



Town and Country Planning Association

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<p>Written Submission by the Town and Country Planning Association on the City of Melbourne Draft Bicycle Plan 2012-16</p>

Dear Sir/Madam

The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) have members and supporters residing, working and utilizing facilities within the City of Melbourne jurisdiction.

On their behalf, the attachment to this submission puts the case that there are additional issues and factors be addressed in the City of Melbourne Draft Bicycle Plan 2012-16; referred to as the MCC DBP in this report.

We seek to be able to present the T CPA case in more detail at the appropriate time during review.

The summary of the T CPA's case is set forth in the following six pages.

Yours sincerely

Horst (Oz) Kayak

President, T CPA

July, 2012

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Introduction

The City of Melbourne is to be congratulated for their ongoing commitment to making a more liveable and affordable city by improving conditions for cycling. The cities innovations like providing protected bike lanes and bike hoops at multiple locations are much appreciated.

The Purpose of the Plan described in the City of Melbourne Draft Bicycle Plan 2012-16 is agreed with. That is, cycling supports the Melbourne liveability status by taking pressure off public transport, reducing congestion and noise and supporting a zero carbon future. Local cycling trips assist people to be healthy and active. The purpose of the Bicycle Plan to outline actions that will assist all people from 8 to 80 years old to cycle more often is strongly supported.

And the comments that follow are intended to contribute to an even better Melbourne for cyclists.

Background

TCPA Inc is a non-profit advocacy organisation funded by members' subscriptions; it is not affiliated with, or supported by, any party political organisation. The TCPA objects include supporting integrated land use and transport planning.

The main VAGO recommendations in the Victorian Auditor-General's Report (2011), *Developing Cycling as a Safe and Appealing Mode of Transport* published by the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) in August 2011 needs to be referred in the MCC DBP. Admittedly their audit is on the DoT and VicRoads, but on many issues it applies to the MCC outcomes as well.

Also existing Austroads practices, guidelines and compliance standards need to be referred to in MCC DBP where there is possible application.

The Future

In planning for the future there are some key factors worth further consideration:

Traffic composition.

There are likely to be more cyclists, more pedestrians, more buses and trucks and less private vehicles. This will mean that the conflict between the most vulnerable road users (cyclists and pedestrians) and the most "dangerous" (large vehicles with restricted driver visibility and high wheel loads) is likely to increase with the potential for increased road trauma, particularly at intersections and other crossing points.

The past emphasis on safe routes will need to be complimented by a new focus and increased emphasis on safe intersections and crossing points.

A different mix of cyclists.

The current cohort of cycling commuters, that what could be described as young, dedicated, hardy, fast, and travelling medium to long distances, is likely to be joined by slower cyclists that ride shorter distances (say 1 to 5 kms). That is, if there are going to be more riders there won't be more riders like we have now, but the new riders are likely to be more timid and less athletic riders, some from the same age group as current commuters, but also older cyclists, including some with lesser physical abilities like poor hearing, poorer vision and less capacity to walk distances. This prediction is based on a comparison (based on the feedback from TCPA members' experience) between bicycle commuters in European cycling cities and Melbourne. For the new riders safer traffic conditions will be needed, including lower speed

limits for motorized vehicles and better on-road conditions (more space) for cycling.

Victorian Auditor General's Recommendations

The VAGO (2011) report on cycling emphasises and recommends the need to:

- improve the quality of project plans so that they consistently meet agencies' internal requirements by creating better practice templates
- finalise evaluation frameworks, when developing future strategies, that describe outcomes, realistic targets, benchmark data and how success will be measured and reported for component projects and for the overall strategy

The afore mentioned two of the six VAGO recommendations also apply to the MCC DBP.

Coroner's Recommendations

In April 2008 the coroner recommended that the government:

- review guidelines for shared cycle paths so that land managers have suitable guidance on the path construction, maintenance, auditing and retrofitting
- consider extra funding to councils to help them develop, maintain and, if necessary, retrofit shared pathways to make them safe.

The above are applicable to MCC DBP, and VicRoads would need to lead a working group to review standards and guidelines, develop a more comprehensive risk assessment and clarify responsibilities and funding for their roads in the MCC jurisdiction.

