

### 7.3 Notice of Motion, Cr Dr Olivia Ball: West Gate Tunnel impacts

**Mover: Cr Dr Olivia Ball**

**Seconder: Cr Andrew Rowse**

#### **Motion**

1. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
  - 1.1. contends that, just as the 2017 traffic modelling that formed the basis of the approval of the West Gate Tunnel is published, the 'additional traffic modelling' that is causing the Victorian Government to delay the implementation of the Transport and Amenity Program should also be published;
  - 1.2. requests that management ask the Department of Transport and Planning to publish the 'additional traffic modelling' without delay;
  - 1.3. requests a report to Future Melbourne Committee by 11 November 2025 that includes:
    - 1.3.1. an intelligible summary of the 'additional traffic modelling' if one is available or, if it is not, an explanation why it is not;
    - 1.3.2. an account of all expenditure to date (including funds committed in 2025-26) from the Transport and Amenity Program, itemised by project and financial year;
    - 1.3.3. an update on the status of the Spencer Street North Master Plan and the Victoria Street Opportunities Plan;
    - 1.3.4. recommendations on how and when to conduct public consultation on the Spencer Street North Master Plan;
    - 1.3.5. a list of which studies, plans and designs prepared by the council under the 2017 traffic modelling are redundant under the 'additional traffic modelling', and their associated costs; and
    - 1.3.6. the latest update on the Hawke Street Linear Park, and a plan to minimise the time between the opening of the West Gate Tunnel and the commencement of construction on the linear park.

#### **Background**

The West Gate Tunnel is expected to open in December 2025.

The project was approved in November 2017 following the Planning Minister's assessment of the project and its Environmental Effects Statement. The Environmental Effects Statement included traffic modelling showing the likely impact on local roads in the vicinity of West Gate Tunnel access roads. (see excerpt at Attachment 1)

The City of Melbourne opposes the project. This position was established by:

- A resolution of this Committee on 19 July 2016 reserving the right to oppose the project unless fundamental design changes were made (see [minutes](#), page 7).
- A resolution of this Committee on 4 July 2017 which, noting that no fundamental design changes had been made, opposed the project outright in a submission to government recommended by management (see submission attached to the management [report](#)). This position informed the Council's stance at the panel assessing the Environment Effects Statement for the project in August and September 2017.

- A resolution of this Committee on 6 February 2018 which responded to the government's formal response to the Environmental Effects Statement, reiterating the council's opposition to the project, and requesting that management obtain formal support and funding from the Victorian Government for "**10 legacy projects and actions**" (see [minutes](#) page 15).

At the 6 February 2018 meeting, this Committee also adopted the [West Melbourne Structure Plan](#). At the centre of West Melbourne, and essential to the success of the Structure Plan, was Objective 8: to "Transform Spencer Street to become a local centre and high mobility street at the heart of the West Melbourne neighbourhood". Associated actions were for council to prepare and implement a Spencer Street Masterplan, and to advocate to the Victorian Government to change the status of Spencer Street from an arterial to local road.

Four of the "**10 legacy projects and actions**" informed the creation of the Transport and Amenity Program.

They were:

- #1: funding streetscape upgrades on Spencer and Franklin Streets and other traffic mitigation in North Melbourne, West Melbourne, Docklands and the CBD.
- #2: requiring no further expansion of road capacity on local roads in North Melbourne, West Melbourne and Docklands.
- #3: converting Spencer Street from a state arterial road to a local road.
- #5: investment in Moonee Ponds Creek.

The Transport and Amenity Program was announced by the then Treasurer and Lord Mayor on 24 August 2018 (media release at Attachment 2). This announcement claimed that the Transport and Amenity Program:

- would total \$100 million, with \$50 million from each of the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne;
- would "improve traffic flow and public space in West Melbourne and be rolled out alongside new parklands in Moonee Ponds Creek... **while** the Labor Government delivers the West Gate Tunnel..."; and
- would "see enhanced streetscapes rolled out across important roads in West Melbourne".

It is now a matter of record that, in the 7 years since the Transport and Amenity Program was announced, no projects to mitigate traffic on local roads inside West Melbourne or improve parklands by Moonee Ponds Creek have commenced.

There was one standalone report on the progress of the Transport and Amenity Program presented to this Committee in the previous term of Council, on 15 March 2022. That [report](#) suggested that public consultation on the Spencer Street North Masterplan would occur in 2022-23, and that 3 other studies and plans had been "delivered": the 'Connecting Docklands to North Melbourne Feasibility Study', the 'Victoria Street Opportunities Plan' and the 'Peel Street Corridor Study'. None of these 4 documents have been published.

