



Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy

2011



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Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011 developed by Whitehorse City Council, with the assistance of Ratio Consultants Pty Ltd 30 May 2011.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* creates a framework to consider the different modes of transport available to the Whitehorse community and provides direction to facilitate travel options and networks that are sustainable, convenient, accessible and safe.

Whitehorse City Council is committed to ensuring that its community, and those who travel through the municipality, have access to transport options that are sustainable, convenient, accessible, safe and enhance the liveability of the city.

Whitehorse is well serviced by public transport, including the Belgrave/Lilydale railway line, and augmented by tram and bus routes along key arterial routes. Whitehorse also has an extensive road network that services transport needs within the municipality and between suburbs, including a freeway link into the Melbourne CBD.

Council recognises that the adoption of safe, sustainable and active modes of transport have a range of health, environmental and community benefits and this strategy seeks to encourage a shift toward the use of sustainable transport modes, including walking, cycling and public transport.

Significant state government and Council strategies and policies have been developed since Council's initial *Integrated Transport Strategy* was developed in 2002, with an increased focus on sustainability and the future development of land use (including more intensive development around the Box Hill Central Activities District and Major Activity Centres) and transport networks.

The goals of the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* are to:

- Improve the links between transport modes for the efficient and convenient movement of people and goods
- Increase the use of sustainable transport modes of transport to minimise the impact of transport on the environment
- Increase the use of sustainable transport modes that promote healthy lifestyles, such as walking and cycling
- Increase the safety of residents and commuters who travel within and through the municipality
- Promote economic development and social connectedness within our community.





Extensive consultation was undertaken while developing the strategy, including assessing the needs across Council departments, professional stakeholders and the community. The results of the consultation have directly affected the directions of the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011*. Key issues raised in the submissions and discussions at the stakeholder and community forums included the need to:

- Provide better integration and coordination of public transport services
- Provide improved facilities for commuter cyclists and safer pedestrian conditions
- Provide improved accessibility for all users
- Urgently upgrade the Box Hill Transport Interchange
- Improve safety for all transport modes, especially pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users
- Continue to grade separate all remaining rail level crossings in Whitehorse
- Encourage the community to use more sustainable forms of transport
- Implement Zone 1/2 overlap public transport fares across Whitehorse (Box Hill and Burwood).

A *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011 Background Report* has been developed which provides detailed information about how this strategy was developed, background data and a more comprehensive discussion of the issues addressed in this strategy. A copy of the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011 Background Report* is available on Council's website www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au. Alternatively, request a hard copy by contacting Council on 9262 6333.

The *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* will be used by Council to advocate for improved transport infrastructure and services and to guide Council's own transport programs and policies into the future.

Four strategic objectives have been developed that form the basis of the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* for the aspects of transport that Council can control or influence. These are to:

- Encourage walking
- Maintain and improve the cycling network
- Encourage an increased shift toward public transport
- Provide safe and efficient movement of vehicles.

The various actions that Council will undertake are listed under each strategic objective, and a complete table of the actions, indicative cost and timelines is included in Appendix 1. The actions within this strategy were developed in the context that the state government is responsible for the provision and operation of public transport and the arterial road network. The proposed actions will assist Council in considering and implementing its own transport programs and projects as well as establishing a clear framework for advocating to other levels of government for transport improvements.



Council currently implements a range of actions that contribute to the strategic objectives indicated above. These actions are in existing Council strategies and plans such as the *Road Safety Strategy 2006-2011*, *Bicycle Strategy*, *Community Wellbeing Plan 2009-2013* and *Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013*. The actions within the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* make reference to these strategies where applicable, without detailing every action that Council is taking or proposes to take under the other strategies.

The *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the actions within the strategy remain relevant and reflect any significant changes to state government policy and transport priorities.



PROJECT BACKGROUND



1.1 Background

Whitehorse City Council is committed to ensuring that its community, and those who travel through the municipality, have access to transport options that are sustainable, convenient, accessible, safe and that enhance the liveability of the city.

Whitehorse is a vibrant middle ring municipality that includes a Central Activities District (CAD) in Box Hill plus major commercial centres, educational and medical precincts interspersed by an attractive residential setting.

The road network in Whitehorse is extensive with a freeway, arterial (major) roads, and EastLink servicing traffic needs between eastern suburbs and the Melbourne CBD.

Whitehorse is well serviced by public transport, which plays an important role for commuter travel as well as for local and cross-town trips. The focus of the public transport network through Whitehorse is the Belgrave/Lilydale railway line, which is augmented by tram and bus routes along key arterial routes. With growing train patronage across Melbourne, the railway line is a critical element of the municipality's public transport network. Important cross-town connections are provided by the bus network, and these services have recently seen significant improvements and increases to patronage through the implementation of the SmartBus and Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) program.

Council recognises that the adoption of sustainable and active modes of transport have a range of health, environmental and community benefits. Council has, and continues to develop, a range of transport initiatives and actively seeks to encourage a shift towards sustainable transport and modes, including walking and cycling. Council is also very active in promoting road safety, with significant resources allocated to decreasing the number of fatalities and injuries caused by road crashes.

This document is an overarching strategy that will guide the development of further

strategies and action plans, such as the *Road Safety Strategy 2006-2011* and *Traffic Management Strategy*.

Council's initial *Integrated Transport Strategy* was developed in 2002. Since that time, significant strategies and policies have been developed by the state government and Council in relation to sustainability and the future development of land use and transport networks. While the 2002 strategy helped guide Council in achieving successful outcomes for several major projects, such as the grade separation of Middleborough Road and Springvale Road level crossings, a new integrated transport strategy is required to reflect the current transport issues and policies and outline Council's vision for a sustainable, convenient, accessible and safe transport network.

Box Hill has been named as a Central Activities District (CAD) where the purpose is to increase the employment, housing density, community facilities, recreation facilities and commercial focus of the area. As a result, extra emphasis needs to be placed on coordinating land use planning and transport in this part of the municipality.

1.2 Goals and Objectives

The *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* sets out advocacy and strategic actions to integrate all forms of transport within the municipality and ensure that transport is sustainable, convenient, accessible and safe.

The goals of the strategy are to:

- Improve the links between transport modes for the efficient and convenient movement of people and goods
- Increase the use of sustainable transport modes of transport to minimise the impact of transport on the environment
- Increase the use of sustainable transport modes that promote healthy lifestyles, such as walking and cycling

- Increase the safety of residents and commuters who travel within and through the municipality
- Promote economic development and social connectedness within our community.

These goals will be achieved by:

- Taking action and advocating to the state and federal governments to:
 - Encourage walking
 - Maintain and improve the cycling network
 - Encourage an increased shift toward public transport
 - Provide safe and efficient movement of vehicles.
- Ensuring Council has adequate programs, policies, guidelines and funding in place to address the transport issues for which Council is responsible.

Four strategic objectives have been developed that form the basis of the strategy for the aspects of transport that Council can control or influence. These are:

Strategic Objective 1

To encourage walking for all members of the community through a range of operational and educational programs, and by providing a safe, attractive, connected and well designed pedestrian environment.

Strategic Objective 2

To maintain and improve the cycling network through the municipality in accordance with the *Whitehorse Bicycle Strategy 2007*, while continuing to promote cycling as a practical alternative to the private motor car for local trips, commuting and recreation.

Strategic Objective 3

To encourage an increased shift toward public transport by advocating for the provision of improved infrastructure and services, in combination with information to the community regarding transport choices available throughout the municipality and education about the benefits.

Strategic Objective 4

To provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and freight through, and within the municipality, with an increased focus on the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

1.3 Transport and the Community

Transport is used by the vast majority of people within the community to go about their daily lives, whether it is for commuting to work, shopping for weekly groceries or visiting family and friends. Transport is the means by which residents are connected to the outside world and is fundamental to a resident's ability to be involved in their local community.

Transport in the context of this strategy includes walking, cycling, public transport (including taxis) and motor vehicles.

Integrated transport is the way in which transport modes and land use link with each other. This integration makes it easier for the community to travel and change between transport modes whilst travelling within and through the municipality to various destinations.

1.4 Policy Context

1.4.1 Federal Government

Although state and local governments determine the legislation, policies and strategies relating to transport within each state and territory, the federal government has a significant role in the future of transport in Australia and Victoria. The federal government is involved in developing national guidelines such as the *Draft National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020*. In addition, the Australian Transport Council provides a forum for federal, state and territory ministers to consult and provide advice to governments on the coordination and integration of all surface transport and road policy issues at a national level. The federal government



provides funding for upgrading major transport infrastructure. For example, the federal government provided advice and funding for the grade separation of the Springvale Road rail crossing.

1.4.2 State Government

Since Council's original *Integrated Transport Strategy*, developed in 2002, there have been significant changes in the state government's legislation and policy direction for transport in Victoria. The change of state government in November 2010 is likely to result in a further review of existing transport policies and strategies across Victoria. A high level summary of the key policies that currently influence transport is provided below.

Transport Integration Act 2010

The *Transport Integration Act 2010* sets out the vision, objectives and principles for transport in Victoria. It makes clear that the transport system needs to be integrated and sustainable, in economic, environmental and social terms. It requires all Victorian transport agencies to work together towards the common goal of an integrated and sustainable transport system.

Victorian Transport Plan 2008

The *Victorian Transport Plan 2008* was developed by the former state government in response to strong population growth in Victoria, coupled with the global challenges of rising petrol prices and climate change, which have all applied increasing pressure to Victoria's public transport system.

Although Box Hill has been designated as a CAD, there was no commitment by the former state government to upgrade the Box Hill Transport Interchange in the Plan.

