

SWAN STREET STREETSCAPE MASTERPLAN IDEAS

Revitalising Swan Street

We want to make sure Swan Street stays a great place to work, visit and live, so we're creating new streetscape masterplan for the area.



Prepared by: Streets Alive Yarra Inc.

streets-alive-yarra.org

Foreword

Streets Alive Yarra is a non-profit, volunteer, resident and ratepayer action group with a [vision](#) for more trees, wider footpaths and vibrant businesses in thriving [neighbourhoods](#). We see our streets being used by people from [all ages](#), irrespective of whether they walk, roll on a wheelchair, cycle, use public transport or drive. Residents and shoppers should be able to move safely, comfortably, and conveniently around Yarra; and park near shops.



Image credit: OCULUS Landscape Architecture and Urban Design

Streets Alive Yarra was founded in 2017 and now has over 2,600 likes on Facebook. A network of local champions develops concepts and proposals for how to improve their local street or precinct. Streets Alive Yarra is also Yarra's Walkability Action Group (WAG) representative for Victoria Walks.

Further information is available at: streets-alive-yarra.org/about.

Summary

Swan Street is a great street and can be even better, by:

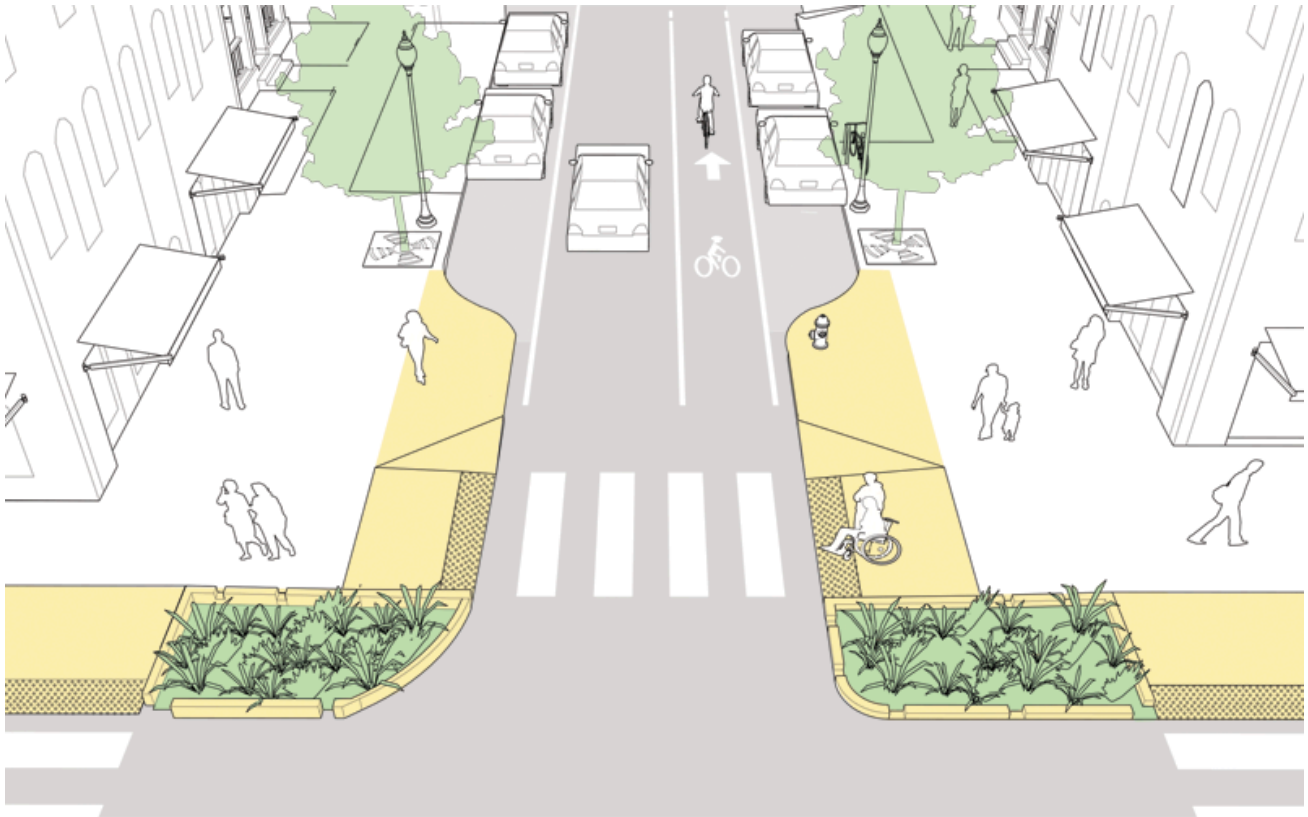
- Building “bump outs” to reduce crossing distances at all side streets.
- Building “at grade” continuous footpaths (or raised threshold treatments) at all side streets, to encourage drivers to slow and give way to people walking.
- Upgrading all “crossover ramps” to the sharper angle of the Netherlands standard, including the ramps on either side of continuous footpaths, to encourage drivers to slow and give way to people walking.
- Improving the quality of paving on footpaths.
- Offering space on side streets to local restaurants to support outdoor dining.
- Converting the first ~ ten car parking bays on each side street to a loading zone, a disabled parking bay, a 10-bike parking bay, and then metered bays, to support traders and shoppers.
- Adding a major piece of artwork to the railway overpass, to welcome visitors.

