



## **WESTERN DISTRIBUTOR**

Consultation report - summary of  
community and stakeholder feedback  
30 April to 31 July 2015

September 2015



# Table of Contents

3	Executive summary
4	Background
5	Engagement Approach
6	Stakeholders - who we engaged
7	Activities - how we engaged
10	Feedback - what we've heard so far
13	Focus on community feedback - top five themes
15	Engagement outcomes

# Executive summary

Transurban identified and started work on the Western Distributor proposal in response to congestion on the West Gate Freeway, predicted growth in Melbourne's west and an increasing number of truck trips to and from the Port of Melbourne.

Since submitting our proposal to the Victorian Government, we have been consulting widely to gather input and ideas that will help improve the proposal. This approach forms part of the five-phase consultation, design and planning process through which Transurban has proposed to develop the Western Distributor.

We believe that input from people who live, work and travel in Melbourne's west will help us get this proposal right. That is why this comprehensive program of stakeholder and community engagement has been integrated into the proposal's development from the earliest possible stage.

The Western Distributor proposal is of interest to a broad range of stakeholders - from local residents and businesses to councils, transport agencies, government agencies, statutory authorities, industry bodies and interest groups.

Input from all interested parties has been actively encouraged, with a range of communication channels used to promote different opportunities to be involved - both online and in-person. This has included a proposal website with an interactive map and survey to collect feedback, several community information sessions and industry and business briefings.

Through consultation to date, we have talked with around 600 local residents and held more than 130 discussions with around 50 stakeholder groups. Through these discussions, we gathered information that has, and will continue to, inform development of the Western Distributor proposal.

Interests vary greatly by group, but broadly speaking there is strong interest in:

- Connections to the port and the CBD
- Location and impacts of tunnel portals and ventilation structures

- Air quality
- How the project will move trucks off local roads, and complementary initiatives to support this objective
- Traffic benefits and expected changes to traffic movements
- Urban design
- Construction impacts
- Value for money
- Importance and best use of public open space
- Traffic noise on the West Gate Freeway and elevated road
- Overall impacts on land use and transport connectivity.

We have listened to feedback and are now refining some elements of the proposal design as a result, with a strong focus on how the Western Distributor will connect with the West Gate Freeway, Port of Melbourne and CityLink.

A number of design updates are being considered, and further engagement activities are planned during September and October 2015 to provide time for more discussion before any decisions are made about progressing the Western Distributor proposal.

Should the Victorian Government decide to continue assessing the proposal, there will be many more opportunities to contribute to the ongoing development of the Western Distributor.

*"We have listened to feedback and started refining our design, drawing on the knowledge and ideas of stakeholders and the local community."*



Community session 30 May

# Background

Transurban identified and started work on the Western Distributor proposal in response to congestion on the West Gate Freeway, predicted growth in Melbourne's west and an increasing number of truck trips to and from the Port of Melbourne.

The proposal submitted to the Victorian Government in early 2015 represented Transurban's thinking about the best way to address a range of growth, traffic and liveability problems facing Melbourne's west.

This proposal was informed by an understanding of the Victorian Government's policy priorities, significant research, advice from technical specialist and Transurban's first-hand knowledge of Melbourne's road network, but was still a concept needing refinement to draw on the knowledge and ideas of local communities and other stakeholders.

On 30 April 2015, the Victorian Government announced that it would assess the proposal under its Market-Led Proposal Interim Guideline. Since then, Transurban has been, and continues to, work with communities and stakeholders to further develop and refine the Western Distributor proposal.

The Government is expected to decide by the end of 2015 whether to progress the Western Distributor through to the next stage of assessment.



## About the Western Distributor proposal

The Western Distributor addresses some of our city's most critical traffic growth and liveability challenges and represents an opportunity to deliver real and much needed improvements to Melbourne's transport network.

It will also provide an economic boost by creating jobs, improving travel times and delivering improved efficiencies for freight.

The proposal includes a tunnel under Yarraville and elevated road in the port precinct to directly connect the West Gate Freeway with the Port of Melbourne, CityLink and the city. It adds more lanes to the West Gate Freeway and includes upgrades to improve safety and access from Webb Dock.

