

Report Card

JUNE 2018

> 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.





Let's Walk Angliss.



Welcome Walks.



Illustration by Elena Strelnikova

Victoria Walks is governed by a Board of Management comprising Kellie-Ann Jolly (Chair), Emma Hamilton (Treasurer), Sue Fitzpatrick, John Hicks, Daniel King, Justin Madden, Josephine Monger and Dana Ronan. The Board is supported by a small but enterprising team of staff led by Ben Rossiter (Executive Officer).

This report summarises Victoria Walks' activities and highlights from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

Overview

Victoria Walks continued to grow its reputation as Australia's preeminent voice on walking and walkability in 2017-18. New research examined barriers and enablers to walking participation while targeted programs promoted the benefits of walking in schools and local communities. A renewed emphasis on communication helped grow this small organisation's influence with stakeholders and to broadcast its work and messages to the broader community.



Jane finds it easier to walk to the station than drive.

CHANGE TO WALKING

TRY WALKING TO THE STATION ONCE A WEEK

change2walking.com.au



Highlights 2017/18

- Released **Young People and Walking**, in partnership with the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria. This research explored young people's perceptions of liveable communities, independent mobility, and supports and barriers to walking for recreation and transport.
- Commenced the **20 Minute Neighbourhood Pilot Program** in collaboration with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP); the Heart Foundation; and the councils of Moonee Valley, Brimbank and Maroondah. Victoria Walks undertook a comprehensive assessment of the walkability of Strathmore, Glengala and Croydon South.
- Delivered the VicHealth funded **Change to Walking** 2017-18 program, testing 'nudge' interventions to influence behaviour towards walking for short trips, with a focus on schools and train stations (outcomes to be reported in 2018/19).
- Delivered the **Let's Walk Angliss** and **Let's Walk Yarraville** programs in partnership with the City of Maribyrnong to connect women with each other to increase their regular participation in recreational walking, leading to them feeling safer in their neighbourhoods.

- Partnered 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.
- Held the fifth **Smart Urban Futures** national two-day conference in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria, with an impressive array of national and international speakers providing inspiring examples of building more liveable, healthy and sustainable cities.
- Supported VicHealth's Walk to School Program and held two exceptionally well-received **Active Travel to School Workshops** with representatives from 61 councils and community health centres from across Victoria.
- Released **One step ahead... Planning for Accessible Centres and Connected Stations**, a report by David Mephram Consulting that explored practical ways for local councils to create attractive, accessible, connected Main Streets.
- Commenced a new three-year funding grant from VicHealth to continue to strengthen policy and practice to encourage more walking for transport and recreation.
- Collaborated with 18 other organisations on the Alliance for an Agenda for Ageing to launch **An Agenda for Ageing in Victoria**.
- Worked with Australian Health Policy Collaboration (AHPC) and 15 prominent organisations to develop ten national policy priorities to improve the health of Australians in **Active Travel: pathways to a healthy future**.
- Partnered with Stockland to launch an active transport pilot program to encourage school children to get active, learn about the benefits of walking and have fun along the way.
- Contributed to the City of Melbourne's planning for their Transport Strategy Refresh, including supportive comment in a wide range of media.
- Held two **supporter networking events**. The first in September 2017 featured David Silvester, Deputy Secretary Network Planning at Transport for Victoria. The other in March 2018 had Professor Peter Jones from University College London, originator of the Link and Place approach, involved in a Q&A session with supporters.
- Worked with VicRoads to deliver the **VicRoads Pedestrian Seminar**, to promote improved provision for walkers in VicRoads' operations.

DO YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL SAFE WALKING?



Survey of 1,089 people aged 10-20 - www.victoriawalks.org.au/young_people/

Our work

Social media

Victoria Walks continues to build an impressive and engaged community of followers by providing inspiring content and provoking discussion around walkability issues.

Our Facebook page attracted 13,000 new followers to total more than 62,000 while daily engagements with the Victoria Walks page increased by 47,000.

Visits to the Victoria Walks and Walking Maps websites both increased by 80 per cent thanks to greater emphasis on curation and presentation of articles, maps and information. People can now find suitable walks such as pram-friendly walks or walks in specific local government areas more easily.

A Facebook group for Victorian dog owners brought a new, engaged audience to our websites. Victoria Walks used the group to encourage responsible pet ownership, a message that is being well-received by members.

Our Twitter followers increased by over 20 per cent and our LinkedIn company page continues to garner a good pool of well-connected professionals.

Media activity

Victoria Walks generated more than 985 media mentions (including broadcast syndications) including 480 television, 370 radio and 98 print stories with a combined estimated audience reach or circulation of 18,863,000 people. The equivalent advertising spend that would be needed to reach the same audience is estimated to be \$2,941,000 (up from \$670,00 in 2016/17).

