

Inner Melbourne Action Plan
Final Report
Action 3.5 Reduced Through Traffic

Purpose

That the IMAP Implementation Committee:

1. Receive the final Reduced Through Traffic study (the study);
2. Accepts the study's recommendations pertaining to IMAP; and
3. Note and refer the individual stakeholder recommendations to the relevant authority.

Background

4. Action 3.5 seeks to determine what actions can realistically be undertaken by member Councils to ameliorate the impact of through traffic in the Inner Melbourne area.
5. The project aims to provide a better understanding and knowledge of through traffic movements within Inner Melbourne, however through traffic is defined.
6. Sinclair Knight Merz was appointed to conduct the study and offered a strong traffic modelling focus (using a model they have developed for the State Government). The following questions are addressed by this study:
 - What is the nature and extent of through traffic in the member councils' areas?
 - Where do the principal through routes clash with local "places" where traffic intrusion is unwelcome
 - What are the economic, social, environmental, and political impacts of through traffic (positive and negative)?
 - Which stakeholders would be affected by changes in the management of through traffic?
 - What measures could be effective in reducing the negative impacts of through traffic?
7. An update report was provided at the IMAP Committee meeting of 31 May, 2013 at which the Committee considered the draft study and requested it be discussed with the IMAP Executive Forum before reporting back to the IMAP Implementation Committee.
8. A presentation of the draft study was made to the IMAP Executive Forum on 18 November, at which positive feedback was received on the study's outcomes and requests for amendments were made to enhance elements of the study. Specifically, the Executive Forum requested further work be undertaken on :
 - a. comparison with the Port of Melbourne Strategy,
 - b. percentages of through traffic on Council and VicRoads managed roads
 - c. impact of rate of growth and lack of adequate transport infrastructure
 - d. the actions which should be undertaken on a regional basis and by individual Councils

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- e. how the outcomes of the study can focus on VicRoads dealing with IMAP as region v. individual Councils.
9. The project team met on 7 February 2014 with the consultant undertaking the study and briefed them to provide further information to alter the report and address the requests of the Executive Forum.
10. An update report was provided at the IMAP Committee meeting of 28 February, 2014 at which the Committee resolved that the submission of the final study on Action 3.5 be considered at the May 2014 meeting of the Implementation Committee.
11. The updated study was received from the consultants in early May, 2014 and distributed to working group. The updated study contained the changes requested by the IMAP Executive Forum during the 18 November meeting.

Discussion

The following section provides a summary of the IMAP proportion of the study. The study also contains an analysis, conclusion and set of actions for individual IMAP Councils, however these should be considered separately.

12. To determine what actions can realistically be undertaken by member Councils to ameliorate the impact of through traffic in the Inner Melbourne area the study first needed to define what was "through traffic. In simplest terms;
 - through traffic is defined as traffic that has an origin and destination outside the municipality, and passes through the municipality.
 - internal traffic has both its origin and destination within the municipality.
 - incoming and outgoing traffic has one end of its trip inside and the other outside the municipality.
13. To provide an objective basis for assessing through traffic impacts in the IMAP municipalities, a spatial analysis of trip-making in the Melbourne metropolitan area was undertaken using a model the consultants developed for the State Government. Traffic routes were modelled by extracting information about car-driver trips from the Victorian Integrated Survey of Travel and Activity (VISTA) and assigning the travel to a detailed road network. VISTA is a survey of household travel in Melbourne and several regional Victorian centres. The survey was conducted over a 12-month period, with 10,909 responding metropolitan households and more than 135,000 reported journey segments. By assessing the roads used by each vehicle trip, estimates of through traffic could be made for each municipality. These were compared with local evidence of popular traffic routes to determine whether the analysis matched expectations.
14. A separate study on freight movement is to be conducted following the completion of this study however, truck volumes were extracted from the Victorian Integrated Transport Model (VITM) (as commercial vehicle trips were not recorded in the VISTA survey), to include their percentage of movement on arterial roads. The VITM volumes were obtained on a per-link basis, rather than as complete routes, so the distinction between through and local truck movements could not be made. The modelling shows that the Monash (City Link) / Westgate Freeway corridors carries the overwhelming majority of trucks. Secondary truck routes travelling through IMAP include;
 - Greater than 2,000 vehicles – Alexandra Parade, Footscray Road, and St Kilda Road
 - Greater than 1,000 vehicles – Hoddle Street, Ballarat Road, Geelong Road and Dandenong Road.

