
11.11 Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade Bus Lanes

Executive Summary**Purpose**

To consider Council's submission to a proposal by VicRoads and the Department of Transport for bus improvement measures in Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade.

Key Issues

VicRoads and the Department of Transport (DoT) are seeking feedback on a proposal to install peak hour bus lanes on Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street to improve the reliability and travel time for bus passengers.

The proposal involves the removal of parking along the left hand lane of these two roads for the out-bound route during weekday afternoon peak periods, from 4 – 7 pm, the extension of clearways restrictions, and the reduction of the median width in Hoddle Street to provide a bus lane in addition to the existing passenger vehicle lanes. Any submissions are required by 29th April 2011.

In order to assist Council to formulate its response to the proposal Dr Michelle Zeibots, from the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University Technology Sydney, was commissioned to review the proposal and the modelling used to support it.

It is suggested that the modelling undertaken by consultants IMIS for the DoT has been considerably constrained and has failed to account for potential mode-shifting and induced traffic reduction factors. The emphasis of the work undertaken for DoT has been on maintaining the highest throughput of private passenger vehicles, rather maximising the number of people that can be accommodated by the two roads optimising the mix of public and private transport.

Financial Implications

The project is being undertaken by the DoT. It is possible that the project will be implemented in 2011/12 to facilitate the services provided by the additional DART bus fleet which commenced operation on October 4th 2011.

Economic Implications

Increased public transport use along Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade should reduce the need for providing additional road space for passenger vehicles along this route.

Sustainability Implications

Public transport is a more sustainable form of transport than private vehicles. The recent Hoddle Street study identified that currently approximately one third of people travelling along Hoddle Street between the Eastern Freeway and Victoria Parade are using public transport buses. Any increase in the reliability and travel time of buses along this route will increase the attractiveness of this service to potential users.

Social Implications

Hoddle Street currently acts as a barrier to social connectedness between the east and west sides of Yarra. Reducing the number of vehicles travelling along Hoddle Street, by encouraging mode shift from private to public transport may reduce the social dislocation created by the road.

The project is being undertaken by the DoT. It is possible that the project will be implemented in 2011/12 to facilitate the services provided by the additional DART bus fleet which commenced operation on October 4th 2011.

PROPOSAL

That Council propose an alternative to the Department of Transport's proposal to widen Hoddle Street and to remove kerb-side parking in Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade and rather urges that options be reconsidered for providing a dedicated bus lane along Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade which do not remove parking, but reduce the number of passenger vehicle lanes available to private vehicles.

11.11 Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade Bus Lanes

Trim Record Number: D11/27185

Responsible Officer: Acting Director City Development

Purpose

1. To consider Council's submission to a proposal by VicRoads and the Department of Transport for bus improvement measures in Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade.

Background

2. VicRoads and the Department of Transport (DoT) are seeking feedback on a proposal to install peak period bus lanes on Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street to improve the reliability and travel time for bus passengers.
3. The proposal is to provide bus lanes on sections of:
 - (a) Victoria Parade (inbound) from 7am to 9.30am Monday to Friday (within the City of Melbourne); and
 - (b) Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street (outbound) from 4pm to 7pm Monday to Friday.
4. The proposal (Attachment 1) involves the removal of parking along the left hand lane during weekday afternoon peak periods, from 4 – 7 pm along these two roads for the out-bound route, and reduction of the median width in Hoddle Street to provide a bus lane in addition to the existing passenger vehicle lanes, and the extension of clearways on the outbound routes to 4 – 7 pm. Any submissions are required by 29 April 2011.
5. Council has sought an external opinion on the proposal and has commissioned Dr Michelle Zeibots, an expert in induced traffic impacts, to review the modelling undertaken by the DoT's consultant IMIS which forms the basis for the option put forward.

