stakeholder approval.
 Feedback sample:
 It is the furthest point from the residential area.



Existing decommissioned underground toilet

ATT 2 - Preferred Location – Option Three

Advantages option three:

- Immediately east of decommissioned toilet in close proximity to existing services
- Easy access for Lygon Street foot traffic
- Pedestrian barrier fence will be installed improving safe foot traffic to toilet
- New facility will be Disability Discrimination Act compliant

Disadvantages:

- Loss of seven motorcycle parking spaces and two centre road parking spaces

Statutory Requirements:

- Will require VicRoads and Heritage Victoria approval (we have in principle agreement)

