

A State of Walking



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Acknowledgments

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Ministerial Foreword

The Victorian Government is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Victorians. We want all people to get the most out of life by taking advantage of the simple things we can do each day to stay happy, healthy and active – like walking.

Walking is the most accessible form of physical activity. It means different things to different people. Walking is a form of exercise, transport or social activity. Over the past decade more and more Victorians have made changes to include walking as part of their everyday routine. People walk to explore their neighbourhoods, to spend time with friends, to pick up their children from school or to simply get fit.

Walking brings people together socially, improves health and helps to create a more sustainable environment. Most importantly, walking is an activity open to nearly everyone, regardless of age, socio-economic status or culture.

Since the forum *A Step Ahead* was held in November 2001, there has been continuing

dialogue between the Victorian Government, local governments and community groups about ways to promote walking. Now, in October 2006, Melbourne is hosting the seventh international *Walk21* conference on walking and liveable communities.

Go for your life is a Victorian Government initiative launched in November 2004. It is designed to encourage Victorians to become healthier and more active by promoting healthy eating and participation in a range of physical activities. *A State of Walking* highlights recent walking initiatives across Victoria and promotes a vision for walking in Victoria.

The Victorian Government is working across its own departments, and with local governments and community groups, to create vibrant strong communities. It wants to encourage healthier and more active Victorians, and to witness the emergence of revitalised, less congested neighbourhood streets.

We look forward to walking with you along this path.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Madden'.

The Honourable Justin Madden MLC
Minister for Sport and Recreation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Batchelor'.

The Honourable Peter Batchelor MLA
Minister for Transport

Vision



The Victorian Government wants Victoria to be a world leader in the development of healthy and active communities. Our aim is to create and support a culture and environment where:

- more people choose walking as the primary means of making local journeys as part of a safer, healthier and more sustainable lifestyle;
- more people choose to participate in walking for recreation; and
- there are more inclusive and attractive places, which encourage people to walk, enriching their experience of being out and about in their community.

Walking – the benefits

- Regular, moderate activity, such as walking, improves health and fitness, regardless of age.
- Walking helps prevent and manage chronic diseases such as stroke, diabetes and heart disease.
- Walking promotes improved mental wellbeing and opportunities for social interaction.
- More people on the streets makes for safer, more vibrant neighbourhoods.
- Walking is the most affordable and equitable means of transport for local journeys.
- Walking is often a quicker means of transport for local journeys.
- Choosing to walk, rather than using the car, reduces pollution and creates a more sustainable environment.
- Walkable cities and towns attract tourists and bring economic benefits.
- A good walking environment supports increased public transport usage.
- Suburbs designed for walking promote stronger, safer, more socially cohesive communities.



Walk21

The first *Walk21* conference was held in 2000. *Walk21* seeks to support, encourage and inspire professionals to evolve the best policies and implement best-practice initiatives that will create and promote environments where people choose to walk.

Melbourne will host the seventh international *Walk21* conference in October 2006. The Victorian Government is the major sponsor. The conference will focus on four main themes designed to support the next steps to bring walking into the mainstream:

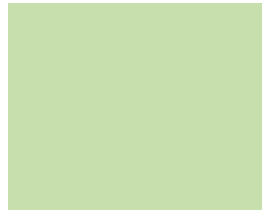
1. Making walking possible – designing communities so walking is safe, easy and attractive.
2. Making the choice – marketing walking to the community.
3. Making the case – building the case for walking from social, environmental and economic perspectives.
4. Making it happen – influencing and generating commitment, partnerships and momentum.

Walk21 2006 will gather experts from around the world to look at ways to improve walking opportunities and help more communities enjoy the health, community, environmental and economic benefits that walking brings.

For more information about *Walk21* go to www.walk21.com

For more information about Melbourne *Walk21* 2006 go to www.melbournewalk21.com.au

A Collective response



We all have a role to play in ensuring all Victorians have more opportunities to walk. Through integrated planning and delivery of programs and services, professionals across a range of fields such as health, community services, urban design and land use planning, recreation, road safety, transport planning, engineering, tourism, crime prevention and education can help to bring about the social and environmental changes required to increase walking participation in Victoria.

While the State Government has been responsible for the development and funding of a variety of walking initiatives,

many local governments and community organisations are leading the way by creating more walkable physical and social environments in their own areas. These initiatives have been developed and implemented to address the specific needs of the local environment and the aspirations of the community.

These initiatives are frequently multidisciplinary, ranging across various sectors including urban design, travel behaviour, public infrastructure, road safety, municipal health planning and recreation. An integrated approach delivers a wider range of benefits to communities.

Case study: Green Light project – campaign to improve pedestrian priority at signalled crossings on busy roads

Goal: to change signal timings and phasings at pedestrian crossings in order to increase the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

The Walking School Bus program has been adopted by 75 per cent of Victorian councils to promote walking as the preferred way to travel to and from school. Ongoing community concerns about the safety of crossing some major roads led to the Green Light project, a study of six signalled crossings used by Walking School Bus groups, in Port Phillip, Bayside and Greater Geelong. This study was funded by the City of Port Phillip and VicHealth.

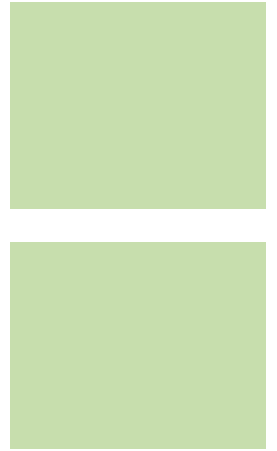
The study timed how long it took for people of all ages, including children in Walking School Bus groups, to cross these major intersections. It also considered pedestrian behaviour and perceptions associated with the crossing task. The study found that pedestrians needed longer green light times and a head start before turning traffic moved through the intersection in order to cross the road safely.

These findings emphasised the need for pedestrian priority at signalled crossings on major roads and for traffic signal times to be adjusted, where possible, with a new crossing time standard to ensure sufficient time to complete the crossing. As a result, a series of recommendations was put forward, and changes to signals have been implemented at newly installed signal crossing in the City of Port Phillip. A further 15 sites have been identified for progressive implementation of the Green Light project's recommendations.

Where to next? The challenge will be to introduce these recommendations to other signalised crossings with the aim of increasing safe and active travel to school across the state. Green Light has shown how a new style of partnership between local governments and the State Government has the potential to deliver real benefits to the walking environment.

www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/walking_well.html
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Content.aspx?topicID=251

A collective response



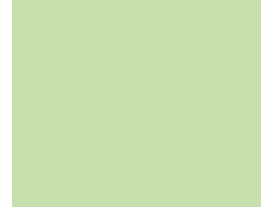
There are a number of important factors which affect whether or not people will walk. These include¹:

- Personal safety
- Time
- Direct and convenient access to locations
- Road safety
- Health issues
- Social inclusion
- Engineering standards
- Good walking environments
- Public transport stop locations and waiting facilities
- Ability to walk to school
- Access to activity centres and shops from home and other arrival points, such as car parks
- Encouragement to walk to work
- Accessibility for people of all abilities.

¹ R Tolley, *Providing for pedestrians: principles and guidelines for improving pedestrian access to destinations and urban spaces*, Victorian Government, Department of Infrastructure, July 2003.

T Litman, *Accessibility: Defining, Evaluating and Improving Accessibility*, Victorian Transport Policy Institute, 2003.

A walking public



Walking for health

Walking plays an important role in people participating in their communities. This simple activity brings people out into their neighbourhoods while helping them be healthier and happier.

Walking is integral to improving the vibrancy and liveability of any community. Walking within local neighbourhoods promotes increased face to face contact with neighbours, social interaction and consequently can encourage more people to get involved in local community activities. The potential health, community and environmental benefits of walking are significant.

Most people aren't aware of the range of benefits to be gained from walking for as little as 30 minutes a day. Walking helps to lose body fat, improve fitness and reduce the risk of lifestyle diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and some cancers. Overall, walking has been shown to improve general health and create an increased sense of wellbeing. It doesn't cost anything to walk and it is an activity available to almost everyone, regardless of cultural background or age.

Encouraging people to walk is vital at a time when obesity levels, particularly among children, are high and Victorians are leading increasingly sedentary lives.

An estimated 56 per cent of males and 38 per cent of females are currently overweight or obese in Victoria.² The challenge is to engage Victorians – particularly women, older people, people with special needs, Indigenous groups and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities – so that walking plays an integral part of their daily routine either as a mode of transport or as recreation.

Some initiatives have been specifically developed for particular groups, such as older Victorians. *A Physical Activity Guide for Senior Victorians* is one example. This guide promotes easily accessible activities, such as walking, explains the importance of being active, and offers handy tips on how to get started and where to gain support.³ Other initiatives have been implemented in a range of settings such as health services, early years, workplaces and schools.

² Victorian Population Health Survey, Rural and Regional Health and Aged Care Services, Victorian Government, Department of Human Services, Melbourne, June 2004.

³ The *Physical Activity Guide for Senior Victorians* is available electronically at www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au > Active Living > Activity > General Information.



Case study: Seniors Go for your life

Avid ballroom dancers, Bill and Gwen like to trip the light fantastic three or four times a week. But lately they have taken a few sidesteps away from the dance floor.

Over the past four years they have both experienced some health problems that would have floored most people. First, Gwen needed a total knee replacement. Three months after surgery and with extensive rehabilitation, Gwen was back on the dance floor.

Then Bill was diagnosed with polymyalgia, a painful muscle disease and he was advised to take up strength training to improve his flexibility and strength. Being a devoted couple, Gwen decided that she would attend training with Bill. There they heard about the Healthy and Active Living for Seniors walking group, run by Bendigo Community Health Services. Bill and Gwen were among the first participants to register.

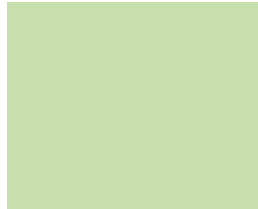
One month after joining the walking group, Gwen was back in hospital for a total knee replacement, this time for her right knee. Gwen's recovery was remarkable. Due largely to her determination, she was back two months later walking with two sticks and, then three months later using one stick and completing a 1.2 kilometre lap of the lake. Not long after this, Gwen and Bill were back on the dance floor every week.

Then, Bill was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Dancing went on hold again while Bill took a daily course of radiation therapy for six weeks. Bill was determined to continue walking with the group, so he arranged his therapy appointments around his walking. Now Bill has been given the all clear by his specialist, who attributes his excellent recovery to remaining physically active during that time. A further bonus – Bill also had his blood pressure medication reduced by half because of his regular walking and twice weekly strength training.

Bill and Gwen have found the walking group and the group leaders keep them motivated and provide them with a social outlet. They have made many friends in the group, enjoying their company and the benefits that come with being physically active. Still walking, still dancing, still training, Bill and Gwen are an inspiration and proof that a little bit of determination and commitment leads to a full and active life.

www.seniors.vic.gov.au

www.bchs.com.au



Case study: Walking School Bus

The Walking School Bus program operates across 60 councils and shires in metropolitan, regional and rural Victoria. It aims to address health concerns by providing exercise as part of the trip to school and to address environmental concerns by reducing the need to drive children to school. The program is funded by VicHealth and local governments and operates in partnership with local schools and community agencies.

The Walking School Bus isn't a vehicle but a fun, healthy and safe way for primary school children to travel to school. Children walk in a group with an adult driver at the front and an adult conductor at the rear. The bus travels along a set route, picking up passengers along the way at designated points. It is particularly popular with younger primary school children.

Moonee Valley City Council has six local primary schools taking part in the Walking School Bus program and another two schools are ready to get started. The program is operating at Ascot Vale, Avondale, Essendon North, Flemington, Kensington and St Peter's (East Keilor) primary schools. There are 91 volunteers involved and over 220 children registered. The council has also adopted a Cycling and Walking Strategy which aims to get people more active in the community.

Before each bus sets off, its routes are checked for safety defects. Safety precautions include brightly coloured vests, a 1:8 adult to child ratio, volunteer road safety training, police checks and registration.

The Walking School Bus Program has sown the seed for change in local councils and schools and has become a very positive part of school and community life.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Content.aspx?topicID=23

www.mooneevalley.vic.gov.au – search under 'Walking School Bus'

Walking for transport

Walking need not be limited to leisure or recreation. Walking can be integrated into the daily routine, including as a form of transport. In metropolitan Melbourne, data from the Victorian Activity and Travel Survey reveals that approximately 45 per cent of all trips are less than 2 km and about a third of these are made on foot. Therefore, while the car remains the dominant mode of travel, there is great scope for promoting walking for short trips, including walking to public transport.

By encouraging people to walk to the local school, to the local shops, to the bus stop or train station, walking can replace the car and become the new primary form of transport for short trips.

TravelSmart is a Victorian Government initiative, which encourages people to choose sustainable transport modes for travel both locally and further afield through its Communities, Workplaces and Education programs, and helps local governments develop and deliver behaviour change programs.

Case study: TravelSmart – new Darebin resident discovers her community on foot

When Balada moved into the Darebin municipality at Christmas time in 2003, she was eager to find out more about public transport in her area. Her neighbours gave her the phone number for TravelSmart and, since that time, Balada has become very involved in the wider community.

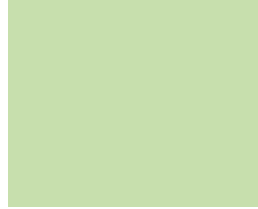
‘Before contacting TravelSmart I never travelled by Melbourne’s trains and I was terrified of the big train stations, like Flinders Street,’ she says. ‘I rang TravelSmart about a few timetables for transport in Darebin. I received everything I asked for and much, much more.’ Balada received extra information on buying and using a Metcard, as well as maps for trains, trams and buses, and information on local walking groups.

Balada is now a member of her local walking club, run by Preston Neighbourhood House, and a regular user of public transport. ‘I walk about two to three kilometres every day and take part in five kilometre walks with my walking club,’ she says. She uses the public transport network to take her out of Darebin into other suburbs, which she then explores on foot.

Balada says her fitness has improved since taking part in the TravelSmart initiative and she has learnt more about her community by walking and taking public transport.

www.travelsmart.vic.gov.au

A walking public



Case study: Peppertree Hill – older people and active transport

In a pilot project based at Peppertree Hill Retirement Village, Rowville, residents were introduced to walking, cycling and public transport as healthier transport alternatives. The project demonstrated that, if given information and opportunity, residents who had relied on their car were willing to use sustainable transport options. The report *Getting about without a car: guidelines for promoting healthy transport to older people* was prepared with residents to assist others to change their travel behaviour.

The project was funded by the Office of Senior Victorians and delivered by Environment Victoria in partnership with the City of Knox and Peppertree Hill Retirement Village.

www.envict.org.au – search under ‘Getting about without a car’

A walking public



Walking for recreation, tourism and pleasure

Attractive paths and tracks and a variety of destinations can enhance the experience of walking for recreation or pleasure. Walking in the company of others, including dog-walking, can be an enjoyable social pastime. Themed walks and links to tourist attractions provide opportunities for tourism for both visitors and local residents.

Therefore, a greater number of walking tracks, better planning and usage of open space, dissemination of information and support for walking groups can help to promote walking, while also building community participation and interaction.

Case study: Great Ocean Walk – an outstanding coastal walk

Whether you are an avid hiker, enjoy camping under the stars or like to take the family on scenic day walks, the Great Ocean Walk provides a challenging and diverse experience along some of Australia's most spectacular coastline.

The Great Ocean Walk, on Victoria's west coast, stretches 91 kilometres from Apollo Bay to Glenample Homestead (near the Twelve Apostles). It passes through the Great Otway and Port Campbell National Parks and overlooks the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park and Marengo Reefs Marine Sanctuary.

The Great Ocean Walk has been designed so that walkers can 'step on and step off' the trail at a number of places, completing short, day or overnight hikes. This means that you can walk during the day and take advantage of local accommodation and restaurant options, or camp overnight at one of the picturesque camping sites.

Take the walk and enjoy spectacular coastal and forest scenery including rocky platforms, sheltered beaches, pristine estuaries, tall forests, heathland and coastal woodland.

There is also the opportunity to see a range of Australian wildlife including kangaroos, wallabies, echidnas and koalas. Look to the skies and see parrots, cockatoos, eagles, owls and many different sea birds. Stop at one of the many coastal lookouts along the track and you may see dolphins riding the waves or, from June to September, migrating whales.

Pull on your hiking boots, grab some water, sunscreen and a hat and experience the Great Ocean Walk for yourself!

www.greatoceanwalk.com.au

A walking public



Further information

Better Health Channel – www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Federation of Victoria Walking Clubs – www.vicwalk.org.au

Go for your life – www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au

Kinect Australia – www.kinectaustralia.com.au

National Heart Foundation – www.heartfoundation.com.au

Port Phillip Walking – www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/walking.phtml

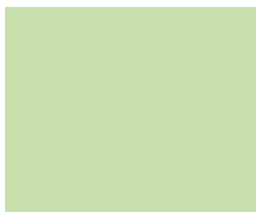
The Walking Club of Victoria – home.vicnet.net.au/~walkvic/

TravelSmart – www.travelsmart.vic.gov.au

Walking Clubs of Victoria – (Outdoor Recreation Centre) – www.orc.org.au

Walking School Bus – www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Content.aspx?topicID=23

Walking Trails of Victoria – www.visitvictoria.com.au
(click on Nature and Wildlife > Outdoor Activities > Walking and Cycling)



Further reading

Be Active Australia: a framework for health sector action for physical activity 2005–2010, National Public Health Partnership, Melbourne, 2005.

