



MEDIA RELEASE

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VTA slams latest City of Melbourne plan to eliminate motor vehicles

The Victorian Transport Association has criticised a City of Melbourne proposal to redesign the Hoddle Grid and further restrict access to key city thoroughfares from motor vehicles, delivery, and freight trucks.

Under the Future Streets Framework proposal that City of Melbourne councillors voted on last evening, sections of CBD thoroughfares including Flinders, Bourke and Spring streets would be closed to motorists, while public transport users, bicycles and pedestrians would be prioritised for access.

Council voted last night to release the Framework for community consultation.

VTA CEO Peter Anderson said the plan was the latest in a litany of City of Melbourne transport proposals that have a total and complete disregard for freight, and the reliance of small businesses and city traders on the transport industry.

“Before COVID, transport movement to and from the city for cyclists was 4% of total trips with cars representing 20% of total trips. Since COVID, bicycle trips remain at 4% with cars now representing 43% of all trips.

“Despite this the City of Melbourne spent much time and money building cycling lanes, eliminating Loading Zones and demonising people who need the convenience of a car to do more things in the day other than just travel in and out of the city.

“Such inward looking, insular and isolationist perspectives are effectively telling 43% of city commuters that ‘we do not want you in our city’. This presumably must include all the freight vehicles that are contracted to deliver, collect and transport goods needed by traders, developers and residents to live and work in the city.”

Anderson said Lord Mayor Sally Capp says she wants the city to be “welcoming and accessible” for all road users, however her own Framework proposal has all but ignored the freight industry, with the words ‘freight’ and ‘truck’ used only three times in the 64-page report.

“The City of Melbourne has form when it comes to excluding the freight and logistics sector from its planning, so it’s no surprise that once again hard-working transport workers are being marginalised from doing their work safely and servicing their customers and the community.

“We see evidence of this time after time, with Loading Zones being abolished to accommodate dedicated bicycle lanes, four-lane streets reduced to two to accommodate tram super stops, and now under this plan the likelihood of some parts of the city grid completely off limits to motor vehicles.”

Anderson said the behaviour of councillors in supporting policies that compromised the viability of city traders demonstrated it was out of step with the community and genuine attempts to get the city back on its feet after years of disruptions and lockdowns.

“We’re all for the city reopening and efforts to attract workers back to the office and shoppers back to town, but it shouldn’t be at the expense of small business owners and sectors like transport that service them,” Anderson said.



“There are unintended consequences that proposals like this are oblivious to or simply ignore, such as goods having to be delivered on trolley and pallet jacks at great injury risk to delivery workers and pedestrians, because there aren’t any Loading Zones nearby, or vehicles have outright been banned.

“Over 5,000 commercial vehicles service the city every day including the garbage collectors, concrete trucks, delivery vans, rigid trucks and ancillary vehicles that need access, parking, and flexibility. These vehicles and their drivers work under tight timelines, growing congestion, and an expectation to live a normal life. Why don’t they get a look in under this plan?

“The freight industry is the lifeblood for thousands of city businesses, commercial developments and public transport projects and its high time the City of Melbourne recognised the value of transport operators and their workers in upholding the vitality of our once great city,” he said.

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