

11.2 Rose Street Feet First Pedestrian Improvement Project - Brunswick Street to Nicholson Street

Trim Record Number: D17/109597

Responsible Officer: Acting Director City Works and Assets

Purpose

1. To report on the Rose Street Feet First pedestrian improvement project.
2. To adopt the recommendations to proceed with the pedestrian improvement treatments along Rose Street, Fitzroy, subject to funding.

Background

3. Rose Street is a local street connecting Nicholson, Brunswick and Smith Streets, Fitzroy.

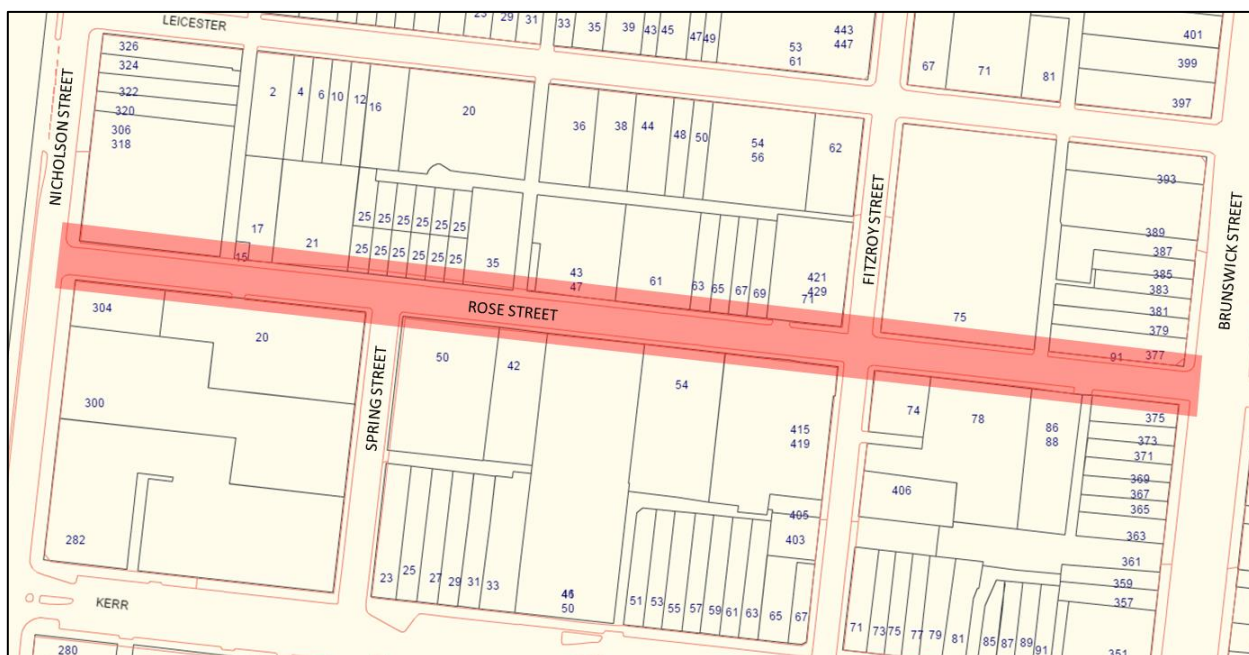


Figure 1: Rose Street Feet First project area

4. Rose Street forms part of a preferred east-west pedestrian connection, together with Keele Street, between Nicholson Street and the Victoria Park railway station, with pedestrian crossing facilities located at Smith, Wellington and Gold Streets.
5. The section of Rose Street between Brunswick Street and Nicholson Street carries high pedestrian volumes on the weekend, who are attracted to the Rose Street Market, cafes, private car parks and other businesses in the area.
6. Over 700 pedestrians per hour walk on this section of Rose Street on Saturdays and Sundays, with 20 per cent of pedestrians walking on the roadway.
7. The Rose Street Feet First project was a collaboration between Council and the community to find ways to improve pedestrian access, safety and the streetscape along Rose Street, between Brunswick Street and Nicholson Street.
8. The project investigated more innovative ways to make these improvements; recognising that infrastructure changes, such as widening footpaths, raising the road level and redesigning drainage, are cost-prohibitive and may not be possible in this inner city location.
9. In 2015, Council undertook a Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) study in the Rose Precinct bound by Alexandra Parade, Smith, Johnston and Nicholson Streets, Fitzroy.
10. The study aimed to address traffic issues in local streets, including traffic speed and volume, through-traffic, safety at intersections, and pedestrian and cyclist safety.

11. On 7 July 2015, Council endorsed a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) to address the traffic issues. Key components of the TMP were to:
 - (a) Introduce one-way (westbound) traffic flow on Rose Street, between Brunswick Street and Nicholson Street; and
 - (b) Introduce a shared zone to improve the pedestrian conditions.
12. A shared zone is a road where pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles all share the roadway. They are used in urban areas where it is common for pedestrians to walk on the roadway, due a lack of adequate footpaths and/or high numbers of pedestrians.
13. A shared zone regulates pedestrians on the roadway. The Victorian Road Rules state that a driver must give way to any pedestrian in the shared zone. Speed limits of 10 km/h are typical in shared zones to improve the safety of all road users.
14. In October 2016, Council obtained a \$25,000 Transport Accident Commission (TAC) grant to conduct a study for the creation of a shared zone along Rose Street.
15. In February 2017, Hansen Partnership was engaged to undertake the concept design and consultation component of the shared zone.
16. Traffic engineering consultant Traffix Group was engaged to conduct a traffic impact assessment on the one-way traffic change.

External Consultation

17. Two rounds of community engagement were undertaken comprising –
 - (a) Stage One - Project initiation to identify issues and ideas:
 - (i) Traders' meeting – 8 March 2017;
 - (ii) Postcard and online engagement through Your Say Yarra website – 10 to 24 March 2017;
 - (iii) On-site information session – 18 March 2017;
 - (b) Stage Two - Presentation of concepts for feedback to develop a final recommended concept:
 - (i) Traders' meeting – 10 May 2017;
 - (ii) Postcard, email and online engagement through Your Say Yarra – 12 May to 9 June 2017; and
 - (iii) On-site information session – 20 May 2017.
18. Throughout the consultation there was strong support for the project and its objective to improve pedestrian access, safety and the streetscape along Rose Street.
19. The consultation was incredibly successful, with good participation and constructive feedback provided throughout. Some examples of the feedback received included:

“Well done for undertaking it. Rose Street has the potential to be a much better shared space.”

“It's great that Yarra Council is undertaking this project.”

“Great to see some thought being put into improvements!”

“Good to involve the local residents in Council decision making.”

“I love the community engagement and consultation having gone to the discussion on Saturday 18 March with the Hansen team and City of Yarra representatives.”
20. Overall statistics for the consultation included:
 - (a) Fifteen traders attended each traders' meeting;
 - (b) 1,000 postcards were distributed in both Stages One and Two of the consultation;
 - (c) 40 people attended each on-site information session;

- (d) 100 visits to Your Say Yarra with 21 responses provided in Stage One; and
- (e) 216 visits to Your Say Yarra with 131 downloads and 25 responses provided in Stage Two.

21. The issues identified in the external consultation were:

- (a) Accessibility;
- (b) One-way traffic change;
- (c) Amenity;
- (d) Parking;
- (e) Heritage, art and events; and
- (f) Street cleaning, waste management and maintenance.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

- 22. An internal working group collaborated on the project, made up of representatives from Traffic and Special Projects, Communications, Open Space, City Strategy, Arts and Culture, Strategic Transport, Parking Management, Engineering and Asset Management, City Works, Compliance, Parking Services, Planning and Construction Management.
- 23. The issues identified in the internal consultation were similar to those raised in the external consultation.

Financial Implications

- 24. The Rose Street Feet First project is estimated to cost approximately \$322,000, which includes a new raised threshold treatment at the intersection of Rose Street and Nicholson Street.
- 25. The project will not commence until total funding is available.
- 26. Council's resolution on 6 June 2017 is to deliver the outstanding Rose Precinct LATM works in 2018/19 and 2019/20, as part of a \$1 million matched funding grant from the VicRoads Safe Travel Speeds in Local Streets program.
- 27. Up to \$150,000 can be funded from Council's 2018/19 Local Area Place Making (formerly LATM) budget.
- 28. The remainder of funding shall be sourced through external grants from VicRoads and the TAC for delivery in 2018/19.

Economic Implications

- 29. Economic benefits to local businesses are likely by improving pedestrian access, safety and the streetscape along Rose Street.

Sustainability Implications

- 30. There are no sustainability issues arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

Social Implications

- 31. Walking and accessibility issues along Rose Street are best managed through the introduction of a shared zone.