Getting about without a car: guidelines for promoting healthy transport to older people, Environment Victoria, 2004.

A Bauman, B Bellew, P Vita, W Brown, N Owen, *Getting Australia active: towards better practice for the promotion of physical activity*, National Public Health Partnership, Melbourne, March 2002.

Go for your life: a physical activity guide for senior Victorians, Sport and Recreation Victoria and Office of Senior Victorians, Department for Victorian Communities, Melbourne, 2005.

National physical activity guidelines for adults, Federal Department of Health and Aged Care, 1999.

National physical activity guidelines for children (5-12), Federal Department of Health and Aged Care, December 2004.

National physical activity guidelines for young people (12-18), Federal Department of Health and Aged Care, December 2004.

Safer cycling and walking toolkit for local government, Bicycle Victoria, 2004.

Victorians' participation in exercise, recreation and sport (2001–2002), Sport and Recreation Victoria, Melbourne, 2003.

Victorian population health survey, Rural and Regional Health and Aged Care Services, Victorian Government, Department of Human Services, Melbourne, June 2004.

A walking environment



A safe and accessible transport system

Almost every trip involves walking to some extent. By improving transport systems and developing supportive environments for pedestrians, people will be encouraged to choose walking more often. Environments can be assessed against a number of criteria for their 'walkability', which may be defined as 'the extent to which walking is readily available to the public as a safe, connected, accessible and pleasant activity'.⁴ This includes opportunities to rest and to enjoy new experiences while walking.⁵

The Victorian Government aims to protect the liveability of established areas and to increasingly concentrate major development in strategic sites such as activity centres and underdeveloped land. Liveability can be achieved in part by giving more priority to walking throughout the planning stages of proposed structure plans, activity centres and transit cities; and also when implementing changes in the transport system. Policies such as *Melbourne 2030* provide a strategic framework for the development of how local government can enhance the walking environment for the community.

Roads, public transport, walking and cycling trails, modal integration, infrastructure, public perceptions, behavioural change, technology and cost all come together when considering how best to implement a safe and accessible transport system – and all present challenges that must be addressed. Within this system, walking can be positioned as a key transport mode, which can replace short car trips or form part of a public transport journey.

Providing for walking requires transport system designers to specifically include pedestrians in their thinking. *Encouraging walking: advice to local authorities*⁶ recommends using the '5 Cs' to assist designers to determine if the local walking environment is:

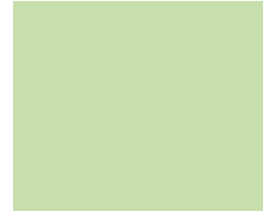
- *Connected?* Are there walking networks to give good access to key destinations?
- *Comfortable?* Do local facilities meet design standards for footway width, walking surfaces and planning for people of all abilities?
- *Convenient?* Can streets be crossed easily, safely and without delay?
- *Convivial?* Are routes interesting, clean and free from threat?
- *Conspicuous?* Are walking routes clearly signposted and are they published in local maps?

⁴ *Making London a walkable city: the walking plan for London*, Transport for London, February 2004.

⁵ J Gehl, L Gemzoe and K Steenhard, *New city spaces*, The Danish Architectural Press, Copenhagen, 2000.

⁶ Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, London, 2000.

A walking environment



In providing for walking, it is important to get the balance right between safety and mobility: measures to improve safety should not make walking inconvenient. It is also important facilities for pedestrians are not only functional but good to look at, pedestrians will feel safe when walking, as well as supported by the local environment. If they can easily navigate their surrounds, and there are places to rest, they can enjoy the experience of walking.

The '5 C's' apply to all spheres of the walking environment, including the transport system, the built environment, and where walking is provided for in the natural environment. These spheres are interconnected, and explicit provision for walking in all of these will give the best results.

There are a number of areas for specific consideration when providing for walking through the transport system. These include, but are not limited to:

- *Paths*. These should:
 - be separated from traffic, as direct as possible, and of sufficient width;
 - avoid steep gradients where possible or provide steps and handrails where unavoidable, provide resting places, have a smooth surface, and be regularly maintained – e.g. be kept clear of overhanging vegetation.
- *Road crossings*. These should:
 - clearly indicate to all road users who has priority – e.g. by including zebra crossings or the use of colour to delineate pedestrian priority spaces;
 - be of sufficient frequency in areas of high demand;
 - provide for clear sightlines between traffic and pedestrians – e.g. by using kerb outstands;
- *Intersections*. These should:
 - allow for ease of crossing – e.g. through grade crossings or raised pavements;
 - make adequate provision for safe staging of crossings by installing sufficiently wide mid-block pedestrian refuges;
 - control traffic – e.g. by using pedestrian operated signals where pedestrian movements are high and/or traffic speeds are high.
- *Intersections*. These should:
 - avoid the use of roundabouts on main pedestrian routes as these are difficult for pedestrians to navigate – especially the young, elderly and disabled;
 - provide for safe staging through sufficiently wide pedestrian refuges/splitter islands;
 - slow traffic turning at intersections – e.g. by providing a tighter radius on corners at intersections, constructing raised pavements, and other approaches.
- *Speed environment*. Traffic can be induced to travel more slowly by introducing 40km/h speed zones or lower, narrowing road pavements, and planting trees to enclose the street.
- *Lighting*. Walkers will feel safer when walking in the early morning and evenings if the main pedestrian routes and key destinations, including public transport stops, are well lit with good visibility.
- *Information*. Maps and way-finding signage to key destinations, including public transport stops, can help pedestrians find their way with ease.

A walking environment



There are a number of publications, which offer technical guidance on providing for pedestrians. Some of these are referenced in the *Providing for Pedestrians* document commissioned by the Department of Infrastructure. In addition, the *Guide to traffic engineering practice Part 13: Pedestrians*, published by AustRoads (last updated in 1995) offers 'guidance on appropriate standards for walkways and footpaths, the provision of pedestrian facilities for crossing roads, signing and other guidance methods.

The Guide pays particular attention to the need to cater for all pedestrians, including young children, the elderly and those with disabilities, and has been prepared after extensive consultation with States and Territories, and community groups'.

Case study: making public transport more accessible for pedestrians

Catering for people with disabilities:

In the recently announced \$10.5 billion *Meeting our Transport Challenges* the State Government allocated some \$250 million over 10 years to upgrade train stations, bus stops and transport interchanges and build 350 more platform tram stops. Low-floor trams and buses are being introduced on the network to provide access for people using wheelchairs and mobility aids. Platform tram stops will mean faster and safer boarding and easier access. Improvements to ramps, handrails, seating and paving, and installing tactile indicators, will help people with mobility and vision impairments. These works progress Victoria's obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002*.

Modal interchange:

In 2005, Whitehorse City Council and the State Government upgraded the Market and Main Streets Mall, linking the Box Hill Central bus, train and taxi interchanges with the newly extended 109 tram. Significant improvements to the pedestrian environment, such as new paving, street furniture, trees and better lighting, have restored the Mall's vitality as the forecourt to the surrounding shopping and civic precinct and nearby transport hub.

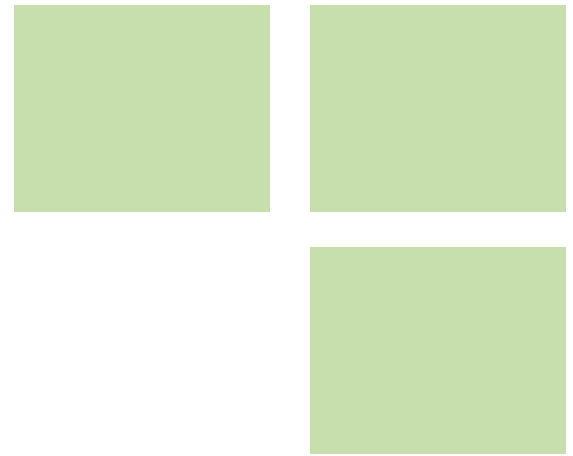
Access to public transport:

Pedestrians need to be able walk easily to public transport from the surrounding streets and neighbourhood. Paths should be smooth, uncluttered, well lit, have places to rest and include safe crossing points. One example of an area approach is the City of Port Phillip's improvements to the St Kilda Junction area under their *Streets for Living* campaign. This area is near the major tram interchange at the junction and other tram stops along St Kilda Road, Dandenong Road and Chapel Street. Surveys conducted by both the council and local residents identified several ideas for improvements, and subsequently the council has completed footpath works, and plans for the St Kilda Road pedestrian underpass are underway.

www.doi.vic.gov.au – search under 'Pedestrians'

www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/walking.html

www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au – search under 'Pedestrians'



Case study: school speed zones

School speed zones were introduced across the state between October 2003 and November 2004 and are located outside every primary and secondary school on school boundary roads that have gates used for student access. The reduced speed limits are part of the Victorian Government's *arrive alive!* road safety strategy, which aims to cut the number of fatalities and serious injuries on roads by 20 per cent by 2007. School speed zones will increase the safety of our most vulnerable road users – children.

The *arrive alive!* school speed zones program is designed to be flexible and meet the needs of all Victorian schools and the travelling public. There are three types of speed zones:

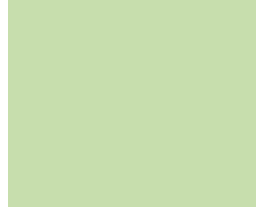
- 50km/h roads – Permanent 40km/h speed limit outside schools. On 50km/h roads with high traffic volumes, time-based 40km/h zones may be used.
- 60km/h and 70km/h roads – Time-based 40km/h speed limit outside schools. This applies from 8.00am to 9.30am and 2.30pm to 4.00pm on school days.
- 80km/h, 90km/h and 100km/h roads – Time-based 60km/h speed limit outside schools. This applies from 8.00am to 9.30am and 2.30pm to 4.00pm on school days.

Time-based electronic signs are generally used on roads outside schools that carry more than 500 vehicles per day with a speed limit of 70 km/h or above.

Pedestrians are among the most vulnerable road users and speeds for survival after a direct impact crash are lower for pedestrians than for other road users. Research has shown that a pedestrian struck by a vehicle travelling at 40 km/h has approximately a 75 per cent chance of survival. A small reduction in vehicle travel speeds can result in a large reduction in pedestrian fatalities.

www.arrivealive.vic.gov.au/c_schoolS.html

A walking environment



Urban design

In order to support walking in local neighbourhoods, urban design needs to give more priority to pedestrians and to improved pedestrian access to services. It is important for walking areas to be perceived as safe, and for infrastructure such as seating, lighting, public information and designated walking routes to form part of the built environment.

The walkability of metropolitan Melbourne is being improved through the number of urban design principles⁷ which:

- clearly define the difference and boundary between public and private space
 - foster natural surveillance by providing buildings with 'active' ground floors and orienting these to streets, squares and parks
 - bring together the main lines of movement to concentrate activity, and mix uses to increase the intensity and duration of activity
 - provide clear open lines of sight, clearly identify entry and exit points, and provide alternative means of exit
 - provide good lighting and visibility to create an environment that helps people to find their way easily
 - relate the built environment to community and culture
 - address the needs of all users, including those with disabilities;
- direct public transport, walking and cycling into the heart of an area, and as close as possible to meeting areas and public spaces
 - ensure new development is of a suitable scale to encourage interaction and participation, and also to allow for retreat and individual activity
 - establish a high-quality pedestrian-oriented street environment that is visually interesting, comprehensive, varied and well-connected
 - design and construct buildings that are flexible enough to accommodate a range of uses over time and
 - design for reduction and abatement of noise.

Minimisation of physical hazards and maximisation of safety and convenience, including separation from vehicles, attention to design lines, widths, colours, surface texture and traffic signal timings, are also important considerations.

More uniform urban design guidelines, such as those outlined in Clause 56 of *Sustainable Neighbourhoods* deliver priority initiatives included in *Melbourne 2030* which support walkable neighbourhoods.

⁷ Principles for development of urban design guidelines, Policy 5.1, Direction 5 - A Great Place to Be, *Melbourne 2030*.

Case Study: Transit Cities

The Transit Cities program has been developed as a mechanism for achieving the Victorian Government's goals set out in *Melbourne 2030*. Nine metropolitan and four regional centres have been strategically chosen to adopt the Transit Cities concept, which will assist the urban renewal of these centres.

Transit Cities are based on the international principle of transit oriented development. This is a form of urban development that clusters a greater mix of land uses around high-quality, integrated transport services. The transport node, including train, light rail and bus interchanges, is designed to be a focus for development and ideally becomes the community 'heart'. It is where people shop, work, meet, relax and live. The concept of Transit Cities encourages walking as a form of active transport. People are able to walk to shops, to access public transport and to use centrally based services. Overall, this concept promotes the urban centre as a social and diverse place.

The Footscray Transit City project aims to revitalise the railway precinct and town centre.

Footscray is a strategically important location, with several metropolitan rail lines running through the station as well as three regional Fast Rail services. The suburb is also close to Melbourne's CBD, which makes it an attractive location for people wanting to live close to the city.

To capitalise on this potential, Maribyrnong City Council and the Department of Sustainability and Environment are looking at opportunities for mixed use, high-density development around Footscray railway station. Careful planning will ensure the unique neighbourhood character of Footscray is not lost and that several heritage-listed buildings and gardens in the railway precinct are preserved.

The council adopted a strategic masterplan for the site in July 2003. A detailed planning study done in 2004 identified better ways to connect the railway station to the retail and business areas. Initiatives announced by the Minister for Planning in April 2004 included the creation of a priority development zone for Footscray and \$500,000 in funding for a pedestrian plaza in Maddern Reserve (off the Nicholson Street retail mall). The Minister for Major Projects and the Mayor of Maribyrnong opened the new \$890,000 Maddern Square in August 2006 as a rejuvenated and dynamic public space.

The Transit Cities program is coordinated by the Department of Sustainability and Environment and is in partnership with councils, government authorities (including the Department of Infrastructure and VicUrban), developers and the community.

www.dse.vic.gov.au - search under 'Transit Cities'

A walking environment

Parks and spaces

There are more than 2,000 trails totalling approximately 8,000 km across Victoria's parks, forests and public land reserves, offering a wealth of walking experiences for people of all ages and abilities. In metropolitan parks, walking was the number one activity⁸ of visitors between 1995–97, with a participation rate of nearly 70 per cent.

Parks Victoria has developed *Linking people and spaces* to provide a vision and strategy for the growth and improvement of Melbourne's open space network.

The essential elements of the network are the existing regional parks, the extensive shared-use metropolitan trail network, the waterways, green links, areas of environmental and cultural significance, coastal foreshores, and waters of Port Phillip Bay and Western Port.⁹

In relation to walking, *Linking people and spaces* specifically recommends completing gaps in the network and extending shared-use trails to support recreation and commuter use, including the Main Yarra trails, the Bay trail and Federation trails. This would create a network of 1200 kms.

Parks Victoria administers the Metropolitan Trail Network Grants Program each year to develop the Metropolitan Trail Network in partnership with local government.

Trail classification standards

Walking is the easiest physical activity to undertake and is the most popular form of exercise among visitors to Victoria's parks and forests. However, Victorian trails are currently classified in different ways on different land tenures and across different parts of the state. The lack of a Victorian (and Australian) standard for trail classification that would make it easy for members of the public to choose the trail suitable for their skills and level of fitness has been identified as a deterrent, particularly for less confident and less able walkers.

The need for uniform trail classification standards was highlighted as a key action in the *Victorian Trails Strategy 2005–2010*. To redress this deficiency, the Victorian Government has committed funding to develop a uniform trail classification standard. This will ensure Victoria's investment in its walking trail network is rewarded by making it easier for people to select walks that suit their needs and encourage greater numbers of people to walk to their destination or for recreational purposes.

For further information on this project, contact Richard Wadsworth (DSE) on Ph: (03) 9637 8417.

⁸ Activities undertaken by visitors to parklands 1995–1997, Figure 1, *Linking people and open spaces*, Parks Victoria, 2002.

⁹ *Linking people and open spaces*.

A walking environment



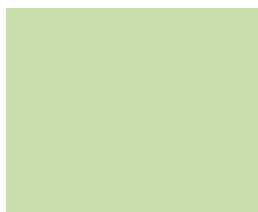
Case study: completion of Bay Trail's missing link

The Bay Trail's 'missing link' between Middle Brighton Baths and Bay Street, Brighton was completed in mid-2005. Parks Victoria and Bayside City Council jointly funded the \$1.5 million shared path project over three years. Works included an elevated boardwalk, viewing decks, seating and lighting along the path, landscaping and beach redevelopment.

The trail now provides safe 'off-road' access for pedestrians, people with prams, cyclists and skaters. The link's construction enables a better and more seamless journey along the Bay Trail from Altona to Beaumaris. Highlights along the way include the historic bluestone Timeball Tower and Gem Pier in the west, Westgate Park, Albert Park, cosmopolitan St Kilda and Rickett's Point. The trail is enjoyed by hundreds of walkers and cyclists each day, making it one of the most popular shared trails in Melbourne. During the week it serves as a commuter route into Melbourne's CBD and becomes a popular recreational path and place for family outings at weekends. Completion of the Seaford to Frankston section of the Bay Trail is the next step in the trail's development.

www.bv.com.au/inform.php?a=5&b=27&c=356
www.visitvictoria.com – search under 'The Bay Trail'

Policy context



The policy environment in Victoria increasingly supports walking, contributing to a wider recognition of the social, health, environmental and economic benefits of this activity.

Coordination and integration of strategies which promote walking, and the processes which facilitate these, is a priority for statewide initiatives, local government planning,¹⁰ and activities in local communities.

The State Government has developed a number of policies and strategies which contribute to the development of a supportive environment for walking in Victoria.

