

# Improving High Street and Plenty Road **for all of us**

A plan for more accessible, reliable and faster public transport and better shopping strips along Tram Route 86

## Summary Project Description



City of  
DAREBIN

# 1 HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

After reading this document you will be well equipped with an understanding of the proposal for High Street, Plenty Road and Tram Route 86. You have many options to provide your feedback:

- go to [www.darebin.vic.gov.au/route86](http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/route86) and complete an on-line survey
- phone 8470 8341 to be sent a survey
- write a submission and send it to Transport Management, PO Box 91, Preston, 3072 or email to [route86@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:route86@darebin.vic.gov.au)
- SMS a short text message with your feedback to 0416 90 61 16
- Drop in to an information session (see details below) and complete a survey on the spot.

Feedback closes at 3pm on Friday 4 December, 2009.

# 2 WANT TO ASK A QUESTION?

If you have questions or would like clarification on any aspect of the project you have the following options:

- Drop in to a general information session at any time between 4pm and 7pm at:
  - o Preston Shire Hall; 286 Gower Street, Preston:
    - Thursday 12 November
    - Tuesday 17 November
  - o Northcote Town Hall, 189 High Street, Northcote:
    - Wednesday 4 November
    - Thursday 19 November
- Drop in to a multi-lingual information sessions (with translators catering for Italian, Greek, Macedonian, Chinese, Vietnamese and Arabic) at any time between 5pm and 7pm at:
  - o Preston Shire Hall; 286 Gower Street, Preston:
    - Wednesday 11 November
  - o Northcote Town Hall, 189 High Street, Northcote:
    - Tuesday 24 November
- Call the Transport Management team on 8470 8341 during business hours or
- Email [route86@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:route86@darebin.vic.gov.au) with your query.
- A Detailed Project Description is also available online or call for a hardcopy (ph: 8470 8341)

# 3 BACKGROUND

Council and the State Government have identified High Street and Plenty Road within the City of Darebin as a public transport corridor (Primary multi modal street) where Tram Route 86 should have priority over general traffic. Within the Activity Centres

along this corridor, the movement of pedestrians should also take priority. This was outlined in the Darebin Transport Strategy, 2007-2027.

Tram Route 86 is Melbourne's third most popular tram route.

The Victorian Government has a vision for making Melbourne's entire tram network accessible and faster with greater priority on shared roads. The City of Darebin is working with the Victorian Government and the community on a plan to help meet this vision.

We want to make catching a tram along Route 86 safer, faster, more reliable and easier to access. We also want to make shopping strips more vibrant and attractive, safer and easier to move around.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The City of Darebin has been working with State Government stakeholders (VicRoads, Department of Transport, Department of Planning & Community Development) and Yarra Trams to develop this proposal. Over the past three months the community, through Community Reference Groups, has also had a major input into the design of the proposal (see Section 6) that meets the following objectives:

- Provide a faster and more reliable tram service
- Provide access to the tram for all including the elderly, people with disabilities and parents with prams
- Make High Street, Plenty Road and Tram Route 86 safer and more pleasant for people especially in activity centres

These objectives are met by proposing;

- A faster and more reliable tram service by:
  - Introducing part time tram lanes during clearway times
  - Extending clearway times in line with Keeping Melbourne Moving
  - Adjusting traffic signals to provide priority to the tram
  - Encouraging through traffic to utilise parallel preferred traffic routes
  - Removing some tram stops that are not an optimal distance apart
  - Introducing platform tram stops which make boarding/alighting faster

These measures will result in a tram travel time saving of approximately 25% (6 minutes) along the route.

- Access to the tram for all by:
  - Introducing platform tram stops which allow tram users to step onto the tram at the same level as the stop

This will result in all stops being compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act which is required by 2022.

- A safer environment for people by:
  - Reducing vehicle speeds along High Street to 40km/h
  - Removing the conflict between tram passengers and cars
  - Reducing through traffic in our busy activity centres

- Providing central medians in Westgarth and Thornbury to assist people crossing the road
- Reducing crossing distances at pedestrian lights in Northcote
- Increasing the number of pedestrian signals along the route

These measures will result in an environment where people feel safe and are safe.

- A more pleasant place for people by;
  - Upgrading street furniture, paving, plantings etc. in line with the Northcote Streetscape Masterplan
  - Providing central medians in Westgarth and Thornbury with room for plantings and greenery
  - Introducing a slower traffic environment in High Street
  - Providing more safe crossing points for pedestrians

These measures will result in an improved street environment.

## 4 SUMMARY

### 4.1 Why this project is important to Darebin?

- One in seven Darebin households earns less than \$500 a week (2006 Census of Population and Housing)
- Approximately one in five Darebin residents has a disability – this is more than the state average (Darebin Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2009-2013).
- The City of Darebin is also home to one of the largest populations of older people in the state with one in five residents being over the age of 60 and approximately 4000 people living in the City of Darebin care for a person with a disability (Darebin Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2009-2013).
- These groups generally have less access to a car. Council has a responsibility to assist them to participate in community life – including work, social opportunities and services.
- If this project is pursued by Council following this consultation period and funding is successful through the Victorian Government approximately \$60-\$70 million of infrastructure investment will occur in Darebin. Council's contribution will be approximately \$2-\$3 million.
- Tram Route 86 is the third most popular route across Melbourne. It carries 15.2 million passengers per year or 50,000 passengers per day. Of these 15,000 are within the Darebin section of the route (Yarra Trams and Metlink).
- The package of measures included in these proposals has the potential to decrease the travel time for these 15,000 people by up to 25% (6 minutes).

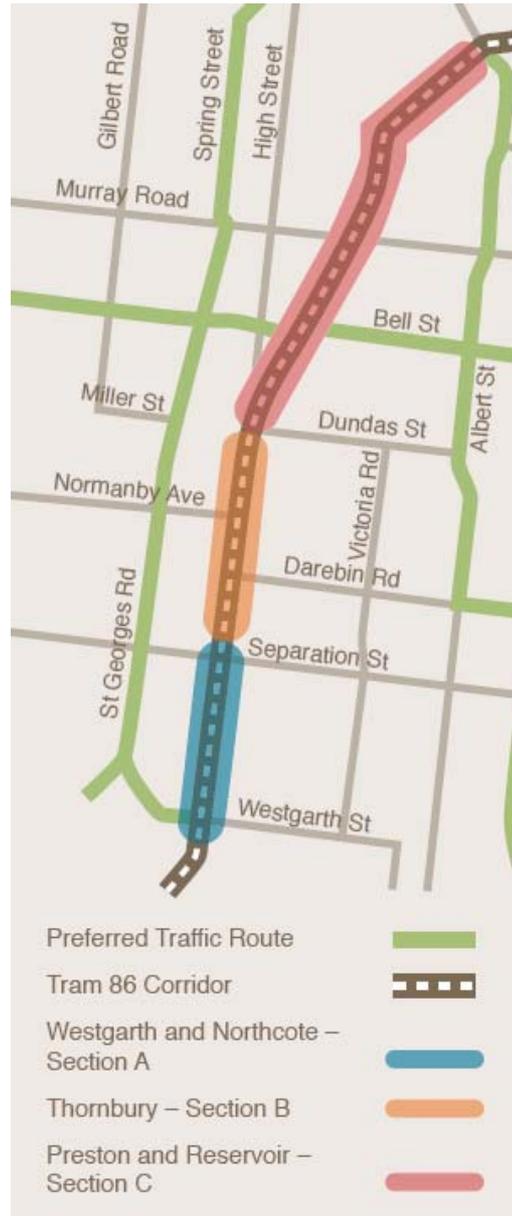
## 4.2 Sections of the Project

There are three distinct Sections of the tram route:

**Section A:** Including Westgarth and Northcote. Along High Street from Westgarth Street to Robbs Parade.

**Section B:** Thornbury. Along High Street from Robbs Parade to Dundas Street.

**Section C:** Preston and Reservoir. Along Plenty Road from Dundas Street to Albert Street



## 4.3 Staging for Implementation

The staging of this proposed project is linked to a need to replace the tram tracks along the corridor. Section A is scheduled for replacement in the next 1-2 years, Section B in the next 2-3 years and Section C in the next 3-5 years. The new tram franchisee may adjust these dates slightly when they take over the operation of the tram network in 2010.