In January 2011, the new state government advised that it has put the Victorian Transport Plan on hold and will set up the Victorian Public Transport Development Authority. The authority will be a single public transport authority to administer public transport and will be independent of the government.

Arrive Alive 2008-2017

Arrive Alive is the state government's road safety strategy that aims to reduce road fatalities and injuries, as well as deliver improvements to the road transport system. The strategy has adopted the 'Safe System' that promotes the integration of safe road users, safe vehicles and safe transport infrastructure.

Melbourne 2030 (2002)

Melbourne 2030 is the state government's plan for managing Melbourne's growth and development. It is designed to protect and enhance the liveability of the city and aims to create a more sustainable, equitable, prosperous and accessible city for the future.

Melbourne 2030 identified Box Hill as a Principal Activity Centre and it has now been reclassified as a Central Activities District. Burwood East/ Tally Ho, Burwood Heights, Forest Hill Chase and Nunawading were identified as Major Activity Centres. Deakin University, Burwood, was designated as a Specialised Activity Centre. These locations have been earmarked for increased commercial business focus with increased employment and higher density housing. As such, these centres are proposed to attract more people to the area and will require a high standard of reliable public transport to provide sustainable, convenient and safe access for the community.

In early 2011, the state government announced that a new metropolitan strategy will be prepared that will address land use planning and transport and provide direction into the future.

Other state government policies and strategies that impact on transport include:

- *Victorian Cycling Strategy 2009*
- *Pedestrian Access Strategy 2010*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *State Planning Policy Framework, Clause 18/Amendment VC71 2010.*

1.4.3 Whitehorse City Council

Whitehorse City Council has a number of policies and action plans that interlink with the actions in the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011*. For example, Council's *Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013*, *Road Safety Strategy 2006-2011*, *Bicycle Strategy*, *Energy Action Plan 2009-2014*, *Community Wellbeing Plan 2009-2013*, *Peak Oil Action Plan*, and *Disability Policy and Action Plan 2008-2011* all contain actions that complement those outlined in this strategy. Interlinking Council plans and policies will help ensure that duplicate actions are avoided and that advocacy is effective.

Council is currently working on projects to encourage walking and cycling as modes of transport including educational programs and a feasibility study for the construction of a bicycle path (CAD Connector) from Box Hill to Ringwood.

Council has prepared structure plans or urban design framework plans for the following activity centres to guide their future planning and development, including transport infrastructure:

- Burwood Heights Major Activity Centre Structure Plan 2006
- Tally Ho Major Activity Centre Urban Design Framework 2007
- Box Hill Transit City Activity Centre Structure Plan 2007
- Nunawading MegaMile Major Activity Centre and Mitcham Neighbourhood Activity Centre Structure Plan 2008
- Burwood Village Neighbourhood Activity Centre, Looking Towards the Future Framework Plan 2008
- MegaMile (West) and Blackburn Activity Centre Urban Design Framework 2010.

1.4.4 Significant Future Issues Affecting Transport Policy

There are several significant current and emerging issues that have been considered when developing this strategy. These include:

- Climate change – the impact of transport on the environment, including where the increased risk of extreme weather events may disrupt the operation of both rail and road based public transport.
- Peak oil – worldwide oil shortages will have a significant impact on people's travel choices and the need to ensure that appropriate alternative transport choices are available to the community.
- Density of development and increased population – increased residential developments, in particular within the Box Hill Central Activities District, will increase the population in these areas. There will be a greater reliance on public transport as developers seek to reduce the car parking within their developments and Council and the state government assess parking rates in activity centres.
- Health – addressing obesity, physical activity and social isolation are major strategic priorities for VicHealth (the state government's health promotion authority). Transport, particularly walking and cycling, plays a vital role in enabling our community to lead healthy and active lifestyles.
- State government – as a result of a change in state government in November 2010 there may be a change in state government policies and priorities for transport in the eastern region. At the time of developing this strategy, details of the current state government's transport policies and priorities are yet to be confirmed.

METHODOLOGY

The *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* was developed following extensive consultation and research. This section provides an overview of the steps undertaken.

2.1 Research and Background Report

A review of Council's strategies and plans was initially undertaken to set the strategic context for the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011*. Research was also undertaken into current travel behaviour within and through the municipality, followed by an analysis of population projections for the region. The findings from this analysis formed a basis for the consultation process that followed.

A background report has been prepared that documents the research and analysis findings. The background report can be read in conjunction with the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* and can be found at www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au

2.2 Community Engagement

Engagement activities were undertaken with members of the community and professional stakeholders to establish an understanding of the values and priorities associated with transport in the municipality. This involved a community consultation process facilitated by Groupwork Pty Ltd consisting of workshops, surveys and written submissions. This process was integral to developing appropriate strategic objectives and actions that are consistent with the views and opinions of the local community.

2.2.1 Internal and Professional Stakeholder Consultation

Workshops were conducted at the Whitehorse Civic Centre at the beginning of the consultation phase. These workshops were with a range of stakeholders, internal staff and members of the community.

Councillor Workshop

A Councillor workshop was held to discuss Council's priorities and the direction that the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* would take.

Council Staff and Stakeholder Workshop

Workshops conducted at the beginning of the consultation phase brought together officers from various Council departments and external stakeholders, including representatives from the Department of Transport, VicTrack, VicRoads and Bicycle Victoria. An interactive session was held to draw upon the experience and local knowledge of the participants and to help identify priorities for the strategy.

2.2.2 Community Consultation

Identifying the local perspectives was essential in developing the priorities and actions of the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011*. A number of activities were undertaken as detailed below.

Community Surveys

Community surveys were undertaken to capture the perspectives of the wider community. Survey forms were made available on Council's website and distributed at Council's Spring Festival in October 2010. Survey forms were also distributed at Box Hill Transport Interchange, targeting existing transport users. Further surveys were developed to target the younger population and determine their views on transport in Whitehorse. In total, 117 survey responses were received.

Community Submissions

As part of the consultation process, advertisements were placed in local and Council newspapers as well as on Council's website inviting written submissions from the community detailing their views of the transport system in Whitehorse. A total of eight written submissions were received.



Community Workshop

The community had a significant role in providing direction for the *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011*. An interactive community session was held on Wednesday 8 November 2011, where participants were asked to identify what they liked and disliked about all forms of transport and transport infrastructure in Whitehorse. Focus was placed on their perspectives of the external influences impacting on transport in Whitehorse. Participants were also asked to identify improvements that they thought were necessary to improve the transport system in Whitehorse.

2.3 Key Issues Raised

The key messages received as a result of the consultation process were to:

- Better integrate and coordinate public transport services, including improved services during evenings and weekends
- Provide improved facilities for commuter cyclists and safer pedestrian conditions
- Integrate land use and transport planning
- Provide improved accessibility for all, especially the elderly, disabled and people with prams and young children
- Urgently upgrade the functionality, appearance, comfort, security and way-finding at the Box Hill Transport Interchange, including improved pedestrian conditions along and across Station Street
- Improve safety for all transport modes, especially pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users
- Continue to grade separate all remaining rail level crossings in Whitehorse
- Encourage the community to change habits and use more sustainable forms of transport for a wide range of trips
- Implement Zone 1/2 overlap public transport fares across Whitehorse.

A range of external influences that impact on transport in Whitehorse were also identified, including:

- **Demographic change**
 - The increasing population
 - The ageing population
 - Growth in cultural diversity
- **Land use planning**
 - Planning and density of housing
 - Location of employment centres
 - Hours of operation in activity centres
 - Car parking
- **Safety**
 - Perceptions of feeling safe
 - Need to understand the public transport system
- **Environment**
 - Peak oil
 - Climate change
 - Carbon price.

2.4 Identification of Actions

A list of actions has been developed to address the key issues from the research and community engagement phases as discussed in Section 2.3 of this report. When assessing the costs and timeframes for each action, Council gave consideration to its existing program and budgetary commitments. The timeframes for actions in this plan indicate when actions should commence. It is, however, noted that the new state government has not presented alternative policies or strategies to the former state government's Victoria Transport Plan and, as such, it may be necessary to amend the timeframes of some of the actions.

The timelines for each action are listed as ongoing; short (1-2 years); medium (3-5 years) and long term (6+ years).



Ongoing

Ongoing actions include the advocacy and strategic actions that Council will continue to carry out to encourage behavioural change and increase the safety of all road users. It is noted that these actions do not include the periodic upgrade to Council's road, bicycle, footpath and parking infrastructure to improve access and safety.

0-2 years (Short Term)

Short term actions that align with current budgeted programs and commitments are a priority. In addition, short term actions include items that require Council to undertake preliminary work to enable Council to effectively advocate for, or undertake, improvements to transport infrastructure.

2-5 years (Medium Term)

These advocacy and strategic actions require the extension of existing programs and some new budgetary commitments to enable advocacy or strategic actions to commence. The majority of the actions listed in the strategy are short to medium term actions that Council will implement itself or effectively advocate for state and federal government funding.

6+ years (Long Term)

The advocacy and strategic actions listed within the 6+ years timeframe include actions that require the completion of earlier actions or the investment of significant resources that may be beyond the scope of current levels of funding.

2.5 Classification of Costs

Cost ranges have been allocated for each advocacy/strategic action, the classification of which is shown in Table 1. These costs are estimates for Council to advocate for or plan the proposed action but do not include additional construction costs for asset or infrastructure upgrades. Some actions may require feasibility studies to be undertaken to enable Council to present a strong case to the state government for the construction of a particular project or for inclusion in Council's capital works program.

