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Infrastructure SA
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On behalf of the Inner West South Road Action Group (Action Group), I provide this submission in response to the 20 Year Infrastructure SA Discussion Paper.

The Action Group is made up of residents, businesses and property owners from both sides of South Road extending from Thebarton and Torrensville to Richmond and Kurralta Park. Although the group is recently formed it is quickly expanding as concerns grow regarding the future South Road corridor.

Our Council, the City of West Torrens (population E60,000 2018) is bisected by South Road and in consequence almost all residents and businesses will be directly impacted by the South Road redevelopment.

We accept that current travel on South Road is neither easy or safe and we know that the road requires redevelopment, but the design of the redevelopment is of critical concern to us. Three options have been proposed. An elevated highway like at Dry Creek, or a sunken road as in the Torrens to Torrens project or an underground tunnel.

Both the elevated highway and the sunken road options will create a massive barrier dividing our community (high above or at ground level), sectioning off and isolating our neighbourhoods. The legacy will be excessive noise, heat and air pollution, loss of amenity and heritage, truncated movement and liveability, with long-term health and social impacts. An eyesore in full view of visitors to our state, it will stand as testimony to our collective lack of vision and drive.

Our position is clear. We believe the only appropriate option for this section of South Road is a tunnel.

Our request is reasonable and rational as a tunnel running under South Road will deliver the super highway but minimise adverse impacts, give opportunities for urban renewal, business development and expansion, it will leave our community intact, our heritage in place, enhance the city scape and demonstrate for all to see our state's sophistication and innovation.

It is well established, nationally and internationally, that tunnels provide safe, environmentally sound, fast and unobtrusive urban mass transit systems. Traffic tunnels clear vehicles from surface streets, reduce traffic noise and pollution and enable the surface street areas to be improved for those who continue to use them. This is an important opportunity for the South Australian Government to demonstrate its capacity for innovation in the development of vibrant communities.

In support of our preferred position, we raise the following advantages:

1. ***Avoiding separation of communities and reduced access to services***

A tunnel will keep the community together because there will be no barrier physically dividing us. Ours is a thriving community. We live in one of the oldest suburbs of Adelaide. We have a very significant list of heritage buildings (all in use), cultural and sporting centres, schools and churches. We are ethnically and culturally diverse and support a number of

artistic groups as well as a significant stock of supported housing. We are a functioning community, we like to get together with our neighbours, go to church, shop in our local shops, frequent local restaurants, go to local Doctors or the RAH, visit local hotels and bars. To live our lives, we move through and around our local area, and we continually crisscross South Road.

2. ***Properties and heritage – economic impact***

South Road currently presents as a complex area of braided infrastructure – spatial dynamics of transportation, economic development, urbanisation, heritage and institutional functions. In other words, the functionality of South Road is much more than transport. The economic importance of businesses along South Road is significant. Our group includes many local businesses.

There are an extensive number and range of small businesses that if forced to move, are more likely to close their doors (this is a well-known phenomenon for small business) resulting in a significant downturn for the local business community.

The extent of public angst aroused by the threatened destruction of Thebarton Theatre demonstrates how quickly community interests can be mobilised.

As Thebarton/Mile End/Torrensville is part of one of the oldest settled areas of Adelaide and South Australia, this is covered by a Historic Conservation Zone. There are numerous historically significant buildings that support a thriving range of community interests benefiting locals and non-locals alike – for example, the Little Glory Church, the Spinners and Weavers Guild and Thebarton Theatre.

Properties identified as Local Significant Places within the Development Plan along South Road include but are not limited to: West Thebarton Hotel, 51-57 South Road, Original Thebarton Town Hall, 125-133 South Road, Thebarton Girl Guide and Scout Hall, 125-133 South Road, Former Thebarton Court House and Police Station, 135 South Road, Queen of Angels Church, 141 South Road. The Holder Memorial Church at 200 South Road is classified as being of Local Heritage Significance. The destruction of these buildings and other properties along South Road will destroy the fabric, viability and liveability of inner west businesses and heritage properties. A tunnel provides the best way to preserve as many as possible.

