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Cycling for the Environment, for Health, for Pleasure

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Ninth Avenue Streetscape Enhancements

The Bicycle Institute welcomes the news that Ninth Avenue, St Peters, will be made more pedestrian and cyclist friendly. We are well aware of possible dangers of the shared use path along the River Torrens west of the point where Ninth Avenue meets the River Torrens Linear Park, and believe that making an on-street route more attractive to commuter cyclists will be an effective means of reducing pedestrian/ cyclist conflict on this path.

We would prefer to be able to comment on detailed design drawings as the concept drawings are lacking in detail, notably dimensions. Nonetheless, we have the following particular comments:

1. We are pleased to hear that the roundabout(s) will be changed to improve pedestrian safety, however the designs provided for in the consultation document suggest a retention of the existing tangential design. We instead urge the same approach be taken as that adopted for the Beulah Road roundabouts in Norwood – a transformation from a tangential design to a radial design.

   It has been too recent for a crash history to determine the effectiveness of the new radial roundabouts as a safety improvement. However video analysis of before and after behaviour at the Sydenham Road intersection of Beulah Road (which I have been undertaking as part of a Masters by Research), as well as the better safety record of radial roundabouts compared with tangential roundabouts overseas, makes us confident that a radial design will slow traffic, improve sightlines and improve the awareness of all road users. This will improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

   We do not know the budget for the planned pedestrian changes, but the illustrated construction of new kerbs would be sufficient with replacement of the central splitter islands to achieve the radial design and should therefore be possible within the budget.

   I would further suggest that if possible, parking on the departure side of the roundabout should be set back further where there is some opportunity e.g. if the kerb length is not a 'round' parking space length. My video observation has identified that a squeeze point is formed for cyclists at the exit of roundabouts.

2. While the cross-sections suggest otherwise, we note that the plan views indicate that the bicycle logos will be placed in the centre of each traffic lane. We applaud this, arguing that it is not only appropriate for Ninth Avenue, but for practically all residential streets with no or a broken centre line. Please install centre logos at the throat of each leg of the roundabouts, to indicate that motorist should not try to squeeze past cyclists on entry – a critical safety factor .

3. We urge Council to consider the use of thermoplastic when installing the logos. There are many, many cases of logos that have practically disappeared in the Norwood Payneham and St Peters area due to poor maintenance. While initially more expensive, thermoplastic is cheaper (assuming a reasonable maintenance regime) because it lasts the length of the pavement's life. We suggest contacting Adelaide City Council if you need more information as they have been using thermoplastic for their bike logos over the last few years.

4. We suggest the Council consider removing the centre line. We question its appropriateness for residential streets. The absence of a centre line encourages both slower driving speeds, more caution and yet more flexibility in the use of the road space when sharing the road with cyclists. See research and trials by Transport for London for evidence to support this contention.

   We note also that the removal of the centre line will improve the appearance of the street and reduce future maintenance costs.

5. In terms of minor details that are difficult to pick up from the concepts:

   - Footpaths should be radiused at intersections, for both cyclists using footpaths (notably children) and pedestrians using wheeled devices
   - Footpaths in some place narrow down as they cross intersections. These are typically provided at the minimum standard of 1.2m when a more generous width is not only possible but would assist people using mobility scooters and prams.
   - Please ensure that wings are provided on kerb ramps. There has been a recent trend to omit these, creating a trip hazard for pedestrians and an awkward location for cyclists.
   - In a few locations, the kerb protuberances seem a little short to adequately satisfy the Australian Road Rule requirements of parking distances to intersections.
   - It is not obvious if any of the reconstructed road surfaces include a raised threshold, which would be known in Adelaide a 'continuous footpath treatment'. We commend these to you, noting overseas research that in addition to halving pedestrian risk, they have up to a three-fold effect in reducing cyclist crashes at intersections.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. I would be happy to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

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