On 19 December 2024, *The Age* reported that "two of the major projects in that [Transport and Amenity] program are at risk of being canned because the Department of Transport and Planning is considering maintaining high-volume traffic on key roads in West Melbourne" ('[Tunnel traffic on a collision course with Spencer Street reinvention](#)'). The article suggested that, "the department has proposed traffic modelling for a scenario in which vehicles are sent from the Dynon off-ramp along Spencer Street to Dudley Street, and through parts of Victoria and Abbotsford streets", instead of directing traffic along Wurundjeri Way.

During the 2025 City of Melbourne budget process, councillors and submitters were informed that the Transport and Amenity Program was experiencing delays as the result of 'additional traffic modelling'. The Quarter 3 Capital Program report to Council on 30 June 2025, for example, states that the project is "off-track":

"Program presents underspending given the general project delays due to the additional traffic modelling required and projects being on hold as a result of this. Project will be re-baselined upon final agreement on traffic modelling outcome and projects path forward."

The 'additional traffic modelling' is not public, yet it is the cited reason why the Transport and Amenity Program cannot be delivered in advance of the West Gate Tunnel opening. This is a fundamental challenge to the

purpose of the Transport and Amenity Program and the Council's strong position since 2016 that the negative effects of the West Gate Tunnel *must* be mitigated. It is also a fundamental challenge to the basis on which the West Gate Tunnel was approved: the traffic modelling found in the public Environmental Effects Statement.

It is untenable that the 'additional traffic modelling' remain secret.

The purpose of the motion is to cause the 'additional traffic modelling' to be published, which in turn may improve the Council's options in mitigating – or insisting that the Victorian Government mitigate – unacceptable traffic and amenity impacts on local roads and in local communities. Without in any way criticising the work being undertaken by City of Melbourne officers in negotiating with the Victorian Government to date, this motion recognises that time is running out, so seeks to bring the facts of the matter – and the Council's advocacy – into the public. Ultimately, the motion seeks to secure better outcomes for City of Melbourne residents, and secure a high amenity, safe and accessible Spencer Street for the West Melbourne community.

#### **Attachment List**

1. Excerpt of West Gate Tunnel Environmental Effects Statement Cha [7.3.1 - 1 page]
2. Record Upgrade Package for City of Melbourne [7.3.2 - 1 page]

Attachment 1

Excerpt of [West Gate Tunnel Environmental Effects Statement](#). Chapter 25, page 18.

Figure 25-6 Difference in daily traffic volumes - West Melbourne and North Melbourne – 2031 project case vs 2031 no project case



## Attachment 2

## Record Upgrade Package For City Of Melbourne

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Friday 24 August 2018

The Andrews Labor Government is teaming up with the City of Melbourne to revitalise local roads and public space in West Melbourne.

Treasurer Tim Pallas today joined City of Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp to announce an historic \$100 million package – with \$50 million from the City of Melbourne and \$50 million from the Victorian Government – the largest dollar for dollar streetscape upgrade package in Melbourne’s history.

The package will improve traffic flow and public space in West Melbourne and be rolled out alongside new parklands in Moonee Ponds Creek as part of an expanded Master Plan, while the Labor Government delivers the West Gate Tunnel and other major transport projects.

The West Gate Tunnel will extend Wurundjeri Way, creating a new city bypass and taking thousands of cars off CBD streets.

To make the most of these changes, a joint City of Melbourne and Transport for Victoria study will identify a package of amenity improvements.

The study will look at improvements to areas including Spencer, King and William streets and the Arden Street precinct, traffic in north and west Melbourne, and better access from North Melbourne to the Docklands.

New parkland and open space along Moonee Ponds Creek will also be created to provide improved recreational areas and an expanded Master Plan will map out how the catchment can be better utilised and reach its full potential as an important recreational and biodiversity corridor.

The announcement responds to council and community feedback provided through the Environment Effects Statement (EES) process for the West Gate Tunnel project and goes beyond the requirements of the EES to improve local traffic and public spaces.

The Labor Government has also announced \$11 million for community upgrades to the inner west that are being delivered as part of the West Gate Tunnel project.

**Quote attributable to Treasurer Tim Pallas**

“This partnership with Melbourne City Council will revitalise public space and improve traffic flow in West Melbourne while we get on with the West Gate Tunnel.”

**Quote attributable to Lord Mayor Sally Capp**

*“Through this partnership we will see enhanced streetscapes rolled out across important roads in West Melbourne while also creating an improved Moonee Ponds Creek for residents and visitors to enjoy.”*