GETTING THE WEST ON TRACK

Closing Major Bike Infrastructure Gaps in Melbourne’s Inner West

Office of Colleen Hartland MLC
Victorian Greens MP for the Western Metropolitan Region
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REFERENCES
1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Active, sustainable transport choices and access to physical activity are intrinsic to livable, healthy and inclusive communities. Active transport participation requires optimal access to safe cycling routes and connectivity between priority destinations. Yet cyclists in the western suburbs of Melbourne endure a lack of route options due to a range of environmental barriers, legacies of an industrial heritage and road infrastructure planned for large volumes of cars and truck freight. In light of substantial investment by other metropolitan municipalities in expanding and improving cycling networks across Melbourne\(^1\), the cycling route deficiencies in the west show up in strong contrast.

There has been extensive research across three levels of government confirming the economic, environmental, social and health benefits of cycling, and in planning bicycle friendly urban environments to achieve the goal of increasing participation in cycling as a regular transport mode\(^2\). Despite this strong investment in planning, many cycling initiatives for the western region remain unfunded.

Through consultation, research and field work, this report for the Bike West initiative identifies and maps priority bike infrastructure projects that will increase bike safety and connectivity along popular and pivotal routes in the inner western suburbs.

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The routes identified are:

**Hobsons Bay City Council**
- **Federation Trail to Bay Trail**: connecting the Federation Trail at the Westgate Freeway to the Bay Trail and to key destinations in Spotswood and Newport.
- **The Punt crossing**: creating a safe crossing on Douglas Parade to the Punt in Spotswood.
- **Hall Street railway line route**: promoting a safe north-south route between Spotswood and Newport.
- **Kororoit Creek Trail**: completing the final off-road link from the Federation Trail to the Bay Trail in Altona.
- **Millers Road, Altona**: creating safer paths under the Westgate Freeway intersection to the Federation Trail.

**Maribyrnong City Council**
- **Federation Trail**: completing the final off-road link to the Hyde Street path in Yarraville.
- **Dynon Road to Hopkins Street, Footscray**: connecting the Dynon Road bike path to Hopkins Street bike lanes and upgrading the Barkly Street/Geelong Road intersection, Footscray, creating a second major city-bound commuting thoroughfare to take the pressure off the busy Footscray Road path.
- **Pilgrim Street to Geelong Road**: linking Pilgrim Street, Seddon to the West Footscray Railway Station and Sunshine Path.
- **Napier Street, Footscray**: linking the heavily used Footscray Road bike path to the Footscray shopping precinct.
- **Footscray to Highpoint**: opening up a north-south link between Footscray and Highpoint shopping precincts.

**Moonee Valley City Council**
- **Craigieburn Railway Line route**: creating a continuous safe route towards the CBD between Buckley Street, Essendon and Racecourse Road, Flemington.
- **East-west links**: creating safe east-west routes through Essendon, Moonee Ponds, Ascot Vale and Travancore that connect the Maribyrnong River Path to the Moonee Ponds Creek Path, and to bike lanes in the Maribyrnong and Moreland municipalities.
• **Mount Alexander Road detour route to Moonee Ponds Creek path**: providing a safe alternative to the Mount Alexander Road route south of Moonee Ponds Junction.

• **Mount Alexander Road separated lanes**: connecting Essendon Junction to Moonee Ponds Junction with safe, separated bike lanes.

• **Moonee Ponds Creek path lighting and directional signage**: improving safety and promoting patronage on this pivotal off-road path by installing night lighting and directional signage to road exits.

Completing these important cycling routes is a fundamental step towards creating the connected, livable ‘20 minute neighbourhoods’ in the western region, which Plan Melbourne states is a key strategy in tackling the economic and environmental challenges of a growing population; notably in accommodating efficient transport systems and land use in highly urbanised environments³. These routes provide the backbone to local and regional cycling networks and could enable safe, convenient access to employment, services, goods, active transport and physical activity if essential infrastructure were installed to accommodate cyclists with different levels of experience and need⁴. Importantly, encouraging more cyclists by offering designated protected routes away from heavy traffic, would take more pressure off the road and public transport systems with economic benefits across many areas for the state⁵.

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2. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

2.1 Objectives
This report aims to alert the Victorian Government to the impact of inadequate cycling infrastructure across the inner western suburbs of Melbourne, and to the state’s responsibilities to ensure funding for transport infrastructure meets critical cycling needs in the west. This report highlights the need for an equitable share of road safety funding, including from the Andrews government promised $100 million Safer Cyclists and Pedestrians Fund, designed to invest in new, dedicated paths and routes across Victoria, which will keep bikes and walkers away from traffic. A further objective is to urge federal, state and local governments to collaborate to fund and implement planning strategies.

2.2 Scope of project
This report identifies the most significant connectivity and infrastructure gaps in the inner western local government municipalities of Moonee Valley, Maribyrnong and Hobsons Bay, which are within a 10km cycling radius of the CBD, and also identifies key connectivity gaps with adjacent municipalities. It focuses on significant regional corridors and missing links across each municipality. The study does not cover all cycling route gaps across the region due to the large number of identified gaps. Listing all gaps is beyond the scope of this study.

Findings are drawn from existing research reports, field work, and consultations with cycling community members, Greens staff and branch members, local government sustainable transport planners, and an independent transport consultant.

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2.3 Notes on terminology

- Sharrows – painted on-road bicycle route directional signage (image 1)
- Lanes – continuous on-road lane markings and dedicated green bike lanes
- Shared path – off-road pedestrian and cycling path
- Copenhagen-style bike lanes – on-road bike lane with a physical barrier separating the lane from traffic

Image 1
Road sharrow for route finding in quiet streets.
3. BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT

Bike West is a local initiative for the Western Metropolitan Region which sits within Colleen Hartland’s work on healthy communities, and reflects the broader Greens position of promoting active transport and sustainable planning. It connects with bicycle planning policies of state government primarily, but also interacts with local and federal government policies. It advocates for greater Victorian Government investment in bicycle infrastructure.

3.1 Existing network and legislative framework

High-use cycling routes form part of the VicRoads Principle Bicycle Network (PBN), developed to guide infrastructure funding. These popular routes are identified as Bicycle Priority Routes or Strategic Cycling Corridors (SCCs) within the PBN. This planning model does not reflect the quality of the actual cycling routes in all cases. In some premier road corridors, cyclists still compete with heavy traffic or use pedestrian footpaths in parts to avoid collisions. While road use hierarchy schemes allocate priority to bikes at certain times of the day, there is a more fundamental need for separation of bikes and cars. New road projects must give high priority to cycling routes according to the Transport Integration Act 2010, S. 10, which mandates “promoting forms of transport and the use of forms of energy and transport technologies which have the least impact on the natural environment and reduce the overall contribution of transport-related greenhouse gas emissions.”

The Victorian transport budget for 2015-16 outlines over $750 million allocated to road widening and safety upgrades, on top of $1.3 billion set aside for the widening of the Citylink and Tullamarine Freeways. Yet there is no mention or commitment of state budget allocations to important bicycle infrastructure despite the budget focus on safety improvements and relieving traffic congestion, and despite Labor’s election commitment to a $100

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Budgeting for bicycle infrastructure is an essential component in resolving traffic issues now and for the future, and this is critical in light of the rapid growth in the western region and in cyclist numbers in recent years. The state government shares a commitment to invest in continuous, connected and separated cycling routes, to support the growth in cycling as an intrinsic part of a more efficient transport system. That ostensible commitment must now be turned into action.