The costs include existing core operating costs and additional costs over and above existing funding levels within Council's budget.

The actions summarised in this strategy outline Council's advocacy based actions and actions it can implement itself, for an integrated transport system within the municipality. The actions and associated timelines will be reviewed if there are significant changes to the current state government policies and programs.

The actions within the strategy will also be reviewed on an annual basis as part of Council's budget process.

Estimated Cost	Classification
\$0-\$10,000	\$
\$10,000-\$75,000	\$\$
\$75,000+	\$\$\$

Table 1. Classification of cost estimate for advocacy and implementation actions.

TRANSPORT MODES AND KEY ISSUES

3.1 Whitehorse Demographics

The City of Whitehorse is a middle ring municipality located 12 kilometres to the east of Melbourne's CBD. Whitehorse is a mix of quiet residential streets, lively activity centres and employment areas. It has large educational, medical, business, and technology precincts that are home to major institutions and corporations such as Box Hill Institute, Deakin University and Box Hill Hospital.

Whitehorse is home to more than 8000 businesses and provides about 60,000 jobs that are supported by a large proportion of the resident workforce. Whitehorse has the biggest concentration of office space outside the Melbourne CBD and St Kilda Road.

Whitehorse currently has a population of approximately 151,000 residents. Whitehorse City Council is seeking to manage the growth of its population and meet demands for new housing stock through its *Housing Strategy 2003*. In accordance with the sustainable development principles outlined in the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS), the areas that are able to support higher density housing are typically located near to activity centres and public transport.

The demographic profile of Whitehorse continues to change and the largest net gains in population will be in the 55 years and over age group. The population increases in Whitehorse will be reflected in the surrounding municipalities, and affect the need for safe and accessible transport services and infrastructure in the region.

Overall, household occupancy patterns across Whitehorse have changed over time. In comparison to 1996 data, there has been a rise in single person households. This was followed in 2001 by a rise in households with four persons.

There is a large proportion of residents earning a high income (\$1000 per week or more) as well as a larger proportion of low income people (less than \$400 per week).

Levels of car ownership for a household affect mobility and transport choices, with zero-car households relying more heavily on alternative transport modes. Most households in Whitehorse own one or two cars, while there is a much lower proportion of a zero-car and three-car household.

Most working people residing within the municipality work outside of Whitehorse in areas including the City of Melbourne, the City of Boroondara and the City of Monash. However, a large proportion of the working population (28 per cent) work within Whitehorse itself, so a significant proportion of resident journey to work travel trips in Whitehorse are local.

3.2 Land Use Planning and Transport

A key issue that links the various topics discussed in this section is land use planning. Integrating transport into new developments and providing walking and cycling links from new developments to the public transport network is vital in ensuring that the transport system within the municipality is an integrated one.

It is vital that the state government and Council work together to ensure that proposed developments provide access to sustainable forms of transport. This includes the provision of adequate end-of-trip facilities in commercial developments to encourage workers to catch public transport, walk or cycle.

In regards to residential developments, the provision of adequate car sharing schemes and bicycle facilities will encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport by residents and their visitors. It is also imperative that new developments provide adequate walking and cycling paths with access to existing and proposed infrastructure outside of the development.



It is considered that land use planning and the integration of transport with new developments within activity centres or in close proximity to transport nodes is of particular importance in providing sustainable transport choices to existing and new workers or residents within the municipality.

3.3 Pedestrian Facilities

The forecast growth in population for Whitehorse, along with the development of increased density living in and around activity centres, means that the demand for a safe, convenient and accessible walking environment will also increase.

Council recognises the benefits of encouraging walking within the municipality and has set out some principles in the *Whitehorse Community Wellbeing Plan 2009-2013* and the *Whitehorse Disability Policy and Action Plan 2008-2011*.

Existing Facilities

The City of Whitehorse generally has excellent facilities for pedestrians in suburban locations with constructed footpaths along at least one side of most streets. There is good walking access to bus stops and tram stops within the municipality as well to the various train stations. Most of the issues associated with pedestrian safety and accessibility are located in the Box Hill CAD and the Major and Neighbourhood Activity Centres due to high pedestrian numbers and potential difficulties in crossing busy arterial roads.

A review of pedestrian casualty crashes for the past five years confirms a high concentration of incidents in the vicinity of the Box Hill CAD along Station Street and Whitehorse Road. Other pedestrian crash concentrations occur along Whitehorse Road at the Mitcham Neighbourhood Activity Centre, along Springvale Road near the Nunawading Railway Station, and at the Blackburn Station Activity Centre.

In addition there are a total of 119 school crossings located within Whitehorse of which 95 crossings are supervised. Supervised school crossings are seen as vital to the safety of our communities.

Council promotes active and sustainable transport, such as walking to school, as an alternative to driving. Providing safe crossing points with a school crossing supervisor is an important component of encouraging sustainable and safe modes of travel to children and their parents.

Walking Programs

Whitehorse City Council has a Walking School Bus Program, which provides a safe, environmentally friendly and healthy method for children to travel to and from school. The Walking School Bus program was initially funded by VicHealth and is now fully funded by Council. There are more than 200 students from nine primary schools in the City of Whitehorse using the Walking School Bus each week. This program is considered to be effective and will continue to be supported by Council due to the number of benefits it delivers.

Other walking programs supported by Council include:

- 'Transit' – assists Grade 6 students transition to secondary school by giving them the confidence to use transport modes that are safe, sustainable and independent
- Events such as 'Walk to School Day' and 'Walktober'
- 'Wiser Walkers' – focusing on safety for elderly pedestrians
- 'Follow the Green Man' which combines education and infrastructure improvements at locations with high pedestrian activity
- 'TravelSmart' that promotes walking as an environmentally-friendly mode of transport.

Desired Improvements

Future pedestrian improvements should be focussed around the Box Hill CAD (primarily along Station Street and Whitehorse Road), within and on the approaches to the Major Activity Centres and shopping centres in Whitehorse, public transport interchanges, and in the vicinity of schools and tertiary institutions (e.g. Box Hill Institute and Deakin University).



Desired treatments at these locations include:

- Raised pedestrian crosswalks to highlight the presence of pedestrians and slow approach traffic speeds, at appropriate locations
- Additional pedestrian operated signals across arterial roads (particularly near bus and tram stops) and pedestrian (zebra) crossings across lower order roads
- Pedestrian median islands to allow pedestrians to cross roads in stages
- Improved lighting at key pedestrian locations
- The creation of wider footpaths in Activity Centres and reduced road crossing distances
- Increased provision of seating and drinking fountains along key routes to and within Activity Centres
- Technology to assist pedestrians who have lower levels of mobility and vision or hearing impairments such as audio tactiles, tactile pavers and at-grade crossings
- Upgraded 'wayfinding' signage to assist pedestrians to navigate their way to their destination
- Improved pedestrian links and connections.

3.4 Bicycle Facilities

Cycling is integral to transport integration and providing mobility without congestion and pollution. It is an ideal mode of transport for short and longer trips in Whitehorse and contributes to public health and community wellbeing. Council recognises the benefits of encouraging cycling within the municipality and has set out priorities in the *Whitehorse Bicycle Strategy 2007* for cycling in Whitehorse.

The Bicycle Strategy identifies the importance of improving opportunities for cyclists by upgrading the current on and off-road bicycle network. This includes better linkages between existing bicycle facilities and better connections to key destinations

such as the Box Hill CAD, Major Activity Centres, Box Hill Hospital precinct, schools and tertiary institutions (e.g. Box Hill Institute and Deakin University).

The Bicycle Strategy supports the Victorian Cycling Strategy and complements the Victorian Principal Bicycle Network (PBN) which guides investment in bicycle infrastructure by VicRoads.

Existing Facilities

Whitehorse has some excellent off-road paths (e.g. the Koonung Creek, Gardiners Creek, Bushy Creek, and Dandenong Creek Trails) which primarily cater for recreational walking and bicycle trips, and complement the limited dedicated on-road facilities for commuter cyclists. The Blackburn Road- Surrey Road link incorporates a series of on-road bicycle lanes (predominantly shared parking / bicycle lanes) and Springfield Road has a mix of on and off-road facilities. Wide kerbside or shared bicycle /parking lanes are also provided along a number of the secondary traffic routes, including parts of Highbury Road, Deep Creek Road, Hawthorn Road, Hanover Road, Hartland Road, Terrara Road, Morack Road and Boronia Road.

Limited bicycle facilities are provided along the main east-west arterial roads (e.g. Whitehorse Road, Canterbury Road and Burwood Highway). These roads carry relatively high levels of traffic and generally have constrained road widths. While road carriageway constraints can impact on the ability to provide continuous exclusive or shared bicycle lanes, there may be scope to install repeater symbolic bicycle logos to reinforce the presence of cyclists to motorists.

Significant improvements are currently being made to the Gardiners Creek Trail within the Cities of Monash and Boroondara that will benefit cyclists travelling to or from Whitehorse.

The City of Whitehorse Bicycle Advisory Committee (CoWBAC) supports Council's guidelines for cyclists using shared paths and organised a 'Sharing the Paths' initiative in 2010 to spread the awareness of Council guidelines for shared paths.



Cycling Programs

Whitehorse City Council supports various programs that promote cycling as a sustainable mode of travel.

The Bike Ed program is implemented in schools and aims to improve the safety and confidence of student cyclists. Other cycling initiatives implemented by Council to encourage modal shift from car based travel include:

- Events such as Ride to Work Day and Ride to School Day
- TravelSmart
- CycleWise – an education program for women to increase their confidence as cyclists.