Human Rights Implications

- 32. There are no human rights issues arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

- 33. A language advisory panel was included in postcards delivered to residents and businesses. This included contact details and a reference number to access Council's interpreter services.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

34. Council Plan 2013-2017 Strategic Objective 3: Making Yarra More Liveable lists the following points applicable to this project:
 - (a) continue to identify opportunities to convert road spaces and laneways for parks and improved pedestrian spaces; and
 - (b) increased pedestrian activity and safety through improved access and infrastructure. This needs to include improved access for mobility aid devices.
35. Council's Strategic Transport Statement (2012 update) actions 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 1.8, 1.9 commit to improve pedestrian facilities and safety including developing shared zones.

Legal Implications

36. In accordance with Section 34 of the Victorian Road Management Act 2004 Council's obligations as a Responsible Road Authority include:
 - (a) to provide and maintain, as part of a network of roads, roads for use by the community served by the road authority;
 - (b) to manage the use of roads having regard to the principle that the primary purpose of a road is to be used by members of the public and that other uses are to be managed in a manner which minimises any adverse effect on the safe and efficient operation of the road and on the environment; and
 - (c) to manage traffic on roads in a manner that enhances the safe and efficient operation of roads.
37. Approval for major traffic control items, such as shared zones, is required from VicRoads.

Other Issues

Accessibility

38. The accessibility issues and high pedestrian traffic (particularly on weekends) are best managed through the introduction of a shared zone to regulate and encourage pedestrians on the roadway.
39. It was noted that traditional infrastructure changes, such as widening footpaths, raising the road level and redesigning drainage, are cost-prohibitive and may not be possible in this inner city location. Issues include:
 - (a) the narrowness of Rose Street prevents widening of the footpaths without the need to remove parking or impacting access to adjacent properties;
 - (b) further constraints placed by electricity poles, sign posts, ticket machines, and bins; and
 - (c) driveway crossovers to private properties.
40. Accessible pram ramps and street painting are recommended at the intersection of Rose Street and Fitzroy Street to address immediate accessibility issues.
41. Cross-traffic movements, such as the southbound movement at the intersection of Fitzroy Street and Rose Street, are discouraged in shared zones. A separate proposal to alter the traffic flow along Fitzroy Street will be investigated to reduce or remove the cross-traffic movement at Rose Street subject to local consultation.
42. A raised threshold treatment at the intersection of Rose Street and Nicholson Street, estimated to cost \$55,000, is recommended to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility at this location.

One-way traffic change

43. Consultation revealed considerable opposition to a one-way (westbound) traffic change in Rose Street, particularly from local traders, operators of the private car parks and residents of surrounding streets such as Kerr Street.

44. A review of the previous LATM study revealed a number of issues with the one-way change. These included:
- (a) an increase in daily traffic volumes on Rose Street since the study (from 533 up to 2,098 vehicles a day). This would lead to greater traffic redistribution to the surrounding area; and
 - (b) a low response rate to the original one-way proposal from those directly affected, with only four responses received (three in support and one opposed).
45. The one-way (westbound) traffic change would cause significant redistribution issues to the surrounding road network:
- (a) Kerr Street: from 1,634 up to 2,373 vehicles on a weekday and 2,092 up to 2,960 on a Saturday;
 - (b) Fitzroy Street: from 138 up to 460 vehicles on a weekday and 186 up to 441 vehicles on a Saturday;
 - (c) Spring Street: from 468 up to 591 vehicles on a weekday and 642 up to 808 vehicles on a Saturday; and
 - (d) Westgarth Street: from 916 up to 1,080 vehicles on a weekday and 1,217 up to 1,536 vehicles on a Saturday.
46. Officers recommend not proceeding with the one-way change in view of the increased traffic redistribution. **See Attachment 1 for the traffic impact assessment summary**

Amenity

47. The installation of additional street trees within Rose Street is not possible due to underground and above ground services such as water, electricity, sewerage, gas and telecommunications lines.
48. Planter boxes incorporating public seating are recommended for trees and shrubs.
49. It is noted that the operational budget will need to be increased by \$9,000 annually to maintain the planter boxes, street trees and shrubs.
50. Additional bike parking is recommended to meet the existing high demand.
51. Currently the street lighting levels along Rose Street are acceptable for a local residential street.
52. However community feedback indicates demand for increased street lighting to address safety concerns. A quote is being prepared by CitiPower for brighter but more energy efficient lights. It is estimated that the upgrade will be in the order of \$20,000 at this stage. Officers are of the view that the existing lighting be retained and its effectiveness be reviewed after 12 months.
53. Community demand for a public toilet in the northern part of Fitzroy will be investigated through the development of the Brunswick Street Master Plan and/or the Yarra City Council Public Toilet Strategy.