Growing Victoria Together (GVT) is a vision for Victoria to 2010 and beyond. It outlines ten goals for the state across the areas of the economy, the environment, communities, democracy, and health and education. An increase in walking for travel and recreation will contribute to the GVT goals of increasing community participation, lowering greenhouse emissions, decreasing motorised trips, and improving the health and quality of life for all Victorians.

www.growingvictoria.vic.gov.au

Through a variety of projects, strategies and campaigns, *Go for your life* aims to increase levels of physical activity and healthy eating by Victorians. The *Go for your life* Strategic Plan 2006 – 2010 reaffirms Victoria's leadership in this important area and sets out a framework for new activities over the next four years.

The Plan sets out activities for particular population groups, as well as activities designed to create environments that support healthier eating and higher levels of physical activity.

www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au

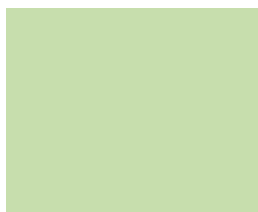
A Fairer Victoria is the Victorian Government's social policy action plan to reduce disadvantage and create opportunity. It sets out actions the Government will take to improve access to vital services, reduce barriers to opportunity, strengthen assistance for disadvantaged groups and localities, and ensures people get the help they need at critical times in their lives. The promotion of walking and participation in walking activities will help to meet the Government's objective of 'Helping older Victorians stay independent' (Strategy 4) and help to prevent chronic disease in Aboriginal communities as part of the objective 'Building a new partnership with Indigenous Victorians' (Strategy 9).

www.dpc.vic.gov.au – search under *A Fairer Victoria*

The *Department of Human Services* and the *Victorian Health Promotion Foundation* have recently undertaken a statewide consultation to develop health promotion and primary prevention priorities for 2007–12. Working in collaboration to agreed priorities will enhance the capacity of service providers and reduce duplication and fragmentation of effort and investment. The strategy underpinning these priorities will be released later in 2006.

¹⁰ For example, Municipal Strategic Statements and Municipal Public Health Plans.

Policy context



Preliminary findings indicate 'Physical Activity and Active Communities' was strongly supported throughout the consultation as one of the priorities.

www.health.vic.gov.au/healthpromotion/role/index.htm#hpps

Melbourne 2030 is a plan for the growth and development of metropolitan Melbourne. It is designed to protect and enhance the liveability of the city. The principles and nine key directions in the plan provide a framework for the development of state and municipal strategic statements, which will directly address how local governments can improve the physical and built environment. Priorities for walking are covered in the following Directions: 1. A more compact city, 5. A great place to be, 7. A greener city, and 8. Better transport links.

www.melbourne2030.vic.gov.au

Linking Melbourne: Metropolitan Transport Plan (MTP) is a comprehensive plan for the management and development of Melbourne's transport system including consideration of non-motorised travel such as walking and cycling. MTP provides key strategies and priority actions which centre around four critical issues: safety, rising congestion, the growth of the metropolitan population, and the promotion of ongoing economic growth for the state. Walking and cycling are addressed specifically as vital ingredients of an integrated transport system.

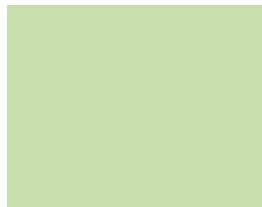
www.doi.vic.gov.au – search under 'Linking Melbourne'

Meeting Our Transport Challenges (MOTC) takes the policy directions of *Melbourne 2030* and the strategic directions of the *Metropolitan Transport Plan* to articulate a comprehensive set of projects that will deliver on these. MOTC provides a strong foundation for improving the access and mobility of all Victorians.

It notes 'maintaining the liveability of our cities, towns, suburbs and communities requires changing our behaviour, like leaving our cars at home more often and taking up more sustainable, healthier forms of travel'. The MOTC initiative represents the biggest commitment to bicycle and pedestrian paths in the state's history and will provide safer, quicker cycling routes, reduce traffic congestion and improve road safety.

Specifically, Action 8 – Promoting smarter, healthier travel choices – includes a significant investment to promote greater use of public transport and to encourage people to walk and cycle on shorter, local trips. This will be achieved through:

- * extending and improving walking options by increasing the number of pedestrian signals, constructing refuge islands, adding fencing to walkways, and upgrading other pedestrian facilities;
- * extending the Principle Bicycle Network and the Metropolitan Trail Network, and improving cycling routes in regional Victoria, which will benefit walkers as many of these are shared paths;
- * continuing to develop the existing *TravelSmart* program to encourage greater use of public transport, walking and cycling; and



- * establishing a new Local Area Access Demonstration Program to help local communities develop and deliver projects to improve access to activity centres, services and other local attractions, particularly by walking and cycling.

www.doi.vic.gov.au – search under ‘Meeting Our Transport Challenges’

arrive alive!, the Victorian Government’s five-year road safety strategy, notes pedestrians are the largest category of road users and should be the central focus of any initiatives designed to make our roads safer. In 2000, pedestrians comprised 15 per cent of deaths and 11 per cent of serious injuries on Victorian roads. About 42 per cent of these deaths were persons over 60 years of age, and infrastructure issues such as poor lighting have been identified as contributing factors. A number of measures have already been introduced which will contribute to reducing pedestrian fatalities and injuries, including:

- introduction of the Wipe Off 5 public education campaign;
- trialling and implementation of new speed enforcement technologies (speed and red light cameras);
- 50km/h built-up area speed limits introduced in January 2001;
- 50km/h speed limits in the main streets of some regional and rural town centres (pilot program being extended);
- 40 km/h school speed zones;

- ‘Off to a safe start traffic’ safety education package for Prep children and their families;
- ‘Kids on the move’, a new traffic safety education resource with a focus on pedestrian safety for primary schools and families;
- ‘A child’s world of traffic’, a DVD for families with children aged 5 to 8 years that focuses on pedestrian training; and
- 40km/h variable speed limits being trialled in several metropolitan shopping strips.

