

**OFFICERS' ADVICE****MOST DANGEROUS AND CONGESTED INTERSECTIONS IN MONASH**

Submitting Councillor: Cr Zographos

**MOTION**

*That Council:*

- 1. Notes the policy commitment of the State Opposition that it will grade separate 55 of the most dangerous and congested road intersections in Melbourne and Geelong.*
- 2. Writes to the State Roads Minister seeking a bi-partisan commitment to remove these dangerous congestion bottlenecks.*
- 3. Directs officers to identify further intersections that Council would like to lobby for inclusion into the State Opposition's list (of which 20 will be announced later this year) and report back by the June 2018 ordinary Council meeting.*

**BACKGROUND**

The State Opposition has announced a "Get Victoria Moving – Traffic Light Removal Project" that outlines the removal of 55 congested intersections across the State, including four locations in Monash:

- Springvale Road/Ferntree Gully Road, Glen Waverley.
- Princes Highway (Dandenong Road)/Springvale Road/Police Road, Mulgrave (Springvale Junction).
- Princes Highway (Dandenong Road)/North Road, Clayton.
- Princes Highway (Dandenong Road)/Warrigal Road, Oakleigh.

These intersections all have significant congestion and accident history issues and need works to improve the safety and operation of the intersection.

Council Officers remain cautious whether an isolated grade separation solution is the most appropriate treatment for the traffic congestion along these routes. The treatment of isolated locations can often lead to extended queueing at the next intersection and arterial road improvements should be managed on a network basis, such as that occurring along Hoddle Street, East Melbourne at the moment.

At individual locations, such as Springvale Junction intersection for example, a major creek runs under the intersection and significant gas and telecommunication assets run along Dandenong Road which makes the undergrounding of say, the Springvale Road leg, extremely difficult with an overpass being the more realistic option. Council's Integrated Transport Strategy calls for the completion of Westall Road connecting into Monash Freeway as a priority to significantly reduce traffic volumes through Springvale Junction and Officers believe this would be more beneficial than works at the intersection.

At the Springvale Road/Ferntree Gully Road intersection, major service stations are located on three of the four legs and retaining vehicle access to these and pedestrian access to the adjacent Brandon Park Shopping Centre would be needed, which makes a grade separation difficult.

In the 1960s, the North Road overpass and Warrigal Road overpass were constructed to remove the rail crossings and these structures remain significant barriers within the community. The western part of the Oakleigh Activity Centre, which is disconnected except via the traffic underpass, effectively died with all the shops and a cinema closing down in the years after the overpass was constructed.

Unlike the current Level Crossing Removal Program, the removal of a cross intersection would involve a significant construction period resulting in the need to close a number of lanes on the intersection for lengthy periods, particularly if the grade separation was an underground trench. This disruption would typically last for up to 12-18 months as seen with projects like the Hoddle Street upgrade.

Other questions to be considered include what would the visual amenity of any trenches or overpasses look like and what impact these would have around the immediate vicinity of the works which is why Council needs more information prior to being able to support grade separations.

### ***BUDGET IMPACTS***

There are no budget impacts for Council if the Notice of Motion is passed. The Project has identified 55 intersections to be removed at a cost of \$4.1-\$5.3 billion using State and Federal funding, and proceeds from the sale of the Snowy Mountains Hydro Scheme.

### ***IMPACT ON INTERNAL RESOURCES***

Existing resources will be used to draft letters if the Notice of Motion is passed.

### ***COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES***

The congestion issues, particularly as they relate to freight movements, relate to Council's strategic objectives for "A Liveable and Sustainable City". Council's Integrated Transport Strategy, adopted in February 2017, supports the "proposed Westall Road completion" .... "and is expected to remove a large proportion of heavy vehicles and freight movements from the local arterial road network, freeing up road capacity".

### ***RELEVANCE TO WORK ALREADY UNDERTAKEN BY OFFICERS OR COMMITTEES***

The proposed policy has not been formally discussed at either the Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF) or Eastern Transport Coalition (ETC).

### ***FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS***

The issues raised in Councillor Zographos' Notice of Motion require further investigation.

Council supports the intention of the State Government to reduce congestion and the potential for accidents at the most congested intersections in Monash.

Council Officers will request further information on the feasibility of grade separations prior to providing support for any particular option, however, it would be preferable if the grade separations were considered as part of overall network improvements rather than on an individual intersection basis.