Victoria Walks is increasingly being approached by national media outlets to comment on walking issues. This year we spoke to ABC TV News Breakfast about a spike in pedestrian deaths across Australia and A Current Affair on a lack of footpaths for elderly walkers.

The release of our report **Young People and Walking** attracted over 70 stories, including a lengthy interview on ABC TV News Breakfast.

"I think it comes down to two things as research clearly shows – it's poor road design or driver behaviour."

– Ben Rossiter
Victoria Walks CEO

Ben Rossiter, ABC News Breakfast, 21 Nov 2017.

Conferences, forums and events

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

- *New Zealand Walking Summit*, July 2017
- *10th Making Cities Liveable Conference*, Brisbane July 2017
- *Local Government Road Safety Officer Network*, August 2017
- *Designing Healthy Liveable Cities* conference (panel), Melbourne Oct 2017
- *TransportCamp* Melbourne, October 2017
- *Smart Urban Futures (2)*, Melbourne, March 2018
- *Positive Ageing Network*, Municipal Association of Victoria, June 2018.



Prof. Peter Jones speaking at Smart Urban Futures.

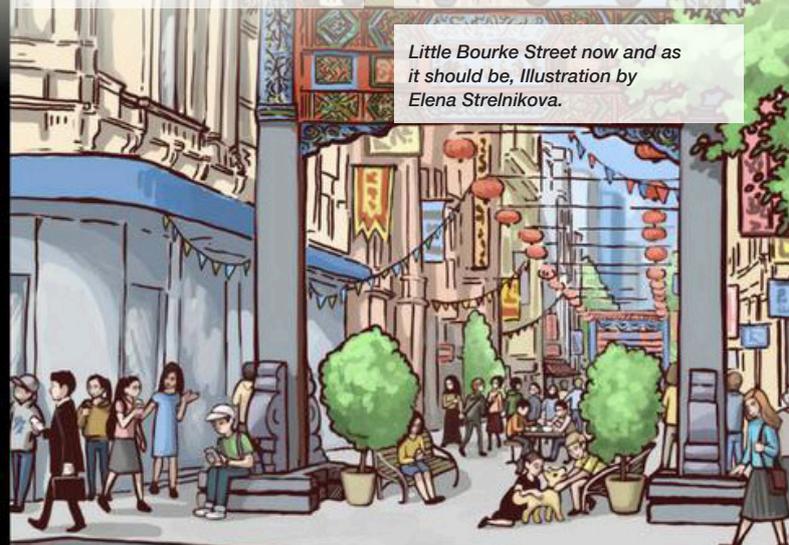
Workshops and committees

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

- Victoria Transport Users Forum, VicRoads
- Cycling and Walking Australia and New Zealand (CWANZ)
- Managing Transport Demand workshop, Infrastructure Victoria
- Physical Activity Taskforce, VicHealth
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Data Requirements Framework Workshop, VicRoads
- Transport Strategy Workshops, City of Melbourne
- Bushwalking with children workshop, Parks Victoria/Bush Walking Victoria
- Pedestrian Framework and Action Plan workshop, VicRoads.



Little Bourke Street now and as it should be, Illustration by Elena Strelnikova.



The year ahead

2018-2019 promises to be another year of exciting challenges and opportunities for Victoria Walks.

We plan to:

- Release our **six-point plan need for investment in walking** and meet with representatives of the Liberal, Labour and Greens parties in the lead up to the state election.
- Release research on the **economic case for government investment in walking**, in partnership with Arup.
- Complete the 20 Minute Neighbourhood Pilot Program, including development of Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvements Reports and a range of communications and outreach.
- Release the **Change to Walking Program 2017-2018** outcomes report.
- Refine and deliver the **Let's Walk** program in Lynbrook in partnership with the City of Casey.
- Release **research on footpath cycling**, conducted by transport consultants MRCagney.
- Hold the sixth **Smart Urban Futures** national conference in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria in March 2019.
- Support VicHealth's **Walk to School Program** and deliver workshops on active travel to school.
- Continue to build local government sector capacity to develop and deliver policy and approaches to increase walking and walkable environments.
- Expand our **Supporters** program, holding two annual support events and ensuring our work remains valuable and relevant to our supporters.
- To increase awareness of walking-related issues through targeted engagement of community members and influencers.

Acknowledgements

Victoria Walks acknowledges and thanks the following organisations:

- 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.
- VicRoads and TAC for their sponsorship of the Smart Urban Futures conference.
- Russell Kennedy Lawyers for Pro Bono legal advice.
- Polaris Lawyers for writing website content on walking legal issues.
- Our skilled volunteers: Elena Strelnikova (illustrator), Keeley Aglinskas (walk map creator), David Mephan (urban planning and accessibility advice) and Aline Peres dos Santos (video production).

Victoria Walks Official and Corporate Supporters