Desired Improvements

Future bicycle facilities in Whitehorse should seek to provide improved routes for commuter cycling, improved connections between existing and future on and off-road paths, improved end of trip facilities, and encourage increased cycling activity (particularly for travel to schools, tertiary institutions, places of employment and the Box Hill CAD and Major Activity Centres).

A key part of the future cycle network in Whitehorse is the construction of the Eastern Rail Trail, with current focus on the CAD Connector between the Box Hill and Ringwood CADs within or directly adjacent to the Belgrave/Lilydale railway line. Whitehorse Cyclists Incorporated, which is a recreational bicycle users club, has prepared a formal proposal (July 2010) for the funding and detailed investigation of the Box Hill to Ringwood section of the Eastern Rail Trail (ultimately seeking to run between the Hawthorn and Heatherdale Stations).

Council is currently undertaking, at its cost, a more detailed feasibility study for the Box Hill to Ringwood Bicycle CAD Connector. The study will take into account the proposal prepared by Whitehorse Cyclists Inc and is planned for completion by June 2011.

In addition, VicRoads are currently working on a structure plan for the Healesville Freeway reservation, east of Springvale Road. The structure plan will take into consideration, amongst other issues and proposals, the provision of bicycle and shared paths and open space. Council is a stakeholder in the development of the structure plan.

Other cycling priorities for Whitehorse include:

- Creation of a formal shared path along the 'Pipe Track' from Mitcham to Glen Waverley (in association with Monash City Council)
- Increased application of green on-road surfacing to highlight bicycle areas at high priority intersections
- Installation of repeater bicycle logos and associated broken lines at regular intervals along strategic commuter routes (e.g. Canterbury Road and Whitehorse Road) to reinforce the presence of cyclists to motorists
- Improved provision of secure bicycle parking at all railway stations in Whitehorse and places of major employment or visitations (e.g. Box Hill Institute, Deakin University, Box Hill Hospital, recreational facilities such as Aqualink etc). Consideration should also be given to the provision of bicycle storage on buses to encourage a greater level of cycle/bus/cycle trips.

3.5 Public Transport

Public transport in Whitehorse plays an important role for commuter travel as well as for local and cross-town trips. The provision and operation of the public transport system is the responsibility of the state government. Council, therefore, relies on state government policies and programs for the improvement to public transport infrastructure and services.



The principal focus of the public transport network through Whitehorse is the Belgrave / Lilydale Railway Line. The railway line is augmented by tram routes along Whitehorse Road, Burwood Highway and Riversdale Road, which provide important connections within Whitehorse and to neighbouring municipalities, many for school and tertiary trips.

The Whitehorse bus network provides important cross-town services, particularly for those with limited transport options, such as those without cars and the young and elderly. The bus network in and around Whitehorse has recently seen significant improvements through the implementation of the SmartBus and Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) programs.

3.5.1 Train Services

Melbourne's radial electrified rail network extends through Whitehorse as the Lilydale and Belgrave lines. There are seven railway stations within Whitehorse. Some railway stations have been significantly improved in recent years, with the Nunawading Railway Station recently upgraded to 'Premium' status, where the railway station is staffed from first to last train every day of the week.

The frequency of the train services in Whitehorse is good with services running Monday to Sunday on the Belgrave and Lilydale lines. During the week





these services run at 15 minute and 20 minute intervals with increased frequency during the peak hours. There are 65 limited express services on the Belgrave and Lilydale lines operating to Melbourne CBD, with express generally from Box Hill. There is an approximate 20 minute frequency at weekends.

Patronage on metropolitan trains has consistently grown and has risen by more than 85 per cent from 1999 to 2009. Patronage at stations within Whitehorse has seen similar growth.

Current Deficiencies

It is generally accepted that trains along the Belgrave and Lilydale lines are operating with reduced services outside peak hours, particularly during the evening (6pm-9pm) period.

To meet best practice targets, trains would need to operate every 10 minutes from 6am to midnight seven days per week. Some current issues that have been identified include:

- Sunday evening services operate only every 40 minutes, while most other railway lines in Melbourne operate half-hourly
- Every second evening service only operates to Ringwood, with no connecting trains to Belgrave, Lilydale or Alamein stations
- The need for increased parking provision for commuters at railway stations.

3.5.2 Tram Services

Four radial tram lines provide fixed transport along Whitehorse's major east-west roads and connect a number of shopping centres, education facilities and hospitals. Tram lines are located along Whitehorse Road (Routes 42 and 109), Burwood Highway (Route 75) and Riversdale Road (Route 70).

The span and frequency of tram services in Whitehorse are generally good, although the lengthy travel times imposed by road network congestion limit their usefulness for commuting to

the Melbourne CBD. During the week the trams generally run on a five to 10 minute frequency. At weekends the frequency drops down to an average of 12 minutes.

The *Integrated Transport Strategy 2002* recommended the extension of the Route 75 tram from Burwood East (Blackburn Road) through to Knox City Shopping Centre. This action has been partially completed with the extension of Route 75 to Vermont South Shopping Centre. The extension of the tram route further east to the Knox City is viewed as a high priority by the Knox City Council with Whitehorse City Council indicating its support for this extension.

3.5.3 Bus Services

The Principal Bus Route Network (PBRN) defines the network of bus routes that will be improved over time to complement Melbourne's rail network. It is essentially a list of bus routes that will be upgraded to SmartBus standards (refer to page 17 for details on the SmartBus standards).

The Department of Transport completed a review of bus services in Whitehorse/Manningham/Monash in 2010. The review identified the current issues of frequency and connectivity and developed a series of priority actions to tackle these issues. The objectives of the review were to increase patronage, improve connectivity and improve coverage.

Final network and service recommendations were made and included route structure changes in response to the following principles:

- Provide improved access to the key activity centres
- Provide bus routes that connect local facilities and communities
- Provide access to key transport interchanges
- Provide bus routes within 400 metres of most households



- Provide user friendly bus routes that are direct, logical, intuitive and efficient
- Provide a consistent network with minimal route variations and loops.

The outcome of the bus service review saw a total of 72 bus routes operating within the eastern region being recommended in comparison to the existing 78 bus routes.

The review demonstrated that Whitehorse has 92 per cent of urban dwellings less than 400 metres distance from existing public transport, which compared favourably to coverage in Manningham (88.6 per cent) and Monash (84.1 per cent).

In and around Whitehorse, the service improvements that have already been rolled out are:

- Route 281 (Templestowe to Deakin University) has been extended from Box Hill to Deakin University
- Route 735 (Box Hill to Nunawading) has been extended from Burwood to Nunawading.

Planned upgrades to bus services in 2011 include:

- Route 768 (Box Hill to Deakin University) will be a new shuttle service that will commence in March 2011
- Route 304 (Warrandyte to City) to run increased services
- Route 307 (Mitcham to City) to run increased services.

The implementation of the recommendation of the bus service review has been slow, and a firm funding commitment and accelerated implementation plan is required from the state government to meet the needs of the travelling public.

Overall, the bus routes that provide the most services to the municipality are the SmartBus and Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) routes which include the 703, 901, 902, 903, 906 and 907. These services provide excellent service coverage on weekends.

The bus routes that provide lesser services are the 202, 270, 273, 281, 284, 303, 315, 318, 612, 740 and 766. Although the services run for relatively long hours on weekdays, the 303, 315, 318 and 740 do not run on a Saturday or Sunday and the remaining services do not run on a Sunday.

SmartBus and Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) Services

SmartBus is a premium bus service that has been designed to complement Melbourne's radial train and tram network by providing 'cross-town' connections along major arterial roads. These routes have longer hours of operation, more frequent services and better connections to the community.

In and around Whitehorse, the following routes have been rolled out:

- SmartBus Route 903 – this route provides connections between Doncaster Shoppingtown, Box Hill CAD and Chadstone Shopping Centre via Station Street, Box Hill and Warrigal Road
- SmartBus Route 703 – this route operates from Blackburn Station to Middle Brighton via Forest Hill Shopping Centre and travels to Monash University
- SmartBus Route 902 – this route operates along Springvale Road and travels between Chelsea and Airport West
- SmartBus Route 901 – this route connects Blackburn Station to Ringwood Station via Whitehorse Road.
- SmartBus Route 906 – this route runs between the City and Warrandyte via the Eastern Freeway.
- SmartBus Route 907 – this route runs between the City and Mitcham via Doncaster Road.

Routes 906 and 907, form part of the Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) bus service.

The SmartBus services have recorded the highest patronage numbers; however, routes 767 and 733 also have good patronage growth.

Current Bus Service Deficiencies

At weekends the services in some areas are reduced or do not exist. Route 202, 270, 273, 284, 303, 612 and 766 services do not operate on Sundays. Similarly the route 201 service only operates at a 90 minute frequency. Route 315 service is a peak service operating one trip in the morning and one in the evening to and from Box Hill. Route 286, 293, 295 and 271 services are limited to a two-hour frequency on Sundays.

A number of services during the week are affected by reduced frequency later in the evenings. Routes 286, 293, 742 are a sample of the services whose frequency drops to between 45 to 60 minutes around 7pm.

Bus Priority Measures

VicRoads proposed under the former state government to implement peak period part time bus lanes during the existing clearway times along Springvale Road between Donvale and Springvale. The proposal for bus lanes was introduced as part of the former state government's plan to ease traffic congestion on Melbourne's arterial roads and to encourage the use of public transport.

A bus priority lane is provided on the south approach of the Springvale Road and Burwood Highway intersection. It is expected that the state government will provide further bus priority measures along the arterial road network in the future.