Parking

54. There has been strong support from traders, residents and the wider community for the removal of some on-street parking to facilitate pedestrian improvements along Rose Street. See Figure 2

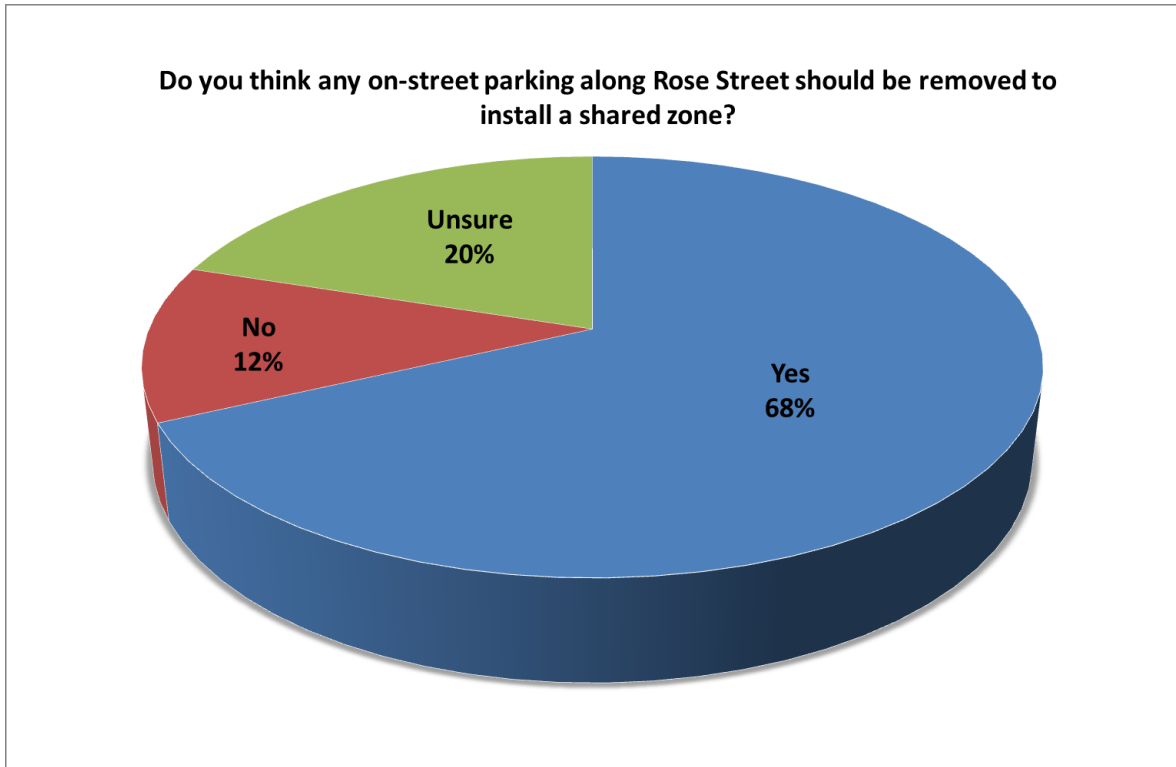


Figure 2: Stage Two community consultation – response to parking removal

55. The following parking changes are proposed:
- (a) replace six parking spaces with pedestrian pause points containing planter boxes, trees and shrubs, bike racks, public seating and street litter bins;
 - (b) convert two parking spaces to dedicated loading zones or similar outside Rose Street Market and near the intersection of Fitzroy Street; and
 - (c) reinstate a redundant driveway crossover outside 88 Rose Street to formalise one additional paid parking space.

Heritage, art and events

56. Rose Street has a unique artistic character that should be reflected in the shared zone design and treatments. It is well-recognised that Rose Street has some of the best examples of street art in Melbourne, attracting local and international tourists alike.
57. There is strong support for opportunities for art installations, either temporary or permanent.
58. The physical constraints placed by the narrowness of the street makes it difficult for art to be installed on the street level. Instead opportunities to install art on the road surface or above the road level are recommended.
59. Council’s Public Art Policy will guide the commissioning of artists.
60. Consultation with the community and traders indicated interest in developing opportunities for events, street activation and business in this area.
61. It is recommended that Council continues to collaborate with the community and traders of Rose Street.

