

Better West Inc. submission to the Infrastructure Victoria Draft Strategy

April 2025



About Better West:

Better West Inc. is a group of residents who work together to create healthy and resilient neighbourhoods in Spotswood, South Kingsville and the surrounding areas, including the Precinct 15 development in Altona North.

We work to see that as our population grows with the change from industrial to dense residential zoning, the redevelopment contributes to:

- better bike, pedestrian and public transport,
- safer streets,
- active and green open spaces,
- cleaner air, and
- better-connected communities.

We strive to work cooperatively and support neighbouring groups, causes, and projects that share a purpose.

Support for Draft Recommendation 11:

Better West's submission supports draft recommendation 11: **extend metropolitan trains and run more services in Melbourne's west**. Specifically, as a group who advocates for healthy and resilient population growth in the Altona North area, Better West strongly supports the second part of this recommendation to: **Assess the delivery of a new train station at Altona North, accompanied by land rezoning.**"

Better West formally supports the reinstatement of Paisley train station

Long-term support from the Hobsons Bay community for the reinstatement of Paisley train station:

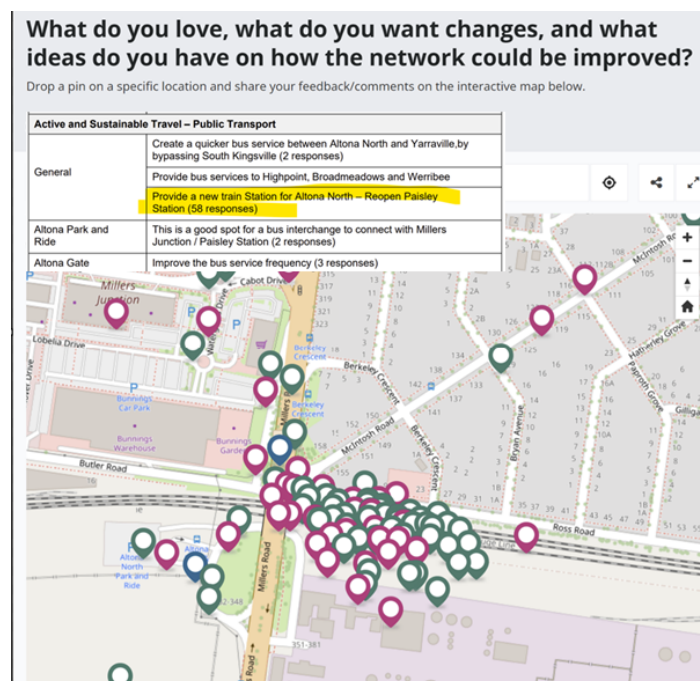
The area of Altona North bounded by the rail line, Mason Street, and Millers Road is called Paisley. There was a train station at Paisley on Ross Road near Millers Road. However, Paisley Station was closed in 1983 when the Altona Loop opened.

The local community and Hobsons Bay City Council have long advocated for reinstating Paisley train Station. Given that there was a station here in the past, some infrastructure,, including the area needed for a station platform and a surrounding commercially zoned shipping strip, is still retained on the site and building a new station here is likely to be relatively low cost and low impact on the surrounding community.

In 2020, when HBCC consulted on its Local Area Movement Plans, the community's request for the reinstatement of the Train station was the most requested item.

In 2022, in its lead-up to the Stage Government election, HBCC built the case for the reinstatement of Paisley Station through a rail plan developed by the Rail Futures Institute—the East-West Metro Rail plan.

The need for the train station is also noted in HBCC's draft Industrial Land Management Strategy. And, most recently, HBCC noted in its Proposed Annual Budget for 2025 /26 that seeking support from the State Government for the reinstatement of Paisley Station in Altona North is a key advocacy priority for the Council. The document states that this project will bring economic, environmental, and social benefits to the growing Hobsons Bay municipality.



HBCCs 2020 consultation on Local Area Movement plans received significant support for the reinstatement of Paisley Train Station

Opportunities to rezone land:

The existing residential area in Paisley was developed in the 1960s and 70s. Since then, the housing density of the Paisley area has not significantly increased. This is largely because the proximity of the Mobil Refinery put this residential area within the inner and outer safety zones of the Hazardous Materials Facility. This meant that planning applications to subdivide and increase density in Paisley have not historically been supported.

The lack of public transport serving the Paisley area since the train station closed in 1983 has also been a factor influencing the zoning of the area. This was cited by Hobsons Bay Councillors when endorsing Amendment C131 of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, IN 2021, as a limiting factor that influenced the ability to allow higher density in the area and classification of the nearby Activity Centres. Councillors endorsement of the planning scheme amendment in 2021 noted the need to advocate for the reinstatement of an Altona North train Station to influence the zoning.

Closure of the Mobil refinery:

Mobil's Hazardous Material Facility permanently closed in 2021. The closure of the Mobil refinery removes the hazard from the residential area. This should allow the approval of planning permits to increase the population and zoning changes to allow higher-density housing in the Paisley area. Given the lower level of development in the Paisley area, there is likely to be an opportunity to consolidate a significant amount of land for higher-density development.

Hobson Bay City Council's draft Industrial Land Management Strategy:

The refinery's closure also opens opportunities for zoning changes of this industrial land. [HBCCs Industrial Land Management Strategy](#), which is expected to be finalised in 2025 makes recommendations for the [Williamstown North Industrial Precinct](#), including:

- Investigation of options to update SUZ2 due to the refinery operation ceasing in 2021,
- Renewal and rehabilitation of Exxon Mobil landholdings to benefit the local economy and local jobs, and;
- State investment in a commuter rail line and a train station to service the industrial precinct, Millers Junction and the broader residential community.

Better West believes that these recommendations in the draft industrial Land Management Strategy align neatly with Draft Recommendation 11, and the state government and HBCC should work together to conduct these investigations.

It is generally considered that the refinery land will be contaminated, and rehabilitation costs will prevent any use other than industrial. However, the recent state government Plan for Victoria the target to Hobsons Bay to provide additional 22,500 new residential dwellings. This ambitious target may force a rethink of this assumption.. As part of the proposal for a new Altona North train station, perhaps investigate whether rehabilitation of this refinery land for a high-density residential precinct is possible.

Park and Ride bus interchange land:

If the Mobil refinery land cannot be rezoned for residential use due to contamination, the current site of the Park and Ride facility on Millers Road could be investigated for high-density residential use. While a Park and Ride and bus interchange facility will be needed as part of a train station precinct, this facility could be moved from its current location to the current Mobil land which is immediately adjacent to the Paisley Station site. It should be noted that the current Park and Ride facility is close to an ecologically important grassland in the catchment of the Kororoit Creek, and this should limit the extent and nature of development in this area.

Improved cycling infrastructure in the area:

In the areas surrounding the site of an Altona North Train station improvements are soon to be made to cycling infrastructure which would also increase the accessibility of residents to access a train station.

With the recent granting of a federal funding contribution, HBCC is commencing the construction, over 3 years, of Stages 4 and 5 of the Kororoit Creek shared cycling and walking path. This will create a much-needed off-road cycling connection from Altona to Altona North and to the Federation trail, connecting cyclists to a dedicated path into the CBD and other areas. The trail along Kororoit Creek will pass close to the site of a new Altona North train station and this will provide opportunity for better cycling connections in this area where they are currently lacking.

A sealed shared cycling and walking path is currently being constructed along Ross Road with plans to connect this bike path to Millers Junction. This path will provide significantly improved access from Newport to an Altona North Train Station.