



Inquiry into Managing Transport Congestion

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CITY OF MARIBYRNONG

SUBMISSION TO VICTORIAN COMPETITION AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION INQUIRY

Council congratulates the Victorian Government on establishing the Managing Transport Congestion Inquiry and is pleased to provide a response to the Issues Paper.

Background

The City of Maribyrnong is an inner city municipality with its eastern boundary only four kilometres west of the Melbourne Central Activities District (CAD). The City has an area of about 3,130 hectares and a population of approximately 62,000, expected to grow to 75,000 over the next 10 years. The municipality contains the suburbs of Footscray, West Footscray, Yarraville, Seddon, Tottenham, Maidstone, Braybrook, Kingsville and Maribyrnong.

Two major interstate, intra-state and suburban rail routes converge at Footscray and provide the nucleus of a well patronised train, bus and tram public transport system. The city is traversed by five important east-west arterial roads and adjoins the Westgate Freeway, all of which provide access to the Melbourne CAD, the Port of Melbourne and major road and rail freight terminals between the Maribyrnong River and the Melbourne CAD. A number of these east-west roads are narrow and highly congested at times.

The two principal foci generating significant travel demand and congestion affecting the City are: Melbourne CAD and the Port of Melbourne.

The transport network constraints affecting linkages between the western metropolitan region and these locations are:

- Train capacity issues along the Sunshine and Werribee lines and through the North Melbourne station
- Travel demand and capacity constraints on major east – west roads including crossings on the Maribyrnong and Yarra Rivers
- Inadequate transport infrastructure to effectively move freight to/from the Port (including rail freight facilities)

The principal influencing factors on these are:

- Population growth in the western metropolitan region particularly in the Werribee growth corridor and lack of corresponding employment opportunities
- Growth of the Melbourne CAD and activity within it
- Growth of the Port of Melbourne in area and activity

Environmental Issues - Community health and well-being

Melbourne's transport system is dominated by road based motor vehicle travel, with more than 70 per cent of all personal trips made by car and less than 10 per cent by public transport. As one of the world's largest cities by area, passenger and freight transport compete for limited road space resulting in congestion and increased travel times. The average travel time in Melbourne is 82 minutes per day, significantly higher than the 60 minutes maximum acceptable global level.

This car dependency results in significant congestion and pollution, which will be exacerbated with the expected doubling of the freight task by 2015. Greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector are growing substantially, rising by 27 per cent between 1990 and 2002. Latest projections indicate that emissions from the transport sector will rise by 42 per cent between 1990 and 2010.

Melbourne 2030 uses increased activity at designated activity centres and transit cities to propose a future Melbourne that is more liveable and makes more efficient use of infrastructure and also offers a variety of housing and lifestyle options for residents. Critical to this is a reduced reliance on the motor car as a means of transport and the existence of better public transport to support greater densities, street life and 'pedestrianisation'.

Traffic congestion, noise and air pollution from car and truck emissions have serious impacts on the quality of life of a community. Air pollution from traffic causes premature deaths and exacerbates diseases of the lungs and the cardiovascular system. VicHealth (1999) has estimated that about 200 deaths per year in Melbourne are related to the effects of air pollution from road transport and that motor vehicle emissions are responsible for 40 – 90 % of the various pollutants in the air.

The Maribyrnong community is quite concerned about the negative impacts of the local, commuter and industrial traffic. Council has been working closely with resident groups and the State Government to reduce these problems. Results of roadside air and noise monitoring undertaken by Council consultants in the area indicate high levels of near road emissions. Council is concerned that pollution from the trucks may cause long term adverse health affects on residents living along these truck routes.

The Australian transport sector accounted for 79 million tonnes of Australia's total net greenhouse gas emissions in 2002, representing 13 per cent of Australia's total emissions. About 88 per cent of these emissions came from road transport, including cars, trucks and buses.

