



Elizabeth Street South Roundtable

Date: 02 February 2024



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Elizabeth Street South Roundtable

Thank you to everyone who attended the Elizabeth Street South Roundtable last week. It was valuable and constructive, bringing together and hearing from local residents and traders, corporation representatives, building managers, support service providers, Victoria Police, Yarra Trams, the Department of Transport and Planning and Metro Trains.

The Roundtable included presentations from the City of Melbourne and Victoria Police, giving an overview of the challenges faced in maintenance and enforcement in the area.

In the roundtable's first session, individuals provided personal reflections and feedback about the precinct. Much of this feedback focused on the desire to see greater activation of local shops, ensuring a connected and clean community environment, and a concern for worker, visitor and resident safety as people access businesses or travel through the precinct. Antisocial behaviour, damage to property such as graffiti and unlit laneways were highlighted as the main causes for people feeling unsafe.

The following pages summarise the ideas and opportunities for improving the precinct that were generated in the roundtable's second session. Similar suggestions and themes were shared across the tables, which have been collated to enable more focused effort.

The City of Melbourne is committed to delivering on these suggestions, where we can act immediately. We will also progress ideas that require further investigation and continue conversations with third party agencies where the City of Melbourne is not the lead organisation.

We look forward to providing further updates as the work progresses and working with you on these next steps.



Summary of the opportunities identified during the roundtable discussion

Activation

- Could the vacant retail tenancies be activated, or incentives provided, to encourage new and different retail opportunities?
- Can the precinct be activated for seasonal events like the Australian Open and bring in food trucks, buskers or public art activations?
- Can we build stronger connections amongst stakeholders in the area through a more localised business precinct to focus and tailor actions to the immediate area?
- Could we introduce a WhatsApp group for local business to share intel and approaches to dealing with the challenges and coordinate consistent cleaning and management?

Cleanliness

- Increase the frequency of cleaning and graffiti removal in the area, and explore opportunities for collaboration/coordination with City of Melbourne, Metro and Yarra trams.
- Focus on improving the amenity in the laneways through introducing a compactor for businesses, and increasing laneway flushing and pressure cleaning.

Safety

- Improve the lighting in the laneways and explore future plans for Flinders Court.
- Undertake a Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) Review to identify potential solutions to improve safety in the precinct.
- Introduce classical music, increase the lighting in the area, and introduce signage about the safe city cameras in operation in the area.
- Increase Police presence in the area and create a safety hub. Could the current mobile presence include Wed and Thu nights as well? What could a 24/7 Police presence look like? Is there funding or part funding for a shopfront from the City of Melbourne?
- Coordinate drug, alcohol, mental health and homelessness outreach and support across the precinct.
- Can the visibility of authority figures be increased across the precinct?
- Make reporting of issues easier and increase the sharing of information with stakeholders.

Design and infrastructure

- Improve or remove the footpath/park area – particularly the road surface and cracked bluestones. Are there ways to better make the connection that it is a shared space?
- Could a seating and greening review be undertaken?
- Increase positive and indigenous connection to Elizabeth Street (the creek) to the river through design.
- Improvements to traffic planning, including loading/unloading of vehicles, traffic congestion and the closed roadway.
- Work with Yarra Trams on options to change or move the tram stop.

Movement

- Increase pedestrian light frequency on the lights, to reduce pedestrian congestion at the lights.

Planning

- Investigate modifying height restrictions to encourage more private investment and building improvements in the area.

Immediate actions underway

- We have increased the frequency of cleaning and graffiti removal in the precinct including:
 - A dedicated sweeper allocated to the precinct between 7am and 3pm.
 - Additional graffiti patrols.
 - Nightly hot spot washing of the Elizabeth Street footpath.
 - Pressure washing of the extended footpath four nights per week.
- We will install safety bollards to reduce vehicle access to the extended footpath area in coming weeks.
- We will install additional planters and trees along the street in the coming month.
- We are partnering with Victoria Police to complete a Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Review to inform further action that we can take in the precinct.

Ideas we are investigating further

- Retail activation opportunities that will breathe new life into the precinct.
- Creative ways to activate the precinct for seasonal events, in partnership with the Victorian Government and local traders.
- Changes to infrastructure and amenity in the area to increase usability and decrease anti-social behaviour. This is in addition to the suggestion to remove some seating, which we have already acted on.
- Increase the coordination of cleaning assets in the precinct, in partnership with multiple agencies.
- Investigation of current planning overlays in the precinct, to encourage amenity improvement and investment.
- Revisiting the ways people report issues across our platforms, to identify improvements and simplifications.

Continued engagement with agencies and the community to deliver further improvements

- We will continue the conversation with the Business Precinct and Local Traders to facilitate connections.
- We will continue conversations with Yarra Trams regarding future changes to the tram stop.
- We will continue conversations with the Department of Transport and Planning regarding the pedestrian crossing light frequency.
- We will continue conversations with referral support services on how we can improve the way we connect people with services.
- We will continue conversations with Victoria Police regarding resourcing.



CITY OF MELBOURNE

MELBOURNE.VIC.GOV.AU

© City of Melbourne