

Report to the Future Melbourne (Transport) Committee

Agenda item 6.5

Exhibition Street Bicycle Lanes

Presenter: Jenny Bailey, Manager Engineering Services

7 May 2019

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to respond to the resolution of the Future Melbourne Committee on 4 September 2018 (refer Attachment 2) by providing findings of the study for full time bike lanes in Exhibition Street, and to recommend that Council supports endorsement of 2019-20 capital funding for implementation of continuous protected bicycle lanes.
2. The Draft Transport Strategy 2030 outlines the City of Melbourne's policy directions for the next ten years and includes a vision for cycling - *More people will be confident to ride with a connected network of safe protected bicycle lanes and abundant bicycle parking*
3. Exhibition Street is identified as a strategic cycling corridor in both the Bicycle Plan 2016-2020 and the Draft Transport Strategy 2030, providing an important link between Rathdowne Street in the north and the Yarra Trails in the south. The Canning Street and Rathdowne Street route is one of the city's most popular cycling routes with 750 cyclists travelling southbound in the morning peak (refer to Attachment 3). Part time bike lanes currently operate during the morning and evening peak periods in some sections of Exhibition Street.
4. Exhibition Street is unsafe for cyclists with sections of the street having no bike lanes. Cyclists face further safety and access issues with illegal parking in the part time bike lanes and left turn vehicle queues. Thirty three cycling related crashes were reported during a five year period, including dooring and left-side swipe mid-block crashes.

Key issues

5. A study to improve cyclists' safety along Exhibition Street between Flinders and La Trobe streets was completed late in 2018. This work included development and review of options for bike lane improvements, including an assessment of four options. Each option was assessed based on the impacts to both vehicles and bicycles, impacts to on-street parking, bicycle safety and existing trees, and potential for the provision of green space. It is noted that 22 per cent of potential cyclists feel confident with a standard painted full-time bike lane, increasing to 83 per cent if physical separation is provided.
6. The study concluded that 39 per cent of bicycle crashes would be avoided if continuous, physically separated kerbside bike lanes were installed along the full length of Exhibition Street. In addition the proposed design will support less confident people to ride bikes and is forecast to achieve a significant increase in bicycle volumes on Exhibition Street (refer Attachment 4).
7. Within 250 metres of Exhibition Street, there are currently 852 on-street paid parking bays and 6,843 commercial off-street parking bays. Installation of continuous, protected bike lanes is estimated to require the removal of approximately 129 on-street car parking spaces in Exhibition Street, equating to a two per cent reduction in the precinct. There will be a minimal net loss of free short-term kerbside parking and loading bays, no net loss of disabled parking bays and options to retain short term parking between Flinders Lane and Flinders Street will be explored to assist residents and local businesses.
8. Removal of 122 paid parking spaces will result in a forecast net revenue loss of \$2.16 million per year in parking meter revenue and \$0.4 million per year reduction in parking infringement revenue.
9. Results from the traffic modelling of fully separated bike lane have shown that travel times for vehicles travelling along the Exhibition Street may increase by approximately 60-90 seconds.
10. Consultation has commenced with properties along Exhibition Street. Further engagement with the wider community and key stakeholders will also be undertaken. Councillors will be consulted prior to finalising design the separated bike lane plans.

Recommendation from management

11. That the Future Melbourne Committee notes the outcome of the study and recommends that Council endorses installation of continuous protected full time bicycle lanes in Exhibition Street in its adoption of the 2019–20 budget.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 8)
2. Resolution of FMC 4 September 2018 (Page 4 of 8)
3. Key Strategic Cycling Corridor and data (Page 5 of 8)
4. Proposed bike lane concept plans (Page 7 of 8)

Supporting Attachment**Legal**

1. Legal advice for the proposed installation of kerbside separated bicycle lanes along Exhibition Street will be requested as required.

Finance

2. The project will result in parking loss and associated loss of parking meter revenue. The annual net loss of parking meter and enforcement revenue is forecast to be \$2.56 million. This is in excess of estimates in the City of Melbourne's 2015-25 Financial Plan which assumes a reduction of metered bays as part of the city's efforts to support more sustainable modes of transport including public transport, cycling, car share and pedestrian footpath widening.
3. The estimated capital cost for this project is \$2.6 million.