Images 2 – 6 (page 10) present a snapshot of the bicycle network in inner northern and central municipalities, showing treatments for integrating bicycle infrastructure into urban areas with heavy traffic. By contrast, cyclists in the west have few safe options to navigate between key destinations within and across municipalities.

3.2 Cyclist safety

In its National Investment in Active Transport Survey, the Heart Foundation found that the rates of cycling were connected to separation of bike lanes and public perception of safety in bike infrastructure. Three in four people (77%) reported they were not comfortable cycling on roads where there are no separated bike lanes. Inadequate infrastructure had a direct impact on behaviour where 44% of participants stated that this prevented them cycling for recreation or transport. More than 50% stated that they would ride more often if there was better infrastructure. This feeling was expressed mostly by women who were more likely to avoid busy roads with unseparated lanes. These results reinforce the research into the risk-averse cycling patterns for women in comparison to those for male cyclists. Fear of fast-moving traffic dominated cyclists’ perceptions of cycling, which supports research


showing that this fear would only be alleviated by separation of bikes and cars rather than more bike lanes on busy roads\textsuperscript{16}. Female cyclist numbers on Swanston Street increased by almost double from 26\% to 39\% between 2011 and 2014 when cars were prohibited and cycling conditions were improved\textsuperscript{17}. Community sentiment about cycling safety is reflected in continuous feedback to cycling networks\textsuperscript{18}. With heavy traffic arterials dominating the landscape of the western suburbs, the bicycle network has a long way to go before it is inclusive of a diverse range of cyclists.


3.3 Public health versus cost

Return on investment influences funding criteria for cycling infrastructure. However, investment criteria need to consider further economic benefits in addition to cyclist numbers at specific locations. It is well documented that encouraging physical activity as a preventative public health strategy has considerable benefits in reducing the prevalence of preventable health conditions like obesity, diabetes, heart disease, depression and anxiety. Framed in economic terms, a 2008 study found that physical inactivity cost the Australian economy $13.8 billion, and caused an estimated 16,000 premature deaths a year. Direct costs to the health system were around $719 million a year. Further research confirms that gender equality in cycling is linked to greater economic participation and growth when consideration of different cycling needs significantly increases cycling numbers. Over 70% of people surveyed by the Heart Foundation want more government funding directed to improving cycling, walking and public transport.

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21 National Heart Foundation (2014) *Blueprint for an active Australia, 2nd Ed.* Melbourne.

Images 2 - 6
Examples of inner city bicycle path integration. Converted shared footpaths, contraflow on-road lanes and separated paths: Flemington, Brunswick and Melbourne.
4. PRIORITY ROUTE SUMMARY

The following is a summary of selected significant cycling route gaps by local government municipality in the Western Metropolitan Region. Each outline provides a brief rationale and mapping of the route infrastructure needed with photographic examples of the current situation to demonstrate the impact on the cycling network in that region.

5. HOBSONS BAY

The regional scope of the Bay Trail and Federation Trail has opened up potential for bicycle access to key destinations from Altona through to Spotswood. However, there is still a lack of direct routes through the Hobsons Bay region connecting with other municipalities for cyclists who are not willing to ride on busy roads. The Westgate Freeway remains a substantial barrier to north-south cycling access and there is limited network connectivity off the main trails, while designated cycling routes follow, or cross, major traffic arterials. Altona North, Spotswood and South Kingsville are forecast to be population growth areas with local government urban regeneration strategies responding to the needs of more young families in these areas. Community consultation identified that connectedness to key destinations and an integrated network are the most important criteria for regional trails. Connectedness is vitally important for sustainable transport access to growing economic hubs at Sunshine, the CBD and Werribee, and to optimise inclusive access through shared pedestrian and bicycle paths for a range of people with different mobility needs in these areas. 61% of residents work outside the municipality and demand on public transport exceeds the available services. The following gaps have been identified in local government planning and through consultation with local cyclists.

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5.1 Federation Trail to Bay Trail, Spotswood

Current situation and the gap:

- The Federation Trail ends prematurely in Yarraville adjacent the Westgate Freeway with the option of crossing into Spotswood via the freeway pedestrian bridge or the underpass at Fogarty Avenue.
- Key destinations in Spotswood such as the Bay Trail, Bicycle Punt, shopping precinct, railway station and Scienceworks are a short ride away from the Federation Trail end, but there are no continuous cycling routes or directional signage from the freeway overpass to direct cyclists to safe cycling routes or to promote bike access to these destinations.
- Fragmented lanes terminate at busy road intersections with no cycling infrastructure to warn traffic of cyclists.
- While Hudsons Road has marked lanes and provides a direct west-east route through Spotswood, the road is frequented by heavy traffic and trucks, and the existing bike lanes are often blocked by parked cars.
- There are untapped opportunities to designate quiet streets away from main thoroughfares as safe cycling routes to key destinations. Local cyclists use the quieter streets of Booker Street and Simcock Avenue near the Spotswood industrial area to access Douglas Parade. These streets are not identified cycling options at the Federation Trail end.

The Solution:

- Install directional signage on posts at both sides of the Westgate Freeway overpass and road underpass to direct cyclists towards The Federation Trail in one direction, and towards the Bay Trail, Punt, Spotswood and Newport in the other direction.
- Install bike lanes and sharrows in gaps along this route.
- Install directional signage at strategic intersections along The Avenue which acts as feeder road between the Federation and Bay Trails.
- Reconfigure the busy Melbourne Road and The Avenue intersection with prominent bike lanes in both directions. Install bike access through the nature strip on the north-eastern edge of intersection at the golf course.
• Install route sharrows along Hope Street, Hall Street and Craig Street to direct cyclists along a continuous route to the Punt crossing on Douglas Parade.

The Benefits:
• There are opportunities to enable multi-mode transport choices by directing cyclists using the Federation Trail to the Spotswood and Newport Railway Stations.
• Promoting a designated route through quiet streets would encourage more people to cycle to shopping precincts and cultural precincts of Spotswood and Newport and reduce traffic and parking congestion on Hudsons Road and near Scienceworks.
• This will optimise the potential of the Federation Trail to connect cyclists with developing activity and cultural centres in Spotswood and Newport and align with local government integrated transport strategy26.

5.2 Douglas Parade crossing, the Punt, Spotswood

Current situation and the gap:

- The Westgate Punt is a ferry service operating from the Spotswood Jetty off Douglas Parade, transporting cyclists to Port Melbourne, saving 13 kilometres off a cycle trip to the CBD.  
- Access to the Punt is from the Bay Trail. Cyclists from the western suburbs must cross Douglas Parade, a very busy traffic route to and from Yarraville, to access the Punt and the Bay Trail.
- There is no clear identification of the crossing point for cyclists or motorists.
- There is no protection for cyclists crossing Douglas Parade which carries large traffic volumes in both directions, including heavy trucks to and from the Yarraville and Spotswood industrial zones.
- There is no safe crossing access for the length of Douglas Parade for cyclists attempting to access the Bay Trail from Spotswood or on the Yarraville side of the Westgate Bridge.
- Bike commuters use the road space with fast moving traffic, often entering Douglas Parade at a dangerous intersection from Simcock Avenue near the Westgate Freeway where there is no bicycle lane marking or signage to alert drivers to the presence of cyclists.
- The bend in the road towards the Westgate Bridge near Simcock Avenue creates blind corners where crossing the road is extremely dangerous for cyclists.

