

**CARLTON COMMUNITY WORKSHOP**  
**DRAFT URBAN REALM ACTION PLAN 2018–2023,**  
**MELBOURNE INNOVATION DISTRICT CITY NORTH**

**COMMUNIQUÉ**

Workshop Date: Saturday 23 March 2019, 2:30 – 3:30pm  
 Venue: Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre  
 Rapporteur: Lisa Adams, lb\_adams@bigpond.net.au  
 Facilitator: David Week, dew@assai.com.au

A community workshop was convened by the Carlton Residents Association (CRA) and City of Melbourne (CoM) to invite feedback from Carlton residents on a draft *Urban Realm Action Plan: Melbourne Innovation Districts (MID) City North, 2018–2023* ('the Plan').

The City of Melbourne presented the main points of the Plan. This was followed by comments from CRA invitees, who were asked to focus their comments using the following format:

- What is the problem or opportunity?
- What are possible solutions?
- What are the benefits, and for whom?

The following table summarizes the results of the conversation.

Problem or opportunity	Possible solutions	Benefits
<p><b>1. Broader stakeholder perspectives</b></p> <p>To date, local resident and business viewpoints have not been included in the Plan. This presents a significant gap in stakeholder participation.</p> <p>Though the benefits of the Plan for students and wealthier residents are clear, it's unclear how the Plan benefits or considers public housing tenants.</p> <p>The interests of Carlton residents must be considered, and with regard to the housing stock and conservation. These interests may not match those of the MID.</p>	<p><b>1(a) Community Reference Group</b></p> <p>Establish a Community Reference Group (CRG), to better draw on resident and business (commercial and not-for-profit) knowledge and expertise and enable pro-active community engagement. The CRG mix should reflect the local demographics. Note this does not obviate the need for targeted engagement under the Plan.</p> <p><b>1(b) Community Asset Map</b></p> <p>Develop a Community Asset Map, reflecting Carlton Residents Association (CRA) and other community interests, so that existing assets are maintained, mobilised and enhanced by the Plan. See for instance: <a href="http://www.creatingcommunities.com.au/community-asset-mapping/">www.creatingcommunities.com.au/community-asset-mapping/</a></p> <p><b>1(c) Innovative consultation strategy</b></p> <p>Since the Plan itself is focussed on creating opportunities for innovation and co-creation, use innovative and co-creative participation strategies to elicit community knowledge and desires, e.g. a Car Free Day; experimental closure of various streets; use of tactical urbanism to trial</p>	<p><b>Benefit</b></p> <p>Preserve, enhance, and make best use of existing MID partner and community-identified assets.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>Plan partners, residents, businesses, workers, visitors.</p>

