

Growing Up in Yarra



Prepared by: Streets Alive Yarra

www.streets-alive-yarra.org

facebook.com/streetsaliveyarra/

Foreward

Streets Alive Yarra is a community group who advocate for:

- shopping streets that build wealth for traders by attracting regular business from local residents;
- a network of safe streets that enable those who wish to use active transport to do so, thus freeing up space on the streets for those who prefer to drive; and
- evidence based and economically rational investment in transport infrastructure.

Our vision is for **vibrant and profitable local businesses**, owing to increased patronage, and **traffic that still flows freely**. Residents and shoppers are able to move safely, comfortably, and conveniently around Yarra. We see our streets being used by people from **8 to 80** years old, irrespective if they choose to walk, cycle, use public transport or drive.



Image credit: OCULUS Landscape Architecture and Urban Design

Streets Alive Yarra was founded in 2017 and now has over 790 likes on Facebook, increasing by 20-30 per week. A network of local champions develop concepts and proposals for how to improve their local street or precinct. Streets Alive Yarra is also Yarra's Walkability Action Group (WAG) representative for Victoria Walks.

Further information is available at:

- www.streets-alive-yarra.org
- facebook.com/streetsaliveyarra/

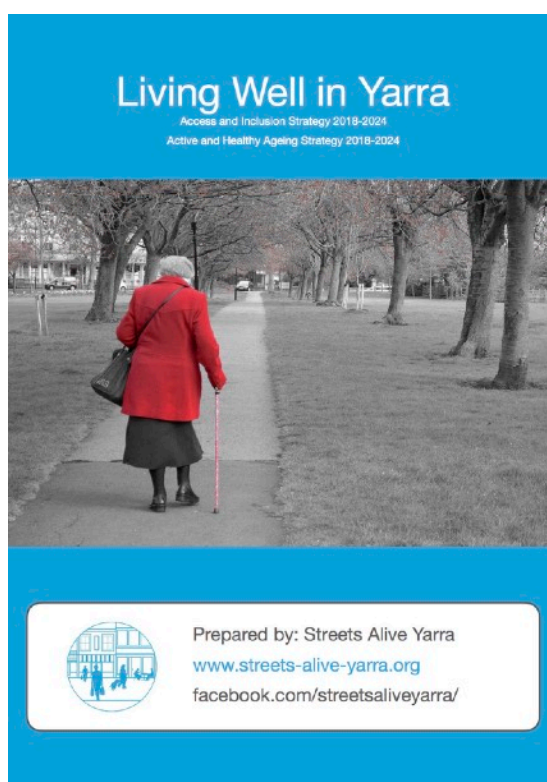
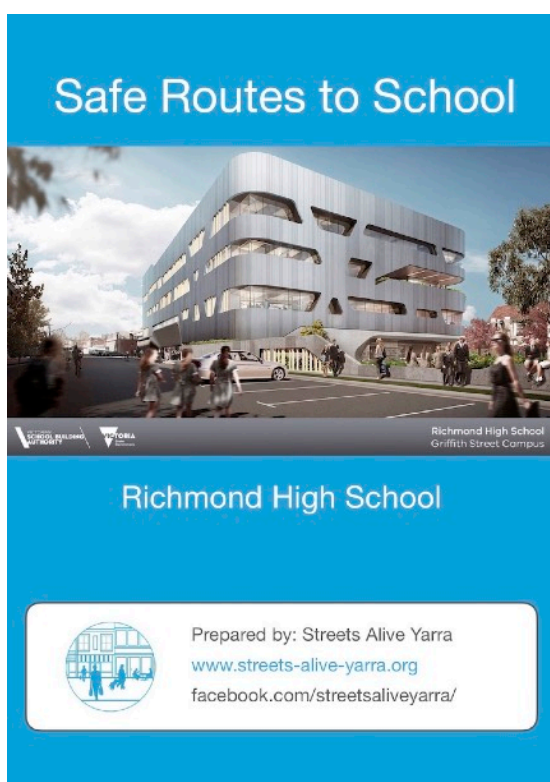
Introduction

Streets Alive Yarra welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft 0-25 Years Plan, 2018-2022. Our feedback is closely aligned with previous submissions, including:

- Safe Routes to School
- Living Well in Yarra
- Budget 2018-2019

These submissions are available for download at:

- www.streets-alive-yarra.org/submissions



The problem

The problem is that Yarra's draft 2018-2022 Plan and 2018-2019 Action Plan does not adequately fund critical strategic priorities such as actually building best-practice integrated networks of safe travel infrastructure. Like many other previous Yarra plans and policies, the need is identified but the execution is known in advance to be underfunded. This is a systemic failure of management within Yarra that needs to be addressed.



Smart Urban Futures

Integrated Active Living Policy at Yarra -
fact or fiction



Bruce Phillips
Director
Planning and Place Making

Source: http://www.mav.asn.au/__data/assets/powerpoint_doc/0008/5669/SUF-2016-Integrated-active-living-policy-at-Yarra-Bruce-Phillips.pptx

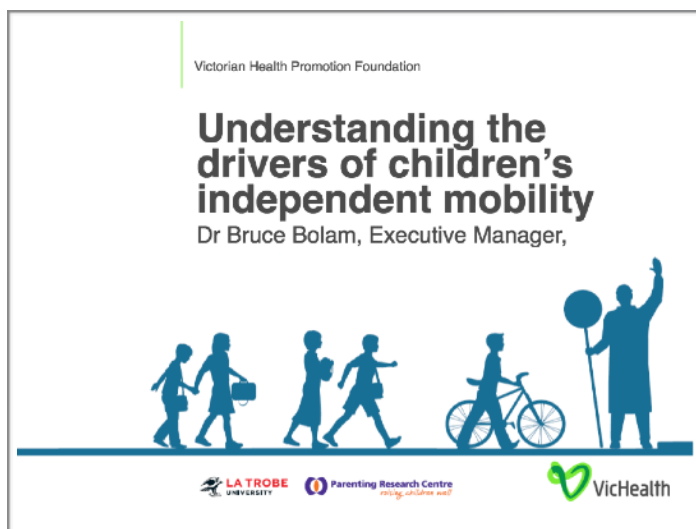
This is not a failure of a single Councillor, Council Officer, or department; but rather a structural issue preventing a whole-of-council approach to prioritising budget allocations. As one part of the solution, *Growing Up in Yarra* should clearly and unambiguously contribute to the evidence base justifying the value of investing \$10m per year over 10 years in safe travel infrastructure.

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/budget>
- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/actions>

The need

Children and youth deserve the ability to move safely, conveniently and enjoyably around Yarra. Being able to “get around” enables children to maintain independence and agency, supporting health, happiness and mental development.

- http://www.mav.asn.au/__data/assets/powerpoint_doc/0005/5648/SUF-2015-Understanding-the-drivers-of-childrens-independent-mobility-Bruce-Bolam.pptx
- <https://www.arup.com/publications/research/section/cities-alive-designing-for-urban-childhoods>



Including from Victoria Walks:

- http://www.victoriawalks.org.au/Walking_with_children/

Quote: There are dozens of reasons why walking is good for children. Walking keeps them fit and active, helps them learn about road safety and prepares them for independence. It shows them that the world is an interesting place, and gives them the chance to watch their own neighbourhoods change with the seasons. It keeps them connected with other people who live nearby – older people and other children.

If it's unsafe for children and youth to use walk or ride around Yarra, then each child will most likely suffer a loss of independence. They are dependent upon their parents to get them to and from school and to after-school activities. This impacts upon their learning and development opportunities, as well as their sense of agency.

“A Good City

is one in which children can grow and develop to the extent of their powers; where they can build their confidence and become actively engaged in the world; yet be autonomous and capable of managing their own affairs.”

Kevin Lynch, Growing Up in Cities, 1977

Source: https://bernardvanleer.org/app/uploads/2017/10/Compendium_of_Best_Practices_of_Child_Friendly_Cities_2017.pdf

In what ways can children's independent mobility promote their mental health and wellbeing?

"Children's lack of independent mobility is a concern for their levels of physical activity, but also for the broader personal, spatial and social skills that moving freely about neighbourhoods and cities can help foster in children. The benefits of children's everyday mobility range from learning to navigate local streets, to interacting with people in public, to gaining a sense of citizenship. There are a number of studies showing that the freedom of children to travel around their neighbourhood without adult supervision has dramatically declined over the last 30 years. This is associated with changes to the physical environment (such as urbanisation and increased car dependence) as well as the social environment (including changes to family working patterns and parental concerns about traffic or strangers)."

Source: <https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/health-and-community/enewsletter/freedom-benefits-children%E2%80%99s-wellbeing>

CONSENSUS STATEMENT

Enabling Australia's children to commute actively and safely to and from school should lead a national effort to increase physical activity and improve health for all generations, communities and individual abilities.

The facts:

- Over 70% of children and 91.5% of young people do not meet physical activity recommendations [1].
- Declining rates of physical activity are contributing to accelerating rates of childhood overweight and obesity. Over one-quarter of Australian children are overweight or obese [2].
- 9.7% of school children have been measured as vulnerable in their physical health and wellbeing domain in the Australian Early development Census, a three yearly survey of children entering their first year of school [3].
- Regular physical activity is recognised as improving academic performance [4].
- Active travel is one of the easiest ways to incorporate physical activity into everyday life.

