

Report Card

JUNE 2019

> Victoria Walks is an independent walking health promotion charity. Our vision is that people walk whenever and wherever possible, within strong and vibrant communities, with resulting health benefits.

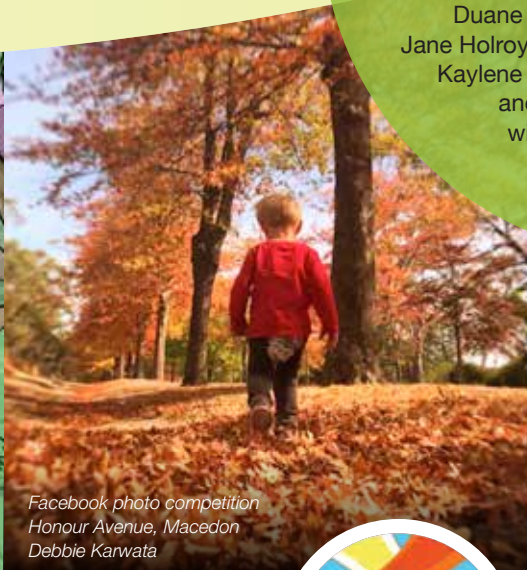
**Working to get
more people walking
more, every day.**

Overview

In Victoria Walks' 10th year, there is much to celebrate. Our research set the agenda for policy debate, was reported by the World Economic Forum and recognised by the Institute of Transportation Engineers Sustainable Transport Award. We combined policy and media work to support the City of Melbourne's efforts to prioritise pedestrians, particularly in the development of its new Transport Strategy. Our social media following continues to grow.

This report summarises Victoria Walks' activities and highlights from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.

Illustration by Elena Strelnikova



Facebook photo competition
Honour Avenue, Macedon
Debbie Karwata



Facebook photo competition
Clunes Cousins, Yvette Denning

Who we are

Victoria Walks is governed by a Board of Management comprising Kellie-Ann Jolly (Chair), Emma Hamilton (Treasurer), Daniel King, Josephine Monger, Dana Ronan, Justin Madden and John Hicks.

The small but enterprising team of staff is led by Ben Rossiter (Executive Officer) and includes Duane Burt (Principal Policy Advisor), Jane Holroyd (Digital Communications Advisor), Kaylene McKay (Let's Walk Co-ordinator) and Jo Eady (Senior Advisor), with associated consultants and skilled volunteers.

Highlights 2018-2019

- Released **The economic case for investment in walking**, in partnership with Arup, highlighting key barriers to appropriate levels of investment in walking, which attracted significant media and stakeholder interest.
- Supported the **20 Minute Neighbourhood Pilot Program** in collaboration with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and others, providing comprehensive Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvements reports and interactive online maps detailing walkability issues and solutions for the three pilot neighbourhoods.
- Delivered **Let's Walk Lynbrook** in partnership with the City of Casey to connect women with each other, leading to safer, more social streets.
- Released the **Footpath Cycling Discussion Paper**, prepared by MRCagney in response to calls for changes to road rules to allow all-ages cycling on footpaths in Victoria.
- Released the VicHealth funded **Change to Walking 2017-2018** program outcomes report on testing 'nudge' interventions to influence behaviour towards walking for short trips, with a focus on schools and train stations, delivered by Alice Woodruff of Active City.
- Continued our partnership with Parks Victoria to deliver **Welcome Walks**, a series of digital and print documented introductory walks, to get more women walking in parks for their health and wellbeing.
- Updated our **Walking Maps** website to provide Victorian walkers with a more mobile-friendly and curated experience to help them find walks in Victoria.
- Held the sixth **Smart Urban Futures** national two-day conference in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria, including keynote presentations and individual masterclasses from Lynn Roberts, CEO of the Congress for New Urbanism and Dongho Chang, City Traffic Engineer for the City of Seattle.
- Provided expert advice to the Queensland Government on the development of the forthcoming **Queensland Walking Strategy**.
- Released our **six-point plan for investment in walking** and met with representatives of the Liberal, Labor and Greens parties in the lead up to the 2018 Victorian state election.
- Built capacity of local councils to sustain active travel outcomes of Walk to School by delivering an **Active Travel to School Workshop** attended by 35 organisations. All participants agreed the workshop would guide their planning and projects. Delivered by Active City.
- Awarded the Institute of Transportation Engineers (Australia and New Zealand) **Sustainable Transport Award 2018** for our work standing up for older pedestrians.
- Collaborated on the development of *A Healthier Start for Victorians: A consensus statement on obesity prevention*, particularly the recommendation to develop and implement a strategy to get Victorians walking more.
- Held two **supporter networking events**. The first in October 2018 featured community engagement specialist Steven Weir and the second in March 2019 had Dongho Chang, City Traffic Engineer for Seattle, speak on the leading role the City has played in designing multi-modal streets.



Our work

Social media and websites

Victoria Walks continued to build its community of walking enthusiasts in 2018-2019.