## 5 A NEW PROPOSAL

A version of this proposal was presented to the community in March 2009. A number of issues were raised by the community at that time and a commitment was made by Council to re-work the proposal with collaboration from the community. As a result, four Community Reference Groups were established in July 2009.

The groups worked hard over four fortnightly meetings of two hours to discuss issues and find solutions. Each group developed a Recommendation Report which were presented to Council on Monday 21 September.

The main issues that were raised in March were resolved by the Community Reference Groups:

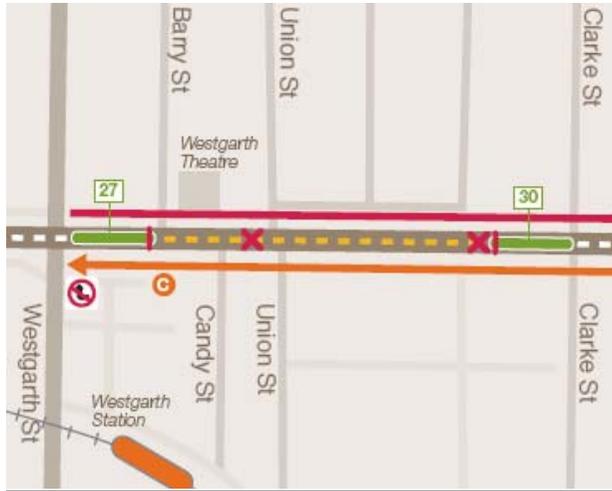
<b>Main issues from March consultation</b>	<b>New Proposal</b>
Removal of parking along Plenty Road to create a permanent tram lane	Implementation of clearways and part time tram lanes in peak hours only
Right hand turn bans into the majority of side streets and properties along Plenty Road	No right hand turn bans into side streets and properties along Plenty Road are proposed at this stage.
Use of the High Street service road as a slip lane at Westgarth Street for left turning traffic	Not part of new proposal
Removal of parking along High Street on Rucker's Hill (between Union Street and Clarke Street) to create a permanent tram lane	Clearways and part time tram lanes in peak hours only

The Community Reference Groups also recommended the following elements of the new proposal:

- The majority of tram stop locations and type to suit local conditions
- Tram stop removal where appropriate
- Clearway times and locations in Thornbury and Preston/Reservoir

## 5.1 Westgarth

Map of Westgarth section between Westgarth Street and Clarke Street:



Sketch showing central island platform stop and central median:



- The signals at Westgarth Street/High Street will be altered to encourage northbound through traffic to utilise St George's Road as the preferred traffic route.
- A part time tram lane and Keeping Melbourne Moving clearway times during peak times in peak directions (6.30-10am on the east side and 4-7pm on the west side except 100m around intersections when 3-7pm is enforced).
- Relocating the pedestrian operated signals at Candy/Union Street to the north end of stop 27 – around Barry Street.
- Provision of a central median (up to 2.4 metres wide) through the centre of High Street to provide better protection when crossing the road. The central median will also enable some greenery/plantings to be introduced.
- It is proposed that stop 30 (at Clarke Street) have steps at the southern end and not a ramp as the slope of the hill is such that the ramp would be approximately 15 metres long if it were to be Disability Discrimination Act compliant.
- A right hand turn ban for traffic travelling south on High Street wanting to turn west onto Westgarth Street to provide additional priority to the tram.
- Car park losses/gains:
  - Stop 27 around the pedestrian operated signals proposed south of Barry Street: approximately 5 spaces lost on each side
  - Relocation of pedestrian operated signals at Union Street: approximately 5 spaces gained on each side.
  - Stop 30 around the pedestrian operated signals proposed at the southern end of the platform: approximately 5 spaces lost on each side

## 5.2 Northcote

Map of Northcote section between Clarke Street and Separation Street:



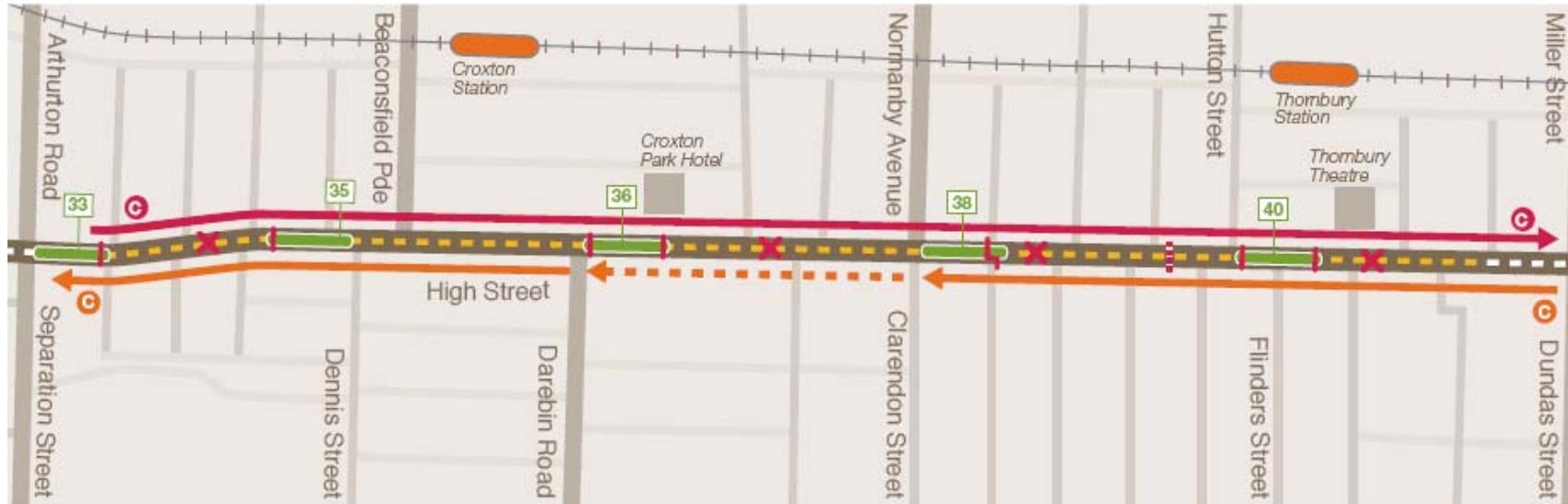
Indicative sketch of the kerb outstand platform stop outside the Northcote Town Hall:



- Permanent removal of clearways from the Northcote Town Hall towards Separation Street, to 100m south of the Separation Street intersection on the west side (ie to the pedestrian operated signals near Lawry Street) and 50m south of the intersection on the east side (ie outside shops 346-360 High Street)
- A part time tram lane and Keeping Melbourne Moving clearway times during peak times in both directions south of Separation Street (6.30-10am and 3-7pm); 50 metres from the intersection on the east side and 100 metres from the intersection on the west side
- Provision for cyclists up and over the front of kerb outstand tram stops.
- Significant pedestrian priority to be provided at the Separation Street/High Street intersection through the installation of facilities that allow pedestrians to cross diagonally across the intersection
- Removal of the sliplane at Arthurton Road/High Street which will provide additional pedestrian space and improve safety.
- Car park losses/gains:
  - Stop 31 northbound at Northcote Town Hall: five car parks lost (1/2 hour parking)
  - Stop 31 southbound at Northcote Town Hall: one car park lost, one disabled bay relocated.
  - Stop 32 northbound at Hawthorn Road: eight car parks lost, including one loading bay.
  - Stop 32 southbound at Mitchell Street: eight car parks lost
  - Stop 33 at Separation Street: Nine car parks lost on both the east and west side of the street.
  - A total of 92 car parks (46 on either side) will have clearways removed. This is a total of 138 hours of parking availability gained each day.

## 5.3 Thornbury

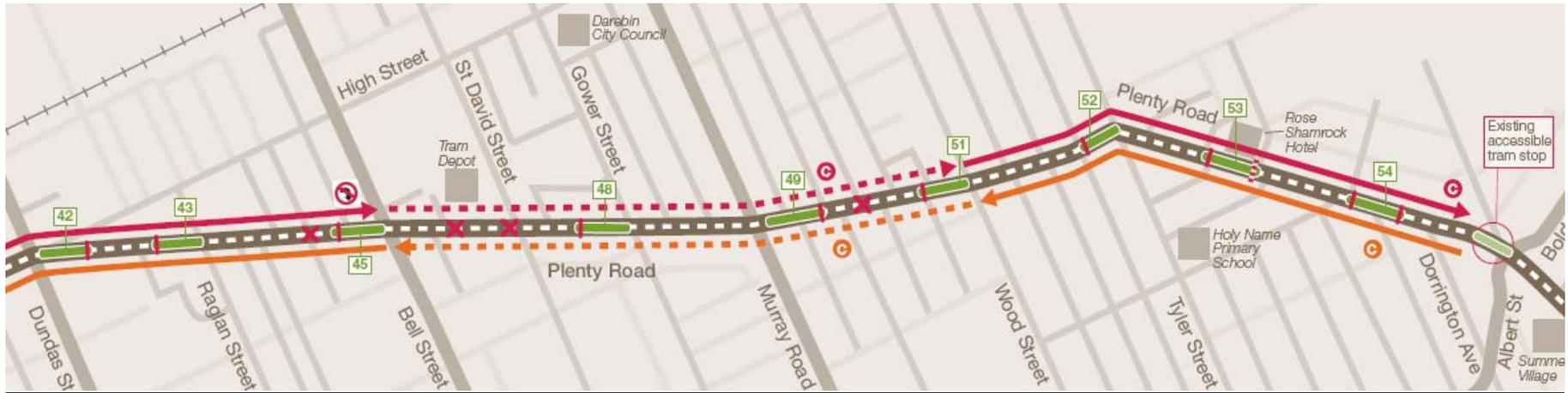
Map of Thornbury section between Separation Street and Dundas Street:



- Introduction of a part time tram lane and Keeping Melbourne Moving clearway times during peak times in peak directions (6.30-10am on the east side and 4-7pm on the west side except 100m around intersections when 3-7pm is enforced) in Stage 2 of the project (2-3 years).
- Exception to this is the 3-7pm clearway in the afternoon peak in the approach to the Dundas Street intersection which is proposed for introduction in Stage 1.
- Provision of a central median (up to 2.4 metres wide) through the centre of High Street to provide better protection when crossing the road. The central median will also provide some greenery/plantings to be introduced.
- Car park losses: Approximately ten car parks will be lost around the new pedestrian signals located at each of the four new stops
- Car park losses/gains:
  - Stop 35 at Dennis Street: approximately ten car parks lost around the new pedestrian signals.
  - Stop 36 at Darebin Road: approximately ten car parks lost around the new pedestrian signals.
  - Stop 38 at Clarendon Street: approximately ten car parks lost around the new pedestrian signals.
  - Stop 40 at Hutton Street: approximately ten car parks lost around the new pedestrian signals.
- A number of side streets will be effected by a central island platform stop being placed in front of the street, thus limiting turns into and out of the street to left turns only: Kemp Street, Ballantyne Street, Raleigh Street and Flinders Street.

## 5.4 Preston and Reservoir

Map of Preston and Reservoir section between Dundas Street and Albert Street:



Indicative sketch showing central island platform tram stop at Murray Road on Plenty Road

- The signals at Albert Street/Plenty Road will be altered to encourage southbound through traffic to utilise Albert Street as the preferred traffic route.
- A part time tram lane and Keeping Melbourne Moving clearway times during peak times in peak directions (6.30-10am on the east side and 4-7pm on the west side except 100m around intersections when 3-7pm is enforced).
- A right hand turn ban for traffic travelling north on Plenty Road wanting to turn east onto Bell Street.
- Car park losses: Approximately ten car parks will be lost around the new pedestrian signals located at each of the nine central island platform stops.
- A number of side streets will be effected by a central island platform stop being placed in front of the street, thus limiting turns into and out of the street to left turns only: Garnet Street, Beauchamp Street, Thomas Street, Hawker Avenue, Rene Street, Chaleyer Street.
- Developments on land abutting the corridor need to consider the location of platform tram stops in future stages as well as the vision for the corridor to provide tram priority with separation from vehicles into the future. New vehicle access off Plenty Road will be discouraged.
- The Victorian Government has a vision for making Melbourne's tram network "a modern light rail service, with higher priority on shared roads so it becomes the best way to move around the inner suburbs". The City of Darebin is working with the Victorian Government to help meet this vision.