Urban rail services are over 2.5 times more energy efficient than motor cars and about twice as energy efficient as buses. Australia's urban rail services keep nearly 600 million car journeys off urban roads each year, saving over 3 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. Rail produces less than a third of the greenhouse gas emissions per tonne freight carried than trucks and is three times more fuel efficient than trucks. Improving rail links into the port will improve port efficiency, reduce transport costs and provide a significant economic return to freight customers and the wider community by reducing truck trips, road congestion, road damage, air pollution, noise and greenhouse gas emissions.

Council is a member of Cities for Climate Protection Campaign which includes reduction targets for green house gas emissions. Consequently Council is seeking ways of reducing greenhouse gas emissions through travel demand management measures such as the TravelSmart program and advocating for more sustainable transport options and moving more freight on rail.

Maribyrnong Council is committed to green travel options because green travel contributes to a stronger and healthier community. Heavy vehicular traffic has a negative impact on the public realm. Noise, congestion and pollution drive people away from the local street. This in turn has a compounding effect. Less people on the

street reduces public confidence in the street being safe or vibrant. However, the inverse is true – human scale green transport encourages the public realm.

The active presence of pedestrians, cyclists and people using public transport brings a public face back to the streets. Streets, shopping centres and hubs that have good public presence further develop a vibrancy and public confidence. Green travel options are good for the local economy and the well-being of the community.

As VicHealth CEO Dr Rob Moodie said

“suburbs that rely only on cars are more likely to make people fatter, sicker, lonelier and probably more depressed...Well-connected communities with strong social networks are more likely to benefit from lower crime figures, better health, higher educational achievement and better economic growth. We are what we plan.”

Freight Movement

The movement of goods within cities is a significant part of the total freight task and is of considerable economic importance. Freight within cities is mostly carried on roads because patterns of origins and destinations are dispersed, distances are relatively short and many of the movements are time sensitive. Freight movement often competes for limited road space with other transport users and heavy vehicles have significant impact on the urban environment.

The growth in on road freight movement will significantly increase traffic congestion in Melbourne, particularly around the Port of Melbourne where we are likely to see an extra 2 million container truck movements a year in 2025 on current Port forecasts. Freight related issues and impacts on the City of Maribyrnong are well known. The community freight forum held in late 2004 highlighted the importance of the issue in the Maribyrnong community.

The latest trade throughputs and forecasts highlighting the rapid growth and expansion of the Port are provided below (as provided by the Port of Melbourne Corporation).

Port trade has grown at an average rate of 7.3% for the past 10 years with container trade growing at 8.1%. The forecast for container growth for the next 20 years is expected to be around 5.5 %. The past trade throughputs and forecasts for the different port trades are shown below.

International Container Trade

1994	689,000 TEU
2004	1,446,000 TEU
2025	4,466,000 TEU

Tasmanian Trade (*equivalent TEUs)

1994	210,000 TEU
2004	410,000 TEU
2025	1,000,000 TEU (forecast)

(* 2 Motor vehicles = 1TEU, 2.5 mass tonnes = 1TEU)

Motor Vehicles

1994	78,000 vehicles
2004	269,000 vehicles
2025	534,000 vehicles

Break Bulk (eg timber, iron and steel, transport equipment)

1994	632,000 mass tonnes
2004	880,000 mass tonnes
2025	1,164,000 mass tonnes

Dry Bulk (eg cement, grain, sugar, gypsum, fertiliser)

1994	1,570,000 mass tonnes
2004	3,974,000 mass tonnes
2025	6,196,000 mass tonnes (*)

(* forecast includes 2,351,000 mass tonnes of grain exports predominantly by rail)

Liquid Bulk (eg oil, petroleum, chemicals)

1994	2,682,000 mass tonnes
2004	4,340,000 mass tonnes
2025	5,283,000 mass tonnes (forecast)

(* pipeline plays a significant role in delivery of petroleum)

Port Truck Traffic

Current Road Impacts

Port traffic currently contributes around the following percentage to key roads in the inner west:

- Westgate freeway – 3.3% of total traffic (estimated)
- Whitehall St (at Somerville Rd) – 39% of trucks
- Francis St (at Williamstown Rd) – 31% of trucks

Origin and Destination

Approximately 80% of all port trade is currently moved by road transport (excluding liquid bulk movement by pipelines). A Port of Melbourne Container Origin Destination Study completed in 2003 indicated that 5% of imported containers go to the near port suburbs, 17% go to the inner suburbs and 68% go to the outer industrial suburbs of Melbourne, typically 15-40km from the port. The remaining 10% is split almost evenly between Victorian country areas and New South Wales. The transport patterns for export containers indicated that 13% came from the near port suburbs, 11% from Melbourne's inner suburbs and 36% from the outer industrial suburbs. A further 32% of export containers originated from Victorian country areas and 8% came from other States.

Truck Utilisation

Currently only 50% of total vehicle capacity is used at an average of 1.05 TEU/vehicle. If utilisation could be increased to 2 TEU/vehicle it would have a significant impact on future truck traffic growth.

Port Rail

The State Government has set a minimum 30% rail mode share target (currently 19%) for all port trade (excluding liquid bulk). For a 30% rail share the volume of containers on rail will need to grow to more than 700,000 TEU by 2010. PMC have set a possible scenario to achieve this rail target.

Train type	Average train movements per day			
	2010	2015	2025	2035
Interstate	3	4	5	6
Intrastate	11	15	17	20
Shuttle	27	34	47	56
Total	41	53	69	82

The Port of Melbourne is the largest container port in Australia and generates significant freight movement in and around the docks – much of which travels along roads and rail through the City of Maribyrnong. Maribyrnong 5 and 6 Docks are within the City limits but the bulk of the goods port is within the City of Melbourne strung along Footscray Road for three kilometres. Many trucks accessing the Port use Footscray Road and Dynon Road to travel through the residential suburbs of Footscray and Yarraville to access the major arterials such as West Gate Freeway, Geelong Road, Ballarat Road and Western Ring Road.

Much of this port related truck traffic is choosing to travel along these streets to avoid the congestion and other constraints on the freeway network. Improved freeway access to the port or dedicated truck access is needed to cater for the expected truck traffic growth. The key issues of concern to Maribyrnong residents are:

- High volumes of heavy vehicles using some streets day and night causing significant detriment to the residential amenity of the area.
- Environmental impacts of noise, diesel fumes and vibrations caused by the high volumes and speeds of heavy vehicles.
- Parking of large vehicles in streets causing parking and safety problems.
- Pavement damage due to continuous heavy loads.
- The use of engine exhaust brakes at night.
- The potential public safety risks associated with the transport of hazardous and dangerous goods through the residential area.
- Problems accessing private properties due to the high truck traffic volumes and speeds.
- Poor environment and safety hazards for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Non-compliance of Traffic Regulations by many truck drivers, eg. speeding and running red lights.
- Inappropriate locations and operation of container storage sites with associated detrimental impacts on residential amenity.

A major issue of concern to the residents is the heavy truck traffic at night making it very difficult for residents to sleep because of the noise and vibrations from large trucks. For example in Francis Street, Yarraville east of Williamstown Road, 30% of all traffic (6000 per day) is large trucks day and night. Noise tests were undertaken in Francis Street with the measured maximum level of 89dB(A) found to be twice as

loud as the maximum acceptable levels and almost four times louder than the acceptable average level. Residents are also concerned about the potential risk of a major accident involving a truck carrying hazardous materials occurring at night when the majority of residents are home.

The Metropolitan Transport Plan November 2004 points out that freight flows are projected to double between 2000 and 2020, The plan will:

- Develop the Dynon-Port rail link, with grade separation of Footscray Road
- Protect strategic land around the port for freight related activities
- Reconfigure access links so that more freight can be moved by rail and specialised port vehicles rather than commercial trucks
- Encourage some port-related freight interchange to outer metropolitan terminals.