The Solution:

- Establish a safe crossing of this road by installing pedestrian and bike traffic crossing signals.
- Exotic trees on the eastern side of the crossing that block cyclists’ view of traffic should be removed.

• The crossing needs prominent directional signage on both sides indicating the route to Federation Trail via Spotswood Railway Station and shopping precinct.

The Benefits:
• These modifications will enable safe access to the Punt and to destinations west of Douglas Parade and encourage cyclist movement to Spotswood from the Bay Trail and patronage to the Punt ferry.
• This crossing point is vitally important for commuters from the western suburbs as there is no safe crossing for the length of Douglas Parade until the intersection with Francis and Hyde Streets in Yarraville.

5.3 Hall Street and Market Street Path, Newport to Spotswood

Current situation and the gap:
• This north-south street follows the eastern side of the Williamstown-Werribee railway line and is favoured by local commuter cyclists travelling to and from the Hyde Street path in Yarraville because of its minimal car traffic and ample road space for cycling.
• Hall Street has no official identification as a bicycle route for cyclists unfamiliar with the area, yet can connect cyclists with the off-road Market Street path in Newport.
• Northbound cyclists travelling to Hall Street via the Market Street path are forced to ride illegally against the traffic flow at the Champion Road roundabout to access the Market Street path.

The Solution:
• Directional signage and sharrows should be installed at key intersections with Hudsons Road railway level crossing, Craig Street access to the Punt, and at Newport. The route should be identified on cycling maps as a safe connection between these destinations.
• There should also be a contraflow shared path accessing the Market Street path via the Champion Road roundabout where north-bound cyclists currently have to ride against the traffic at this roundabout to access the Market Street path.

The Benefits:
• Hall Street serves as a safe access point to quiet west-east cycling avenues away from the busy Hudsons Road thoroughfare in Spotswood.
• There is potential for cycling access to promote patronage at Newport east of the railway, which is partially shielded from vehicle traffic by the barrier created by the railway line and Melbourne Road overpass28 and to encourage economic development in the Spotswood/Newport precincts, while also improving transport and parking issues29. This route is a safe cycling connection from Spotswood directly to the Newport Substation arts and cultural precinct, and connects with the off-road cycling path on Market Street which leads to the Altona Foreshore.
• Developing Hall Street as a cycling route is an efficient use of road space which meets the objectives of the Victorian Cycling Strategy.30
• Continuity and clarity in the Market Street/Hall Street route from Maddox Road completes an essential link between Spotswood, Newport and Altona.

existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)

needed – sharrow or on road bike lanes

5.1 Federation Trail to Spotswood route

5.3. Hall Street/ Market St. route

Bike lanes needed at intersections

Market St./Champion Road roundabout
 east-bound contraflow path required

5.2 Douglas Parade crossing to Bicycle Punt

existing regional off-road path (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)

needed – directional signage to Spotswood, Bay trail & Punt

needed – crossing signals & directional signage to Federation Trail, Bay Trail & Punt

needed – directional signage to Federation Trail, Bay Trail & Punt
Map 5.2 Detail - Federation Trail to Bay Trail & The Punt crossing, Spotswood

- Federation Trail end
- Westgate Freeway pedestrian overpass
- Bike lanes needed at intersection
- Westgate Freeway road underpass
- Scienceworks
- Bicycle Punt
- Bay Trail

- existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
- existing regional off-road path (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
- needed – off-road bypass lane at intersection

- needed – sharrows or on road bike lanes
- 1 needed – directional signage to Spotswood, Bay trail & Punt
- 2 needed – Douglas Parade crossing refuge island & directional signage to Federation Trail, Punt & Bay Trail
Exit from freeway overpass, Spotswood. Directional signage, sharrows & gutter treatment needed.

The Avenue intersection with Williamstown Road – view East. Buffered bike lanes needed.

Hope Street, view South, directional sharrows needed.

Hudsons Road level crossing, view West, bike lanes needed.
Image 13
Craig Street to Scienceworks overflow car park, view east.

Images 14 & 15
Douglas Parade crossing, Scienceworks car park exit to the Bay Trail and Punt - crossing signals and directional signage needed.

Image 16
Douglas Parade to Simcock Avenue intersection.

Images 17 & 18
Commuter cyclists using Douglas Parade & Simcock Avenue under Westgate Bridge – marked lanes at intersection needed.
5.4 Kororoit Creek Trail final stage, Altona

Current situation:

- The final stage of this off-road shared trail is needed to connect the Federation Trail to the Bay Trail in Altona.
- The existing north-south trail follows Kororoit Creek from Caroline Springs and ends north of the Princes Highway at the Federation Trail.
- Completion of this trail has high regional priority in the Draft Western Metropolitan Regional Trails Strategic Plan, a collaborative local government effort in the Western Metropolitan Region.\(^{31}\)

The Gap:

- The Westgate Freeway creates a substantial barrier to north-south connections between Altona and Altona North, and this compromises access between the Federation Trail and Bay Trails.
- There is no off-road access between these two trails in Altona with primary access between Altona and Altona North, via the busy Millers Road traffic arterial where the on-road lane ends south of the Westgate Freeway underpass.
- The Westgate Freeway and Princes Freeway/Geelong Road create substantial barriers to north-south cycling across regions without cycling underpasses or bridges.

The Solution

- Hobsons Bay Council has identified the engineering and design issues with completing this path. The complexity of crossing the two major freeways needs state intervention to design and construct the necessary infrastructure to enable access under the two freeways and over the railway line.

• This project must be included in future freeway upgrades given the many millions of federal and state dollars previously allocated to this freeway.32

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The Benefits

- A completed trail would allow a continuous off-road shared path from the north western suburbs down to and the bay in Altona via Cherry Lake Reserve, and connect with the Western Ring Road and Coastal Bay Trails, both regionally important off-road trails in the cycling network.

- A completed trail would be a substantial cycling asset for a large sector of the western region, linking cycling and pedestrian access to a high number of people across Hobsons Bay and Brimbank local government areas.