3.5.4 Taxis

Taxis and the 'multi-purpose' taxi program, form an important part of the public transport service, especially for people with limited mobility. There are two major taxi ranks within Whitehorse, which are located on Carrington Road, adjacent to Box Hill Centro and on Mahoneys Road at Forest Hill Chase. There are also additional taxi ranks at other locations throughout the municipality.

There may be a need to investigate relocating the Carrington Road taxi zone to a position along the southern side of Whitehorse Road to improve its visibility and integration with other public transport modes.

In addition, given the lack of taxi zones within the municipality there is a need to investigate the introduction of additional ranks to provide a critical link to other modes of transport.





3.5.5 Public Transport Zones

Melbourne's public transport network is divided into two main fare zones. The zones vary depending on whether you travel by bus, train or tram.

The tram services that operate in Whitehorse are either in Zone 1 or the Zone 1 and 2 overlap. The train stations within Whitehorse are all within the Zone 2 fare zone with the exception of Mont Albert train station which is in the Zone 1 and 2.

The current zoning structure has been raised as an issue by the community, in particular students, requesting that Box Hill (Box Hill Institute) and Burwood (Deakin University) be included within the Zone 1/2 overlap for all transport modes.

3.5.6 Box Hill Transport Interchange

Current Facilities

The Box Hill Transport Interchange, which is the busiest suburban transport interchange outside of the CBD, is a hub for rail, tram, bus and taxi services, but operates in a fragmented manner with poor spatial connections between some of the modes and poor amenities for bus passengers. The linkages and 'way finding' between modes is poor and the bus passenger facilities are tired and outdated. Pedestrian safety and accessibility around the Box Hill CAD is poor due to conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles in crossing busy arterial roads, especially Station Street.

The poor function and appearance of the Box Hill Transport Interchange was raised as a major concern by the community and key stakeholders during the consultation phase of this strategy.

Current Deficiencies

The Box Hill Transport Interchange has a number of deficiencies in terms of its operation and appearance, including:

- Poor visual and physical links to train, bus, tram and taxi services and the adjacent road network at the Box Hill CAD
- Dated and uncomfortable waiting facilities for bus passengers

- Bus and traffic impacts and congestion along Carrington Road
- Traffic congestion and pedestrian safety problems along Station Street
- Lack of public amenities (e.g. toilets).

Possible Improvements

The state government is currently undertaking a study into the upgrade of the bus interchange and a second study related to access and mobility of the wider Box Hill CAD. These studies will seek to improve passenger amenity, way-finding, accessibility and safety. It is noted that a 40km/h reduced speed limit has recently been implemented along Station Street from Monday to Friday between 8am and 7pm.

Council is advocating for improvements to the bus interchange and wider Box Hill CAD to include:

- Improved bus passenger waiting facilities in terms of comfort, information, security, functionality and amenity
- Better links to the railway station, including better 'way-finding' signage
- Improved pedestrian and cycling facilities (e.g. wider footpaths, safer options to cross busy roads, better lighting, more seating, and reduced speed limits)
- Relocated taxi zones and/or improved signage.

3.6 Older Persons

Whitehorse has an ageing community and it is imperative to ensure there are safe, convenient and accessible forms of transport to cater for the current and future needs of the Whitehorse population.

Council's home-based community care program provides assisted transport services for residents who are elderly, frail and/or have disabilities. Seven community buses are used to transfer aged residents eligible for Council support on trips to shopping facilities, banks, post offices, libraries and

social support programs. Four cars are also used to transfer people to attend appointments such as medical appointments.

Whitehorse City Council also implements the Wiser Driver, Wiser Walkers and Keeping Safe and Mobile Programs that aim to help older road users stay safe on Whitehorse roads and active within the community.

3.7 Accessible Transport

The state government is working in conjunction with all public transport operators to improve access for people with limited mobility on all modes of transport including trains, trams, buses and taxis.

All railway stations within Whitehorse are accessible for wheelchair users and an audible and visual passenger information system is available at suburban stations.

Premium stations, such as Nunawading and Box Hill, are staffed from first to last train every day and have wheelchair accessible toilets. Many railway stations also have accessible telephones and parking spaces allocated for people with additional needs.

Modified tram stops and low floor trams make it easier for all passengers to travel on the tram network. Wheelchair accessible trams are proposed to operate on all route 109 trips. Many trams also have high-contrast stanchions, grab handles and step edging, which improves accessibility for people with vision impairment.

Accessible tram stops have been constructed along the majority of tram routes 109 and 75 in Whitehorse to complement the low-floor trams and provide access to all trams, with the exception of the stops on route 70 along Riversdale Road.

The state government is progressively replacing all buses with low floor accessible buses. The new buses are improving passenger comfort and meet the requirement of the federal government's *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. Improvements have also been made to bus stops along many



routes in Melbourne's eastern suburbs as part of the SmartBus program, including tactile markers, and real time information signs which display what time the next bus will be arriving and whether it is a low floor bus.

Wheelchair accessible taxis are also available in Whitehorse.

3.8 Road Safety

Council recognises the importance of being able to travel safely throughout Whitehorse and is committed to reducing the number and severity of road crashes within the municipality. Significant Council resources are allocated to providing road safety behavioural and engineering programs to achieve this goal.

There was a total of 1838 casualty crashes in Whitehorse during the five-year period from January 2005 to December 2009 inclusive, including 17 fatal crashes, 730 serious injury crashes and 1091 minor injury crashes. This compares to the previous total of 2533 casualty crashes, including 22 fatal crashes, in Whitehorse during the five-year period from January 2000 to December 2004. This represents a 27 per cent reduction in casualty crashes and a 23 per cent reduction in fatality crashes between these two periods.

The intersections with the worst crash records are:

- Springvale Road / Canterbury Road
- Burwood Highway / Blackburn Road
- Station Street / Canterbury Road (VicRoads is currently delivering a project to install a fully controlled right turn to address the majority of the crashes at this location. This treatment is expected to be installed by June 2011).

Approximately 80 per cent of injuries and fatalities in Whitehorse involve drivers and passengers, and the remaining 20 per cent



involve cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists. Road users aged 16-25 years are most at risk of being involved in a crash within Whitehorse. Older road users are more likely to suffer serious injuries or die as a result of a crash due to their increased frailty and health conditions.

Council is a leader in the delivery of road safety behavioural programs and will continue to implement a wide range of activities, including physical treatments where appropriate, to reduce the trauma in our community caused by road crashes.

Council plans to review the current *Road Safety Strategy 2006-2011* and develop new actions that will assist in the reduction of the number of crashes occurring within the municipality.

3.9 Road Network and Car Based Travel

Whitehorse has an excellent network of arterial roads and freeways, which are subject to high volumes of passing commuter traffic. The Eastern Freeway/EastLink route provides excellent access between the eastern and south-eastern suburbs and the CBD and effectively channels regional through-traffic around the periphery of the municipality, rather than directly through Whitehorse.

The roads that are classified as freeways and arterial roads which fall under the control of VicRoads in and around Whitehorse are:

- The Eastern Freeway and EastLink
- Whitehorse Road, Burwood Highway and Springvale Road are each 'State Arterial Roads'
- Elgar Road, Station Street, Middleborough Road, Blackburn Road, Belmore Road, Canterbury Road and Riversdale Road are also 'State Arterial Roads'.

VicRoads has also nominated a number of routes throughout the metropolitan area for use by over-dimensional (OD) heavy vehicles. A Metropolitan OD Permit Route 1 is designated along the Eastern Freeway/EastLink, Springvale Road and Burwood Highway.

The construction of EastLink, in association with the completion of important rail crossing grade separation projects along Springvale and Middleborough Roads, has had a significant positive impact in relieving traffic congestion on busy arterial roads.

Other key north-south roads (e.g. Mitcham Road, and Blackburn Road and Rooks Road) still experience significant traffic congestion, particularly at the level crossings for the Belgrave / Lilydale rail line.

Grade Separation of Railway Lines

Whitehorse City Council advocated strongly and effectively for state and federal government funding for the grade separation of the Springvale Road and Middleborough Road level crossings, where the grade separation involved separating the railway line and road. Similar levels of advocacy will be required to gain government support and funding for the grade separation of Mitcham Road, Rooks Road, Blackburn Road, Heatherdale Road and Mont Albert Road within the municipality.

The Liberal National Coalition state government came into power on 27 November 2010 and stated that "the Coalition plan to fix the problems of the notorious level crossings in Whitehorse" and promised to give Melbourne families less commuting time and more quality time.

The state government has highlighted Mitcham Road, Rooks Road and Blackburn Road as urgent public transport projects for grade separation works and road upgrading. Commitments have been made to grade separate the level crossings at Mitcham Road and Rooks Road at an estimated cost of \$180 million during its first



term (2010-2014). The new state government has also committed that during their first term of government, a \$12 million feasibility study for the grade separation of the Blackburn Road railway level crossing will be undertaken. It is estimated that the project cost of removing the level crossing will be \$150 million. Council will continue to work closely with the relevant state government authorities in the advocacy and planning for these grade separations.

Traffic Volumes

Vehicle traffic is forecast to increase across the arterial road network in Whitehorse over the next 10 years, with most growth being seen along the east-west roads in the eastern part of the municipality (approximately 6.2 per cent growth to 2021 for east-west roads in the vicinity of Springvale Road).

Traffic growth along north-south roads is estimated to be more moderate (approximately 3.7 per cent growth for north-south roads in the vicinity of Whitehorse Road).