Melbourne  
needs a

# solution

This project meets real  
and pressing needs:

Melbourne's western region is  
expected to grow by more than

**double**   
the population  
of Geelong  
in the next 16 years

Over  
**20,000**



truck trips were made  
on inner-west roads  
every day in 2014

Port of Melbourne  
traffic is forecast  
to nearly

  
**triple** by 2041

The West Gate Bridge  
is experiencing crippling  
congestion during  
peak periods, with

**over 200,000**  
vehicles crossing  
it each day



# Engagement approach

Transurban intends to develop the Western Distributor proposal through a five-phase consultation, design and planning process. At each stage, inputs from communities, councils, environment agencies, freight operators and other stakeholders will inform the proposal's design and planning approvals.

We believe that input from people who live, work and travel in Melbourne's west will help us get this proposal right. That is why a comprehensive program of stakeholder and community engagement has been integrated into the proposal's development, from the earliest possible stage.

Early and effective stakeholder engagement ensures that views are clearly understood from the very beginning, supporting the development of a proposal that addresses real problems and delivers benefits for local residents, the transport industry and the Victorian economy.

Our engagement approach is outlined in the diagram below. We are currently in Phase One. Should the Government decide to progress the Western Distributor through to the next stage of its assessment, we will move on to Phase Two.

## Proposed planning and engagement approach

	ENGAGEMENT	PLANNING, DESIGN & PROCUREMENT
<b>PHASE 1</b> <b>Proposal design</b>	<b>Understanding what's important</b> to people who live, work and travel through the area Share information on: → project objectives, benefits, scope → community views and priorities Inform project development  <i>Online feedback</i> <i>Local community sessions</i>	→ Confirm technical assumptions and feasibility with on-site investigations: - Location of underground and overhead utilities - Bridge and structure inspections - Air quality data collection - Targeted drilling to test ground conditions - Flora, fauna and waterway surveys
<b>PHASE 2</b> <b>Concept design</b>	<b>In-depth discussion of community priorities</b> → Discuss issues, ideas and options → Inform design and requirements for construction tender  <i>Online feedback</i> <i>Local in-depth discussion forums</i>	→ Continue on-site investigations and prepare for environmental field studies → Technical inputs to design → Develop urban design principles → Assess availability and capability of interested project construction providers
<b>PHASE 3</b> <b>Illustrative design</b>	<b>Ongoing engagement as design develops</b> → Keep people informed → Respond to ideas and concerns  <i>Community Reference Group (CRG)</i> <i>Regular newsletter and events</i>	→ Finalise illustrative design and tender specifications for main section of works → Competitive negotiations with construction tenderers and selection of preferred → Environmental and technical studies to assess impacts of preferred design
<b>PHASE 4</b> <b>Preferred design</b>	<b>Public exhibition</b> Preferred tenderer's design and associated impact assessment → Independent assessment of impacts and community input → Inform planning panel recommendations  <i>Design display sessions</i> <i>Written submissions</i> <i>CRG</i>	→ Impact assessment of tenderer's preferred design will address issues including: - traffic and transport - social and business - air quality, visual, noise, vibration - surface water, groundwater and soil - heritage, planning and land use → Ongoing contractual discussions with preferred tenderer
<b>PHASE 5</b> <b>Detailed design</b>	<b>Updates on planning approvals</b> How Ministerial decision will inform the project's design and construction approach  <i>CRG</i> <i>Continued engagement with local community</i>	→ Ministerial decision on planning approvals - Sets out the project area - May identify design changes - Confirms requirements contractor must follow during construction

Note: Localised early works at Webb Dock could be completed independent of the works on the West Gate Freeway and the Western Distributor and is not detailed in the above process.

# Stakeholders - who we engaged

The Western Distributor proposal is of interest to a broad range of stakeholders - from local residents and businesses to councils, transport agencies, government agencies, statutory authorities, industry bodies and interest groups.

Through consultation to date, we have talked with around 600 local residents and held more than 130 discussions with around 50 stakeholder groups. Through these discussions, we gathered information that has, and will continue to, inform development of the Western Distributor proposal.

So far we have engaged with:

- Local residents and businesses
- Local interest groups (i.e. sporting, environment and trader groups)
- Local and regional councils
- Victorian Government departments and agencies
- Commonwealth Government departments and agencies
- Emergency services
- Port and freight operators
- Business and industry groups
- Utility providers
- Special interest groups

# Activities - how we engaged

Transurban invited initial feedback on the Western Distributor proposal through a number of engagement activities between May and July 2015. Input was actively encouraged, with a range of communication channels used to promote different opportunities to be involved – both online and in-person.

The main activities undertaken to communicate with and engage communities and stakeholders are outlined below.

## Website

The Western Distributor ([consult.transurban.com](http://consult.transurban.com)) website provides a central location for information and consultation. Visitors can subscribe to updates and news about the Western Distributor. It is an accessible and flexible way for people to find information and participate in consultation activities.

**12000+ visitors, 7000+ documents downloaded / 1400+ video views / 500+ photo views**

A range of online consultation tools were used to encourage open discussion and seek feedback.

→ **Discussion forums** allowed for open conversations about specific topics. Transurban posted several questions and participants were able to post their views and respond to comments made by others.

We asked:

- “What are your first impressions of the Western Distributor project?”
- “When you’re travelling around the inner west, what are the main transport challenges you face?”
- “The Western Distributor will help get trucks away from residential streets – are there other ways to reduce through-traffic on local roads in the inner west?”

**800 visitors / 45 participants / 81 comments / 143 agrees or disagrees**

→ The **‘ask a question’** tool allowed people to ask a question and receive a public response.

**310 visitors / 44 questions asked and responded to**

→ An **interactive map** allows people to pinpoint exact locations that are important, are an issue or where there is an opportunity for improvement.

**2086 visitors / 198 comments / 1150 agrees or disagrees**

→ **Surveys** were used to collect more detailed information on what is important, what people would like to see considered in the project’s development and preferences for future engagement. Two surveys were designed to elicit relevant feedback from both local residents and the general community.

**203 participants (164 local resident / 39 general community)**

## ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

 **600+**

face-to-face discussions through five information sessions and 10 pop-up stalls

 **10,000+**

visits to the online portal

 **500+**

responses to online engagement tools including detailed survey

 **30+**

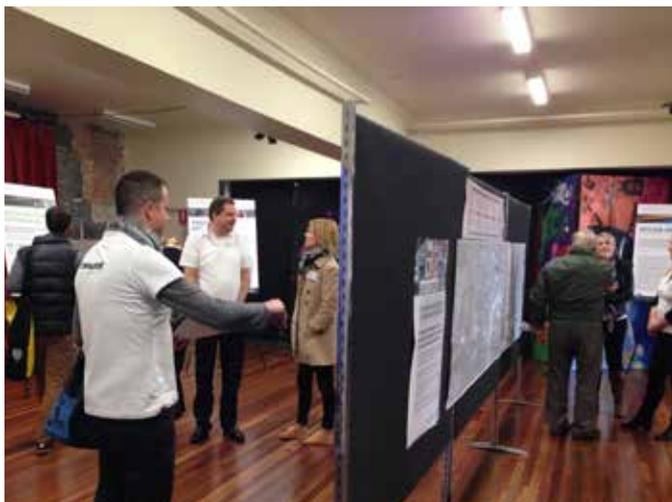
ads in metro and local papers

 **30,000+**

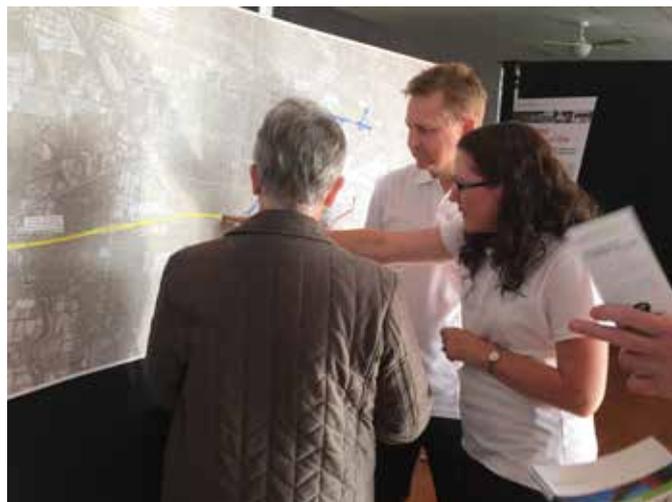
households reached and two newsletters distributed

 **130+**

stakeholder meetings with over 50 organisations



Community session 13 June



Community session 25 May

## Community sessions

Community information sessions were held to brief local residents on the Western Distributor proposal. This allowed more in-depth, face-to-face discussions and allowed interested people to talk with technical experts.

Five sessions were held:

- Yarraville-Footscray Bowls Club, Yarraville – 25 May / **70 attendees**
- St Augustine's Parish, Yarraville – 30 May / **50 attendees**
- St James Old Cathedral, West Melbourne – 4 June / **30 attendees**
- Scienceworks, Spotswood - 11 June / **40 attendees**
- Footscray Community Arts Centre, Footscray – 13 June / **30 attendees**

All sessions were drop-in style so that people could attend at a time that best suited them. Participants were able to view large proposal design maps or speak with team members who hosted stations related to their area of expertise:

- Design
- Traffic
- Planning & environment
- Tunnels
- Construction

These station topics were informed by initial feedback received through online engagement tools. There were information boards and take-away discussion papers at each station, which explored these key topics of interest.

Participants were encouraged to complete a survey either during or following the session.

## Pop up info stalls

Pop up stalls provided an opportunity for informal interaction with local people in the lead up to community sessions. Pop ups helped raise local awareness of the proposal and allowed us to reach a range of local residents.

Thirteen pop ups were held in May, June and August, with more than 400 people reached:

- Yarraville Gardens – 9 May
- Yarraville Village shopping strip – 13 May
- Footscray Market – 15 May
- Seddon Village shopping strip – 16 May
- Yarraville Square shopping centre – 21 May
- Harbour Esplanade Docklands – 22 May
- Newport shopping strip – 23 May
- Kensington shopping strip – 31 May
- Hopkins Street Footscray – 12 June
- Point Cook Town Centre – 17 June
- Yarraville Gardens – 15 August
- Yarraville Village shopping strip – 20 August
- Spotswood shopping strip – 22 August

## Mailouts and email updates

A mass mailout containing a letter and proposal overview brochure was distributed to 30,000 letterboxes in the inner west in early May 2015. A 'community update' newsletter was also distributed to the same area in July.

Five email updates have been sent to subscribers to keep them informed of new information and opportunities to participate in engagement activities.

## Email and telephone

A direct line to Transurban's project team was provided via email (projects@transurban.com) or telephone (1300 280 939).

## Fact sheets and publications

A number of publications have been created to explain key aspects of the proposal and discuss other topics of interest:

- A **proposal overview** is available online and was also distributed to 30,000 local letterboxes.
- **Information sheets** provide more detailed information on benefits, project need, planning and engagement process, proposed toll structure, and about Transurban - available online and at community sessions.
- **Discussion papers** directly address key topics of interest raised in the online discussion forums and Q&As – available online and at community sessions.

## Advertising

Online and in-person engagement opportunities were promoted through newspaper, radio and online advertising.

- **30 newspaper advertisements**, including The Age, Herald Sun, Geelong Advertiser, Ballarat Courier and suburban titles covering the Wyndham, Hobsons Bay, Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Moonee Valley and Melbourne areas.
- **90 radio spots** on metro stations including Smooth, 3AW, Magic and KIIS.
- A **Google search campaign** reached over 10,000 people.

## Social media

Transurban's twitter account@TransurbanGroup was used to promote engagement activities such as pop ups and community sessions.

## Telephone calls / emails to community groups

During May and June phone calls were placed to over 40 local business, sporting and other community groups, followed up with an email containing more information about the proposal. These groups were asked to pass information along to their members or other interested parties and were encouraged to attend a community session and provide feedback.

## Information for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities

Those who speak a language other than English could find out more about the proposal through:

- **Newspaper advertisements** in local Leader and LOTE publications
- **Proposal information** translated into Arabic, Greek, Italian, Chinese and Vietnamese
- A telephone **interpreter service**.

## Information for the media

A joint Transurban/Victorian Government media announcement on 30 April 2015 generated significant media coverage across print, radio, TV and online. This helped raise general awareness of the proposal and generated a significant number of visits to the Western Distributor website.

## Stakeholder briefings, meetings and workshops

A comprehensive program of engagement with key proposal stakeholders included:

- High level briefings to stakeholder CEOs and senior executives
- One-on-one meetings
- Industry briefing on 14 May 2015, attended by 67 people from 35 organisations
- Telephone briefings and emails with information / links to website
- An agency and council liaison group, with representatives from 20 organisations, meets regularly. These meetings bring together key decision makers from organisations that have a significant interest and influence regarding the proposal.

# Feedback - what we've heard so far

Our discussions with a broad range of stakeholder groups and local communities have confirmed that the key proposal objectives – providing an alternative to the West Gate Bridge and moving trucks away from homes in the inner west – are indeed high priorities.

Transurban developed the Western Distributor to address two of Melbourne's biggest transport challenges – providing an alternative to the West Gate Bridge and moving trucks away from homes in the inner west. Discussions with over 50 stakeholder organisations and 600 local people, through meetings, surveys and community sessions, have confirmed that these issues are high priorities for many different groups – from local residents to freight operators and all levels of government.

A broad cross section of industry, business and community representatives took part in engagement activities, resulting in many and varied comments on a number of different topics. Where possible this feedback has been summarised and grouped into key themes for reporting purposes, however all comments have been reviewed and considered individually.

Interests vary greatly by group, but broadly speaking there is strong interest in:

- Connections to the port and the CBD
- Location and impacts of tunnel portals and ventilation structures
- Air quality
- How the project will move trucks off local roads, and complementary initiatives to support this objective
- Traffic benefits and expected changes to traffic movements
- Urban design
- Construction impacts
- Value for money
- Importance and best use of public open space
- Traffic noise on the West Gate Freeway and elevated structures
- Overall impacts on land use and transport connectivity

## Traffic and transport

There is a strong desire to **minimise weaving and merging on the West Gate Freeway** for improved safety and traffic flow. It is important to ensure that this existing issue is not exacerbated by the tunnel entry/exit on the West Gate Freeway and that opportunities for improvement are considered.



Some stakeholders asked us to look at options that **cater for placard loads** (dangerous goods such as fuel tankers) and local industry in order to remove more trucks from local roads and provide better connectivity for freight.

Many stakeholders provided feedback on the **functionality of Footscray Road** and connections, including the need to maintain existing service levels on Footscray Road, preserve major connections at both the eastern and western ends of Footscray Road, and retain Dock Link Road as a truck only route.

Concerns about traffic entering the city and other **impacts to surrounding roads** were raised, including any **impacts on road-based public transport travel times** and reliability.

### Highlights from community feedback

The local community made it clear that **moving trucks off local roads** is their top priority. Truck traffic is seen to affect local people in many ways, most significantly in terms of traffic delays, air quality, safety and noise. Overall there is strong support for a solution that takes trucks off local roads but people want confidence that the Western Distributor can effectively address this issue.

For those living further afield, **addressing congestion** along the M1 corridor is most important – and is also seen to be the number one benefit of the Western Distributor proposal. We heard that traffic congestion in the inner west, including on the M1 corridor, is a major challenge when travelling around the area.

## Freight productivity

The freight industry would like to see **freight-friendly interchanges** and connections that consider turning circles, weaving, gradients and speed limits.

There is a desire for the West Gate Freeway and Bolte Bridge to be strengthened to **cater for heavier trucks**.

## Local amenity and safety

There is a strong desire to see high quality **urban design** features for a positive legacy. This is closely associated with concerns about the visual impact of structures, improved noise wall design and the need to consider current and future land use surrounding the proposed tunnel portals, including opportunities for positive uses.

Stakeholders raised the need to consider pedestrian, cyclist and public transport user **safety and amenity**. Opportunities to **improve cycling route connectivity** through the inner west were identified, with several mentioning the Federation Trail 'missing link' as a priority.



## Highlights from community feedback

Many local residents cited access to walking and cycling facilities, public transport and the freeway as a benefit of living in the inner west. However there are **concerns about the ability to travel safely** – whether by foot, bike or motor vehicle – given the high volumes of truck traffic and gaps in the existing cycling network.

**Improved cycling and pedestrian facilities** and complementary changes to the surrounding road network are initiatives that people believe would be of benefit to the community and should be prioritised.

Local residents **value public open space and facilities**, particularly public parks and sporting grounds. They have a strong sense of community and like the village atmosphere of their area.

The **visual impact** of major structures, particularly the portals and elevated freeway, is a concern. There is recognition that the project may leave a lasting visual legacy and it is important that it is a positive one. There were some requests for an extended tunnel under the Maribyrnong River to avoid impacts on the amenity of the riverside. Others are concerned that the elevated freeway will impact on amenity for cyclists using the existing shared path along Footscray Road.

Those who participated in the online survey **support the inclusion of a tunnel** in the Western Distributor's design. The importance of getting **key design and engineering elements** of the tunnels right was emphasised. In particular, the location of tunnel entries/exits, design of the tunnel ventilation system and placement of structures, and minimising any impacts.

## 'Future Proofing'

Stakeholders asked that **potential future developments and land use** be considered in planning for the Western Distributor, such as E-Gate, Arden Macaulay, Bradmill and 'Don' sites, and future public transport connections along Dynon and Footscray Roads.

The need to **complement existing road upgrades**, such as Shepherds Bridge in Footscray and Cook Street in Port Melbourne, was also raised.

## Environment

**Traffic noise** and provision of noise attenuation was raised by local stakeholders, as well as a desire to demonstrate changes to **air quality** achieved by the proposal.

There is a desire to **preserve areas of environmental value** such as waterways, open space, existing trees and native vegetation. The Moonee Ponds Creek floodplain was raised as a potential issue.

Some stakeholders emphasised the need for careful management and treatment of **contaminated soils** and consideration of **groundwater** movement and potential impacts.

### Highlights from community feedback

There is a strong drive to **improve local air quality**. People told us that air quality is an existing issue and they are concerned about the health implications. Some see the proposed tunnels as a way to reduce emissions in their local area while others are concerned about how emissions will be removed from the tunnels. There is a strong desire to see international best practice applied in the design of a tunnel ventilation system.

Existing and future **traffic noise** was the key concern, particularly for residents along the West Gate Freeway. This community is also looking to better understand where road widening would occur and the proximity of the road and noise walls to homes.

Local communities are passionate about **public open space and facilities**, particularly natural environments such as waterways and parks.



Moonee Ponds Creek

## Tolling strategy and network use

The most commonly raised concern about tolling is that it may cause **rat-running** through local streets. There have been requests for widespread **truck restrictions** on arterial and local roads through the inner west to ensure the proposal achieves a significant reduction in truck traffic near homes.

Some stakeholders suggested that Transurban consider **a dynamic tolling structure**, including night time discounts, trip caps and variable tolling for trip length. This proposal is also seen to be an opportunity to review tolls for placard loads, to encourage dangerous goods trucks heading south east to use the Bolte Bridge instead of inner west roads, as well as providing access and priority opportunities for road-based public transport.

Looking at broader network operations, some stakeholders suggested looking at measures to promote the use of Grieve Parade for heavy vehicles and consider adding an outbound on-ramp to the West Gate Freeway/ M80 from Grieve Parade.

### Highlights from community feedback

There is broad support for changes that **encourage the use of the freeway network** and discourage use of local roads.

## Construction

People require ongoing **access to homes and businesses** during construction.

**Haulage routes** for tunnelling and construction should be selected in consultation with stakeholders to minimise disturbance, and the general impact of construction on **liveability** in the inner west must be considered.

### Highlights from community feedback

**Construction impacts** raised include general disruption and inconvenience, construction traffic, treatment or removal of contaminated soil and access to properties/facilities.

While people expressed a clear preference for a tunnel when compared to an elevated road, residents living close to the proposed alignment are concerned about the **proximity**. They want to understand what is involved in **tunnel construction** and any possible impacts that could affect their homes now or in the future – as well as certainty that this won't happen.

# Focus on community feedback – top five themes

Transurban engaged an independent research specialists to undertake a rigorous review and analysis of all community feedback to confirm our understanding of community views and highlight key priorities for further consideration. The results of this analysis are outlined below. The full report can be viewed or downloaded from the Western Distributor website.

The independent analysis identified five broad themes that represent topics most commonly raised:

- Trucks are a significant issue for the local community
- Relieving congestion is seen as a key benefit of the proposal
- Tunnel exits / entries and ventilation structures are of significant interest
- Traffic noise is a concern, particularly for those along the West Gate Freeway
- Improved cycling and walking facilities and changes to the surrounding road network are both supported as possible complementary initiatives.

An explanation of the research methodology and detailed findings are included in the full independent report.

This is an analysis of feedback received through consultation to date and is not necessarily representative of all those who reside in Melbourne's inner west or the broader community.

**Theme 1: Trucks are a significant issue for the local community, particularly those in Yarraville. Locals want to see trucks moved off their streets in order to improve safety and air quality. They are seeking assurances that trucks will use the new connection.**

- **90%** of locals are impacted by truck traffic (particularly those in Yarraville 98%).
- **42%** of locals rank 'moving through truck traffic off local streets and away from homes' as the number one benefit of this project (increasing to 59% for those in Yarraville, and to 76% taking into account the top three ranking positions).
- The most common comments made on the interactive map were in relation to **extending the truck ban / ensuring trucks stay on the freeway** (30%). Similarly, the most common general concerns / improvements cited in survey responses related to toll avoidance and banning trucks on local streets (20% and 19% respectively).
- For those in Yarraville, the two biggest impacts of truck traffic are **pedestrian safety (30%)** and **air quality (25%)**.

**Theme 2: A key benefit of the project is relieving congestion and providing an alternative to the West Gate Bridge (particularly for those outside of Yarraville). However, some question whether it will be enough to solve existing issues.**

- **86%** of locals are impacted by traffic congestion in the inner west and **87%** of the broader community are affected by congestion when travelling on or around the West Gate Freeway or Bridge.
- **50%** of the **general community** rank providing an **alternative to the West Gate as the main benefit** of this project.
- One of the most common first impressions of the project is that it will **alleviate congestion**.
- **21%** are **concerned that congestion will remain after widening the West Gate Freeway**, making this the second most common concern about the freeway widening.
- The third common concern about the proposal more generally is **that this project isn't enough to address congestion / question if it will cause more congestion** (18%).

**Theme 3: Tunnel exit / entries and ventilation structures is a topic of significant interest and should be prioritised in further detailed discussions. This corresponds with local resident concerns around air quality.**

- **90%** of locals (and 84% of the general community) would **prefer a tunnel** over a surface road.
- **38%** rank the location of the tunnel exit / entries and ventilation structures as the number one priority for more detailed discussion, (which increases to 63% taking into account the top three ranking positions).
- The number one concern with the proposed locations of the entry / exit points is **'emissions / placement of ventilation structures'** (22%).
- Locals, particularly those in **Yarraville**, report that **trucks have a strong impact on air quality**, indicating the importance placed on air quality in this area.
- The third most common comment made on the map related to **concerns about the ventilation structures / air quality** (25%).

**Theme 4: There are concerns around traffic noise, particularly in relation to the West Gate Freeway upgrade.**

- The most common comments about the West Gate Freeway widening are around **traffic noise / ensuring sound barriers are in place** (23%).
- Furthermore, the **third most common concern about the proposed locations for the tunnel portals is traffic noise** (19%) highlighting the importance of minimising noise in this area.
- The fourth most common general comments/ suggested improvements relate to **traffic noise / noise barriers** (15%).
- Concerns around noise are also linked with truck acceleration and deceleration.