Department of Transport Proposal

6. The proposal is for five northbound lanes along Hoddle Street: four 2.9 -3.1 metre wide lanes general vehicle lanes, and one 3.2-3.6 metre wide bus lane. The road width proposed for the northbound travel lanes along Hoddle Street would be 15.0 to 15.2 metres wide, with five travel lanes, one reserved for bus use and to be painted red.
7. The dedicated bus lane would be able to be used by cars wishing to turn left for the permitted distance prior to the intersection. The existing T2 lane, permitting only vehicles with two or more occupants would be removed.
8. More specifically the proposal involves:
 - (a) the removal of parking along the kerbside lane for three hours by means of peak hour clearways;
 - (b) the widening of the road surface along Hoddle Street between Victoria Parade and Johnston Street by up to 1.2 metres by narrowing of the central median;
 - (c) the removal of kerb outstands at signalised crossings; and
 - (d) the removal of six (6) trees planted in the central median of Hoddle Street, two of which can be replaced as part of a wider landscaping plan.

Key Issues

Modelling

9. Dr Michelle Zeibots was commissioned to provide commentary in relation to the consideration of induced traffic reduction in relation to the modelling which was used by the Department of Transport to determine its preferred option for bus improvements in relation to which feedback is currently being sought. A copy of her report has been separately provided to Councillors.
10. In relation to traffic management modelling practice, Dr Zeibots explains that traffic models can be programmed to take into account a range of different travel behaviour responses including *traffic reassignment* – drivers shifting from a slower route to a quicker route – *mode-shifting* – people shifting from a slower mode to a quicker mode – and *induced traffic reduction* – people choosing destinations closer to the origins or else not travelling at all because travel time have become slower. Traffic reassignment is the most common and easiest response to include in traffic models, however, mode-shifting and induced traffic reduction responses are critical to include and consider for models to be informative when considering proposals such as the introduction of bus only lanes.
11. Dr Ziebots explains that “induced traffic reduction is a travel behaviour response that generates reductions in road vehicle traffic in response to reductions in road space. It occurs because people choose to take fewer trips when travel times become longer because of reductions in available road space.
12. She explains that induced traffic reduction is a significant travel behaviour response to consider when evaluating the likely impacts of reallocating road space for dedicated bus lanes along major roads like Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street.
13. More specifically Dr Zeibots was able to establish that the modelling used to evaluate the various options for making bus improvements along Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street did not investigate the potential for induced traffic reduction. She established this by speaking to the modelling consultants. Nor did it consider possible mode-shifting particularly as a result of improvements in accessibility by bus that is likely to result from changes to relative public transport speeds, or changes to bus service frequencies and schedules that would no doubt be introduced to take advantage of the improvement to service. She suggests that the findings from the modelling which was undertaken were limited to statements about which option would change or most reduce the potential carrying capacity of the roads in question.
14. Dr Ziebots also suggests that an option of using existing traffic lanes on both Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street as a dedicated bus lane at specific times is the option likely to have the most significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Trees

15. The proposal would require the removal of six trees from the central median. The project material suggests that two trees can be replaced and indicates that additional trees could be planted along the footpath areas.
16. Council’s arborist has been consulted by the DoT, and has provided a written response. He notes that the trees play an important environmental and social role. The trees were installed with funding from VicRoads. He has advised that the trees remain healthy and viable and would not be considered for removal. He also considers that there is likely to be detrimental impact on remaining trees from the widening of the road.

Lane Width

17. The proposal would provide for lane widths from 3.2 to 3.6 metres wide for the bus lane, and between 2.9 to 3.1 metres wide for the four travel lanes. To achieve this up 1.2 metres additional road width would be constructed.
18. The existing road width is not detailed on the provided plan, but is approximately 14.0 metres. It provides for four travel lanes, including the T2 lane, and a parking lane,

incorporating a 2.0 metre wide kerb outstand at the signalised pedestrian crossing near the Collingwood Town Hall.

19. If parking is not removed from the kerb side, the available lane space would be reduced to approximately 12.0 metres. This would allow provision of a 3.3 metre bus lane, and the three 2.9 metre wide passenger vehicle lanes. This passenger vehicle lane width has been used in the proposed design, and allows for cars to theoretically travel at the 70kph speed limit along Hoddle Street. It is noted that during peak periods, this nominal speed is unlikely to be achieved. The Hoddle Street study identified that average travel speeds along Hoddle Street during peak periods were under 20kph.
20. It is noted, that a narrower lane width could be adopted, which accompanied with a speed limit reduction along Hoddle Street would lower driver expectations of travel time, and further support the potential for mode shift to public transport.

Consultation

21. The DoT has briefed Council on several sessions over the last 18 months, and engaged Professor Graham Currie from Monash University to attend and respond to Councillors' questions at one session.
22. Council was consulted regarding the consultation methods to be used in relation to the proposal. Two public information sessions were held in mid March. No separate consultation is being undertaken by Yarra or VicRoads. Feedback is being sought before 29 April 2011. A report on the consultation is expected to be prepared by the DoT.

Financial Implications

23. The project is being undertaken by the DoT. It is possible that the project will be implemented in 2011/12 to facilitate the services provided by the additional DART bus fleet which commenced operation on October 4 2011.

Economic Implications

24. Increased public transport use along Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade should reduce the need for providing additional road space for passenger vehicles along this route.

Sustainability Implications

25. Public transport is a more sustainable form of transport than private vehicles. The recent Hoddle Street study identified that currently approximately one third of people travelling along Hoddle Street between the Eastern Freeway and Victoria Parade are using public transport; buses.
26. Any increase in the reliability and travel time of buses along this route will increase the attractiveness of this service to potential users.

Social Implications

27. Hoddle Street currently acts as a barrier to social connectedness between the east and west sides of Yarra. Some members of the community continue to express deep concern about the impacts of the construction of the Eastern Freeway in the 1970's, which would have greatly increased the volume of traffic moving along Hoddle Street. Reducing the number of vehicles travelling along Hoddle Street, by encouraging mode shift from private to public transport may reduce the social dislocation created by the road.

Human Rights Implications

28. There are no known restrictions or infringements on the substantive rights outlined in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

29. Through its Council Plan and Strategic Transport Statement Council supports the improvement of public transport options, and seeks to encourage the shift of transport from less to more sustainable modes.

Legal Implications

30. The DoT considers that this consultation process satisfies with the Code of Practice for Clearways on Declared Arterial Roads for the changing of Clearways hours along Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street to support the bus lane.

Conclusion

31. VicRoads and the Department of Transport's objective of making bus trips to and from the city quicker and more reliable for passengers and allowing the bus system to run more efficiently is strongly supported. However it is considered that the exhibited option of using the parking lanes in Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street and increasing the road space in Hoddle Street does not take into account induced traffic reduction or mode shifting.
32. It is considered that alternative options should be evaluated, taking those matters into account, as well as the needs of all road users, including pedestrians

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:
- (a) makes a submission in relation to the 'Bus Lanes on Victoria Street and Hoddle Street' proposal opposing the proposed widening of Hoddle Street and the removal of kerb-side parking in Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade on the grounds that:
 - (i) the modelling used to evaluate the options developed in relation to bus improvements do not appear to have considered induced traffic reduction or mode shifting; and
 - (ii) the proposal would result in a loss of pedestrian amenity and safety;
 - (b) makes a submission in relation to the proposed amendments to the Clearways times along Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade opposing the extension of Clearways times; and
 - (c) urges Department of Transport to reconsider the options for providing a dedicated bus lane along Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade in light of Dr Zeibots' report and prepare an alternative proposal which does not remove parking, but reduces the number of passenger vehicle lanes available to private vehicles.

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Attachments

- 1 Bus Lanes on Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street

BUS LANES ON VICTORIA PARADE AND HODDLE STREET HAVE YOUR SAY

Doncaster Area Rapid Transit

This proposal is part of the Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) project. DART upgraded four bus routes to SmartBus standards in October 2010.

SmartBus Routes 905, 906, 907 and 908 travel along Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street every 7-10 minutes during peak times, every 15 minutes throughout the day and every 30 minutes at other times. Services start as early as 5am and run as late as midnight.

This network of high frequency buses with longer operating hours gives more people the opportunity to use public transport.

DART aims to improve public transport options in Melbourne's east and so reduce the number of people driving into the CBD.

Information sessions

View plans and discuss the proposal with VicRoads and Department of Transport representatives at an information session:

Date	Time	Venue
10 March 2011	3.30pm – 7pm	Collingwood Senior Citizens Centre, Eddy Court, Abbotsford (near the Town Hall) Melways Ref: 2C H10
15 March 2011	2.30pm – 7pm	Dallas Brooks Centre 300 Albert Street, East Melbourne Melways Ref: 2G C1

Have your say

We look forward to hearing your views on this proposal. Please get your feedback to us before **29 April 2011**:

- Online** using the online feedback form at www.transport.vic.gov.au/smartbus
- By post** using the feedback form and reply paid envelope provided with this brochure.

Further information

To find out more about the proposal or obtain additional feedback forms, please contact us:

- Visit** www.transport.vic.gov.au/smartbus
Phone (03) 8688 1734
Email smart.bus@transport.vic.gov.au

For further information in your language please call:

Arabic	عربي	9280 0758
Cantonese	廣東話	9280 0759
Croatian	Hrvatski	9280 0760
Dinka	Dinka	9280 0776
Greek	Ελληνικά	9280 0761
Italian	Italiano	9280 0762
Macedonian	Македонски	9280 0763
Mandarin	普通话	9280 0771
Polish	Polski	9280 0764
Russian	Русский	9280 0765
Serbian	Српски	9280 0766
Spanish	Español	9280 0767
Turkish	Türkçe	9280 0768
Vietnamese	Việt-ngữ	9280 0769



VicRoads and the Department of Transport are seeking feedback on a proposal to install peak hour bus lanes on Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street.

This proposal aims to make bus trips to and from the city quicker and more reliable for passengers. It will also allow your bus system to run more efficiently.

What is proposed?

Bus lanes are proposed on sections of:

- Victoria Parade (inbound) from **7am to 9.30am**, Monday to Friday.
- Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street (outbound) from **4pm to 7pm**, Monday to Friday.

These bus lanes are to operate in the left lane, which is currently used for parking. No traffic lanes will be added or removed.

To ensure that the bus lanes can operate effectively, peak hour clearways are also proposed, allowing vehicles blocking the bus lane to be removed.

Installing the proposed bus lanes will also require:

- road widening on sections of Hoddle Street,
- installing new signs, line marking and red pavement in the bus lanes,
- removing up to six trees from the centre of Hoddle Street – two of which can be replaced as part of a wider landscaping plan.

It is also proposed to convert the existing T2 lane on Hoddle Street into a general traffic lane.

See the map overleaf for more detailed information.

Why are changes needed?

Thousands of people use buses on Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street each day, especially during the peak hours.

To ensure that people continue using the bus and to attract new passengers, buses must run closely to timetable with consistent and reduced travel times.

Right now, buses experience long traffic delays on Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street. A trip from East Melbourne to the Eastern Freeway in the afternoon peak can take anywhere from around five minutes to 25 minutes.