Further information is available at:

- <https://streets-alive-yarra.org/protected-footpaths/>
- <https://streets-alive-yarra.org/sloping-footpaths/>
- <https://streets-alive-yarra.org/footpath-network/>

Bump outs

Bump outs improve pedestrian amenity by decreasing crossing distances. They can also be combined with continuous footpaths.



Bump outs (or kerb extensions). Image credit: NACTO.

Continuous footpaths

Continuous footpaths encourage drivers to slow down and give way to people walking, who have right of way at intersections. Yarra has installed a form of continuous footpath in some locations, but the design is not best practice. The design would be improved by differentiating the footpath colour from the asphalt colour of the road, and by increasing the gradient of the ramps on each side to the Netherlands standard.



Example of a continuous footpath in Yarra. Image credit: Streets Alive Yarra.

Crossover ramps

Using the steeper Netherlands standard ramps on either side of a continuous footpath encourages drivers to slow down and give way to people walking.



Example of Netherlands standard ramps either side of a continuous footpath. Also note how the colour and texture of the footpath is differentiated from the asphalt of the road. Image credit: [aggregate.com](https://www.aggregate.com).

High quality paving

High quality paving improves amenity for people walking, especially at intersections, if it is differentiated from the black asphalt colour and texture of vehicle lanes.



Example of high quality paving in Yarra. Image credit: Streets Alive Yarra.

Changing parking on side streets

Swan Street will eventually need to be upgraded with protected and level access tram stops (for DDA compliance) and protected bicycle lanes (to enable people to safely access shops by bike). To support this, loading zones and parking for shoppers (both cars and bikes) needs to be relocated to side streets. Council can begin this process of adjustment now, as part of the streetscape masterplan, by:

- converting the first ~ ten car parking bays on each side street to:
 - a loading zone,
 - a disabled parking bay,
 - a 10-bike parking bay, and
 - metered parking to support shoppers.

Note that such changes (on side streets) would not result in any changes to the traffic or transport function of Swan Street, which council has defined as out of scope. It would, however, remove a barrier to such changes occurring in future.

Major artwork

The railway overpass could support a major piece of artwork, welcoming visitors to Swan Street.



Example artwork on railway overpass at a shopping street. Image credit: [Google Maps](#).

Concluding remarks

It's great that council welcomes ideas for improving the streetscape of Swan Street. It's disappointing that, similar to the process for Brunswick Street, council lacks the ambition to aim higher, and consider the whole streetscape, including the option to formally advocate to the state government for protected and level access tram stops (as shown on the previous page), and protected bicycle lanes.

Streets Alive Yarra would be delighted to provide further detail or explanation of the themes raised in this document.

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