The Department of Transport estimates that if state government public transport usage targets are met (20 per cent target for public transport's share of motorised trips within Melbourne, rising from the current level of 9 per cent) traffic will decrease on some roads (particularly in the west of the municipality) or increase at significantly lower rates, so there are substantial benefits to be gained from shifts toward sustainable transport across Melbourne.

The Role of Car Parking

According to Melbourne 2030: 'Focusing a substantial proportion of development at activity centres that have good access to the Principal Public Transport Network will help to reduce car trips and decrease the share of trips that need to be made by car.'

In precincts such as the Box Hill CAD, this provides opportunities to limit car travel through the promotion of public transport and careful land use planning and associated car parking provision.

In the future, Council could give consideration to the adoption of lower parking requirements for new development applications located in appropriate locations (such as the Box Hill CAD) in exchange for higher levels of on site bicycle parking, scooter parking, access to a car share scheme, or contributions towards sustainable transport infrastructure in the public domain (e.g. bicycle parking facilities, pedestrian improvements etc.).

In 2006, the former state government set up an advisory committee to review the existing parking provisions in the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP). The advisory committee produced a report in August 2007 incorporating a number of recommendations relating to the current system. The report adopted an 'assess and reduce demand' approach to its review. This approach 'sets car parking requirements based on empirical assessment of demand requirements to meet demand or to undertake measures to reduce car parking demand'. In a practical context, the committee noted that this approach 'means beginning with a realistic assessment of the likely demand for car parking for a particular use in a particular area, and examining ways in which that demand can be reduced.'

The advisory committee report and draft practice notes were made available for comment in 2007 although the recommendations are yet to be adopted and implemented. Discussions with representatives of the Department of Planning and Community Development indicate that the development of actions in response to the recommendations of the advisory committee is underway.

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY ACTIONS

The *Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011* creates a new framework to consider the different modes of transport available to the Whitehorse community and provides direction to facilitate travel options and networks that are sustainable, convenient, accessible and safe. This strategy will be used by Council to:

- Implement its own projects and programs
- Advocate for improved transport infrastructure and services
- Guide future policy and strategic objectives within the municipality.

The strategic objectives of the strategy are outlined on the following pages, with actions which will enable Council to implement and advocate for transport options that are sustainable, convenient, accessible and safe.

The complete list of actions, including an indicative timeframe and cost range, is included in Appendix 1.

Strategic Objective 1

To encourage walking for all members of the community through a range of operational and educational programs, and by providing a safe, attractive, connected and well-designed pedestrian environment.

4.1 Encourage Walking

Walking is not only beneficial for health and wellbeing but can also play an important role in improving quality of life as it helps protect the living environment and natural resources when built into transportation systems.

The walking actions in this strategy aim to reinforce and maintain the positive aspects of the walking environment that currently exist within Whitehorse, while also addressing a number of areas identified for improvement.

Most of the issues associated with pedestrian safety and accessibility are located in the Box Hill CAD and other Major Activity Centres due to high pedestrian numbers and difficulties when crossing busy arterial roads.

Future pedestrian improvements, such as the installation of pedestrian operated signals, raised pedestrian crosswalks on local roads, reduced speed limits and improved security and lighting should be focussed around the Box Hill CAD, within and on the approaches to the Major Activity Centres and shopping centres, public transport interchanges, major sporting facilities and in the vicinity of schools and educational institutions.

Reference	Action
1.1.1	Implement and advocate for improved pedestrian facilities at all Major Activity Centres.
1.1.2	Advocate for improved pedestrian facilities and access at Box Hill Central Activities District, including along Whitehorse Road and Station Street.
1.1.3	Investigate and implement as recommended, improved pedestrian facilities and access at Box Hill Central Activities District.
1.1.4	Lobby the state government for a more transparent and equitable funding arrangement for the provision of school crossing supervisors to increase participation of school children walking to school.
1.1.5	Continue to implement educational programs to encourage walking as a mode of transport and ensure that road safety measures are incorporated into programs.
1.1.6	Continue Council's role in promoting sustainable and active transport within the municipality.
1.1.7	Lobby VicRoads for audio tactiles to be installed at all signalised intersections and pedestrian operated signals in Whitehorse.



4.2 Maintain and Improve The Cycling Network

The simplicity, cost-effectiveness and ease of use of bicycles have contributed to its worldwide use and popularity. Along with being popular for recreation and sport, cycling is an environmentally-friendly form of transport that can reduce reliance on car-based transport. Fundamental elements of this strategy include the provision of quality spaces and places for commuter and recreational cyclists.

The City of Whitehorse has some excellent off-road paths (e.g. the Koonung Creek, Gardiners Creek, Bushy Creek, and Dandenong Creek trails) which primarily cater for recreational walk and cycling trips, and complement the limited dedicated on-road facilities for commuter cyclists. The Blackburn Road-Surrey Road link incorporates a series of on-road bicycle lanes (predominantly shared parking/ bicycle lanes) while Springfield Road has a mix of on and off-road facilities.

Future bicycle facilities in Whitehorse should be developed in accordance with the *Whitehorse Bicycle Strategy 2007* and seek to provide improved routes for commuter cycling, improved connections between existing and future on and off-road paths, improved facilities, and encourage increased cycling activity, particularly for travel to schools, tertiary institutions and places of employment. The investigation and possible construction of the eastern rail trail between the Box Hill and Ringwood CADs (CAD Connector) is a pivotal link for future bicycle infrastructure improvements in the municipality.

This includes the provision of well-connected on and off-road paths/lanes to encourage increased levels of cycling in a safe manner throughout and beyond Whitehorse.

Strategic Objective 2

To maintain and improve the cycling network through the municipality in accordance with the Whitehorse Bicycle Strategy 2007, while continuing to promote cycling as a practical alternative to the private motor car for local trips, commuting and recreation.

Reference	Action
2.2.1	Advocate to VicRoads, as part of the structure plan process, for funding for the construction of an off-road shared path along the former Healesville Freeway reservation, east of Springvale Road.
2.2.2	Complete a feasibility study and advocate for the construction of the bicycle CAD Connector between Box Hill and Ringwood.
2.2.3	Advocate for the progressive construction of an off-road shared path along the Pipe Track from Mitcham to Glen Waverley.
2.2.4	Continue to implement educational programs to encourage cycling as a mode of transport and ensure that road safety measures are incorporated into programs.
2.2.5	Continue Council's role in promoting sustainable and active transport within the municipality.



4.3 Encourage An Increased Shift Toward Public Transport

Whitehorse City Council acknowledges that the reliance on car-based travel has numerous environmental, social, safety and economic implications for the community. To minimise the negative aspects of car-based travel, public transport will need to absorb a greater share of the increasing travel demand.

Trains

Compared with many other municipalities, the City of Whitehorse is well serviced by public transport. Most commuter trips are made on the Belgrave/Lilydale railway line, so its ability to meet continued patronage growth is a critical element of the strategy. The railway line is supported by tram routes along key arterial routes (i.e. Whitehorse Road, Burwood Highway and Riversdale Road) which provide important connections within Whitehorse and to neighbouring municipalities.

Box Hill Transport Interchange

The Box Hill Transport Interchange is identified as an important component of the Central Activities District and requires urgent attention if it is to provide high quality integrated transport to the precinct.

Buses

The bus network in Whitehorse provides important cross-town services, particularly for those with limited transport options, such as those without cars and the young and elderly. The bus network in and around Whitehorse has recently seen significant improvements through the implementation of some of the recommendations of the Bus Service Review including the SmartBus and Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) programs. However, it has been identified that the frequency of bus services during evenings and at weekends in some areas of Whitehorse are reduced or do not exist. While the advent of a number of SmartBus services in Whitehorse has improved the frequency and spread of bus services, further improvements are required.

The implementation of the recommendation of the bus services review has been slow and a firm funding commitment and accelerated implementation plan is required.

Trams

The route 75 tram has recently been extended from Burwood East (Blackburn Road) through to Vermont South. The extension of the tram route further east to Knox City is viewed as a high priority by the Knox City Council with Whitehorse City Council indicating its support for this extension.

Taxis

The location of the existing taxi ranks within the municipality has been identified as problematic, with safety, accessibility and congestion raised as issues. By increasing the convenience, legibility, safety and comfort of taxi ranks – particularly at places with high pedestrian activity such as railway stations and shopping centres – patronage is likely to increase.

Vehicle Traffic

Whitehorse caters for a high number of educational institutions, with many of these facilities being well serviced by public transport. However, they currently generate very high levels of car-based traffic activity. There is strong potential to significantly reduce the current levels of car based travel, with a shift to more sustainable transport modes (public transport, cycling and walking) with the combined assistance of the state government, educational institutions and the local community.

Whitehorse has an ageing community and it is imperative to ensure that there are safe, convenient and accessible forms of transport to cater for older residents when driving is no longer a safe option. The provision of a high quality public transport network that addresses the social, environmental, economic and safety needs of all members of the community is required.



Strategic Objective 3

To encourage an increased shift toward public transport by advocating for the provision of improved infrastructure and services, in combination with information to the community regarding transport choices available throughout the municipality and education about the benefits.