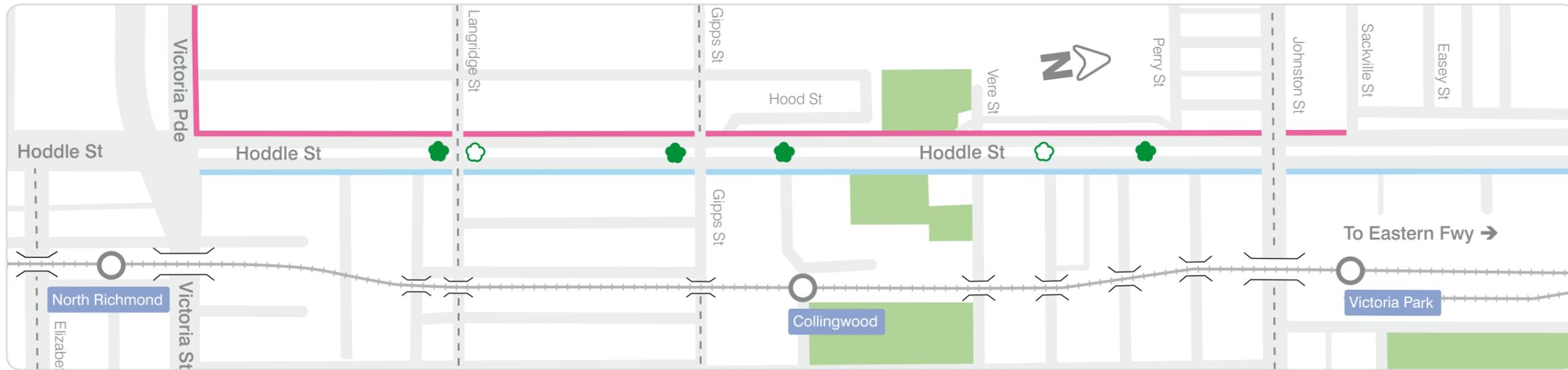
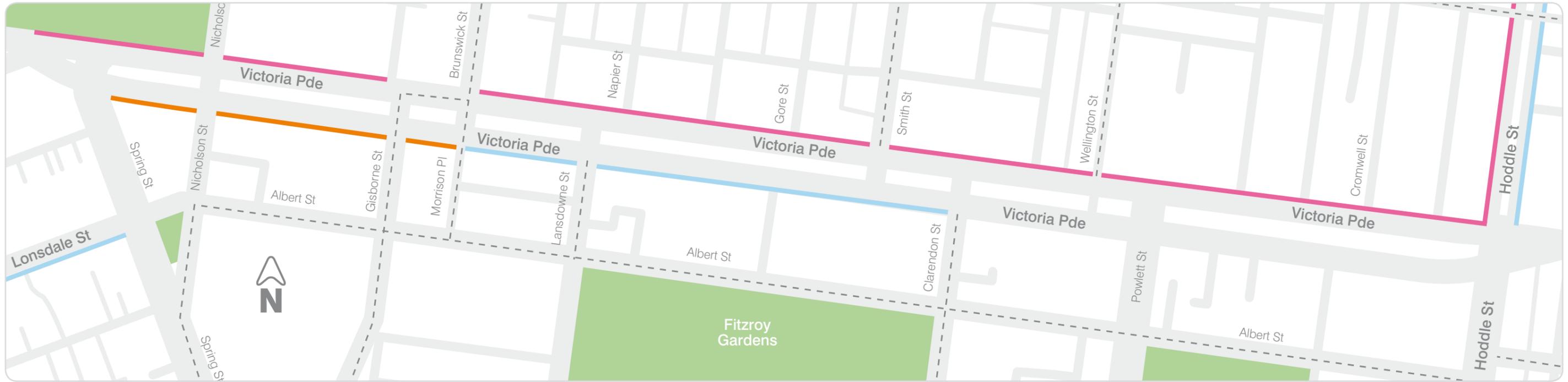
Bus lanes will reduce these delays – making bus travel a quick and convenient alternative to driving.



You may have heard about the 'Hoddle Street Study' – an investigation of ways to improve Hoddle Street for everyone in the long term. The proposal outlined in this brochure aims to address a current public transport need immediately, and will not preclude any recommendations made by the Hoddle Street study.

DOT/ES33/11

Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street bus lane proposal



Legend

- Existing bus lane and clearway
- Proposed AM peak bus lane and clearway (7am – 9.30am Mon-Fri)
- Proposed PM peak bus lane and clearway (4pm – 7pm Mon-Fri)
- Trees to be removed
- Trees to be replaced
- Cycling route

Bus lanes

The proposed bus lanes are to operate in the left lane during peak hours only – when they are most needed due to high bus and passenger numbers.

Bus lanes already operate on Lonsdale Street, the Eastern Freeway and sections of Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street. With the proposed changes, peak hour buses can travel from Spencer Street to the Freeway in a dedicated lane – saving time and providing a more reliable service.

Clearways and parking

To help the bus lanes operate effectively, peak hour clearways are proposed. No parking or stopping is permitted in a clearway. During clearway operating hours, vehicles blocking the bus lane may be removed and/or fined. Parking will remain available at other times.

Hoddle Street centre median

Road widening of up to 1.2 metres in the centre of Hoddle Street will be necessary to ensure the left lane is wide enough for a bus lane.

This will affect six trees growing in the centre of Hoddle Street, two of which can be replaced with smaller trees. It will also be necessary to install extra guardrail fencing as a road safety precaution.

Landscaping options are being investigated and other ways to improve amenity along Hoddle Street will be considered.

T2 lane

It is proposed to convert the existing T2 lane on Hoddle Street into a general traffic lane. It is estimated that 50 per cent of drivers using

this lane do so unlawfully, resulting in a slow moving lane that does not provide the intended benefit.

Cyclists

There is one bus every minute on Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street in peak times. With such large volumes of traffic, it is not proposed that cyclists share the bus lanes. Cycling routes shown on the above map provide a safer way for cyclists to move around the area.

Example street section – Victoria Parade