Many found us at Facebook with 10,000 newcomers taking our overall following to over 73,000. Our 'Dog Walks' Facebook group hit the 5000-member milestone, with hundreds of dog owners now requesting to join each month to share information about dog-friendly walks.

On Twitter @victoriawalks we continued to put walking on the political agenda sparking thousands of conversations among over 3000 followers.



The number of people visiting www.victoriawalks.org.au increased by nearly 50 per cent in 2018-2019 as they looked for inspiration on where to walk.

Our Walking Maps website experienced similar growth in popularity. Almost half a million individual users visited walkingmaps.com.au to find information about Victoria's recreational trails and urban walking gems.

In late 2018 we embarked on a mission to improve the experience of Walking Maps – particularly for people accessing walk information on-the-go from their mobile phones. We added a Google Maps feature that gives directions (by car, public transport or by foot) to the start of a walk. Website visitors can also now flip through a walk's photo highlights rather than opening them one at a time. The proportion of users who become return visitors to the site is growing, indicating Victorians increasingly regard Walking Maps a go-to tool to inspire their walking adventures.

Media activity

Victoria Walks generated 539 media mentions (including broadcast syndications) including over 200 television, 175 radio and 30 print stories with a combined estimated audience reach or circulation of 13,444,594 people. The equivalent advertising spend that would be needed to reach the same audience is estimated to be \$1,476,709 (which compares to \$2,941,000 in 2017/18 and \$670,00 in 2016/17).



Victoria Walks is increasingly being approached by media outlets to comment on walking or pedestrian related issues.

The most covered issues were: concerns over the push by some cycling organisations to allow adults to ride on footpaths; and Victoria Walks' support for the City of Melbourne's draft Transport Strategy.

Conferences, forums and events

Victoria Walks presented at many conferences and major forums during the year, including:

- *11th Liveable Cities Conference* (Keynote), Melbourne, July 2018.
- *Perth Walking Forum – A morning with Dr Ben Rossiter*, July 2018.
- *Walking MIP: Planning Workshop*, Yarra Ranges Shire Council, December 2018.
- *World Urban Parks Congress*, Melbourne, October 2018.
- *XIX International Conference on Walking and Liveable Communities – Walk21 (2)*, Bogotá October 2018.
- *Australian Walking and Cycling Conference*, Bendigo, October 2018.
- *Victoria Transport Infrastructure Summit*, Melbourne, February 2019.



Workshops and committees

Victoria Walks participated in a number of workshops and committees, including:

- Cycling and Walking Australia and New Zealand (CWANZ).
- Physical Activity Taskforce, VicHealth.
- City of Port Phillip Draft Integrated Transport Strategy workshop
- Walking and Cycling Data Framework and Action Plan Workshop, VicRoads.
- International Federation of Pedestrians advocacy workshop, Walk21 Bogata.
- The Most Active Sporting Nation workshop, Sport Australia.
- Victorian Sustainable Transport Interest Group (VicSTIG).
- Movement & Place – Walking and Place Working Group, VicRoads.
- Victorian Active Living Alliance Forum, DHHS.
- Towards Zero Victorian Road Safety Summit, TAC.



Illustration by Elena Strelnikova

The year ahead

2019-2020 promises to be another year of exciting challenges and opportunities for Victoria Walks.



We plan to:

- Release research into official crash, hospital and police data to provide a better understanding of pedestrian crashes in Victoria, conducted by Monash University Accident Research Centre and funded through a **TAC Community Road Safety Grant**.
- Provide a keynote presentation to the **Walk21 conference** in Rotterdam, Netherlands.
- Undertake research into walking for transport in Melbourne with particular emphasis on walking to shops, including a literature review, analysis of VISTA data, and report on existing information regarding access to local shops.
- Support VicHealth's **Walk to School** program and deliver workshops on active travel to school.
- Deliver the **Let's Walk** program in Long Gully and Kangaroo Flat in partnership with the City of Greater Bendigo.
- Expand our collaboration with Polaris Lawyers, highlighting legal and enforcement issues relating to walking.
- Hold an event to celebrate Victoria Walks' 10-year anniversary and expand our **Official Supporters** program.
- Work with Active City to build local councils' capacity to deliver VicHealth's Walk to School program through a new resource guide and delivering four workshops in regional Victoria.
- Establish a **Women Who Walk** Facebook group to provide Victorian women a digital meeting space to connect, inspire each other to walk more, swap information and discuss safety issues.

Acknowledgements

Victoria Walks acknowledges and thanks the following:

- VicHealth for its significant core and project funding since 2009.
- The City of Melbourne for provision of reduced-rent office space in 'City Village'.
- DEWLP for their support in delivering the 20 Minute Neighbourhood Pilot Program.
- Helen Bartley Consulting for pro bono program evaluation advice.
- Our skilled volunteers: Elena Strelnikova (illustrator), Keeley Aglinskis (walk map creator), Jennifer McCurry (research), Chloé Espiard (event planning).

Victoria Walks Official Supporters



Victoria Walks Corporate Supporters:

