

Sydney Road

Sydney Road is one of the biggest local issues we hear from people about. It is a source of constant complaints about near misses and crashes with drivers and it's inaccessibility to locals who travel by bike. Sydney Road is surrounded by people, especially families, who use bicycles as part of their everyday trips. Local schools have very high active travel rates and yet it is rare to see these people, families especially, shopping or visiting Sydney Road.

Shopping strips like Sydney Road rely overwhelmingly on locals for business, despite 'destination' shops like the wedding precinct, and this is reflected in how people currently get to Sydney Road. Sydney Road is also unusual in having so much parking available in and around the shops aside from on Sydney Road itself.

An independent survey commissioned by Victoria Walks found that in Sydney Road Brunswick only 20% of visitors had driven to Sydney Road, with most arriving on foot or by PT. In Coburg 35% of people drive, (on a rainy day) with most arriving on foot or PT. When you see the low figures for those who arrive by bike, and compare them to the figures for how many people are arriving by bike at local schools and the station and commuting to work by bike, you can see that traders are missing out.

<https://www.victoriawalks.org.au/Assets/Files/Walking%20%20transport%20FINAL.pdf>

In the same survey traders overestimate the number of people arriving by car. This is not particular to Sydney Road but a phenomenon that has been documented at shopping strips worldwide. Most likely because traders and their employees tend to arrive by car.

The VicRoads Research Study into options for Sydney Road found overwhelming support amongst the local community for a design that provided protection and prioritised people travelling on foot and bicycles and that provided accessible tramstops.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56ab7799cbced6c7e8d74a40/t/5ec1e6701eba8512a9472966/1589765762308/CS003371+Final+A.pdf>

Some similar case studies to Sydney Road:

This Heart Foundation study detailing the retail impact of removing parking spaces to improve walking and cycling access includes many overseas examples but also refers to **Acland Street, St Kilda and High St Northcote**.

<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/getmedia/5a0dfe57-0d70-4ffd-be95-fc38092b7ebe/Good-for-business.pdf>

Re Acland Street.page 22: The traders realised that removing car spaces would only affect around a quarter of their customers (and at least some of those would return on other forms of transport, anyway). But more importantly, they recognised that their largest and most loyal customer group was actually local.

Re High Street,Northcote.page 23: Visitors to Northcote Shopping precinct place a higher level of importance on cleanliness and maintenance, pedestrian access and safety than business respondents who thought car parking was most important.

- *Business respondents tended to overestimate car-based travel and underestimate walking and public transport use amongst visitors to Northcote Shopping precinct.*

This study reaffirms in an Australian context the overemphasis placed on car travel and parking by business respondents compared to shoppers.

Page 20 has details of a study re the spend of people of arriving by bicycle compared to people arriving by car,for Lygon St, Carlton. This has since been found to be true in many other places.

Toronto Canada

Measuring the Local Economic Impacts of Replacing On-Street Parking With Bike Lanes

A Toronto (Canada) Case Study

These surveys focused on four metrics:

- (1) spending, - increased
- (2) customer counts, - The number of customers rose.
- (3) visit frequency, -the frequency of visit rose
- (4) vacancies. – stayed steady

“We find all indicators point to increased economic activity on Bloor Street following the installation of the bike lane,”

“the share of visitors arriving by car specifically to shop did not change significantly after the bike lane’s installation, and even rose slightly, from 6 to 8 percent. Drivers did report more difficulty parking after the change, but harder to park doesn’t necessarily mean harder to shop.”

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01944363.2019.1638816?journalCode=rjpa2>

[Study of 14 corridors in 6 cities -- Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Memphis, Minneapolis and Indianapolis by Portland State University](#)

“in cases where a motor vehicle travel lane or parking was removed to make room for a bike lane, food sales and employment tended to go up, according to the report.”

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/04/200422151318.htm>

Vancouver, Canada

Downtown Business Improvement Association Vancouver initially opposed installation of bike lanes on the grounds that removing on street parking would lead to a decline in business. But a 2011 economic impact study commissioned by the city and the Downtown Vancouver BIA, showed most people walked, cycled or took transit to get downtown. Just 20 per cent of customers arrived by car

-cyclists spend as much as people arriving by car and over the medium term, they spend more. This is because they are local shoppers.

<https://www.ibigroup.com/ibi-insights/bike-lanes-good-small-business/>

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