Reference	Action
3.3.1	Advocate for the urgent upgrade of the Box Hill Transport Interchange – including better connectivity between tram, train, taxi and bus services and improved passenger waiting facilities in terms of comfort and information.
3.3.2	Advocate for the extension of the route 75 tram service along Burwood Highway from Vermont South to Knox City.
3.3.3	Advocate for the construction of the third railway line between Box Hill and Ringwood, with the implementation of grade separations of the level crossings.
3.3.4	Advocate for the removal of inter-zone inequalities in public transport fares (e.g. Box Hill Institute and Deakin University).
3.3.5	Advocate for improved integration and co-ordination of bus, train and tram timetables.
3.3.6	Advocate for the urgent implementation of the recommendations of the state government Monash/Manningham/Whitehorse Bus Service Review.
3.3.7	Advocate for the implementation of bus lanes within the municipality (e.g. Springvale Road, SmartBus routes and appropriate intersections).
3.3.8	Advocate for increased span of hours of public transport services, in particular buses during the evening periods and weekends.
3.3.9	Advocate for all households within Whitehorse to have access to public transport within 400m of their home.
3.3.10	Continue to develop partnerships with bus, train, tram and taxi operators with the view of discussing operation issues and customer service initiatives.
3.3.11	Support the state government in the creation of an independent body to coordinate all public transport services in Melbourne to provide improved integration and coordination between all services.
3.3.12	Work with and advocate to the state government to better integrate land use planning with transport.
3.3.13	Council to continue to display leadership by utilising sustainable modes of transport for business travel. Encourage the Whitehorse community to follow Council's lead by promoting safe, sustainable and active transport.
3.3.14	Advocate to the state government for the introduction of additional taxi ranks, where appropriate, and the upgrade of existing taxi ranks.
3.3.15	Advocate to the state government and Department of Transport to accelerate the upgrade of all public transport (trams, trains, taxis and buses) infrastructure to comply with Disability Discrimination Act 1992 requirements and provide appropriate funding for these works.
3.3.16	Advocate for audio announcements to be made on all forms of public transport and that tactile maps and way-finding information be better planned and installed.



4.4 Provide Safe and Efficient Movement Of Vehicles

The road-based transport network in Whitehorse is vital to the movement of people and goods and underpins other important modes such as walking and cycling.

The removal of railway level crossings at Mitcham Road, Rooks Road, Blackburn Road, Heatherdale Road and Mont Albert Road are high priority actions for Council.

The current state government has highlighted Mitcham Road, Rooks Road and Blackburn Road as urgent public transport projects for grade separation works and road upgrading. The state government has committed to undertaking the rail crossing grade separation of Mitcham Road and Rooks Road at an estimated cost of \$180 million during its first term. The new state government has also committed that during its first term of government a \$12 million feasibility study for the grade separation of the Blackburn Road railway level crossing will be undertaken. The removal of the Blackburn Road level crossing has an estimated project cost of \$150 million.

VicRoads is investigating the implementation of peak period part time bus lanes during the existing clearway times along Springvale Road between Donvale and Springvale. This proposal was part of the former state government's plan to ease traffic congestion on Melbourne's arterial roads and to encourage the use of public transport.

Vic Roads has developed SmartRoads Road Use Hierarchy maps for each municipality to illustrate which transport modes have priority on the arterial road network at different times of the day. This is the first step in the SmartRoads process of developing network operational plans intended to be a strategic management tool to assist the decision-making process of VicRoads and Council to manage the road network during different times of the day.

Council is committed to reducing the number and severity of road crashes within Whitehorse and significant Council resources are allocated to providing road safety behavioural and engineering programs to achieve this goal. The focus for Council is to reduce the number and severity of road crashes involving novice drivers and older road users, while also providing education regarding alcohol, drugs, fatigue, speed, and safe and sustainable travel to school.

A car-sharing scheme is an alternative to car ownership where members can access a number of conveniently located cars on demand to use for short or longer periods. Car-sharing schemes can save time and money as they reduce many of the direct costs associated with individual car ownership, such as servicing and maintenance, fuel, repairs, cleaning, registration and insurance. Research about car sharing experiences overseas suggests that the concept also has potential environmental benefits through reduced single occupancy vehicle trips and increased modal share of sustainable transport such as walking and cycling. It also has the potential to reduce congestion and the demand for on-street parking. Council has previously investigated a car-sharing scheme for Whitehorse but at the time the scheme was not economically viable.

In precincts such as the Box Hill Central Activities District there is an opportunity to promote usage of public transport and limit car travel through careful land use planning and associated car parking provision. There is an opportunity to downgrade the classification of Station Street in order to facilitate public transport passage and improve pedestrian safety. In the future, Council could give consideration to the adoption of lower parking rates for new developments located in the Box Hill Central Activities District, in Major Activity Centres and in the vicinity of train stations to encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport.



Strategic Objective 4

To provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and freight through and within the municipality with an increased focus on the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

Reference	Action
4.4.1	<p>Advocate for the grade separation of all level crossings within Whitehorse. All future grade separations to consider access needs of cyclists, pedestrians and motorists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitcham Road • Rooks Road • Blackburn Road • Heatherdale Road • Mont Albert Road.
4.4.2	Advocate for measures to improve public transport priority, whilst maintaining the capacity of the arterial road network at key intersections.
4.4.3	Continue to work with VicRoads to further develop the SmartRoads - Road Use Hierarchy.
4.4.4	Lobby VicRoads to downgrade the road classification of Station Street Box Hill and to increase the focus on road based public transport and pedestrians.
4.4.5	Continue to review and monitor road crash data in Whitehorse and implement Council's <i>Road Safety Strategy 2006-2011</i> and <i>Traffic Management Strategy</i> .
4.4.6	Continue to investigate the feasibility of introducing a car-share scheme within the Box Hill CAD in association with a private car share company and to implement when economically viable.
4.4.7	Advocate to the state government regarding the provision of adequate commuter car parking at train stations.
4.4.8	Investigate the adoption of reduced parking rates for new developments located in the Box Hill Central Activities District or, where appropriate, in Major Activity Centres and in the vicinity of train stations, to encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport.
4.4.9	Advocate to the state government to adopt and implement the recommendations of the 2007 advisory committee report regarding parking provisions in the Victorian Planning Provision (VPP).
4.4.10	Advocate to VicRoads for the installation of mid-block facilities, where appropriate, to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists on arterial roads.

APPENDIX 1 – ACTION PLANS

The following table sets out consolidated actions and priorities that Council will pursue to implement this strategy. The priorities will involve the input from various groups and agencies with Council providing the lead advocacy role. The priorities are listed as ongoing, short (1-2 years); medium (3-5 years) or long term (6+) priorities.

A graphical summary of the actions listed below is provided following this table.

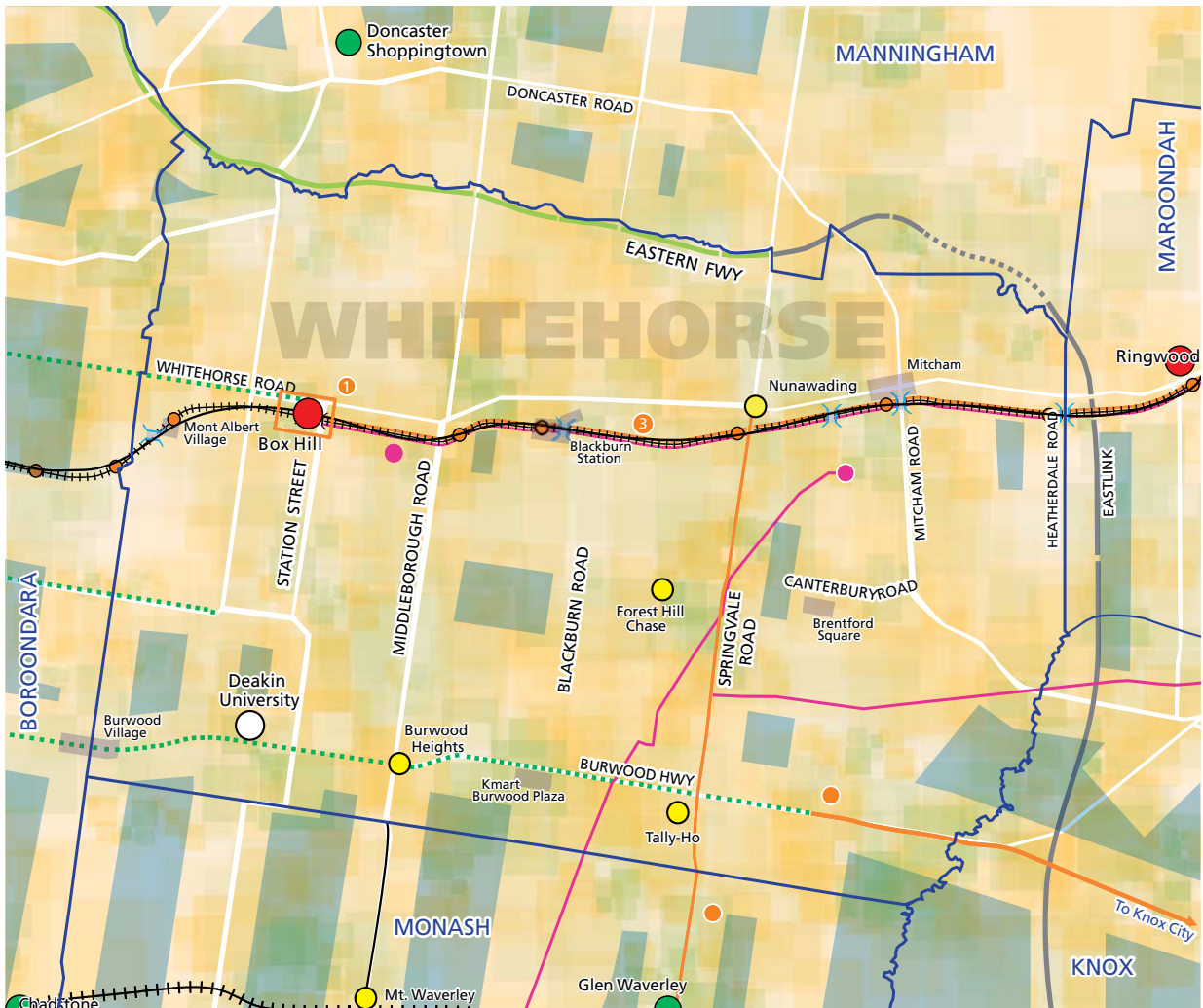
Strategic Objective	Ref No.	Action	Cost	Timeline	Lead Council Department	Council Department Partner
Strategic Objective 1 To encourage walking for all members of the community through a range of operational and educational programs, and by providing a safe, attractive, connected and well designed pedestrian environment.	1.1.1	Implement and advocate for improved pedestrian facilities at all activity centres.	\$\$\$	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	1.1.2	Advocate for improved pedestrian facilities and access at Box Hill Central Activities District, including along Whitehorse Road and Station Street.	Core Work	Medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	Community Development, Planning and Business, Communications
	1.1.3	Investigate and implement, as recommended, improved pedestrian facilities and access at Box Hill Central Activities District	\$\$	Medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	1.1.4	Lobby the state government for a more transparent and equitable funding arrangement for the provision of school crossing supervisors to increase participation of school children walking to school.	\$	Short	Engineering and Environmental Services	Community Laws, Communications
	1.1.5	Continue to implement educational programs to encourage walking and cycling as modes of transport and ensure that road safety measures are incorporated into programs.	\$\$\$	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	Arts and Recreation Development
	1.1.6	Continue Council's role in promoting sustainable transport within the municipality.	Core work	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	1.1.7	Lobby VicRoads for audio tactiles to be installed at all signalised intersections and pedestrian operated signals in Whitehorse	\$	Medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	

