
11.10 Draft Bridge Road Streetscape Master Plan

Executive Summary

Purpose

To seek Council's authorisation for the draft Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan (the Masterplan), and be placed on public exhibition for community consultation.

Key Issues

The changes in retail patterns and shop vacancies in the Richmond Hill Precinct have caused concerns to the local businesses over a number of years.

The business community has been campaigning that Council lead the process of preparation of a comprehensive streetscape masterplan in partnership with the main street association and State Transport agencies.

The proposed construction of the Richmond High School requires an urgent upgrade of the tram stop in front of the Town Hall to make it safer for school students and other users.

The draft Masterplan sets out a framework for short, medium and long term improvements to the streetscape along Bridge Road.

The draft Masterplan requires exhibition to enable community feedback from the community and also external stakeholders such as Transport for Victoria, Vic Roads, Yarra Trams and Department of Education, Bridge Road Main Street Association etc.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications with the proposal to exhibit the draft Masterplan; however, commitment from Council would be required for capital works funding over several years for design and construction of public domain improvement projects identified in this draft Masterplan.

PROPOSAL

It is recommended that Council authorise the exhibition of the draft Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan for the purpose of undertaking a community consultation process in July-August 2017. The consultation would include exhibition of the draft Masterplan, meetings with key stakeholders and information sessions.

11.10 Draft Bridge Road Streetscape Master Plan

Trim Record Number: D17/78516

Responsible Officer: Manager City Strategy

[Help](#)

Purpose

1. To brief Council on the draft Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan (Attachment 1-5) for the purpose of progressing to public exhibition for community consultation.

Background

2. Bridge Road shopping strip is identified as a major activity centre in Plan Melbourne (2017-2050). It is also an important transport link between the CBD and the eastern suburbs of Melbourne.
3. For decades, Bridge Road (the Hill) has been a popular destination for brand outlets and fashion clothing; drawing visitors from various parts of Melbourne and beyond. In the last decade or so there have been a number of changes in terms of retail patterns and development activities. A number of fashion outlets have closed and there is an increase in new cafés and restaurants and also residential developments.
4. The changes in retail patterns and shop vacancies in the Richmond Hill Precinct have caused concerns to the local businesses. Vacancies are due to a number of factors. Through redevelopment of properties, in the longer term, new occupancies will occur. The north side of the Richmond Hill precinct (north side of Bridge Road) is also experiencing significant housing development.
5. The business community has been campaigning for Council to undertake streetscape improvements, street activation and place-making initiatives to attract more visitors to the street.
6. In 2015, the Bridge Road Main Street Association had also organised a streetscape improvement study with the help of Tract consultants. The study suggested that the Council lead the process of preparation of a comprehensive streetscape masterplan in partnership with the main street association, VicRoads and PTV.
7. In July 2016, the intent to prepare a Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan was presented to the Councillors.
8. Hansen Partnership, a leading urban design consultancy was engaged by Council to prepare the streetscape masterplan.
9. In September 2016 key issues and opportunities were presented to the Councillors.

External Consultation

10. Development of the draft Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan (the Masterplan) has been a consultative process between the Council and a number of important stakeholders including State agencies, Epworth Hospital, and the Bridge Road Mainstreet Association.
11. At the start of the project resident, business and visitor surveys were conducted to understand their issues and aspirations for Bridge Road.
12. An ideas workshop was organised involving professionals from different fields such as landscape architecture, planning, heritage, architecture and economic development, which have helped to inform the development of the masterplan.

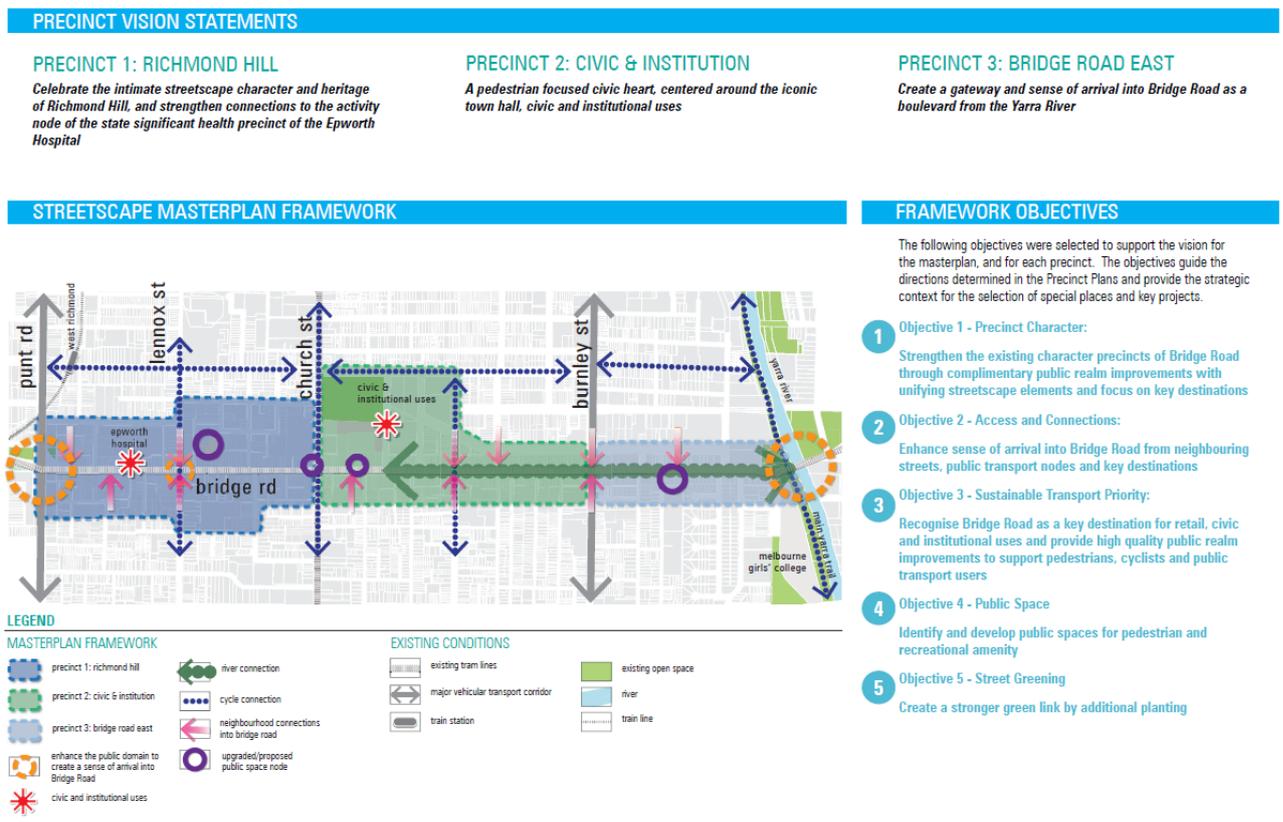
- 13. A Project Steering Group with representatives from Bridge Road Main Street Association, Transport for Victoria, PTV, Vic Roads, Yarra Trams, Department of Education, Bicycle Victoria, Victorian Planning Authority and Epworth Hospital has guided the development of this draft masterplan.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

- 14. A number of Council departments and units including Economic Development, Social Policy and Research, Strategic Transport, Traffic, Engineering Services, Maintenance, Statutory Planning, Strategic Planning, Arts Venues & Cultural Services, Aged & Disability Services, and Family & Children’s Services have contributed to the development of the Masterplan.

Summary of the Draft Streetscape Masterplan

- 15. The Masterplan area encompasses the whole of Bridge Road between Hoddle Street and the Yarra River, a distance of approximately 2.2 kilometres.
- 16. Recognising and responding to the character and identity of different sections of Bridge Road, the Masterplan suggests three distinct precincts and a vision for each as stated in the diagram below:



- 17. The Masterplan includes 5 key objectives that would help achieve the vision. These are:

(a) Objective 1 Precinct Character:

Strengthen the existing character precincts of Bridge Road through complementary public realm improvements with unifying streetscape elements and a focus on key destination;

(b) Objective 2 Access and Connection:

Enhance the sense of arrival onto Bridge Road from neighbouring streets, public transport nodes and key destinations;

(c) Objective 3 Sustainable Transport Priority:

Recognise Bridge Road as a key destination for retail, civic and institutional uses and provide high quality public realm improvements to support pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users;

(d) Objective 4 Public Space:

Identify and develop public spaces for pedestrian and recreational amenity; and

(e) Objective 5 – Street Greening:

Create a stronger green link by additional planting.

18. The Epworth Hospital Precinct and Richmond Town Hall & Gleadell Street area have been included as two special places where significant activity is expected in future and thus the Masterplan recommends a number of public realm improvement initiatives at these two places.
19. The Masterplan also includes following five key projects:
 - (a) Pause points;
 - (b) Street furniture upgrade;
 - (c) Street greening;
 - (d) Signage and way finding; and
 - (e) Lennox Street intersection upgrade.
20. Opportunity for three potential public space projects has been identified, the feasibility of which requires further investigation and discussions with relevant stakeholders.
21. A palette of standard street furniture has been suggested for future upgrades and maintenance works.
22. The implementation strategy is focussed around short to medium term (0-10 years) projects and recommends that delivery of 2 special places and 5 key projects would be important for establishing a vibrant, safe, active and inviting Bridge Road for its existing and future residents, businesses, workers and visitors.

Financial Implications

23. There are no financial implications with the proposal to exhibit the draft Masterplan to seek community feedback.
24. The draft 2017/2018 Council budget provides funding for design development of the Richmond Town Hall and Gleadell Street project.
25. Significant further funding would be required over several years in the forward capital works budget to implement design and documentation of other projects identified in the Masterplan.
26. Council's forward capital works program currently includes \$1.5 Million for Bridge Road under the activity centres program for implementation of renewals and upgrades along Bridge Road in future years; however as stated above, additional funding would be required to implement the Masterplan initiatives and projects. Advocacy for external sources of funding is also a possibility.
27. Adoption of the streetscape masterplan and design and documentation of projects would also help in seeking development contributions from developers.
28. Council officers are also in discussions with Transport for Victoria, Department of Education and other agencies such as VicRoads to develop project implementation partnerships. This is particularly directed towards achieving public realm improvements to the Town Hall civic precinct to support the increased activity from the new high school.