The modelling suggests that most other arterial roads carry only small numbers of trucks, many of which would be engaged in local deliveries.

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15. The following conclusions are drawn from the IMAP analysis:

- The primary through traffic routes in IMAP are the City Link corridors, Eastern Freeway (including Alexandra Parade / Cemetery Road/ Tullamarine Freeway and St Kilda Road. Being the highest capacity arterial roads in IMAP, these roads attract a significant proportion of traffic moving through the IMAP area.
- Hoddle Street, Ballarat Road and Dandenong Road all carry moderate through traffic levels of between 10 - 20% of all traffic using the road.
- Most traffic using local streets and other arterial roads in IMAP has a local destination in IMAP. In other words, what may be perceived as "through traffic" in a local precinct may in fact be largely due to residents or visitors to the IMAP area.
- Most through traffic originates from neighbouring municipalities including Boorondara and Hobsons Bay.
- Given the size of the IMAP area, public transport carries a significant amount of through movement in IMAP. If public transport was to play a greater role in reducing IMAP's through vehicle traffic, it appears that better cross-town public transport options could help to reduce trips that are presently quicker or more convenient to undertake by car.

16. The study found that while IMAP and its individual municipalities contain moderate volumes of through traffic, the analysis suggests that the bulk of this traffic uses designated arterial roads. Given that these roads are designed to convey large traffic volumes and are somewhat separated from local areas, this might be considered "acceptable" through traffic with minimal direct impact on Councils.

17. The study notes that behavioural and political factors are significant contributors to the impact and growth of the small amount of "unacceptable" through traffic in the IMAP region. In particular, behavioural factors such as the steady decline in car occupancy rate, and political factors such as the impact of residential growth in the Growth Areas without significant commitment and funding to alternative modes of travel for those that live in these areas are compounding factors in creating and increasing through traffic to the IMAP area.

18. In considering responses to through traffic, the study's recommendations focus on "genuine" through traffic passing through the area from one side to another. To mitigate these impacts the key IMAP recommendations are as follows:

- Develop a SmartRoads Network Operating Plan (NOP) for IMAP in conjunction with VicRoads.
- Investigate the economic impact of parking v's public transport and walking in local activity centres
- Establish working groups to develop a corridor approach to managing through traffic. These should involve municipalities outside IMAP as well as transport agencies (i.e. VicRoads and PTV)
- Become informed about road pricing strategies and how implementation of road pricing could affect IMAP and individual municipalities. With this knowledge, advocate for strategies that will help to address through traffic. (Hypothetical examples might include: an inner-Melbourne congestion charge, tolls on existing roads, broader network-wide charges).
- Liaise with DTPLI and Growth Areas Authority (MPA) to share information about the impact of through traffic growth on IMAP by the continued expansion of Melbourne without supporting infrastructure.
- Establish a policy position on key infrastructure improvements IMAP will support in terms of priorities required to reduce through traffic growth (for example Melbourne Metro and regional Rail Link.)

19. The study also contains through traffic mitigation measures and suggests actions that individual Councils might consider to help limit the future impacts of through traffic in their municipalities.

Project Budget

20. The project had remained well within budget.

Recommendation

21. That the IMAP Implementation Committee:
 - a. receives the final report on Action 3.5.
 - b. accepts the study's recommendations pertaining to IMAP.
 - c. notes and refers the individual stakeholder recommendations to the relevant authority for action.