

"We have wasted ratepayers' money": council hits re-set on cycling

On the one hand I am pleased that the City Council and the State Government are providing \$12 million for 2 streets of bikeway in the City. That kind of money ought to lead to some great outcomes for people moving about the city. I hope we are heading in a better direction.

On the other hand I am dismayed that a portion of this \$12 million will be wasted destroying good existing cycle infrastructure, and at least in the case of Frome Road an inferior (how separated?) cycle path will be installed in order to accommodate 4 lanes of peak hour traffic.

What I cannot understand is where the motivation for such an outcome is coming from? Restoring 4 lanes of peak traffic in Frome is contrary to all (?) that the Lord Mayor, the City Council and the State Government appear to be arguing for in the future of the City.

I have heard the Lord Mayor speak knowingly, persuasively and passionately about *Carbon Neutral Adelaide*. I am deeply appreciative that he, Council and the SA Government are acting to reduce CO2 emissions significantly in the City of Adelaide. It appears to me that the Lord Mayor has been able to bring his Council colleagues with him on this. I see this as a significant accomplishment.

I have read the *Adelaide Design Manual*. It enthuses me. When I read the *Design Manual* I want to continue to live in the city that we are heading towards. I ask others to look at the *Manual* so they can see the progress we are making in Adelaide.

The *Design Manual* often includes statements such as

Ensure high quality flexible, facilities for transportation such as seating, shelter, separated bike lanes and accessible parking spaces (p14).

Provide safe, convenient and comfortable transport options such as public transport areas and separated bike lanes (p24).

...widen streets and provide the capacity to incorporate long-term separated bike lanes (p5).

In addition in some *Design Manual* documents illustrations include calmed streets, wonderful street scapes, lots of cycles and some cars. The general approach to design is for promoting diverse ways for people to move in the City, while containing private motor vehicle use and finding a more activated city balance.

The *Adelaide Design Manual* is **consistent with all recent City Council documents and State Government documents**. *Operation Moving Traffic* (DPTI) points out that the state lost one billion dollars in 2011 to congestion. Congestion is worsening. It's caused by private motor vehicle use. That is not sustainable.

The just released *Draft 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide 2016 Update* sets ambition targets for active transport, and includes statements like 'Less reliance on cars will also free up our roads, reducing emissions and relieving infrastructure costs'.

I have read other Adelaide City Council and State Government documents relating to people movement in the City. None of them make statements like 'Widen roads in order to accommodate more motor vehicles and increase CO2 emissions in support of global warming'. Such statements would be contradictory to *all* existing statement of strategic intent.

So what is the problem that 4 lanes of traffic in Frome is addressing? Where are we going with this?

The Frome Bikeway – Independent Evaluation (2014/04052)

The Supporting Information prepared by Council staff as well as the *Independent Evaluation* finds that the Bikeway is fundamentally sound and attracting cyclists. (See also the *Super Tuesday* Counts which show 41% of users are women whereas women are 27% on painted line bike paths in the City).

Please see #30 in the Supporting Information (23/06/2015)

‘In summary, there is no evidence to show that the bikeway has had a negative impact on:

- Travel times for motorists
- Motor vehicle traffic on adjacent routes
- Property values
- Trading conditions for business
- The availability of on-street parking spaces
- The collection of garbage bins
- The attractiveness and activation of the street’.

But there is a positive increase in numbers of cyclists and a positive impact on the comfort for cyclists. See also page 10, (63)

In addition there has been a reduction in motor vehicle traffic in major Adelaide City streets of between 4% and 30%. There is no increasing traffic creating a demand for more car space, even if meeting additional demand was seen as a virtue.

The *Independent Evaluation* finds in favour of the existing separated bikeway. This raises the question - Why use my rates to employ interstate consultants and then totally ignore their evidence based and persuasive advice?

My questions

- How is it that my taxes (rates) will be wasted in order to destroy a functioning, successful infrastructure project that has no down sides?
- How is it that this will be done in an effort by the Lord Mayor and Council to promote private motor vehicle use and CO2 emissions (among other pollutants) when not one City Council or State Government document argues for this?
- How is it that this wasteful destruction which will incense a lot of people, has no constituency? Where is the clamour for 4 lanes? It’s not the RAA. It’s not DPTI. Neither people who drive nor people who cycle have organised to promote the use of motor vehicles in the City – Frome Road.
- How is it that when the City Council is succeeding so well in changing the way people move around the city, the look and feel of the city, and the way the Lord Mayor has led the City towards a *Carbon Neutral Adelaide*, that we have this wasteful destruction? I can’t fathom this overturning of existing policy and infrastructure.

It is not time to re-set. My rates are not yet wasted (this second time around). There has been no failure of design (only dilly dallying and not completing), and I am not prepared to let go emotionally (!), if I don’t have some appreciation of the reasoning behind the re-introduction of four lanes.

I'd be pleased if the Lord Mayor would make the case for four lanes of motor vehicle traffic in Frome. No case has been made, only an announcement made. What is the evidence base? This is not announce and defend policy, this is simply announce.

I'd also be pleased if the Lord Mayor would explain how this action lines up with all the existing documents about how the City is to become more activated and attractive to people rather than congested by cars. **The move appears to me to lack all policy alignment.**

Why subvert the credibility Council and the Lord Mayor have accrued for their work around *Carbon Neutral Adelaide*, and improving City Design, by waste and destruction and then beginning again on what has to be an inferior product, the design of and dimensions for we just don't know as yet? What other City streets are now due for widening to accommodate more motor vehicles?

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