Planning Considerations

In planning for the future it is suggested that explicit consideration be given to land uses that are likely to attract high numbers of cyclists. Such uses can be identified by user characteristics, such as large numbers of potential cyclists like university students, and by locations where car-parking provisions are significantly less than the demand, for example Victoria Market and major sporting venues. Local management of the some times conflicting demands of pedestrians and cyclists is likely to be of increased importance at, and in the immediate approaches to, such activities. Separate facilities may be needed.

Specific Engineering Suggestions

- 1) The PBN is focused on major roads. The potential of quiet streets, plus linking across barriers, could well be explored for a fine grained future low stress cycling network as explained by [Mekuria, Furth. & Nixon \(2012\)](#)
- 2) On road bike lanes should either be upgraded to comply with Austroads standards or be removed. Where substandard lanes are removed the road should usually be redeveloped as a shared space with a lower (e.g. 40 km/h) speed limit. This is particularly important where current bike lanes (of less than 1.5 m width) run beside parked cars - as with narrow bike lanes beside parked cars there is not sufficient lane width for a cyclist to ride past a car door that may at any time be opened.
- 3) Angle parking on streets and roads used by cyclists should generally be converted to parallel parking. Angle parking puts drivers in an impossible situation in terms of backing out blind into the path of any oncoming cyclists. Specific local solutions may be available, for example on streets with a central median, perhaps a bike lane could be located bedside the median, well away from the parked cars.
- 4) A sense of coherence and consistency needs to be developed in provisions for cyclists and the management (calming) of general traffic. For example, a consistently lower speed limit (say 50 km/h) for all kerbside lanes on multi lane roads where a 60 km/h or higher speed limit currently applies.
- 5) Cyclists need to be placed in predictable locations where motorists will expect them. Contra-flow lanes are therefore generally undesirable. An exception could perhaps be where a street is redesigned to look like a bike way but with provision for one lane of one-way motor traffic (rather than a one way street to which a contra flow bike lane has been added).
- 6) Hundreds of bikes are stored on railway platforms and concourses to serve the needs of long haul commuters for the last mile to reach destinations. The PT players in co-operation with the MCC need address this very practical easy low cost practice in operation in many world class

cities. The normal video security surveillance should also focus on the bike storage

Other suggestions

- 1) Stress the Benefits: Some people need to be reminded of the many advantages of switching car trips to cycle trips and of enabling people without access to cars to cycle. The bike plan could refer to work in this area, like that of the VTPI report by [Litman \(2012\)](#).
- 2) To reduce future conflict between cyclists (and pedestrians) with trucks, peak hours truck curfews may need to be considered as in Gatehouse Street (as well as in Paris and some other European cities).
- 3) More data is needed on how well cycling infrastructure is working. Simple counts and police reports on crashes are not enough. Consideration could be given to CoM hosting or sponsoring a Melbourne version of the Perth “Bike Blackspot” as described at www.bikeblackspot.org
- 4) Melbourne Bike Share Scheme needs to be rethought and relaunched in away that it can be seen to be a success rather than the current underutilized opportunity. In particular, image, access arrangements and pricing need to be rethought.

Omissions from Draft MCC DBP.

Audit Reports including VAGO Reports

Austroads references/compliance

Coroner Reports

Legible and focused mixed mode transport maps clearly highlighting pinch and conflict points. Drill down information availability from the Dot in AT routes are needed.

Perception

Feedback from nearly 200 people chatted to at MBS docking stations indicates that the major deterrent from people considering riding a bike is the perception that the AT

infrastructure is unsafe. The inconvenience of obtaining helmets was only an issue with tourist types. Melbourne metropolitan residents seldom used the helmet issue as their main excuse for not riding a bike.

Conclusions

The **perception** of an unsafe AT infrastructure system for bicycling is the major inhibitor to reaching the levels of bicycle use found in comparable cities to Melbourne.

Acknowledgements

The valuable input to this report by the following are appreciation:

van Dueren, Philip

Hood, Colin

Delvaen Jean Francois

Pattinson, Warwick

Parker, Alan

References

<http://www.austroads.com.au/abc/>

Litman, T 2012, *Evaluating Non-Motorized Transportation Benefits and Costs*, retrieved 13/06/12, from <http://vtpi.org/nmt-tdm.pdf%3E>.

Mekuria, MC, Furth., PG & Nixon, H 2012, *Low-Stress Bicycling and Network Connectivity*. page 88