



"May sustainable transport systems be at the heart of Adelaide's success as a people-friendly and environmentally responsible city."

Chris Liedig.
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City of Adelaide.
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Wakefield St Streetscape Project

Dear Chris,

On behalf of our members, Bike Adelaide wishes to express support for the proposed Wakefield St Streetscape Project. However, we wish to raise concerns over aspects of the design which do not deliver improvements for cyclist safety. It is encouraging to see Council using the renewal works as an opportunity to improve some aspects of the street but many in our community see this as a major opportunity to be more ambitious.

Firstly, we want to acknowledge the improvements that are being made. The installation of new continuous footpaths at side streets are an excellent initiative, allowing pedestrians greater safety and priority. New mid-block crossings and removal of motor vehicle turn access across Wakefield Rd at certain points contribute modest safety improvements. We are very happy to see Chancellery Lane made two-way. This is a critical link in providing cyclists with a safe, low-stress north-south route in this part of the city.

However, the design put to consultation has raised community concerns about the replication of existing cycling infrastructure which is unsafe and does not support more people cycling. The concerns relate to:

- **Unseparated and unbuffered bike lanes:** many cyclists feel uncomfortable and unsafe riding so close to motorists travelling up to 50kph, especially considering the volume of buses and trucks that also use this street. The lack of separation also wedges cyclists between moving vehicles and parked vehicles which can (and do) reverse suddenly and block the lane or strike cyclists. Parallel parking spaces also mean cyclists are directly in the car door swing zone and are at constant risk of being doored.
- **Bus stops in bike lanes:** buses stopping in bike lanes force cyclists to either merge with motor traffic or stop and wait behind the bus, directly exposing them to exhaust fumes and preventing effective travel. Buses attempting to stop while bikes are present also creates unpredictable and confusing situations for both cyclists and bus drivers. Many riders can be intimidated when a bus approaches a stop from behind them.
- **Cars crossing and reversing into bike lanes from 45° parking spaces:** motorist visibility is very poor when reversing from 45° spaces and this poses a serious safety threat to cyclists. Motorists cannot see people in the bike lane until their vehicle is already fully blocking the lane and can often reverse unexpectedly and quickly. This can hit a cyclist directly, and potentially knock them into oncoming motor traffic. The increased adoption of oversized SUVs and trucks causes bike lanes to be blocked by overhanging vehicles.
- **No bike boxes or left/right turn facilities at traffic lights:** lane configurations only provide safe through-movement at intersections but no clear indication of how cyclists should use the intersection to turn, creating unpredictable conditions and behaviour for both cyclists and motorists. Motor-traffic left turn lanes to the left of bike lanes are heavily subjected to blockages by queuing motorists, making it difficult and unsafe for cyclists to use the lane. No bike boxes mean cyclists must weave through queued cars and cross those cars from the right to turn left onto Frome St and other bike lanes, creating unnecessary conflict.

There are also no indications of bike right turn facilities from Wakefield St where there are currently bike hook-turn boxes. However, the existing hook-turn boxes are poorly signposted, making it unclear that cyclists can legally cross if the traffic is clear. Even with those facilities, cyclists must choose between waiting for two signal phases to complete a right turn (compared to one phase for right-turning motorists), crossing up to six lanes of bi-directional road at once, or attempting to move from the bike lane across two lanes with traffic approaching from behind and entering the right turn motor lane. All of these are sub-optimal options.

In raising these issues, we hope that our feedback will result in achievable improvements to the proposed design to address these ongoing safety concerns. To assist we provide the following suggestions.

- **Implement separated bike lanes:** this can be achieved by moving the bike lane closest to the kerb and placing parking spaces on the outside. This retains parking spaces and uses the parked cars as a protective barrier. Separation need not be expensive or complicated, with simple concrete curbing providing an effective barrier. At its most basic, this can also be achieved by a painted buffer paired with concrete wheel-stops in parking spaces, this concept would have impact on street drainage. This provides a safer space for cycling by removing the risk of collision with reversing or turning cars, or by buses pulling into and out of stops. This also ensures bike lanes are not blocked by queuing, turning vehicles at intersections, and drivers can easily walk to and from their parked car. This treatment would be consistent with the modest asset renewal works of the project. We note that streetscape and treatment consistency are often cited by road designers as aims of their design. In fact, consistency is a speed-related variable. At higher speeds, consistency assists with legibility and decision-making for car drivers. However, for pedestrians, consistency is a negative. Variation helps walkers focus on something other than the distance to their destination. A streetscape with high consistency tells users that it is a driving environment. A CBD street should aim for variation, at least between each street block. Differentiated streetscapes tell users that this is a pedestrian environment, giving drivers a subtle cue to slow down. A kerbside bike lane that provides enhanced safety for cyclists is of greater importance for a CBD street than consistency of treatment and we strongly urge that this treatment, which can tie into street upgrades later, be adopted.
- **Install bus stop bypasses:** these allow bikes to pass between the bus stop and the footpath, allowing space for bus passengers to board and alight buses separated from bikes, and for cyclists to avoid intimidating interactions with buses accessing stops. There are already working examples of this layout on Flagstaff Rd, Darlington. Swanston St in Melbourne's CBD demonstrates that variations of this layout are safe and effective in low and high-volume contexts.
- **Consistent treatment of raised footpaths:** the proposal shows these treatments to be a raised threshold. The key difference here is that a continuous footpath is a road-related area under the Australian Road Rules, at which vehicles must yield to pedestrians. Overseas, such treatments have been found to roughly halve the pedestrian crash risk and reduce the risk to cyclists using adjacent separated bike tracks by far more - a result that could be expected to similarly apply to nearby bike lanes. In contrast, threshold treatments are part of the road environment, at which pedestrians are required to yield to vehicles. This can create confusion and the SA guidance has been to apply these carefully, due to the possible increased crash risk to pedestrians. We urge ACC to ensure that continuous footpath treatments are installed to favour the movement of pedestrians and enhance cyclist safety.
- **Cyclist friendly road crossings:** While the cyclist crossings of medians are much appreciated, we would like to see design details that differentiate these from pedestrian crossings. Crossings that are provided at road level tend to accumulate road debris thus creating a hazard for cyclists. Also, the raised kerb is a pedal strike hazard that reduces the effective path width for cyclists. For these reasons, we urge that crossings are provided as paths over the median. Such path-style crossings also elevate the user enhancing their visibility. We also note that apart from cyclists crossing directly over from side streets, cyclists using Wakefield St may want to turn right. Due to the difficulty of managing this manoeuvre from the left-hand side of the road, many cyclists will instead move into the right-hand lane and then turn right. These crossings should be provided with a splay to allow right turning cyclists to access the crossing conveniently. Austroads Part 6A would require a 2m splay in the similar situation, where cyclists are turning right from a bike path into another bike path.

These interventions are relatively low cost and are consistent with the City of Adelaide's intentions to make streets safer for pedestrians and cyclists, reduce transport-based carbon emissions and reduce road congestion.

Warm regards,

Stephen Janes.
On behalf of the Committee M
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