- The trail enables greater cycling access between Altona foreshore and Sunshine Town Centre, an increasingly important economic and employment destination, located in an area of rapid population growth.33

- The completion of the final section of this trail target the goals of the Hobsons Bay Integrated Transport Strategy by enabling greater mobility alternatives in the region’s ageing population,34 as well as the active transport needs of the existing cycling population and in the forecast growth in population in Altona North.35 It also meets the objectives of the Victorian Cycling Strategy in accommodating population diversity in this region by considering alternative mobility and transport options and community wellbeing.36

33 Brimbank City Council (2014). *Sunshine Town Centre Structure Plan.*


5.5  **Millers Road to Federation Trail intersection at Westgate Freeway**

Current situation:
- This thoroughfare is located on the VicRoads Principal Bicycle Network,\(^{37}\) as a direct route north from Altona to North Altona under the Westgate Freeway.
- The road passes from Civic parade at Altona Foreshore past Cherry Lake reserve, the industrial areas of Altona at Kororoit Creek Road, Bayside College, community library and Altona Gate Shopping Centre.
- The road serves as a major traffic arterial to and from the Westgate Freeway. It connects with major east-west roads and bicycle routes through to Williamstown and Newport.
- There are bicycle lanes on both sides of Millers Road which stop at Altona Gate Shopping Centre south of the freeway underpass.
- Regular bus services stop along this road.

The Gap:
- On-road cycle paths terminate before the freeway underpass with no bicycle infrastructure passing under the bridge to connect with the Federation Trail north of the freeway.
- There is no protection for cyclists against a large volume of traffic turning onto and off the freeway ramps.
- There is no protected north-south route in this region.
- There are no bike facilities connecting with bus routes.

The Solution
- Install protected lanes from Altona Gate Shopping Centre passing under the freeway to the Federation Trail.
- Install bicycle racks at bus stops along Millers Road and develop Park and Ride options.

The Benefits

- A safe intersection will enable cycling access to the Federation Trail.
- Bicycle racks combined with a shared off-road path will promote use of public transport between destinations along this route and to other regions.
Map 5.3 - Kororoit Creek path & Millers Road intersection, Altona

- **Existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)**
- **Existing regional off-road path (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)**
- **Needed - off-road path**
- **Needed - sharrows**

**Intersections with Bay Trail**

1. **Kororoit Creek Trail underpass**
   - Needed - freeway underpasses and route signage

2. **Kororoit Creek Trail missing link**
   - Needed - directional signage to Federation and Bay trails

3. **Cherry Lake intersection**
   - Needed - buffered on-road bike lanes, shared path and directional signage

**Map 5.5 - Millers Rd underpass**

- **Needed - off-road path**

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*Note: The map highlights critical intersections andmissing links along the Kororoit Creek Trail and Millers Road. The annotations indicate areas requiring specific enhancements to promote safer cycling routes.*
- existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
- existing regional off-road path (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
- needed – off-road paths

Map 5.5 Millers Road intersection

To North Altona

Connection with Federation Trail

Needed - Park and Ride bus options with bicycle parking

Lanes end

To Bay Trail & Altona Foreshore

Images 19 & 20 Westgate Freeway underpass

needed - marked on-road route signage & lanes
6. MARIBYRNONG

Areas of Maribyrnong lie within 7km of the CBD where the highest rates of cycling occur. The numbers of people cycling to work is higher here than most municipalities apart from Moreland and Yarra, which have the highest cyclist numbers and an extensive investment in bicycle infrastructure.\(^{38}\) The Super Tuesday 2015 bike count recorded 92 bike trips per hour in the municipality, an increase of 60% in cyclist numbers since the last count in 2011, with the highest numbers recorded at the river crossings on Footscray Road and Hopkins Street/Dynon Road.\(^{39}\) Both of these bicycle routes are high priorities for the western suburbs cycling network yet are compromised by missing connections through Footscray shopping precinct and Victoria University’s Footscray campus.\(^{40}\) Maribyrnong City Council recently joined the Inner Melbourne Action Plan, a local government collective working to improve liveability in the inner city regions where bicycle and public transport connectivity is seen as intrinsic.\(^{41}\) The following routes are identified as priorities in state and local government planning and by local cyclists.

6.1 Federation Trail missing link through Yarraville

Current situation:

- The Federation Trail is a sealed, off-road path that offers a continuous west-east route beginning at the Werribee River and terminating at Fogarty Avenue in Yarraville, where cyclists must navigate truck routes and congested intersections to connect with the north-south bike path along Hyde Street in Yarraville, the intended end point of the trail.

- The Hyde street path connects to the Footscray Road bike path to the CBD. So the Yarraville missing link is the barrier to a completed bike path which will enable a safe, viable route to and from the CBD from the south-western suburbs.

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\(^{39}\) Bicycle Network Victoria. (2015d). *Super Tuesday Bike Commuter Count, Victoria April 2015*


• Construction of this path may depend on road project funding. The proposed modification of the Westgate Freeway with the West Gate Distributor or the Western Distributor proposal is an opportunity to fund this vital link, however there is currently uncertainty regarding which of these projects may go ahead, and the Western Distributor proposal is still in the early design and planning stages potentially taking many years to complete. 42

• There is directional street signage at some intersections along local roads between the end of the Federation Trail and Yarraville.

The Gap:

• The trail stops well short of its intended connection with the Hyde Street bike path on the Maribyrnong River in Yarraville and is a short but significant missing link in an important regional route connecting the outer western suburbs with the inner west and CBD43.

• The intended Federation Trail link will continue from the eastern end at Fogarty Avenue, cross Williamstown Road and railway line, through Stony Creek parkland to the Hyde Street path.

• There is no safe or direct route now through Yarraville for cyclists to meet established bike paths. This is most noticeable for cyclists new to the area.

• Cyclists have no option but to negotiate very busy arterial traffic routes on Francis Street, Williamstown Road and Somerville Road which carry large numbers of trucks.

The Solution:

• There should be no reason why this missing link cannot be completed independently of the construction of the West Gate Distributor and Western Distributor Road proposals. There is ample reserve land for an off-road path adjacent the Westgate Freeway to the railway line and Maribyrnong City

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Council has already constructed a connecting path through Stony Creek Reserve from Hyde Street. This route would not be impacted by any of the proposed new road designs.

- Bicycle signals are needed at the crossing of Williamstown Road and Hyde Street.
- A pedestrian and bicycle access bridge are needed over the Williamstown-Werribee railway line.
- Cyclists need an immediate solution to efficiently and safely negotiate the Yarraville roads to the Hyde Street bike path while waiting for the Federation Trail completion. Current needs are bicycle traffic signalling at major crossings, and road sharrows to direct cyclists through local streets away from the main traffic arterials.

The Benefits:

- Completion of this missing link is an inclusive and important step in enabling cyclists of all abilities to access the CBD and many other destinations from the western suburbs via an off-road path with connections to the Bay Trail, Hyde Street path, Footscray Road path, and Maribyrnong River Trail.
- As a shared path in close proximity to the Maribyrnong River and CBD, it enables high quality cycling access to a greater number of people across a large sector of the western suburbs.
- A separated connected path will encourage the uptake of cycling for transport and exercise.
- This off-road link will provide important connectivity to cyclists across other regions of Melbourne to explore the western suburbs opening up economic opportunities in the west.44

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existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
existing regional & off-road path (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
needed – off-road path
needed – route sharrows & directional signage
needed – on-road directional signage to Bay Trail, Spotswood
needed – road crossing signals & directional signage
needed – rail line bridge crossing
Entry to freeway overpass from Fogarty Avenue, Yarraville – signage needed to Spotswood.