Economic Implications

29. If adopted, the streetscape improvements, public space and amenity upgrades identified in the Masterplan would likely attract more visitors and encourage greater use of the space, in turn benefiting the local economy.

Sustainability Implications

30. The draft Masterplan offers the opportunity to address the following sustainability issues:
- (a) increased use of public transport by upgrading the tram stops for improved access, safety and amenity;
 - (b) energy efficient lighting, including the use of solar technologies;
 - (c) additional tree planting to assist in the provision of shade and assist in reducing the heat island effect;
 - (d) improved bicycle facilities to encourage the use of sustainable transport; and
 - (e) street tree surrounds that allow water to infiltrate through to the ground.

Social Implications

31. The project would result in the following key social benefits:
- (a) new or improved public spaces where people may meet;
 - (b) improved pedestrian amenity and safety near the tram stops;
 - (c) improved connections to the Yarra River and Capital City Trail; and
 - (d) increased lighting levels along the footpaths.

Human Rights Implications

32. There are no identified human rights implications from the report.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

33. During the exhibition stage of the draft Masterplan, Council's website and all information distributed within the community would provide contact numbers for interpreter services for the CALD community seeking information/clarification.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

34. The draft Masterplan is considered consistent with the broad objectives outlined in the Council Plan (2013 – 2017), with a focus on the need to:
- (a) *"Increase in pedestrian activity and safety through improved access and infrastructure"*;
 - (b) *"convert road spaces and laneways for parks or improved pedestrian spaces"*; and
 - (c) *"foster and promote Yarra's arts, culture, history, diversity and vitality"*;
35. The draft Masterplan is considered consistent with the Yarra Urban Design Strategy (adopted 2011) which advocates for a quality public domain in Yarra, universal access, social interaction and walkability.
36. The framework for the Masterplan is consistent with the state transport objectives and suggests a number of initiatives relating to sustainable transport and improved access.

Legal Implications

37. There are no known legal implications with the public exhibition of the draft Masterplan.

Consultation

38. Public consultation is proposed for July-August 2017 including:
- (a) *Your Say Yarra* project page online (linked from Council website);
 - (b) Promotional flyer delivered to the businesses and residents;
 - (c) Face to face information sessions;

- (d) Promotion of the consultation via Council's social media channels;
- (e) Draft streetscape masterplan available to view at the Richmond Town Hall reception as well as at the Richmond Library; and
- (f) Feedback sought from service authorities, state agencies as well as Bridge Road Main Street Association.

Other Issues

- 39. Local businesses and the Bridge Road Main Street Association are keen to see the progress of the Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan.
- 40. The development of the Richmond High School requires greater focus on developing safer, pedestrian, cyclists and public transport connections to the civic and institutional precinct along Bridge Road.
- 41. At a previous Council meeting of November 2014 Council had considered that there is merit in providing plaques recognising the association of historical figures like Nellie Melba, Ned Kelly, Joseph Docker etc. with the City of Yarra.
- 42. In this meeting Council had desired that priority be given to the two initial plaques for Bridge Road, Richmond; and officers provide a further report on the required budgetary and other resource implications.
- 43. This was considered during the development of the Masterplan. The masterplan includes a key project on Signage and Wayfinding and suggests installation of historical plaques along Bridge Road as a part of this project. This will build on the existing heritage plaques that are located on premises within the Richmond Hill Precinct.
- 44. The Masterplan requires community feedback and support from external agencies such as Yarra Trams, VicTrack, and VicRoads etc. It is proposed that consultation with the community and key stakeholders occurs in July-August this year.
- 45. The consultation would include exhibition of the Masterplan, meetings with key stakeholders and information sessions.

Conclusion

- 46. This draft Masterplan identifies a number of initiatives, which would be important for establishing a vibrant, active, safe and inviting public domain along Bridge Road for existing and future residents, traders, workers and visitors.
- 47. The implementation of the historical plaques as discussed under paragraph 41 - 43 would be part of the implementation of the signage and way finding project included in the Masterplan.
- 48. Undertaking community consultation would provide Council with feedback from the community which can then be considered for finalising the Masterplan for Council's adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council note the draft Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan for the purpose of undertaking community consultation and authorise its exhibition in July- August 2017.
- 2. That Officers provide a further report to Council on the outcome of the public exhibition and consultation in October 2017.

CONTACT OFFICER: Richa Swarup
TITLE: Coordinator Urban Design
TEL: 9205 5149

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Councillor Chen Yi Mei

Seconded: Councillor Nguyen

1. That Council note the draft Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan for the purpose of undertaking community consultation and authorise its exhibition in July- August 2017.
2. That Officers provide a further report to Council on the outcome of the public exhibition and consultation in October 2017.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Attachments

- 1 Part 1 - Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan Final Draft
- 2 Part 2 - Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan Final Draft
- 3 Part 3 - Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan Final Draft
- 4 Part 4 - Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan Final Draft
- 5 Part 5 - Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan Final Draft