Engagement Report

How this project came about

This project came about from a community budget submission in the 2017/18 Community Budget Process and was incorporated in the 2018/19 Budget process for investigation and design. The project scope was to facilitate pedestrian access across Douglas Parade between Wilkins Street and Yarra Street. Following a number of investigations Council identified two prospective crossing points within this section of Douglas Parade, Bunbury Street and Yarra Street.

Objectives of Engagement

The reason for engaging the community on the project is to identify community sentiment on the options presented at the two intersections and whether there was a clear preference in the options presented. Also to identify whether there were any issues with any of the options presented at the two intersections.

The Engagement Process

A flyer raising awareness of the engagement process was distributed to 980 houses within the catchment of the train line, the Strand and between Yarra Street and Wilkins Street, Newport. Information on the options developed for the two intersections was presented online through the Council’s online engagement portal and a community drop in session was held where members of the community where able to speak to members of the project team to ask questions, raise concerns and discuss options regarding the project.

From the online consultation process 111 people took the time to visit the site to find more information about the project and 12 people provided feedback on options presented.

At the community drop in session 7 people engaged in conversation with the project team and provided comments on the different options presented to the two intersections.

What we heard

Overall themes that we heard:

- The majority of people indicated they cross Douglas Parade at the Bunbury Street / Dowman Street intersection.
- That people are heading in all directions when crossing Douglas Parade.
- There is a perception that cars are speeding on Douglas Parade.
Bunbury Street / Dowman Street / Douglas Parade intersection

We heard through the consultation that of the two options presented option 2 was the preferred.

Of the two options developed for the Bunbury Street / Douglas Parade intersection, which one do you prefer?

- Option 1 (8.2%)
- Option 2 (91.7%)

(12 responses, 0 skipped)

Comments received about the Bunbury / Dowman Intersection - need to mention the concerns of residents in Dowman Street.

- Option 2 seems the better design and safer with the increase of traffic that will eventually happen when the apartments in Nelson Place are finished.
- Option 2 with zebra crossing and flashing lights because this is a safer proposal, particularly for children and parents with prams.
- I have chosen option 2 since this is the only one that helps pedestrians and cyclists cross busy Douglas Parade, which I see as the main reason for any improvements.
- There is a great deal of walking traffic uses the Bunbury Street, Dowman Street access to the Strand. Many who come from Williamstown Junction as well. Lots of young children come down Bunbury across to Dowman Street to ride their bikes along the Strand bike path to both Williamstown Primary School and St. Mary’s Primary School. A safe place to cross is very important. Elderly people walking dogs are also very regular users of this route to the Stand.
- Slow down the traffic.
- That Dowman Street is very narrow and there is no space for cars to turn around so sometimes cars / trucks back out of Dowman Street into Douglas Parade.
Yarra Street / Douglas Parade intersection

Of the three options presented for this intersection, option 2 was preferred, however there was very mixed feedback received regarding this intersection.

Comments about the Yarra Street/ Douglas Parade intersection

- I think option 1 is overkill and would be difficult for the buses.
- Option 3 with the amount of increased traffic coming down Douglas Parade, you would still be trying to scamper across. Option 2 means the traffic has to slow down and stop for pedestrian traffic; which in turn will help break up the continuous flow of traffic.
- This intersection can be difficult to navigate due to the number of streets and the angle they are on. As a motorist or pedestrian, being able to safely cross this intersection is a challenge. Option 1 is considered to be the most efficient way to slow traffic and to allow for all road users to safely cross streets.
- I’m not sure any option is required. Any raised sections / bumps are potentially dangerous if cars travel at speed (to pedestrians and residents), also they increase noise for residents. Douglas Parade isn’t very wide at the corner and I’m not sure a zebra crossing is needed, it’s easy to cross
compared to Kororoit Creek Road or Melbourne Road. Changing the position of the bus stop will create a blind spot (when occupied by a bus) for cars turning left from Yarra Street into Douglas Parade heading towards the Willy shopping centre.

- Not one option solves the problems along this road. Highest priority is to SLOW the traffic. I am an owner directly impacted by the proposed work. Please consider protection of overhead canopy from high vehicles turning into Yarra Street. Stormwater drainage would be a serious issue if not upgraded to enable run off to drain across Douglas Parade down Yarra Street – property flooding is a risk. Safe crossing is one thing but also consider vehicle speed both along and turning off Douglas Parade. Cars use excessive speed at night. Douglas Parade is also too narrow for cyclists, a group also impacted by these changes.

The outcome – what is Council proposing to do.

Given the assessment of the feedback received Council feels that there are two clear outcomes.

Bunbury / Dowman Street intersection on Douglas Parade

It is proposed to move ahead with a modified version of option 2. The modification to option 2 being the removal of the raised platform at Dowman Street to address the concerns from residents within Dowman Street about access.
Yarra Street intersection on Douglas Parade

For Yarra Street intersection Council is proposing to put this intervention on hold for further investigation. There was little consensus within the community about whether any of the options presented were of benefit and that they might create more problems at this intersection. Given this outcome Council feels that more investigation is required to achieve the best outcome for the community at this intersection. Council will shortly be undertaking a Local Area Movement Plan (LAMP) for the area between North Road, the Strand, Kororoit Creek Road and Millers Road. This LAMP will drive what happens in this section of the city for the next 10 years from a traffic perspective. While Council does feel that an intervention is required at this intersection, the LAMP will identify whether further interventions are required in nearby streets and will suggest the best type of intervention to use to ensure continuity and consistency within the local area.

The LAMP will be released for community consultation seeking additional feedback, and building on, the 9 years of data that you have already provided to Council on traffic issues within your local area. We strongly urge you to get involved with this consultation process on this major Council project.