



12.2 SOUTH MELBOURNE MARKET PROPOSAL TO CLOSE CECIL STREET THIS SUMMER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: KYLIE BENNETTS, GENERAL MANAGER, CITY GROWTH AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 To seek support for the partial closure of Cecil Street from 3 January to 24 April 2022.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The South Melbourne Market Advisory Committee recommend the implementation of a partial road closure on Cecil Street (northbound lane between York and Coventry Streets) from 4 January to 24 April 2022 to offer an outdoor dining precinct which will support the Market's Cecil Street hospitality traders, other traders within the Market and provide a public space for the community that can host smaller events and activations.

2.2 The Market intends to still hold the 2022 Port Phillip Mussel and Jazz Festival on the March Labour Day weekend. The scale of the event will be dependent on COVID-19 restrictions that are in place at the time of the event and available funding.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Approves the partial closure of Cecil Street (north lane between York and Coventry Streets) from 3 January to 24 April 2022.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

4.1 The Market would like to create a public space for seating and activations on Cecil Street as done in early 2021, with a partial street closure between York and Coventry Streets from early January to mid-April 2022.

4.2 The Market are of the view this will maximise potential public and hospitality seats at the Market for 16 weeks and result in an enhanced experience for visitors, traders and the wider community.

4.3 The Market intends to hold the 2022 Port Phillip Mussel and Jazz Festival on the March Labour Day weekend. However, the scale of this event may vary from previous years based on COVID-19 government restrictions at the time and available funding.

4.4 The South Melbourne Market are seeking additional funding for the Cecil Street closure and the 2022 Mussel and Jazz Festival from Council through the State Government grant for outdoor activation.

4.5 Additional funding will determine the scale of the 2022 Mussel and Jazz Festival (and COVID-19 government restrictions) and level of presentation and activation on Cecil Street that will be possible.

- 4.6 Alternative options were considered to expand public space and encourage more customers to the Market to assist with Market recovery from the pandemic such as the roof top car park, York Street and the York Street car park but it was determined that the Cecil Street precinct provided the best opportunity for traders and was proven to attract more customers as evidenced by the closure early this year.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 Two pieces of market research were undertaken, with onsite attendees and residents/workers/businesses located within a 5km radius of the site when the closure was in place from January to April in 2021.
- 5.2 The two surveys produced differing results with attendee attitudes very favourable, while residents and businesses had more divergent attitudes at the extremes of being either very favourable or very unfavourable.
- 5.3 ATTENDEE RESEARCH
- 5.3.1 Attendee feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting that the space exceeded expectations.
- 5.3.2 49.3% identified that visiting the new space was solely, or partly, the reason for their visit that day. Of that group, 33.9% said that the new public space was the main reason for their visit, suggesting that it brought a new audience to the precinct who may otherwise not have visited.
- 5.3.3 66.5% of attendees felt that this public space was beneficial for the South Melbourne area with 97.8% saying it was in the right location.
- 5.4 LOCAL RESIDENT & BUSINESS RESEARCH
- 5.4.1 Respondents of the market research survey were predominantly residents of South Melbourne (76.5%), followed by those working in South Melbourne (23.5%) and business owners (11.4%).
- 5.4.2 When considering the statement '*The creation of this space is a positive for traders, residents and visitors*' 48.7% agreed to a great extent and 21.7% were at the other end of the agreement scale stating they did not agree at all. Residents were more likely (23.7%) to disagree with this statement than business owners (18.8%) or workers (17.6%).
- 5.5 Should the Council approve the Cecil St closure, communications to local residents and businesses would be distributed well in advance of the activation in order to allow time to listen to and consider concerns.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 N/A

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 It is envisaged that traders looking to utilise the partial closure would make a financial contribution to the activation area by investing in a 'parklet-like' space for their customers, which could be in the vicinity of \$10-20K per trader based on experiences from the 2021 activation.
- 7.2 The cost of ensuring the partial road closure is appropriately managed is estimated at \$40K (which includes appropriate safety requirements and traffic management work),



cleaning is estimated at \$10K and it is envisaged that an amount of \$15K would be allocated to activate common areas.

- 7.3 The Market has requested consideration from Council through the State Government grant for outdoor activation for the Cecil Street closure and the 2022 Mussel and Jazz Festival.
- 7.4 With respect to the 2022 Mussel and Jazz Festival, the Market would also work with traders around partnership and activation opportunities.
- 7.5 The size and scale of the 2022 Mussel and Jazz Festival would be dependent upon COVID-19 government restrictions at the time in addition to available funding.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 N/A

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 The Market Advisory Committee recommendation is to create a public space for seating and activations on Cecil Street as done in 2021, with a partial street closure between York and Coventry Streets from early January to mid-April 2022. This recommendation will maximise potential public and hospitality seats at the Market for 16 weeks and result in an enhanced experience for our visitors, traders and the majority of the wider community.

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 9.2 Liveable Port Phillip – South Melbourne is a great place to live, and the Market community can access more high-quality public space on their visit to the Market and South Melbourne precinct.
- 9.3 Vibrant Port Phillip – South Melbourne Market Cecil Street traders can flourish and thrive again and maintain their reputation as one of Melbourne’s multicultural culinary hubs.

10. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

10.1 TIMELINE

10.1.1 November:

- Commence road closure infrastructure requirements
- Commence programming
- Notification of Cecil St partial road closure to local businesses and residents

10.1.2 3 January – 24 April:

- Road closure and activation of space

11. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

- 11.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil