

- c) A comparison of local councils which have implemented cat curfews, voluntary cat containment strategies and strategies to de-sex un-owned/semi-owned cats for the number of cats being impounded, the number of complaints about roaming or nuisance cats, the number of cats being returned to owners, the number of cats being adopted and the number of cats being surrendered. Some councils which could be compared include City of Yarra Ranges, City of Casey and City of Banyule.
- d) Proposals on and recommended funding for:
  - i) A program of targeted de-sexing of semi-owned and unowned cats, including:
    - encouraging people who feed community cats to take ownership of and responsibility for the community cats that they feed with the offer of free de-sexing, free registration and free vaccination.
    - targeting hot spots for semi-owned or unowned cats with door knocks
  - ii) A program of education which including education about methods such as bed-time feeding to contain cats overnight as well as encouraging the use of and assistance with construction of cat enclosures.
  - iii) Resource citizen scientists to survey and get data on locations of threatened and endangered species in Merri-bek council area to inform areas to focus on for semi-owned and unowned cats, as well as cat owners who have cats which do predate.
- e) Notes that reducing local cat populations via free desexing is a proven mechanism to reduce the local cat population. In this context, council will provide an analysis of the cost of the above proposals, particularly free desexing, in relation to the costs of running the Epping Animal Welfare Centre (EAWC), given that free desexing will likely reduce impound rates at the EAWC, and therefore, running costs.

Carried unanimously

9.17 pm Cr Carli Hannan left the meeting.

## **7.1 ELEVATED RAIL THROUGH BRUNSWICK - COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO STATE GOVERNMENT PROJECT**

### **Executive Summary**

In October 2022 Council welcomed the Victorian Government's announcement of their plans to remove 8 level crossings on the Upfield Rail Line between Park Street, Parkville and Albion Street, Brunswick by 2027. An elevated train line, with new train stations, will replace the existing train line. This new elevated section of the Upfield Rail Line will connect with the new Bell to Moreland station elevated section, creating over 4 kilometres of continuous elevated rail through the heart of the City of Merri-bek once complete.

Elevating rail through Brunswick is a project which has the potential to significantly transform our city for the better, making it more walkable and cyclable, creating significant new areas of green, functional open space, and strengthening the cultural and civic heart of Brunswick.

Achieving a project of this scale in a such an established area will also mean significant disruption with road, train and shared user path closures which will impact on local pedestrians, commuters, businesses and visitors. In addition, there are important local assets associated with the Upfield line in this section, with many mature trees and heritage elements to consider.

An initial scan of issues and opportunities, intended to act as a starting point to engage with the community around their aspirations and priorities, is attached to this paper as Attachment 1.

Council's role in level crossing removal projects is to facilitate and liaise with the State Government and their delivery team, to advise on local issues, aspirations and policy, and to be the voice of the local community throughout the project.

Council is seeking community input at this early stage to inform a position paper for consideration in April 2023. This position paper will capture the community's vision for the area impacted by the project and will be form the basis for Council's advocacy to the State Government in a way that will reflect community expectation and achieve the best possible outcomes for Brunswick.

This paper seeks Council endorsement of the approach to engage with the community from December 2022 to March 2023, to gain insight into their vision and what is most important to protect, enhance and create through this project.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Notes the work to identify initial issues and opportunities (captured in Attachment 1) presented by the removal of 8 level crossings and the elevation of the rail line in Brunswick, as announced in September 2022 by the State Government.
2. Endorses the approach to community engagement outlined in this paper, to seek the views of the Merri-bek community in relation to this major project.
3. Notes that the findings from this engagement will form the basis for a position paper outlining the community's vision and priorities for this project, both in its delivery phase, and in its outcomes, and that this position paper will form the basis for advocacy to the State Government throughout their delivery of the project.

### **Motion**

Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Harte seconded -

That Council:

1. Notes the work to identify initial issues and opportunities (captured in Attachment 1) presented by the removal of 8 level crossings and the elevation of the rail line in Brunswick, as announced in September 2022 by the State Government
2. Endorses the approach to community engagement outlined in this paper, to seek the views of the Merri-bek community in relation to this major project, including as stakeholders in the Community Engagement process Disability Advocacy Groups such as Disability Resources Disabled Motorist Australia, Pedestrian Groups Walk on Moreland, and Older Persons Advocacy groups.
3. Notes that the findings from this engagement will form the basis for a position paper outlining the community's vision and priorities for this project, both in its delivery phase, and in its outcomes, and that this position paper will form the basis for advocacy to the State Government throughout their delivery of the project
4. Notes the concerns and issues raised by community members at a public meeting held on Sunday 13 November 2022 at Brunswick Town Hall attended by 24 people, as outlined in the document circulated on 7 December 2022.