Francis Street crossing, Yarraville

Somerville & Williamstown Roads intersection, Yarraville
6.2 Dynon-Road-Hopkins Street link, Footscray

Current situation:

- This traffic thoroughfare is a primary entry point directly into the centre of Footscray from the Melbourne CBD. Footscray is designated a Central Activities Area according to the State Planning Policy Framework, and is expected to accommodate a high growth in economic development and demands on transport systems. Hopkins Street has Priority Bicycle Route status on the VicRoads Principal Bicycle Network and connects with Footscray Railway Station. It features as a cycling entry point to the precinct from Melbourne in the Footscray Structure Plan.

- Hopkins Street, Hopetoun Bridge and Dynon Road form a critical access link across the Maribyrnong River between the CBD and the western suburbs.

- Dynon Road itself has a high quality bi-directional off-road bike path running alongside it, along the northern verge, which ends abruptly before the Hopetoun Bridge over the Maribyrnong River. The bike path features in the City of Melbourne plan to connect the CBD bike network to the Footscray Central Activities Area.

- Barkly Street, which runs through the Footscray Central Activities Area to West Footscray from Hopkins Street, has on-road bike lanes.

- Dynon Road connects to the Maribyrnong River bike path by a ramp from the southern footpath, and via the slip road north-east of the bridge.

- Despite its geographic advantages, the road is extremely congested with no provision or protection for cyclists, some of whom use the northern footpath to cross the bridge. The northern footpath over the bridge is broken and covered in stone rubble. To avoid this broken path, some cyclists brave the congested road space and jostle with large numbers of trucks, cars and buses.

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The Gap:

- There is no cycling path or bike lane along the direct route between Dynon Road and Barkly Street, despite it carrying heavy traffic including trucks and buses. There are high risks to cyclists attempting to use the road space in heavy peak-hour traffic.
- Cyclists sometimes use the footpaths on Hopkins Street, east of Irving Street.
- There is no road space for cycling paths on either side of Hopkins Street.

The Solution:

- Existing footpaths should be redesigned as shared paths connecting the Dynon Road bike path to Hopkins Street bike lanes. This is appropriate as Hopkins Street has a low volume of pedestrian traffic.
- On-road bike paths along Barkly Street need buffering to highlight the presence of cyclists to drivers and minimise the risk of cyclist injury from collisions and doorings.
- Alternative routes along parallel adjacent minor roads should be established to accommodate less-confident or experienced cyclists\(^{49}\).

The Benefits:

- A protected route will open up more cycling options between the CBD and Footscray Central Activities Area and links with other priority cycling paths; Maribyrnong River Trail, Capital City Trail, and a north-south route to Highpoint.
- This route maximises the potential of the new off-road Dynon Road path in the Melbourne municipality as a feeder path to the western suburbs\(^{50}\).


- Enabling a greater number of cyclists between the economic hub of Footscray and urban renewal areas around the inner northern suburbs will open up further economic potential and reduce demand on roads, parking, and public transport system, particularly with growing populations in the future\textsuperscript{51}.
- This will provide an alternate route from the CBD to Footscray Road bike path, which has become quite overcrowded during peak hour.

6.3 Napier Street, Footscray

Current Situation:
- This stretch of road presents a serious missing link through Footscray for cyclists travelling between the Footscray Road bike path through to the Footscray shopping precinct, Victoria University’s Footscray campus, as well as West Footscray Railway Station and the Cross Street Path, which connects West Footscray to Sunshine.
- This route connects to the Maribyrnong River bike path for north-south access.
- An alternative parallel route exists via the Pilgrim Street detour in Seddon. However, many cyclists are observed using this route daily for its direct access through to the Footscray business district and Victoria University.
- New barriers installed under the railway bridge are a response to frequent truck collisions with the bridge\textsuperscript{52}.
- Some cyclists currently use the footpath to avoid the dangerous road space.


The Gap:

- This route has regional significance by offering a cycling connection between the CBD and the outer western suburbs via the Regional Rail Link path, but despite this important status, there is no cycling provision along Napier Street to meet this need.
- The number of cyclists continuing to tackle heavy traffic Napier Street’s more direct route through Footscray is strong evidence that this road must be reconfigured with separated bicycle lanes to avoid accidents between traffic and cyclists.

The Solution:

- Maribyrnong Bicycle Strategy has outlined proposals which make use of shared pedestrian paths and a bi-directional separated lane on the southern side of Napier Street.
- Buckley Street lanes should be redesigned with buffering.
- Waiting for road project funding to complete this work does not address the serious risk to cyclists forced into heavy traffic and this should be an immediate priority in Victorian government planning for safer cycling projects.

The Benefits:

- Completing this final stage will enable a direct route between the CBD and Sunshine and further connections to the Maribyrnong River and to paths in the Melbourne municipality.
- Protected high quality cycling lanes connecting Buckley Street and Footscray road will accommodate cyclists with different levels of experience and enable more western suburbs residents to take up cycling to key destinations in Footscray and beyond.
- Expanding the reach of cycling will meet the objectives of the Footscray Structure Plan and those of the state and local government cycling strategies.

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54 ibid
- This route will increase safety and reduce travel times of cyclists travelling to and from Footscray shopping precinct and the CBD.

### 6.4 Pilgrim Street-Geelong Road intersection

**Current Situation:**
- This route runs parallel to Napier and Buckley Streets through quieter streets of Seddon to join the Geelong Road underpass and connect with West Footscray Railway Station and it connects with the regionally-significant Regional Rail Link path, via the Sunshine Path.
- Pilgrim Street is accessed by detouring south from the Footscray Road path along Moreland Street and turning into Parker Street. This is a safer alternative to the Napier-Buckley Street bike lanes which position cyclists dangerously close to heavy traffic including trucks.
- Approximately 1,100 cyclists each day use the Pilgrim Street route, with around 200 per hour during peak times.\(^{55}\)

**The Gap:**
- The westward bike lane on Pilgrim Street ends abruptly at Williamstown Road with no directional signage to link this path to the Geelong Road underpass and West Footscray Station which are out of sight.
- With this gap, the alternative route parallel to Napier Street along Parker and Pilgrim Streets to connect cyclists to West Footscray Station and the Sunshine Path is incomplete.
- The heavy use of this route justifies the investment in it, even if improvements are also made to the Napier Street route.

**The Solution:**
- Install on-road sharrows and directional signage along Williamstown Road between Pilgrim Street and the Geelong Road underpass, and at the crossing to and from West Footscray Railway Station, directing cyclists to the off-road path.

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• Install contraflow signage in Alexander Street, which currently has a one-way direction, to connect with Pilgrim Street.
• Install lanes to the footpath opposite the underpass to promote this as a shared cycling and pedestrian path between Alexander Street and Pilgrim Street.