3. ***Healthy neighbourhoods – reduced noise, air and heat pollution***

We are strongly of the view that the inner west can be a place that supports healthy living, that facilitates walking, riding and other physical activity and can be an environment that has minimal noise and air pollution. Our area is undergoing significant infill and housing stock is keenly sought.

It is well known that the urban built environment and in particular the design of transport corridors has an enormous impact on the health of the community. There is strong evidence demonstrating the links between chronic disease and lifestyles characterised by car-dominated transport, reduced opportunities for exercise, increased fast food availability and lack of social connection.

We are very conscious of the well documented negative impacts surrounding large scale road infrastructure projects including rises in noise and air pollution, and with global warming heat pollution is an increasing concern. Asphalt can heat up and become between

20 to 30 degrees Celsius hotter than the surrounding air temperature (albedo effect) with the consequence that a bitumen highway of 10 to 16 lanes will become a significant heat pool impacting the local area through the day and night. We are concerned that any design other than an underground tunnel will contribute to poorer health outcomes.

To further progress our position, we note the many supporting statements in the Discussion Paper, and in particular that a holistic approach must underpin future planning and should not be reliant simply on one single aspect such as road or freight requirements:

- The Future Focus for the strategy will consider ways to shape the urban form and create vibrant precincts.
- Having the right infrastructure will enable better connections and ensure our communities maintain their liveability.
- Greater numbers of people are choosing to live closer to the city in varied forms of housing with 76% of greater Adelaide's new housing growth being in established suburbs.
- Larger urban centres with greater densities require a shift towards holistic long-term systems-based planning with a deep understanding of the dependencies between infrastructure sectors.
- Having the necessary infrastructure in place to welcome and support new migrants to make the transition, particularly those from non-English speaking backgrounds, is essential to having migrants establish themselves and their families in South Australia.
- Infrastructure that improves the liveability of South Australia is good for its residents and essential for attracting businesses looking to improve worker amenity and to support new migrants.
- South Australia's economy and the wellbeing of all South Australians is dependent on how well its environment is managed, which includes protecting natural assets.
- ***The presence of certain infrastructure such as major arterials and structures can also significantly affect the amenity of places and communities, making this an important design consideration.***
- Infrastructure supports the growth and wellbeing of a population through creating a sense of place and facilitating economic activity. Projects must be prioritised according to their ability to build the capacity and competitiveness of our economy and enhance South Australia's liveability.
- Consideration also needs to be given to ensure green infrastructure (open space, parks, walking trails, playgrounds, bike paths) are appropriately accommodated to support liveability objectives as the population and cities grow.
- The resulting shift towards higher amenity, medium density metropolitan living, notionally supported by well-established and well-functioning public transport, requires city and town planning activities to adopt more holistic approaches to planning, including moving from a project planning approach towards place-based and precinct planning.
- Development of precincts must consider the multifaceted nature of inhabitants and visitors, so that they are located in close proximity to employment links and key services such as retail, education, health care and entertainment.
- Precinct planning provides an integrated approach which, if done well, can expedite development, drive innovation and build cohesive communities.
- ***South Australia has an opportunity to build inner-urban density. Doing so will enable existing low-density suburbs to become more walkable, mixed-use medium-density***

communities which are better serviced by transport, services and amenities. This would require different approaches to infrastructure that focus on developing more efficient urban environments, effectively planned transport corridors.

In summary

We are determined that the South Road redevelopment proceed as a tunnel under South Road. The alternatives to a tunnel will destroy our community and result in an embarrassing eyesore for which our whole state will suffer.

We won't accept the destruction of our community and nor would anyone else in the same situation. We will fight for the survival of our community, and for the betterment of our state.

We trust our concerns will be addressed and not overridden by short term narrow transport objectives that do not add value to the liveability and economic future of South Australia.

We request and welcome the opportunity to participate in all future consultations, and to have our position presented to Infrastructure SA and the Government. We believe we should be consulted at every stage of the planning before the final concept is decided on by the State Government.

Please contact Cath Cashen on email [DELETED] or mobile [DELETED] or Nicki Dantalis on email [DELETED] or mobile [DELETED].

Yours sincerely

Cath Cashen and Nicki Dantalis

On behalf of the Inner West South Road Action Group

cc Michael Coxon, Mayor, City of West Torrens
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