Conflict of interest

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

Health and Safety

5. Between 2011 and 2016, there have been 33 recorded crashes on Exhibition Street involving cyclists with 39% serious injury crashes and 61% 'other' injury crashes. The most common crash type (27 percent) was "Vehicle door crashes". Other common crash types included "Lane side swipe" with 3 crashes (12%), and "Right Through" with 4 crashes (13%). The construction of full-time kerbside separated bicycle lanes along Exhibition Street will improve safety for all cyclists, including City of Melbourne employees, riding to/from/through the Central City.

Stakeholder consultation

6. Transurban and the Department of Transport including VicRoads have been consulted regarding the proposed bicycle lane design. Formal approval is still required from Transurban and VicRoads prior to the City of Melbourne being able to deliver the project.
7. Consultation regarding the proposed parking and traffic changes with businesses and property managers along Exhibition Street has commenced. Further community and stakeholder engagement will be undertaken prior to finalising a design.

Relation to Council policy

8. Exhibition Street is identified as a strategic cycling corridor in the Victorian Government's Plan Melbourne and the City of Melbourne's Draft Transport Strategy 2030. Council's Bicycle Plan 2016-2020 included a project to 'investigate options for full-time bicycle lanes in Exhibition St by completing modelling studies.'

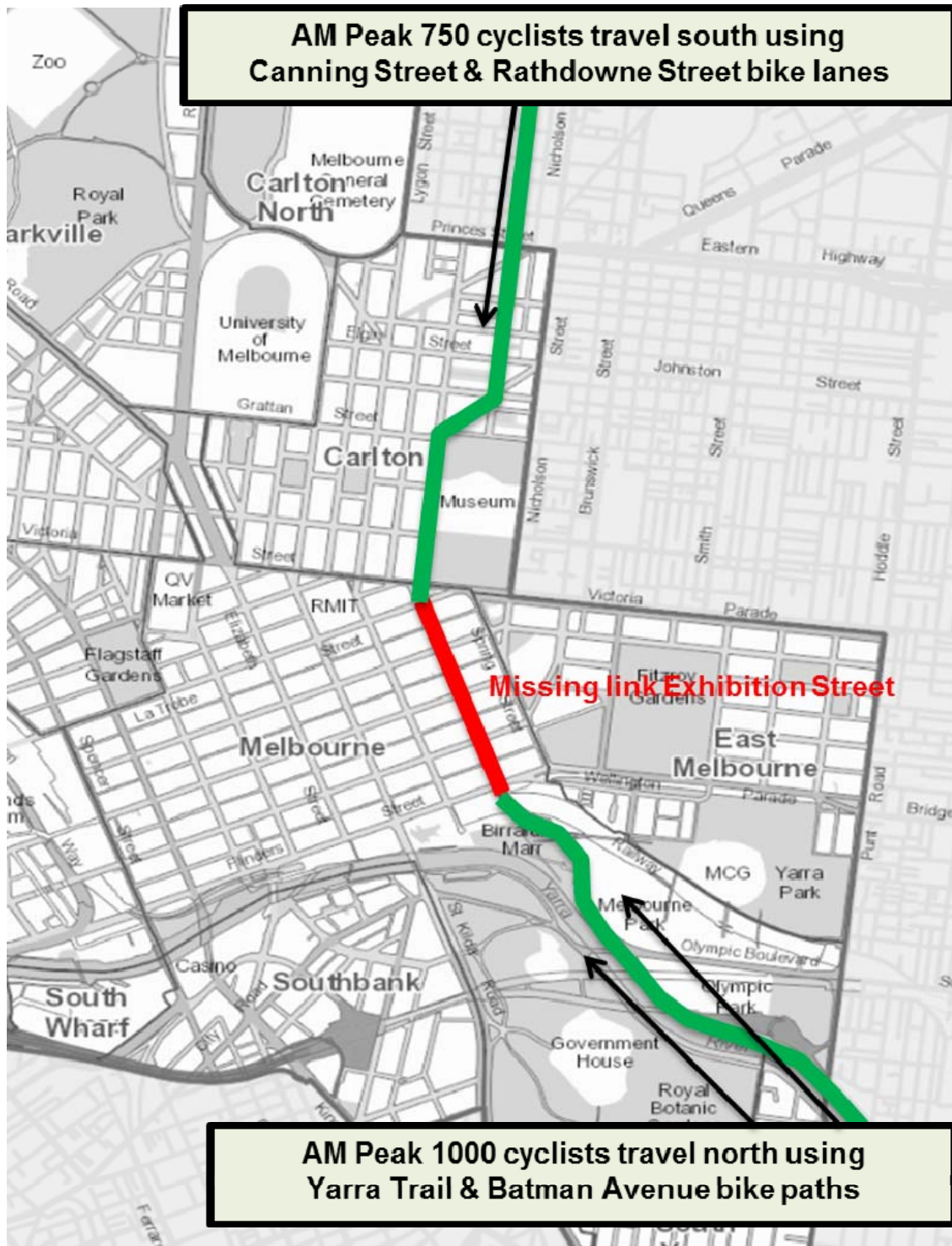
Environmental sustainability

9. Installation of improved bicycle lane infrastructure throughout the municipality will encourage increased cycling mode share, reduced car usage, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. A traffic lane has a capacity of 900 vehicles per hour while a bike lane can carry 3000 bicycles.
10. The final design may result in some impact on existing trees, which is being discussed with Council's arborists. Ultimately, the design may provide opportunities for additional greening.

Resolution of the Future Melbourne committee on 4 September 2018:

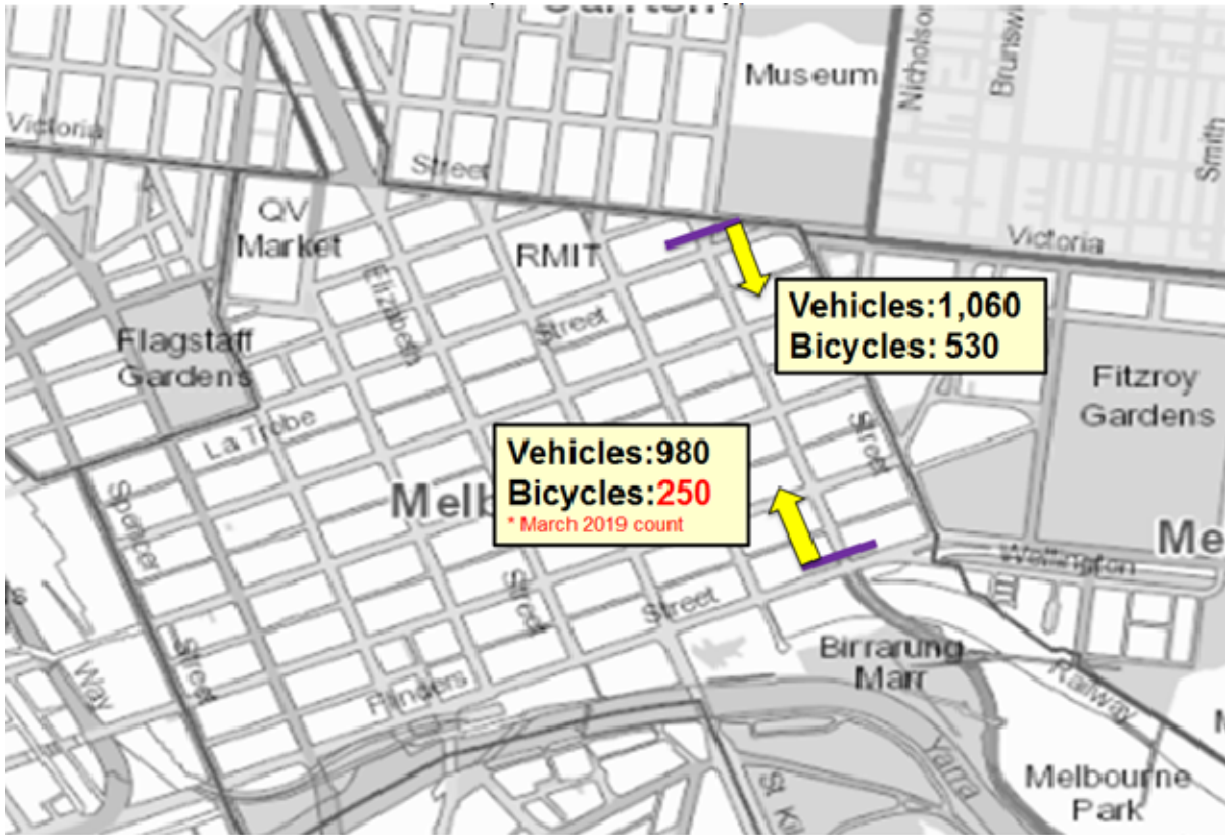
1. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
 - 1.1. Notes that, indicated by the number of public complaints and the frequency with which enforcement officers are required to attend, the 'peak' hour only bicycle lanes in Exhibition Street have not been as effective as desired;
 - 1.2. Notes the completion of action 34 of the 2016-20 Bicycle Plan in the 2017-18 financial year, being "Exhibition Street – Investigate options for full time bicycle lanes by completing traffic modelling studies".
 - 1.3. Requests a report from management being presented to this Committee in October 2018 setting out the findings of the aforementioned investigation and recommendations as to how to make Exhibition St safer for all users, including options to expedite works'.