The Benefits:
• This route completes a safer alternative to Napier Street and accommodates cyclists preferring an off-road path under the Geelong Road underpass.
• Directional signage to the underpass at Geelong Road and at Pilgrim Street and Williamstown Road will streamline the connection between Footscray Road and the Sunshine Path via Pilgrim Street to fill a missing link for less confident cyclists preferring routes away from traffic.
Footscray Rd. Path
to Docklands
Maribyrnong River path connection
6.4 Pilgrim St. route
Pilgrim St. route
existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
needed – road sharrows, on-road lanes and directional signage

Sunshine path to Regional Rail Link

Hopkins St.
6.2 Dynon Rd. route
6.3 Napier St. route
6.4 Pilgrim St. route

Moreland Rd. path intersection

Bike lane intersection upgrade needed
Refer 6.5 Highpoint route

Connection with existing Dynon Road bidirectional path

Footscray Rd. Path to Docklands

Pedestrian/cycling bridge access

Multiplier

Map 6.2 Dynon Rd. / 6.3 Napier Street / 6.4 Pilgrim Street routes

1. needed – widened bridge crossing path
2. needed – intersection cycling lanes and signals
3. needed – directional signage to intersection, off-road shared path and on-road contraflow lanes

1

2

3
Hopetoun Bridge, Hopkins Street/Dynon Road, Footscray, view east
Images 34 – 35
Hopkins Street, Footscray, view west

Image 36
Irving Street/Hopkins Street intersection, Footscray, view south
Images 37 – 42
Napier Street, Footscray
Image 43
Exit from Pilgrim Street to Williamstown road, view north, directional signage needed to West Footscray Station

Image 44
Williamstown Road to Pilgrim Street, view south

Image 45
Geelong Road underpass at Buckley Street/Sunshine Road, view west

Image 46
Truck in bike lane, Sunshine Road, view west to West Footscray Station

Image 47
Geelong Road underpass at Buckley Street/Sunshine Road, view east

Image 48
Geelong Road underpass at Buckley Street/Sunshine Road
6.5 North-South Skyline Drive Route, Footscray to Highpoint

Current situation:

- This route offers a direct north-south connection between two important economic centres of the municipality: Footscray and Highpoint Shopping Centres.
- To the south, it connects to both the premier east-west links of Barkly Street-Dynon Road and Buckley-Napier Street via the Victoria Street lanes.
- Cycling routes along Commercial Road, Footscray, and along Eldridge Street and Skyline Drive in the north follow quiet residential streets and shared off-road paths which will encourage less confident cyclists.
- The disused Kinnears factory site on Ballarat Road is an imposing barrier blocking access to these cycling routes to its northern and southern edges. Access around this site is via a detour along Ballarat Road and Farnsworth Avenue with no cycling provision.
- A proposed residential development for the Kinnears Rope Factory site is currently in planning and design stages and pedestrian and bike access is being considered through the precinct according to the State Planning Policy Framework although planning details are unconfirmed to date.  
- There is a separated shared path through Edgewater connecting with the Gordon Street pedestrian crossing lights. Off-road bike access is needed from Gordon Street to Highpoint. There is some directional signage north of the Kinnears site but no signage to its south.
- The Edgewater path also connects to the Maribyrnong River path, with bridge access across the river to Ascot Vale.

The Gap:

- The Geelong Road intersection, Ballarat Road crossing, and the Kinnears factory site pose substantial barriers to cyclists accessing an otherwise direct and safe north-south cycling link connecting Seddon, Footscray and Highpoint.

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• The Geelong Road intersection with Barkly Street is dangerous, offering no protection or space provision for cyclists. This must be reconfigured to accommodate cyclists wanting to access areas on either side of this intersection.

• The undeveloped Kinneys factory site currently has no through-access and cyclists are faced with a detour along Ballarat Road and Farnsworth Avenue to connect with the cycling routes north of this site.

• Ballarat Road carries continuously heavy traffic and cyclists must use two sets of pedestrian lights at the junction with Droop Street to cross this busy arterial. There is no provision for cyclists on Ballarat Road or Farnsworth Avenue.

The Solution:

• Upgrade the Geelong Road intersection with Barkly Street in Footscray with infrastructure enabling access between Victoria Street and Commercial Road in line with the Maribyrnong Bicycle Strategy 2014.57

• Provide on-road directional signage from Victoria Street to Commercial Road across the Footscray intersection with Barkly Street.

• Upgrade existing traffic signals at the Ballarat Road/Droop St intersection to enable cyclists to cross Ballarat Road with one set of lights.

• Enable shared pedestrian and cycle paths along Ballarat Road to Farnsworth Avenue and bike route signage along Farnsworth Avenue to connect with the northern side of the factory site.

• Development plans for the Kinneys site must include mandatory cycling access through the development from Commercial Road to the south which will connect with Kinnear Street and the Eldridge Street cycling route, north of the development.

• Construct a shared off-road bike path from the Gordon Street crossing to Highpoint Shopping Precinct.

The Benefits:

- There is an excellent opportunity for a continuous protected and direct north-south cycling connection from Footscray to Highpoint passing through the Kinears Rope Factory precinct.
- This route also connects with the Maribyrnong River path, with bridge access across the river to Ascot Vale near Highpoint enabling east-west connections to the Moonee Valley and Melbourne municipalities.
- The route takes advantage of quiet residential streets with minimal bike infrastructure modifications other than the reconfiguring of the major intersection crossings.
existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
existing regional off-road path (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
needed – off-road shared paths to crossing point

needed - route sharrows and on-road lanes at intersections
needed – cyclist crossing lanes, light signals and directional signage
Images 49 – 51
Barkly Street & Geelong Road, intersection, view west.

Image 52
Intersection from Commercial Road, view east.
Image 53
Commercial Road towards Ballarat Road, view north, sharrow needed.

Images 54-55
Kinnears Rope Factory Development site from Commercial Road and towards Ballarat Road pedestrian crossing, view north.

Image 56
Dual crossings at Ballarat Road & Droop Street junction, view south from Kinnears site, one set of cyclist signals and lanes needed at Ballarat Road.
7. **MOONEE VALLEY**

Apart from the two popular shared paths along Maribyrnong River to the west and Moonee Ponds Creek to the east, there is an absence of continuous, connected and safe bicycle routes through the central areas of Moonee Valley. Despite the region’s location as an activity centre destination and its direct transport links to the CBD, the cycling network is fragmented, incomplete and compromised by unsafe roads or crossings. While more confident cyclists use primary traffic arterials for direct access to key destinations, there are very few alternative routes for cyclists who are fearful of cycling on major roads. Moonee Valley also has an ageing population combined with high rates of obesity affecting 45% of residents. Improving access to active, sustainable travel and pedestrian and cyclist connectivity for people at all stages of life is a feature of the first strategic objective in the local government’s Health and Wellbeing Plan. Moonee Valley City Council has identified problematic routes and potential solutions, which are fundamental to meeting its policy objectives for road safety, integrated transport planning, infrastructure planning, environmental sustainability, community wellbeing, and population growth. Some of these priority routes are outlined below with others proposed by local cyclists.

7.1 **Craigieburn railway line route**

Current situation:

- This on-road route follows quiet local streets along the Craigieburn railway line in a north-south axis from Buckley Street adjacent to Essendon Railway Station to Newmarket Station at Racecourse Road in Flemington, which connects with the Capital City Trail near Flemington Bridge.
- Two very busy arterial road crossings at Maribyrnong and Ascot Vale Roads present substantial barriers to cyclists waiting for gaps in traffic, travelling in both directions, during peak traffic periods. The crossing point at Ascot Vale Road is at the bottom of a hill at a point of fast-moving traffic in both directions.