Street cleaning, waste management and maintenance

62. Bin storage and waste collection are major concerns among the Rose Street community. The large number of bins at the Brunswick Street end was especially highlighted.
63. The narrowness of the footpaths means that pedestrians are forced onto the roadway when bins are placed for collection. This is a common issue throughout Yarra City Council, and the creation of a shared zone in Rose Street will improve pedestrian access when bins are out.
64. Local Laws prevent setting up designated bin storage areas in public areas.

- 65. There is no immediate solution to address the bin issues. Council's Compliance Administration Team and Waste Management department shall monitor and respond to bin placement and collection issues.
- 66. An additional two public street litter bins are proposed outside Grace Café and the Rose Street Market.
- 67. In response to community feedback, Rose Street between will be added to the enhanced street sweeping program, increasing the mechanical street sweeping from a monthly to a weekly frequency.
- 68. It is noted that the operational budget will need to be increased by \$13,000 annually for the enhanced weekly street sweeping program, pressure washing street cleaning and street litter bin collection.

Options

- 69. Two concept designs for the shared zone were provided for consultation in Stage Two. **See Attachment 2 for preliminary concept designs.**
- 70. Concept Option 1 incorporated a flexible design that could be used to test changes to the street layout as a short-term experiment lasting up to five years, through the provision of pedestrian pause points in place of existing car parking spaces.
- 71. Concept Option 2 incorporated a repeating design element to break up the linearity of the street, through tree planting and bluestone paving banding to provide a visual cue to slow vehicles.
- 72. Each concept was restricted to the same budget.
- 73. Concept Option 1 received 57 per cent support compared to 30 per cent for Concept Option 2. **See Figure 3**