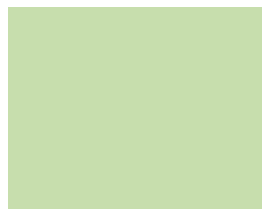
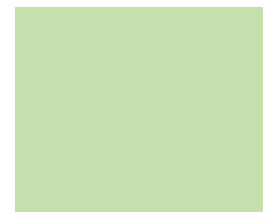
www.arrivealive.vic.gov.au

Sport and Recreation 2005–2010: A Five Year Strategic Plan for Sport and Recreation Victoria is the government’s vision to build an inclusive, collaborative and strong sport and recreation sector that supports a more active Victoria.

The Strategic Plan envisages:

- people being active in their communities (Strategic Direction 1)
- people working together to get the most out of government investment in sporting facilities (Strategic Directions 2 and 3)
- people achieving individually, supporting family members or their local team, or demonstrating pride in national and state performance (Strategic Direction 4).

www.sport.vic.gov.au - search under ‘Sport and Recreation 2005-2010’



The *Victorian Trails Strategy 2005–2010* is the key document for managing Victoria's walking and cycling paths into the future. It presents a clear vision for the state's trail network and is underpinned by long-term guiding principles based on ecologically sustainable development. The strategy establishes key directions for trail development, management, marketing and research, and identifies priority action projects for implementation between 2005 and 2010.

www.dse.vic.gov.au – search under 'Victorian Trails Strategy'

Healthy Parks, Healthy People. Parks Victoria is implementing significant environmental and recreational initiatives under the banner 'Healthy Parks, Healthy People'. One of these initiatives is to communicate to all Victorians the benefits of a healthy park system and how this in turn contributes to the health of individuals and society.

www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/1grants.cfm

Linking People and Spaces is a strategy for Melbourne's open-space network that promotes well-managed open spaces for the the liveability and sustainability of the city. The strategy recognises the significance of trails as a link between people and places, and supports addressing the gaps in the network and extending shared-use trails to encourage recreational and commuter use.

www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/resources/09_0714.pdf

The *Victorian Greenhouse Strategy* outlines actions needed to achieve a reduction in Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions across a number of sectors. The strategy addresses the need for a change in travel behaviour – specifically, a reduced dependence on the car and an increase in non-motorised modes of transport such as walking and cycling.

www.greenhouse.vic.gov.au

Our Environment, Our Future – Sustainability Action Statement 2006 sets out key objectives for ensuring Victoria makes sustainability a priority for the future. It addresses the need for efficient transport systems and liveable cities and towns which complement environments for walking.

www.dse.vic.gov.au - search under 'Sustainability Action Statement 2006'

New requirements for residential subdivisions are being introduced to create more sustainable and liveable communities. These measures, to replace Clause 56 in planning schemes, are part of the *Sustainable Neighbourhoods* package and will come into effect from 9 October. The new provisions will greatly improve planning for new housing lots and deliver easy connections to shops, neighbourhood centres, recreation facilities and schools. An emphasis on walking, cycling, public transport access and well-connected street networks will make new neighbourhoods more pleasant places to live.

www.dse.vic.gov.au – search under 'Sustainable Neighbourhoods'



Further information

arrive alive! – www.arrivealive.vic.gov.au

Environment Victoria – www.envict.org.au

Go for your life – www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au

Green Light Project – www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/assets/contentFiles/GreenLight.pdf

Linking Melbourne - Metropolitan Transport Plan – www.doi.vic.gov.au – search under 'Metropolitan Transport Plan documents'

Living Streets – www.livingstreets.co.uk

Melbourne 2030 – www.melbourne2030.vic.gov.au

Parks Victoria – www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

Providing for Pedestrians – www.doi.vic.gov.au – search under 'Providing for Pedestrians'

Road safety – www.vicroads.vic.gov.au – click on 'Road Safety'

Safer Roads Program – www.arrivealive.vic.gov.au/c_saferroadspro.html

Sustainable Neighbourhoods – www.dse.vic.gov.au – search under 'Sustainable Neighbourhoods'

Transit Cities – www.doi.vic.gov.au – search under 'Transit Cities'

TravelSmart – www.travelsmart.vic.gov.au

Walking Action Plan for London – www.tfl.gov.uk/streets/walking/why-2.shtml

Further reading

AS 1742.10 *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Part 10 – Pedestrian Control and Protection*, Standards Australia

Environments for health: municipal public health planning framework, Department of Human Services, Melbourne, 2001

Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, Part 13: Pedestrians AUSTRROADS.

Linking Melbourne: Metropolitan Transport Plan, Department of Infrastructure, 2004

Linking people and spaces: a strategy for Melbourne's open space network, Parks Victoria, 2002

Looking out for pedestrians: an outline. A guide to programs to improve pedestrian safety in local communities, VicRoads, 2004

Making London a walkable city: The Walking Plan for London, Transport for London, February 2004

Perth Walking: the Metropolitan Region Pedestrian Strategy – the way ahead, Department of Transport, Government of Western Australia, February 2000

R Tolley, *Providing for pedestrians: principles and guidelines for improving pedestrian access to destinations and urban spaces*, Victorian Government, Department of Infrastructure, July 2003 (download PDF copy from www.doi.vic.gov.au/)

The future of walking



As we move further into this century, there are a number of emerging issues, which will increasingly challenge the Victorian community such as petrol prices, climate change, traffic congestion, obesity and the aging population. More walking can have a positive impact on all these issues.

Having hosted the seventh international *Walk21* conference in October 2006, Victoria has a unique opportunity to build on this momentum. The Victorian Government has committed to improve the coordination and integration of walking and cycling initiatives in partnership with local government and community organisations.

The Victorian Government sees the development of a more integrated approach to walking as the next step in building on *Walk21* and making a contribution to addressing issues such as traffic congestion and obesity. Greater partnership and coordination between all sectors and organisations who promote increased walking at a local and a state wide level will enable significant and lasting benefits for all Victorians.

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