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• A local government plan has been prepared which outlines strategies for integrating bicycle infrastructure along this route with minimal road signage implemented to date.61

The Gap:
• There are to date no infrastructure solutions to the serious safety concerns at major road crossings on Maribyrnong and Ascot Vale Roads. This prevents the development of an otherwise quiet and safe cycling route to and from Flemington.
• These road crossings are dangerous and need substantial investment into infrastructure to protect cyclists from large volumes of fast-moving traffic in both directions.
• The crossing point on Maribyrnong road is immediately adjacent to a rise in the road to the east, blocking the line of sight between drivers and cyclists.

The Solution:
• Install cyclist crossing light signals at Maribyrnong Road between Edgar Street and Bayview Terrace.
• Construct a cyclist and pedestrian bridge with ramps cantilevered off the existing railway bridge over Ascot Vale Road to enable separation of cyclists from traffic and safe access at all times over this busy road. This is preferred to a traffic island or pedestrian/bike crossing traffic lights, as a traffic island does not offer a safe crossing when it places cyclists in the centre of a continuous flow of fast-moving traffic. The presence of pedestrian lights further east and west suggests that the addition of another set of signals would not be recommended.

The Benefits
• This route has the potential to be a viable direct cycling alternative to Mount Alexander Road for less experienced cyclists with safe resolutions to these road crossings.

61 Moonee Valley City Council (n.d.). Improve walking and cycling along the Craigieburn Rail Corridor.
• The completion of a continuous safe route which connects with public transport and other bicycle routes to the north and south, fills a significant gap in an area lacking in safe cycling routes.

7.2 **East-west links**

**Current situation:**

- East-west links need to be established in Essendon, Moonee Ponds and Ascot Vale to connect residents and cyclists with off road paths along the Maribyrnong River and Moonee Ponds Creek to activity centres.
- Current east-west lanes are few and follow major roads, such as Fletcher Street and Buckley Street, Essendon. The primary east-west traffic arterial of Maribyrnong Road carries large volumes of traffic with no safe road space for cycling lanes.
- East-west links need to be planned to align with major road crossings at Epsom Road, Ascot Vale Road, and Mount Alexander Road, and with major road and railway crossings north of Essendon Railway Station.
- There is some route signage connecting the Maribyrnong River bridge in Ascot Vale to Mount Alexander Road and Travancore.

**The Gap:**

- There is a lack of connected east-west cycling routes away from the major traffic arterials to link with off-road river paths, railway stations or bike paths in adjacent municipalities of Moreland and Maribyrnong. These routes need to accommodate less confident cyclists for whom the primary roads are unsuitable.
- In the north, the Fletcher Street bike lane ends before the busy intersection and roundabout at Mount Alexander Road, Essendon, forcing cyclists into the line of traffic in a narrow congested lane.
- Essendon Junction is confusing with no clear cycling routes across the roundabout between Essendon Station and Fletcher Street.
- Another east-west link in the north is needed near Keilor Road across to connect Maribyrnong River with lanes in Coburg.
• At Moonee Ponds, there are no connected east-west routes between Moonee Ponds Junction and the off-road paths; Maribyrnong River and Moonee Ponds Creek.

• In the south, there is a signposted route from the Maribyrnong River bridge at Pipemakers Park to Ascot Vale following local streets which ends at Mount Alexander Road after major road crossings at Epsom Road and Ascot Vale Road. The road signage needs to be more substantial for cyclists unfamiliar to the area with directions to key destinations and road crossing points.

The Solution
• In the north, the Fletcher Street/Mount Alexander Road intersection needs reconfiguring and lane definition to connect cyclists safely across the roundabout to the Essendon Railway Station underpass and Buckley Street.

• At Moonee Ponds and Essendon, an alternative route is needed to avoid Maribyrnong Road which carries vast amounts of traffic and is unsuitable for cyclists. This route should include a safe crossing at Orford Road leading to the Maribyrnong River bicycle path on the eastern bank.

• In the south, the entire east-west route needs more prominence for cyclists unfamiliar to the area. This link needs infrastructure to establish a defined route with road signage to connect with identified crossing points at Epsom Road, Union Road, Mount Alexander Road and Ascot Vale Road to the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail in Travancore.

The Benefits
• Defined east-west routes with road crossing infrastructure would provide the connectivity to off-road trails which is currently absent from the region.

• Safer east-west links opens up options for commuting between Moonee Valley and the activity centres in Moreland and Maribyrnong, and beyond.
7.3 Mount Alexander Road North separated lanes, Essendon Junction to Moonee Ponds Junction

Current situation:

- This traffic thoroughfare is also priority route on the Principal Bicycle Network connecting two key activity centres, Essendon Junction and Moonee Ponds Junction, and is within a short distance of Essendon and Moonee Ponds Railway Stations, running parallel to the Craigieburn Line.

- This important route features as a strategic cycling connection in the Moonee Valley Structure Plan and Integrated Transport Plan, which identify the need to accommodate the high growth in transport demands to and from Moonee Ponds Junction and to build separated cycling lanes along Mount Alexander Road as part of its sustainable transport and community wellbeing strategies.

- Bicycle lane connectivity gaps at the intersection with the Essendon Junction Activity Centre and to Essendon Station are central issues reported in mobility planning for this area.

- This is a direct commuting route for more experienced cyclists observed at morning and evening peak times.

- Moonee Valley City Council commissioned a comprehensive study on cycling infrastructure options for this stretch of road, including separated Copenhagen-style lanes, a central shared path, and advance signals at Fletcher Street, Buckley Street, Kellaway Avenue and Dean Street. However none of these have been implemented.

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The Gap:
- Existing south-bound cycling lanes end south of Buckley Street forcing cyclists into the path of traffic. With no lane signage, there is no warning for drivers on the presence of cyclists who need to manoeuvre into the path of traffic.
- There is no provision or protection for cyclists along the entire stretch of road despite the four lanes available to vehicles and parking.

The Solution:
- This very important strategic cycling link needs separated Copenhagen-style lanes between Fletcher Street and Moonee Ponds Junction.
- The CDM analysis on separated lanes for Mount Alexander Road found that the kerbside lanes were underutilised and that the volume of traffic could potentially be accommodated with the 3 remaining lanes without much impact on traffic if the kerbside lane was modified for a separated cycling lane. The report’s study of a similar road in St Kilda found that enhancing the cycling route had no discernable impact on traffic, which was considerably higher in volume than that on Mount Alexander Road\(^66\).

The Benefits:
- Cycling and walking are the main transport modes through Essendon Junction\(^67\). Separated lanes combined with clearer east-west routes through Moonee Ponds and Essendon Junctions will have a significant impact on the sustainable transport and liveability objectives of the structure plans for these activity centres.
- With higher traffic movements expected at Essendon and Moonee Ponds Junctions, it is expected that the provision of separated lanes will see an increase in cycling numbers, which Melbourne City Council experienced following the introduction of Copenhagen style lanes in the CBD\(^68\).

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Better integrating cycling into the transport planning for Mount Alexander Road will take pressure off state road and public transport systems feeding into the Melbourne CBD.