Exhibition Street – Key Strategic Cycling Corridor

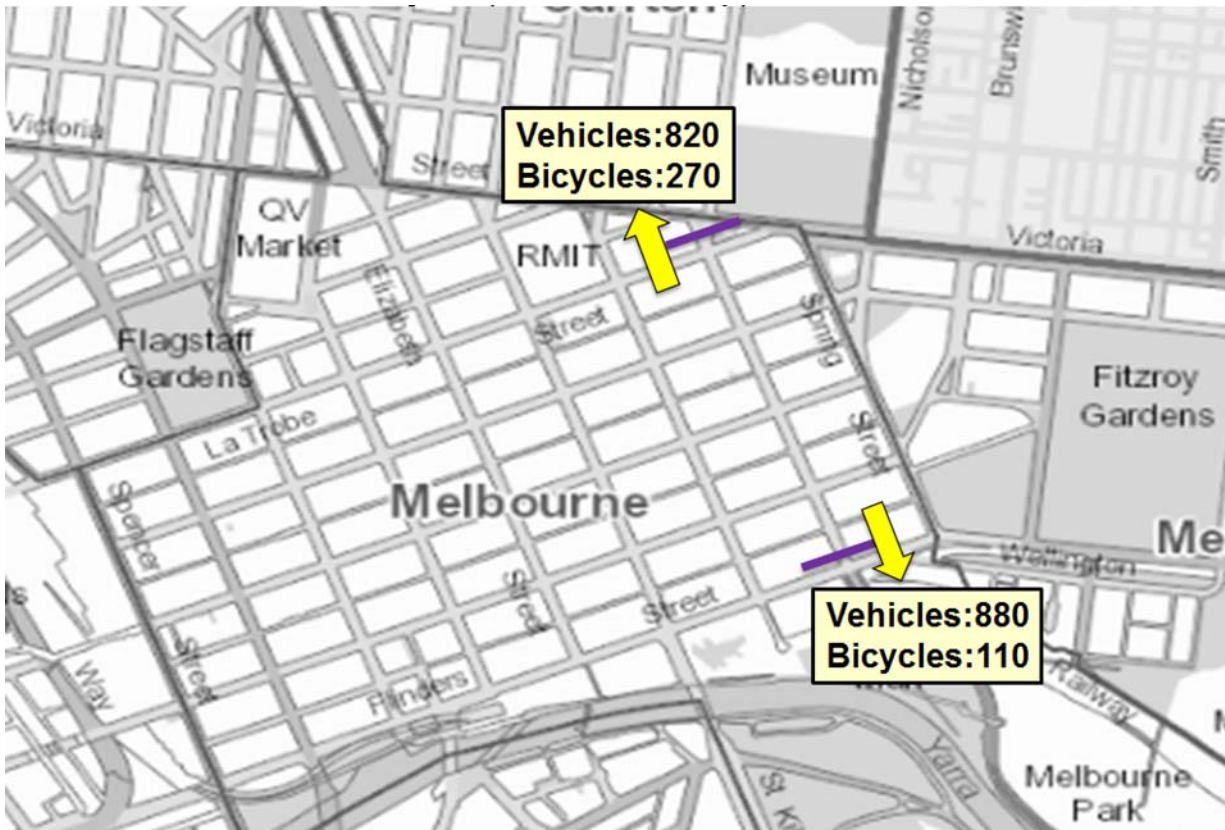


Exhibition Street – Traffic and Bicycle Volumes

AM Peak Hour 8-9am volumes (2017 survey data)