Problem or opportunity	Possible solutions	Benefits
	changes to street or sidewalk configurations; protection of residential areas.	
<p><b>2. Broader view of “innovation”</b></p> <p>The Plan’s map of innovation centres in City North is incomplete. It restricts the scope of innovation to the universities and medical centres.</p> <p>Part of the Plan’s intention is to use Carlton as a test bed for co-creation.</p> <p>The Plan does not incorporate the history and current situation of the district, and with regard to existing residential amenities and community assets.</p> <p>These omissions limit the credibility and potential of the plan.</p>	<p><b>2(a) Broader survey of innovation</b></p> <p>Include missing social innovation centres in the Plan’s map of innovation centres and the proposed Community Asset Map, such as the Centre for Policy Development, Lowitja Institute, Melbourne Museum, Readings Foundation and La Mama.</p> <p><b>2(b) Inclusive innovation policy</b></p> <p>Develop a policy statement, which frames the relationship between the district’s history, current situation and planned future, with reference to the innovation district and urban realm action plan and the residential areas that need protection.</p>	<p><b>Benefit</b></p> <p>Preserve, enhance, and make best use of MID partner and community-identified assets.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>Plan partners, residents, students, workers.</p>
<p><b>3. Open space ratios</b></p> <p>The plan is silent on its impacts on open and green space, and in particular, current and future ratios of open/green space per resident. Ratios are in decline, which is an alarming concern for residents.</p>	<p><b>3(a) Maintenance of open space ratios</b></p> <p>Plan to pro-actively maintain existing open-space ratios per head of population. Plan to assess its impact on Carlton resident and daytime population, and to increase open and green space per head accordingly.</p>	<p><b>Benefit</b></p> <p>Adequate open and green space.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>All users.</p>
<p><b>4. Balance of active and quiet spaces</b></p> <p>The plan is silent on the relationship between public realm ‘activation’ and needs for quiet, calming public and residential areas and green space.</p>	<p><b>4(a) Planning for active and quiet spaces</b></p> <p>Plan to ensure that not only is “dead” space made more active in a way that is of benefit for existing users, but quiet space is maintained and where possible enhanced.</p> <p>In particular, the Plan should address the needs of residents for quiet, low traffic environments.</p>	<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <p>Having a mix of spaces for the different needs of workers, residents, students and visitors.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>Workers, residents, students, visitors.</p>
<p><b>5. Parking conflicts</b></p> <p>The plan is silent on parking conflicts and how these conflicts could be addressed through the plan, with specific regard to opening up and making better use of the urban realm. This is a missed opportunity.</p> <p>For instance it could be argued that making busy pedestrian corridors such as Lygon St more pedestrian friendly by reducing car traffic and car bays should be a priority in the Plan. Local businesses would need</p>	<p><b>5(a) Co-design of parking solutions</b></p> <p>Carlton is a walkable neighbourhood and residents already enjoy walkable access to many amenities. However, businesses depend on parking for clients, many of whom cannot get to Carlton via public transport. Elderly and less mobile residents also depend on cars both for themselves, and for visits from family. Innovative approaches to planning and co-design could be trialled to resolve parking conflicts. There are many success stories to draw upon, such as the “Isole pedonali” pedestrian zones in Palermo, Sicily<sup>i</sup>, and other examples.<sup>ii</sup></p>	<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <p>Innovative parking solutions created.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>Plan partners, residents, businesses, workers, students, visitors.</p>

Problem or opportunity	Possible solutions	Benefits
to be convinced of the merits.	<p><b>5(b) Holistic parking strategy</b></p> <p>The plan to clarify its role in addressing parking conflicts and the development of a holistic parking strategy.</p>	
<p><b>6. Future public transport strategy not specifically addressed</b></p> <p>The plan could identify the need to further develop our public transport strategy, with specific regard to opening up and making better use of the urban realm.</p>	<p><b>6(a) Public transport strategy</b></p> <p>The Plan to clarify how it enhances overall public transport strategy.</p>	<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <p>Integration of urban realm and public transport strategy.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>Plan partners, residents, students, workers, visitors.</p>
<p><b>7. Hyper-connectivity undifferentiated</b></p> <p>The plan could identify the stage of life and mobility with particular regard to transport and connectivity within the district.</p>	<p><b>7(a) Mobility dissected by need</b></p> <p>The plan to clarify its role in addressing mobility and accommodation of all ages.</p>	<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <p>Clearer planning objectives.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>Plan partners, residents, students, workers, visitors.</p>
<p><b>8. Large-scale industrialisation</b></p> <p>The hospitals and universities are all large industries, hungry for more land. There is therefore a tension between the residents and small business owners of Carlton to the East of Swanston, with the industrial institutions to the West.</p>	<p><b>8(a) Set mix targets</b></p> <p>The Plan to acknowledge the risks associated with increasing industrialization and commercialisation and how the risks can be mitigated. Note each sector (small businesses, not-for-profit businesses, residents, institutes) will identify a different set of risks. Targets could be set, for instance to ensure social housing, small businesses and not-for-profits are not edged out.</p> <p>What is the desired use mix for the future of our district? We note the @22 Barcelona case study in the Plan sets targets and these appear to be a crucial part of the plan.</p> <p><b>8(b) Grow West</b></p> <p>Growth projections for the MID City North should be established to asses where future growth should go.</p> <p>Consider channelling some of the industrial growth imperative in other directions, such as to the west where there this is more land with industrial character. Other major urban growth areas, like Fishermans Bend, should also be considered.</p>	<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <p>Clearer planning objectives and better risk management.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>Plan partners, residents, businesses, workers, students.</p>