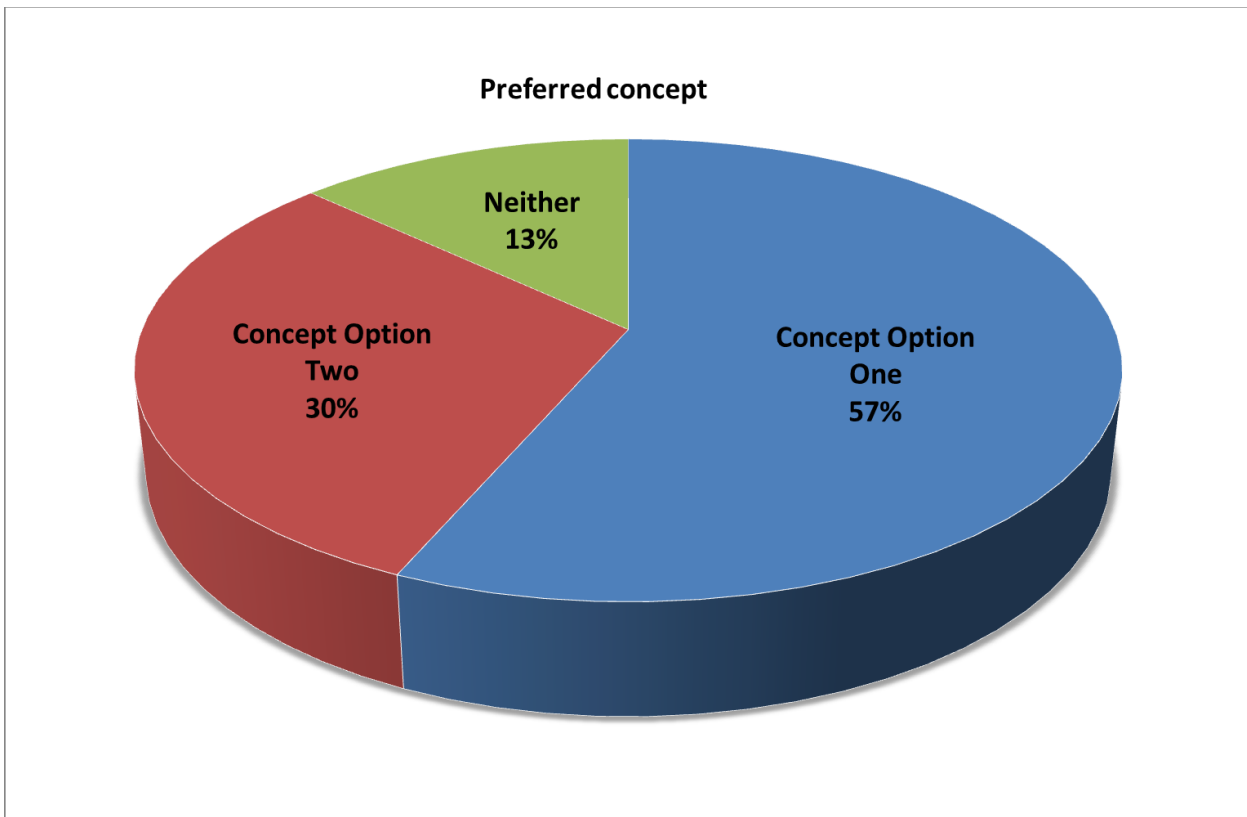


Figure 3: Stage Two community consultation – response to preferred concept

- 74. A final recommended shared zone concept was prepared based on the preferred Concept Option 1 and other feedback. **See Attachment 3 for final recommended concept.**

Conclusion

75. The proposal for one-way (westbound) traffic change along Rose Street is no longer supported in view of the updated traffic impact assessment and community opposition to the change.
76. The accessibility issues and high pedestrian traffic (particularly on weekends) are best managed through the introduction of a shared zone to regulate and encourage pedestrians on the roadway.
77. The final recommended concept provides a flexible design which can be used to test changes to the street layout, such as through the provision of pedestrian pause points in place of existing car parking spaces. **See Attachment 3 for final recommended concept**
78. Annual maintenance costs for new infrastructure of \$9,000 for planter boxes, street trees and shrubs and \$13,000 for an enhanced weekly street sweeping program, pressure washing street cleaning and street litter bin collection be included in future maintenance schedules.
79. Street lighting to be reviewed as per item 81.
80. The design aims to support the change of Rose Street to a shared zone and the priority of pedestrians over vehicle movement.
81. Key design features include:
 - (a) A 10 km/h speed limit to reduce traffic speed;
 - (b) The replacement of six parking spaces with pedestrian pause points containing planter boxes, trees and shrubs, bike racks, public seating and street litter bins;
 - (c) Two dedicated loading zones or similar outside Rose Street Market and near the intersection of Fitzroy Street;
 - (d) Reinstatement of a redundant driveway crossover outside 88 Rose Street to formalise one additional paid parking space and repair the footpath;
 - (e) Painted treatments on the roadway;
 - (f) Opportunities for art installations, including those above the street level at the Brunswick Street entrance;
 - (g) Pram ramps and street painting at the intersection of Rose Street and Fitzroy Street to address the immediate accessibility issues; and
 - (h) A raised threshold treatment at the intersection of Rose Street and Nicholson Street.
82. Monitoring, further testing and evaluation will be carried out as required following the completion of the project, including a 12 month review as part of formal reporting to VicRoads, TAC and Council.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:
 - (a) endorse the final recommended shared zone concept that provides a flexible design which can be used to test changes to the street layout, estimated at \$322,000. **See Attachment 3 for final recommended concept;**
 - (b) abandon a proposed one-way (westbound) traffic change along Rose Street in view of the updated traffic impact assessment and community opposition to the change;
 - (c) note that an additional annual operating budget of \$9,000 is required to maintain new planter boxes, street trees and shrubs;
 - (d) note that an additional annual operating budget of \$13,000 is required for an enhanced weekly street sweeping program, pressure washing street cleaning and street litter bin collection;
 - (e) continues to collaborate with the community and traders of Rose Street to develop opportunities for events, street activation and business in this area;
 - (f) note that the project will not commence until total funding is available;
 - (g) acknowledges that the budget for Rose Street will be in the order of \$150,000 from Council's 2018/19 Local Area Place Making (LAPM) budget;
 - (h) acknowledges that additional funding, in the order of \$172,000, will be sought through grants from VicRoads and the TAC for delivery in 2018/19; and
 - (i) notes that monitoring, further testing and evaluation, including street lighting, will be carried out as required following the completion of the project, including a 12 month review as part of formal reporting to VicRoads, TAC and Council.

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Attachments

- 1 Traffic Impact Assessment Conclusions - One-way Change on Rose Street
- 2 Preliminary Concept Designs for Rose Street Shared Zone
- 3 Final Recommended Concept for Rose Street Shared Zone