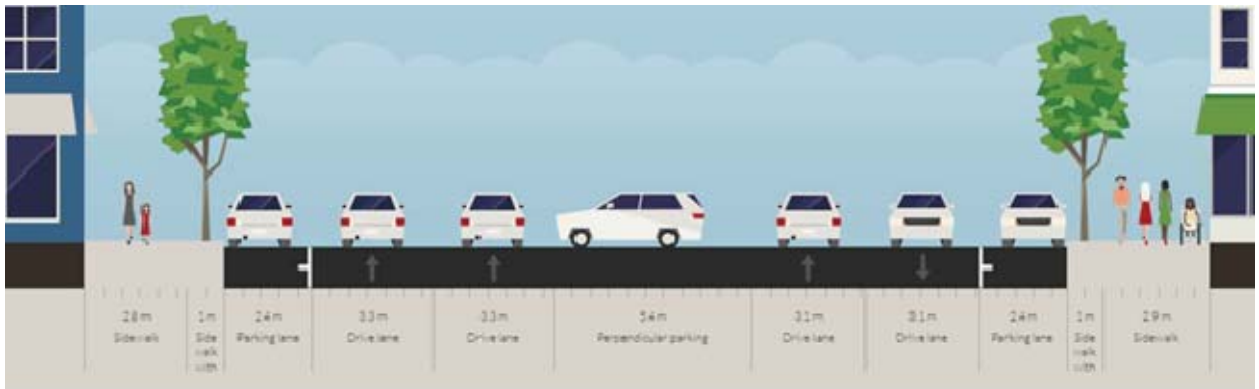


PM Peak Hour 5-6pm volumes (2017 survey data)



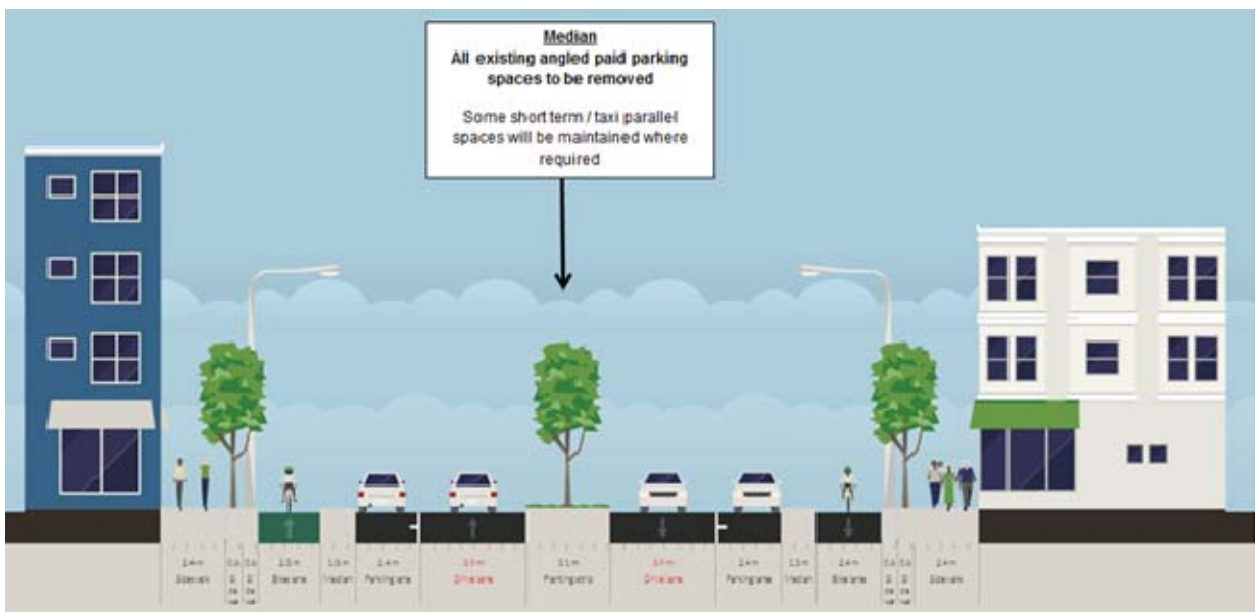
Exhibition Street Layouts

Existing typical Exhibition Street cross section



- Two traffic lanes in each direction.
- Peak Period Bike Lanes currently operate in some sections for two hours per day.
- Central angle paid parking.
- Kerbside parking.

Proposed typical mid-block plan



- Peak period clearways to operate in some sections.
- This will maintain two mid-block traffic lanes where traffic flow requires prioritising.
- Full-time parking to be provided where businesses require it.
- This will reduce mid-block traffic capacity to one lane at all times.