5. Notes the large community meeting held by Brunswick Residents Network on Monday 5 December 2022 attended by over 50 people, demonstrating the significant community interest in this project and the need for meaningful community consultation.
6. Acknowledges the growing community concern about the possibility of two new stations instead of three, and seeks information from the Level Crossing Removal Project to assist community understanding and inform Council's advocacy position.
7. Endorses the establishment of a Brunswick – Upfield Rail Corridor Roundtable chaired by Cr Tapinos that will be convened as required to address specific thematic needs, with a flexible membership that brings together local community members and relevant experts at key points to explore issues as the development of the Upfield Corridor Community Vision progresses.
8. Requires that nominees seeking to participate in the Brunswick – Upfield Rail Corridor Roundtable must be able to demonstrate:
  - a) Strong community networks and linkages or willingness to build these connections;
  - b) An ability to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the community;
  - c) A willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and unbiased manner;
  - d) An ability to look beyond personal interests for the benefit of the community and residents of the City of Merri-bek;
  - e) A demonstrated commitment to participative and consultative processes; and
  - f) Endorsement by their own organisation (if applicable).

### **Amendment**

Cr Riley moved, Cr Conlan seconded -

7. Endorses the establishment of a Brunswick – Upfield Rail Corridor Roundtable co-chaired by Cr Panopoulos, Mayor and Cr Tapinos to be convened as required to address specific thematic needs, with a flexible membership that brings together local community members and relevant experts at key points to explore issues as the development of the Upfield Corridor Community Vision progresses.

**Carried**

### **Amendment**

Cr Pavlidis moved -

7. Endorses the establishment of a Brunswick – Upfield Rail Corridor Roundtable co-chaired by Cr Panopoulos, Mayor and Cr Tapinos, and a Government MP to be convened as required to address specific thematic needs, with a flexible membership that brings together local community members and relevant experts at key points to explore issues as the development of the Upfield Corridor Community Vision progresses.

*Amendment was acceptable to the mover and the seconder and incorporated into the substantive motion.*

### **Resolution**

**Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Harte seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Notes the work to identify initial issues and opportunities (captured in Attachment 1) presented by the removal of 8 level crossings and the elevation of the rail line in Brunswick, as announced in September 2022 by the State**

**Government.**

2. **Endorses the approach to community engagement outlined in this paper, to seek the views of the Merri-bek community in relation to this major project, including as stakeholders in the Community Engagement process Disability Advocacy Groups such as Disability Resources Disabled Motorist Australia, Pedestrian Groups Walk on Moreland, and Older Persons Advocacy groups.**
3. **Notes that the findings from this engagement will form the basis for a position paper outlining the community's vision and priorities for this project, both in its delivery phase, and in its outcomes, and that this position paper will form the basis for advocacy to the State Government throughout their delivery of the project**
4. **Notes the concerns and issues raised by community members at a public meeting held on Sunday 13 November 2022 at Brunswick Town Hall attended by 24 people, as outlined in the document circulated on 7 December 2022.**
5. **Notes the large community meeting held by Brunswick Residents Network on Monday 5 December 2022 attended by over 50 people, demonstrating the significant community interest in this project and the need for meaningful community consultation.**
6. **Acknowledges the growing community concern about the possibility of two new stations instead of three, and seeks information from the Level Crossing Removal Project to assist community understanding and inform Council's advocacy position.**
7. **Endorses the establishment of a Brunswick – Upfield Rail Corridor Roundtable co-chaired by Cr Panopoulos, Mayor and Cr Tapinos, and a Government MP to be convened as required to address specific thematic needs, with a flexible membership that brings together local community members and relevant experts at key points to explore issues as the development of the Upfield Corridor Community Vision progresses.**
8. **Requires that nominees seeking to participate in the Brunswick – Upfield Rail Corridor Roundtable must be able to demonstrate:**
  - a) **Strong community networks and linkages or willingness to build these connections;**
  - b) **An ability to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the community;**
  - c) **A willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and unbiased manner;**
  - d) **An ability to look beyond personal interests for the benefit of the community and residents of the City of Merri-bek;**
  - e) **A demonstrated commitment to participative and consultative processes; and**
  - f) **Endorsement by their own organisation (if applicable).**

9.35 pm *Cr Carli Hannan returned to the meeting before the various vote.*

**Carried**

9.38 pm *Cr Bolton left the meeting.*