Strategic Objective	Ref No.	Action	Cost	Timeline	Lead Council Department	Council Department Partner
Strategic Objective 2 To maintain and improve the cycling network through the municipality in accordance with the <i>Whitehorse Bicycle Strategy 2007</i> , while continuing to promote cycling as a practical alternative to the private motor car for local trips, commuting and recreation.	2.2.1	Advocate to VicRoads, as part of the structure plan process, for funding for the construction of an off-road shared path along the former Healesville Freeway reservation east of Springvale Road.	Core work	Short to medium	Planning and Building	Engineering and Environmental Services, Arts and Recreation Development
	2.2.2	Complete a feasibility study and advocate for the construction of the bicycle CAD Connector between the Box Hill and Ringwood.	Core work	Short to medium	Arts and Recreation Development	Engineering and Environmental Services
	2.2.3	Advocate for the progressive construction of an off-road shared path along the Pipe Track from Mitcham to Glen Waverley.	Core Work	Short to medium	Arts and Recreation Development	Engineering and Environmental Services
	2.2.4	Continue to implement educational programs to encourage walking and cycling as modes of transport and ensure that road safety measures are incorporated into programs.	Cost included in 1.1.4	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	Engineering and Environmental Services
	2.2.5	Continue Council's role in promoting sustainable transport within the municipality.	Cost included in 1.1.4	Ongoing	Engineering Environmental Services	Engineering and Environmental Services
Strategic Objective 3 To encourage an increased shift toward public transport by advocating for the provision of improved infrastructure and services, in combination with information to the community regarding transport choices available throughout the municipality and education about the benefits.	3.3.1	Advocate for the urgent upgrade of the Box Hill Transport Interchange – including better connectivity between tram, train and bus services and improved passenger waiting facilities in terms of comfort and information.	\$\$	Short to medium	Planning and Building	Engineering and Environmental Services
	3.3.2	Advocate for the extension of the route 75 tram service along Burwood Highway from Vermont South to Knox City.	\$	Medium to long	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications
	3.3.3	Advocate for the construction of the third railway line between Box Hill and Ringwood, with the implementation of grade separations of the level crossings.	\$	Medium to long	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications
	3.3.4	Advocate for the removal of inter-zone inequalities in public transport fares (e.g. Box Hill Institute and Deakin University).	Core work	Short to medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications
	3.3.5	Advocate for improved integration and co-ordination of bus, train and tram timetables.	Core work	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications
	3.3.6	Advocate for the urgent implementation of the recommendations of the state government Monash/Manningham/Whitehorse Bus Service Review.	Core work	Short to medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications

Strategic Objective	Ref No.	Action	Cost	Timeline	Lead Council Department	Council Department Partner
<p>Strategic Objective 3 (cont.)</p> <p>To encourage a increased shift toward public transport by advocating for the provision of improved infrastructure and services, in combination with information to the community regarding transport choices available throughout the municipality and education about the benefits.</p>	3.3.7	Advocate for the implementation of bus lanes within the municipality (e.g. Springvale Road, SmartBus routes and appropriate intersections).	Core work	Short to medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications
	3.3.8	Advocate for increased span of hours of public transport services, in particular buses during the evening periods and weekends.	Core work	Short to medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications
	3.3.9	Advocate for all households within Whitehorse to have access to public transport within 400m of their home.	Core work	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications
	3.3.10	Continue to develop partnerships with bus, train, tram and taxi operators with the view of discussing operation issues and customer service initiatives.	\$	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	3.3.11	Support the state government in the creation of an independent body to coordinate all public transport services in Melbourne to provide improved integration and coordination between all services.	Core work	Short to medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	3.3.12	Work with and advocate to the state government to better integrate land use planning with transport.	Core work	Ongoing	Planning and Building	Engineering and Environmental Services
	3.3.13	Council to continue to display leadership by utilising sustainable modes of transport for business travel. Encourage the Whitehorse community to follow Council's lead by promoting safe, sustainable and active transport.	Cost included in 6.1.5	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	3.3.14	Advocate to the state government for the introduction of additional taxi ranks, where appropriate, and the upgrade of existing taxi ranks.	\$	Medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications
	3.3.15	Advocate to the state government and Department of Transport to accelerate the upgrade all public transport (tram, trains and buses) infrastructure to comply with the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> requirements and provide appropriate funding for these works.	\$\$	Medium to long	Engineering and Environmental Services	Community Development, Communications
	3.3.16	Advocate for audio announcements to be made on all forms of public transport and that tactile maps and way finding information be better planned and installed.	\$\$	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications

Strategic Objective	Ref No.	Action	Cost	Timeline	Lead Council Department	Council Department Partner
Strategic Objective 4 To provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and freight through and within the municipality with an increased focus on the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.	4.4.1	Advocate for the grade separation of all level crossings within Whitehorse. All future grade separations to consider access needs of cyclists, pedestrians and motorists (Mitcham Road, Rooks Road, Blackburn Road Heatherdale Road and Mont Albert Road).	\$\$\$	Short to medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	4.4.2	Advocate for measures to improve public transport priority, whilst maintaining the capacity of the arterial road network at key intersections.	\$	Long	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	4.4.3	Continue to work with VicRoads to further develop the SmartRoads Road Use Hierarchy.	Core work	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	4.4.4	Lobby VicRoads to downgrade the road classification of Station Street Box Hill and to increase the focus on road based public transport and pedestrians.	\$	Short to medium	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	4.4.5	Continue to review and monitor road crash data in Whitehorse and implement Council's <i>Road Safety Strategy 2006-2011</i> and <i>Traffic Management Strategy</i> .	\$\$\$	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	4.4.6	Continue to investigate the feasibility of introducing a car-share scheme within the Box Hill CAD in association with a private car share company and to implement when economically viable.	\$\$\$	Medium to long	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	4.4.7	Advocate to the state government regarding the provision of adequate commuter car parking at train stations.	\$	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	Communications
	4.4.8	Investigate the adoption of reduced parking rates for new developments located in the Box Hill Central Activities District or, where appropriate, in Major Activity Centres and in the vicinity of train stations, to encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport.	\$	Short term	Engineering and Environmental Services	
	4.4.9	Advocate to the state government to adopt and implement the recommendations of the 2007 draft advisory committee report regarding parking provisions in the Victorian Planning Provision (VPP).	Core work	Short term	Planning and Building	
	4.4.10	Advocate to VicRoads for the installation of mid-block facilities, where appropriate, to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists on arterial roads.	Core work	Ongoing	Engineering and Environmental Services	

MAP



- CENTRAL ACTIVITIES DISTRICT
- PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY CENTRE
- MAJOR ACTIVITY CENTRE
- SPECIALISED ACTIVITY CENTRE
- OTHER LOCAL SHOPPING CENTRES

- Rail and Station
- Tram Route
- Eastern Freeway
- Eastlink
- Municipal Border
- CYCLING

1. Off-road shared path along the former Healesville Freeway reservation east of Springvale Road.
2. CAD Connector between Box Hill Interchange and Ringwood Railway Station.
3. Off-road path along the Pipe Track from Mitcham

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

1. Upgrade of the Box Hill Transport Interchange.
2. Extension of the Route 75 Tram service along Burwood Highway from Vermont South to Knox City Shopping Centre.
3. Third railway line between Box Hill and Ringwood.
4. Implementation of Bus Lanes within the municipality eg: Springvale Road.
5. Advocate that all households with Whitehorse are located within 400m of a public transport service.

Area beyond 400 m of public transport service.

CAR BASED TRAVEL

1. Grade separations of all level crossings within Whitehorse.
2. Seek VicRoads to down grade the road classification of Station Street, Box Hill.



Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners of the land now known as Whitehorse and pays respects to its elders past and present.

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