<b>Problem or opportunity</b>	<b>Possible solutions</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
<p><b>9. Gentrification</b></p> <p>Knowledge workers are the top income earners. More knowledge workers may mean higher land values, higher rents, higher prices, driving out retired folk, students and public housing tenants.</p>	<p><b>9(a) Make the Plan economically inclusive</b></p> <p>The Plan is intended to be inclusive and welcoming to all, but this seems to consider only psychological efforts. The Plan might also specifically address economic issues, so that people are not driven out of Carlton by price—whether rent, or goods and services.</p>	<p><b>Benefit</b></p> <p>Social inclusion.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>Residents, students.</p>
<p><b>10. Abstract language</b></p> <p>The plan is largely communicated in abstract terms, which is difficult for stakeholders and implementers to visualise. The impact is therefore difficult to envisage. Conflicts can arise purely out of differences in interpretation.</p>	<p><b>10(a) Concretize and visualise the Plan</b></p> <p>The plan should instead use concrete and visual language. How will the character of each of the existing streets change? Bike lanes? Parking? Closures? Traffic? Speeds? Median and sidewalk changes? Building façades? Historic conservation? Not specific design—but character. This does not necessarily mean drawings.</p>	<p><b>Benefit</b></p> <p>Shared understanding among stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p> <p>All stakeholders.</p>

## Closing notes

The participants:

- noted that pro-active community engagement on the plan is vital for at least three reasons. Residents, business owners and workers are major stakeholders (the impacts on them will be significant), are a valuable resource (they bring knowledge and expertise that is grounded in the locale), and many are involved in innovation in ways that are integral to the aims of an innovation district.
- noted the significant opportunities afforded by the Innovation District partnership and Plan to develop the urban realm for the benefit of residents, workers, students, universities and businesses.
- noted the CoM refers to the Brookings Institute definition of an innovation district, which is included here as a footnote for reference.<sup>iii</sup>
- agreed to provide feedback on the Plan using a structured approach, as an efficient way to draw out resident knowledge and ideas on how to strengthen the plan. In practice, this approach also identified some significant risks from a resident perspective, and how they could be mitigated.
- agreed to produce a joint CRA and CoM communiqué as a record of the workshop.
- noted their interest in being kept informed and further contributing to the plan, as opportunities arise. The CoM advised that the workshop should be seen as a first step to pro-actively engage with the community on the plan.
- noted there was insufficient time in this meeting to consider the details of the plan at the level of, “Which streets and intersections should be the focus and why?”.
- expressed their appreciation to the CRA and CoM representatives who convened the workshop.

<sup>i</sup> See the report, *Urban Active Environment (UActivE) Action plan (2016-2017) Palermo, Italy*, page 20.

<sup>ii</sup> For examples see the article, *A Short History of Car Free Days: Origins, Timeline, Progress* and the [Carfree](#) website.

<sup>iii</sup> The [Brookings Institute](#) defines innovation districts as being, “dense enclaves that merge the innovation and employment potential of research-oriented anchor institutions, high-growth firms, and tech and creative start-ups in well-designed, amenity-rich residential and commercial environments. Innovation districts facilitate the creation and commercialization of new ideas and support metropolitan economies by growing jobs in ways that leverage their distinct economic attributes. These districts build on and revalue the intrinsic qualities of cities: proximity, density, authenticity, and vibrant places. Given the proximity of many districts to low-income neighborhoods and the large number of sub-baccalaureate jobs many provide, their intentional development can be a tool to help connect disadvantaged populations to employment and educational opportunities.”

## ATTACHMENT TO THE COMMUNIQUÉ

### AGENDA

Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre, Multipurpose Room 2  
Saturday March 23, 2:30-3:30pm

Time	Item	Lead
2:30pm	Welcome and introductions	Lisa Adams, CRA
2:35pm	Presentation: The Draft Urban Realm Action Plan	Jordi McInerney, CoM
2:50pm	Facilitated Q&A: An opportunity for the group to ask specific questions about the Plan.	Sam Cremean, CoM
3:00pm	Facilitated discussion (workshop activity) The intent is to tap into local citizen knowledge and expertise to generate practical ideas for the action plan, and demonstrate the value and importance of pro-active citizen engagement to these types of planning processes.	David Week, CRA
3:30pm	Next steps and wrap up, followed by afternoon tea	Sam Cremean, CoM Lisa Adams, CRA

### PARTICIPANT LIST

#### Carlton residents

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