7.1 Craigieburn Line route, north
7.3 Mt Alexander Rd. separated lanes
7.5 Underpass signage identifying roads & off-ramps, lighting along route

Map 7.1 – Routes 7.1 Craigieburn Line/ 7.2 East-West links/ 7.3 Mt Alexander Rd lanes/ 7.4 Mt Alexander Rd. detour/ 7.5 Moonee Ponds Creek

- 1: needed – road identification & off-ramp signage, lighting
- 2: needed – cycling crossing signals and route signage
- 3: needed – cycling crossing bridge at busy intersection

Map 7.2

Map 7.3

7.2 East-West link – Essendon
7.2 East-West link – Moonee ponds
7.2 East-West link - Ascot Vale

Bridge crossing

existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
eexisting regional off-road path (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
needed – off-road shared paths to crossing point
needed - route sharrows and road crossing connections
To Buckley St & Essendon Railway station

7.1 Craigieburn Line route

7.2 East-West route/s - Ascot Vale

7.5 Moonee Ponds Creek signage & lighting

Bridge access to Maribyrnong

Moonee Ponds Creek Trail & Flemington Bridge connections

3

7.1 Craigieburn Line route

7.2 East-West links/ 7.5 Moonee Ponds Creek signage & lighting

To Buckley St & Essendon Railway station

7.5. Underpass signage identifying roads & off-ramps, lighting along route

needed - Road identification signage at underpasses & off-ramps to key destinations, lighting along path

needed - cycling crossing signals and route signage

needed - cycling crossing bridge at busy intersection

Map 7.2 – Routes 7.1 Craigieburn Line/ 7.2 East-West links/ 7.5 Moonee ponds Creek signage & lighting

existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)

existing regional off-road path (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)

needed – off-road shared paths to crossing point

needed - route sharrows and road crossing connections
Images 57 – 58
Craigieburn Line crossing at Ascot Vale Road, top.

Images 59
Maribyrnong Road crossing, bottom.

Image 60
Maribyrnong Road intersection with Union Road, Ascot Vale.
Images 61 – 64
Mount Alexander Road north, Buckley Street to Moonee Ponds Junction.
7.4 Mount Alexander Road to Moonee Ponds Creek detour

Current situation:

- This section from Moonee Ponds Junction to Flemington is a designated Bicycle Priority Route, located on the VicRoads Principal Bicycle Network\(^69\) where bicycle access and public transport is given priority over car parking during peak times. At all other times of the day, the route on both sides of the road is blocked by parked cars.
- There is a high extent of business activity along this road with corresponding car parking and vehicle access needed.
- Cyclists use this road because of its direct access into the CBD and a lack of other direct cycling routes.

The Gap:

- This long stretch of road offers no protection for cyclists from large volumes of traffic and provides no space between parked cars and trams outside peak times.
- The location of this road is within a radius of the CBD with high cycling numbers\(^70\) yet the dangerous stretch of road inhibits all but the bravest cyclists.
- There are few options to avoid this stretch of road because of the fragmented network in Moonee Valley, creating a substantial gap for potential cyclists who choose to avoid cycling major roads.

The Solution:

- Create a detour route from Moonee Ponds Junction across Pascoe Vale Road and Dean Street, through local streets to connect with Moonee Ponds Creek at established on-ramps.

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\(^{69}\) VicRoads (2012b). *SmartRoads Priority Maps: Moonee Valley.*

• Install a crossing refuge at Dean Street outside Moonee Valley Harness Racing Club to enable access to smaller streets south east of Moonee Ponds Junction.
• Reconfigure shared path outside the Racing Club for off-road cycling access to crossing point.

The Benefits:
• Combined with protected lanes along the northern stretch of Mount Alexander Road, this route modification will provide connectivity from Buckley Street through to the Moonee Ponds Creek off-road path towards the CBD.
• There is minimal infrastructure needed to install this route which makes use of quiet streets to connect with the established creek path ramps.
• This route will promote cycling access from the creek path to Moonee Ponds Junction in line with the Moonee Valley Integrated Transport Plan\textsuperscript{71} and bicycle plan\textsuperscript{72}.

\textsuperscript{71} Moonee Valley City Council (2008). \textit{Moonee Valley City Council Integrated Transport Plan}.
\textsuperscript{72} Moonee Valley City Council (2012). \textit{Walking and Cycling Strategy, 2012-2022}. 
Mt. Alexander Rd north – Keilor Rd.

Map 7.3 - Mt Alexander Road South detour

- **Existing on-road lanes**: (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
- **Existing regional off-road path**: (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
- **Needed – off-road shared paths to crossing point**

- **To Flemington & CBD**
  - Needed – route sharrows & directional signage at Dawson Street underpass

- **Options for crossing signals or refuge island**

- **Alternative connections to Moonee Ponds Creek path on-ramps**
Images 65 – 67
Mount Alexander Road south of Moonee Ponds Junction.

Image 68
Moonee Ponds Junction detour point via Alexandra Avenue & McPherson Street.
7.5 **Moonee Ponds Creek Path lighting and signage**

Current situation:
- This off-road path follows the Moonee Ponds Creek along the eastern boundary of Moonee Valley and offers an alternative to on-road lanes for less experienced or confident cyclists travelling from the northern suburbs to Flemington where the path meets the Capital City Trail.
- The sharp bends and underpasses along the creek path become safety risks after dark with no ambient street lighting to complement bike lights.
- There is no indication of road names to orient cyclists wanting to exit the path at specific roads.

The Gap:
- As an important high-use route reaching a large sector of the northern suburbs, this path lacks the high level of safety infrastructure expected of a path with regional status and with direct connections to and from the CBD and with other high-use paths\(^73\).

The Solution:
- Install lighting at underpasses and at bends in the path.
- Install road signage at underpasses and at exit points.

The Benefits:
- Lighting the darkest sections of the path will enable a safe route for cyclists travelling in dawn and evening peaks and encourage more cyclist patronage with enhanced safety.
- Road identification and directional signage at underpasses and off ramps will enable increased patronage from cyclists wanting to navigate to activity centres and key destinations along the route.

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Map 7.4 – Route 7.5 Moonee Ponds creek lighting and signage / 7.2 East-West links North

- **Route 7.5 Moonee Ponds creek lighting and signage**
  - Underpass signage identifying roads, off-ramps & key destinations, lighting along route

- **Route 7.2 East-West links North**
  - Connect with pedestrian/rail crossings & existing bike routes
  - Bike lanes aligning with pedestrian crossings
  - Road identification signage at underpasses & off-ramps to key destinations, lighting along path

Legend:
- **Blue lines**: Existing on-road lanes (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
- **Dashed blue lines**: Existing regional off-road path (Open Cycle Maps, 2015)
- **Orange lines**: Needed – Route sharrows & directional signage
- **Circle 1**: Needed – Road identification signage at underpasses & off-ramps to key destinations, lighting along path
- **Circle 2**: Needed – Bike lanes aligning with pedestrian crossings
References


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GETTING THE WEST ON TRACK
Closing Major Bike Infrastructure Gaps in Melbourne’s Inner West
Office of Colleen Hartland MLC, Victorian Greens MP for the Western Metropolitan Region