

The Hon. John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads
The Hon. Jo Haylen MP, Minister for Transport

6th June 2023

GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Submitted via [website](#)

Dear Ministers Graham and Haylen,

Re: Transforming Victoria Road, Rozelle

WestConnex has bulldozed through Inner West communities, into and under the CBD and along the beautiful foreshore. Whilst Transurban's outgoing CEO boasted a 289% inflation-backed toll and [congestion bonanza](#), the project has come at great social, economic and environmental cost to local residents and businesses.

The loss of safety, convenience and liveability has been endured under a promise that putting through-traffic in tunnels would return streets to communities. When the Rozelle Interchange opens, there will be a toll-free underground bypass of Victoria Road between the Iron Cove Bridge and the Anzac Bridge. Traffic volumes on this section of Victoria Road will be [slashed by nearly 50%](#).

A golden opportunity arises for the Labor Government to embark on bold and legacy-building urban renewal. The time to do so is now, before traffic induced by WestConnex fills up all available road capacity.

In 2022, Bicycle NSW worked with Bicycle User Groups to prepare a detailed [document](#) advocating for a review of the active transport infrastructure that is being delivered in and around the Rozelle Interchange. Grasping the once-in-a-lifetime chance to reconfigure Victoria Road was a key priority. Other recent Inner West [submissions](#) urged decision makers to reduce traffic lanes, widen footpaths and add cycleways, pedestrian crossings and trees to return people and life to this [failing stroad](#). The previous government showed strong [support](#) for transforming Victoria Road. This was cemented by the identification of a [strategic cycleway corridor](#) along this route in April 2022.

It is therefore incredibly disappointing to learn that Transport for NSW released its depressing [Vision for Victoria Road](#) just before the State election. It contains no ambition for the corridor beyond 24-hour clearways for buses. There is no imagery of a different future to inspire stakeholders. No improvements to amenity and no extra space for landscaping, cycleways, kerb extensions or pedestrian crossings.

Of course, a slimmed down road could accommodate bus lanes but a reduction in vehicle lanes will apparently [only](#) be considered if traffic volumes shrink after the Western Harbour Tunnel and WestConnex have settled into the network. And we all know that won't happen as traffic will grow to fill whatever space it can.

There is no strategic cycleway in the short term vision that would encourage people of all ages and abilities to ride. Transport still proposes [minor upgrades to the hilly back street local route](#) to meet the minimum provision required by Condition E58. The gradients reach 15% on Kennif Street!

In addition, it was a backward step to reopen Lilyfield Road and return the speed limit to 50km/h. Access to Lilyfield Road from Victoria Road was partially closed and the speed limit reduced to 30km/h for an extended period during construction of the interchange. The traffic adapted and the road was much safer for all road users. We joined with local advocates and the Member for Balmain to petition for this configuration to be permanent. To ensure safe access to the new parklands, Lilyfield Rd and the streets north to Darling Street / Balmain Road should be designated as a 30 km/h liveable neighbourhood with traffic calming to discourage through traffic.

Another strategic cycleway, the Lilyfield Connection, is earmarked as an ‘immediate opportunity’ in the [Eastern Harbour City Strategic Cycleway Corridors program](#). Several ways to deliver this are explored in our [report](#). Inner West Council is progressing this cycleway on Lilyfield Road. A low-traffic, low-speed environment would greatly facilitate safe cycling with less need for expensive protected infrastructure.

I am asking for your intervention because these essential changes to the current plans for the Rozelle Interchange will not occur under the current scope of works for WestConnex.

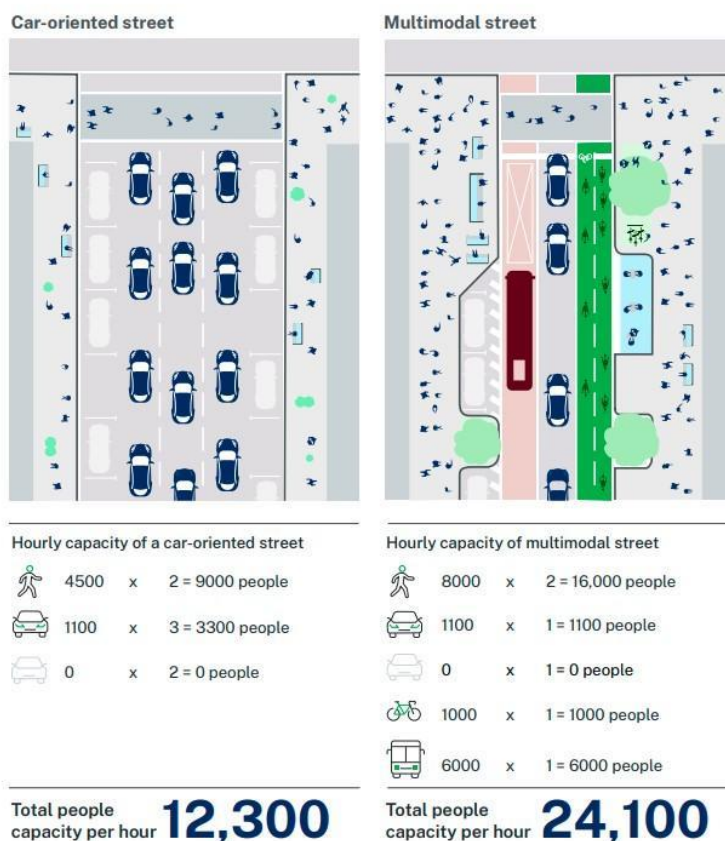
This is a critical time for communities affected by WestConnex. **A similar reconfiguration of Parramatta Road**, from Broadway to the GreenWay, must get underway urgently to reduce the dominance of motor traffic and restore health, resilience and liveability to an historic street. As you know, plans to rejuvenate Oxford Street are underway and we have launched a [campaign](#) to build community and political support.

It is essential to move the dial on car-first planning and reallocate road space for active transport to address the unsustainable and inequitable nature of our roads. Prioritizing pedestrians over private cars, as outlined in Transport for NSW’s [Road User Space Allocation Policy](#), brings environmental and health benefits.

Transport for NSW needs to be reminded of this excellent diagram from the 2022 [Future Transport Strategy](#).

Victoria Road offers the perfect opportunity to apply this model and set a benchmark for reimagining Sydney’s unloved arterial roads.

Figure 1: A key diagram from the new Future Transport Strategy that explicitly supports the reallocation of road space, comparing the total number of people moved per hour in the same amount of space on a car-oriented street and a multimodal street (Source: TfNSW)



Thank you for considering our call to action. We look forward to hearing from you and consulting with Transport for NSW on meaningful solutions that deliver a healthy, resilient and equitable urban environment for future generations.

Yours faithfully,



Peter McLean

Chief Executive Officer
Bicycle NSW

cc

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Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group in NSW for forty-seven years, and has more than 30 affiliated local Bicycle User Groups. Our mission is to 'create a better environment for all bicycle riders', and we support improvements to facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. Bike riding provides a healthy, congestion-reducing, low-carbon form of travel that is quiet, efficient and attractive for all ages with the correct infrastructure design.