Important aspects considered in the development of the Council's Integrated Transport Strategy (MITS) 2002 included:

- Identifying the primary routes for trucks and hazardous materials;
- Development of a freight movement network using the primary arterial road network away from residential land use;
- Location of freight generating land uses and freight handling centres e.g. container storage sites;
- The potential to increase the role of rail in the movement of freight.

It is important to encourage greater integration of the location of freight handling areas and freight movement groups to increase transport efficiency and reduce impact on the amenity of residential areas. An integrated approach will facilitate the efficient safe and cost effective movement of freight, ensure that freight handling areas are located where good access to freight areas exists and ensure that the impact of the local environment of freight movement, storage and distribution are considered in the planning and management of urban areas.

The issues of port related traffic, port storage and handling safety, and the allocation of land for generally port-related purposes will continue to be very difficult for the Council to manage.

The Way Forward

The Western Metropolitan Region is experiencing significant population growth and the associated economic activity will lead to increased demand on the major arterial and rail networks serving the Region, particularly inner suburbs. In addition, the substantially increased activity projected for the Port of Melbourne, the strengthening of the logistics industry in the west and north of Melbourne, changes to manufacturing and importing, suggest serious environmental, economic and social consequences for Maribyrnong in 10 – 20 years time if these issues are not adequately addressed.

The Western Metropolitan Region Councils (including Maribyrnong Council) have commenced an advocacy campaign to raise awareness and seek government commitment and funding for major transport improvements needed in Melbourne's western suburbs.

The issues to be the focus of the lobby/advocacy campaign are:

- the release of the draft Inner West Integrated Transport Strategy (IWITS);
- the State Government's actions to address the increasing traffic demands on the West Gate Freeway corridor and across the West Gate Bridge; and
- the State Government's actions to address the constraints on the railway network at North Melbourne and City Loop tunnel that restricts the ability to operate additional metropolitan train services on the western/northern group of lines.

A key stakeholder group called the Western Transport Alliance (WeTAI) has been formed. This group consists of senior local government officers, representatives from major transport companies, VTA, TWU and Melbourne Port Corporation. WeTAI is reviewing forward projections of the rail and road freight task, rail commuter needs, road commuter demand and other transport requirements for the next 15 – 20 years as a basis for further discussion with Government.

For Melbourne to remain a highly liveable City, Government must ensure the transport infrastructure is in place to deliver sustainable transport options and services well into the future. A combination of road, rail, cycle, pedestrian, water and air transport infrastructure is needed with significant funding required on Melbourne's public transport infrastructure and services. The Metropolitan Transport Forum has produced three documents that outline how the state government can move on this issue – "Creating Choices", "Funding Choices" and "The Economic Benefits of Investing in Public Transport in Melbourne".

Congestion costs, oil consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and social exclusion will continue to increase if unsustainable urban development and transport behaviours are allowed to continue. Council believes that Melbourne needs a new approach to transport planning, with transport decisions that promote economic growth, energy efficiency, enhanced communities and social inclusion, public health, equity and environmental quality. In summary Council suggests that:

1. The growth predicted for Melbourne Port will potentially have a huge impact on Maribyrnong. Decisions and actions that promote expansion of growth in port related road freight must properly consider social and environmental impacts on surrounding communities. A significant proportion of this road traffic growth could be shifted to rail.
2. Maribyrnong Council is at the confluence of major transport links to the west. A need exists to ensure that the residential amenity and liveability of the inner western suburbs is not threatened by the predicted growth in traffic along these routes, i.e. require a full 'community benefit' analysis for major land use and transport projects that ensures sufficient resources are allocated to improve Footscray (Transit City) and other inner western suburbs.
3. More sustainable transport choices need to be provided and promoted, facilitating a shift in favour of transport modes other than the private car. Significant investment is required for improvements to Melbourne's public transport system and services.
4. Planning needs to start now. There is a long lead time between identifying a problem, developing options, consultation and obtaining funding.