**Theme 5: When asked what types of complementary initiatives should be considered as part of the proposal, improved cycling and walking facilities was the top preference, followed by changes to the surrounding road network.**

- **'Improved cycling and pedestrian facilities' is the number one ranked complementary initiative for locals (29%)** and comes in second behind changing the surrounding road network to complement the proposal for the general community (25%).
- **Access to amenities and community facilities, and parks, sporting and recreation** are the two most important features and facilities for locals (55% and 52% respectively). Coming in directly **behind this, in third and fourth position, is being able to walk or cycle safely** (31% and 23% respectively).
- **'Changes to the surrounding road network' is the complementary initiative most preferred by the general community (28%)** and comes in second behind cycling / pedestrian facilities for locals.
- **47%** rank finding out more about **'how the new road connects with other roads in the area'** within the top three topics for more detailed discussion.

# Engagement outcomes

Your feedback is being used to help us evaluate and refine the Western Distributor proposal. Should the proposal move to the next stage of the Victorian Government's assessment, feedback will also inform further design development, procurement planning, contractor performance requirements and the scope of technical studies.

## How we're using feedback to improve the proposal

We have listened to feedback and done more detailed technical work to refine some elements of the proposal design. The refinements have a strong focus on how the Western Distributor will connect with the West Gate Freeway, Port of Melbourne and CityLink.

A key change includes the movement of the southern portal location which will help move more trucks out of local streets through the addition of on and off ramps at Hyde Street, but will involve new impacts at Hyde Street Reserve and surrounding areas. In response to this, we have identified some new opportunities to add to open space, improve local amenity by removing overhead power lines and upgrade cycling and walking connections, including Federation Trail.

Engagement activities are underway during September and October 2015 to provide time for more discussion to assist in the ongoing development of the proposal and before decisions are made about progressing the Western Distributor proposal.

Other key considerations in response to community and stakeholder feedback include:

- **Merging and weaving** is a major cause of delays on the West Gate Freeway so we're looking at options to better manage traffic flow, attract more trucks away from local streets and keep Melbourne's M1 corridor moving.
- **Yarraville Gardens** is a key community asset and we're looking at ways to move the northern tunnel entry-exit further away.
- **Connections with Appleton Dock Road and Dock Link Road** are being considered to help more trucks use the Western Distributor for trips to the Port. We're also investigating the option of a port connection with Mackenzie Road.

- The Western Distributor will provide **new freeway to freeway connections with CityLink** while maintaining existing movements in all directions between Footscray Road and CityLink.
- **City connectivity options**, including surface road and intersection improvements, are being further evaluated.
- Proposed **Webb Dock access improvements** will complement previously planned State works.

## Preferences for future engagement

Local interest in the Western Distributor has been high and there is a desire to see more detail and discuss key elements of the proposal.

Most of those who participated in Phase One engagement activities – both online and through community sessions – said they would like to be kept informed and involved in future consultation.

Community priorities for further discussion are (in priority order of top three, as ranked by survey participants):

- The location of tunnel entries/exits and ventilation structures
- Road connections
- Expected changes in traffic movements
- Air quality / tunnel ventilation
- Traffic noise
- Opportunities to improve cycling, walking and other facilities
- Construction impacts
- Design and appearance of the road and structures.

## Next steps

The Victorian Government is assessing the Western Distributor proposal under its Market-Led Proposal Interim Guidelines and is expected to decide by the end of 2015 whether to progress to the next stage of assessment.

Should the assessment process continue, Transurban will move to the next phase in our Planning and Engagement Process, which was published with the proposal in April 2015 and detailed on page 5 of this report.

We are developing this proposal in consultation with community and stakeholders and remaining open about changes that affect those who live, work and travel in Melbourne's west.

We believe that an iterative design process, whereby we share our ideas, seek feedback, then consolidate and refine our design, will help us get this project right. We will continue open discussions with Government, councils, residents and local groups, and share updates on what's happening, as we progress the design.

There will be many opportunities to contribute to the proposal's development, including informing the requirements for the construction tender and input into the urban design principles and objectives.

Through the formal planning and approvals process, there will also be opportunities for community and stakeholder feedback through written public submissions and an opportunity to present to the planning panel.

We would like to thank everyone who has participated in the engagement process to date, and we encourage your continued involvement as we keep working on the Western Distributor proposal