Source: <https://www.vu.edu.au/sites/default/files/ahpc-active-school-travel-policy-paper.pdf>

Community support, including from children

Growing Up in Yarra validates prior community surveys that show strong community support for safe & active travel, including specifically for children and youth who are unable to drive a car.

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/community-support>
- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/student-support>

For example, here is a screenshot from the Draft Council Plan 2017-21:

Council Plan community consultation

The top issues identified by the community in the Council Plan community engagement process are:

1. Sustainable transport

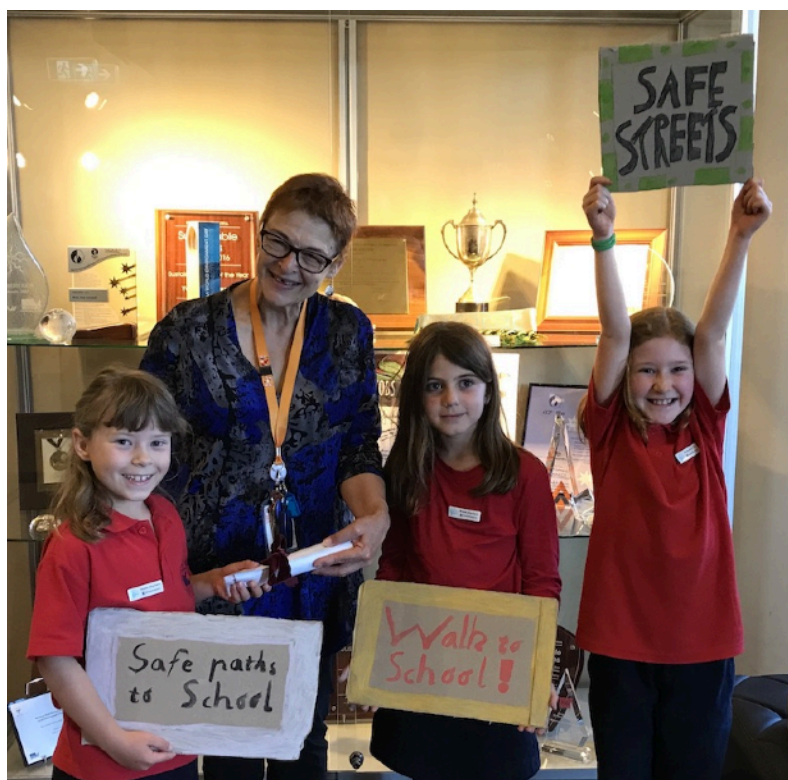
Here is an example of student support:

At the meeting on 5 December 2017 Council received a petition with approximately 51 signatures of Richmond Primary School grade 3 students. The petition stated:

"We are primary school kids that are probably going to Richmond High School when we are older. But we don't want to get run over by some fast cars and you probably don't want that either. You can stop this from happening by making the cars go slower and make a safer bike path too."

Council resolved:

"That the petition be received and referred to the appropriate officer for consideration."



Safe travel networks

The solution is to deliver integrated networks of safe travel infrastructure throughout Yarra, enabling children and youth to walk, cycle or use public transport between home, school, sport and friends:

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/footpath-network>
- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/bicycle-network>

Networks should offer a minimum of a 3-star road safety rating from iRAP, the International Road Assessment Programme:

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/safety>

Networks include protected footpaths, bicycle paths, intersections and tram stops:

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/protected-footpaths>
- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/protected-bicycle-lanes>
- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/protected-transit-stops>
- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/protected-intersections>

Recommendations

Growing Up in Yarra 2018-2022 Plan and *2018-2019 Action Plan* should adopt the following policies and actions:

- Increase the budget for safe travel infrastructure to \$10m per year
- Classify streets in Yarra as public open space so that investments in safe travel infrastructure can be funded from the open space levy
- Increase the open space levy to provide more funds for safe travel infrastructure
- Define [20-minute neighbourhoods](#) in Yarra, in accordance with [Plan Melbourne](#), centred around shopping strips
- Build integrated safe & active travel networks throughout Yarra over 10 years:
 - Upgrade quiet residential streets into 20-30 km/h shared zones
 - Construct protected bicycle lanes on shopping streets and access streets
 - Construct protected intersections where shopping or access streets intersect
- Reform the [pricing of parking](#), to bring supply and demand back into balance, and to mitigate claims that parking fees are intended to raise revenue (i.e. change pricing from a revenue target to an occupancy target), and over the long term to enable street space to be re-allocated to safe travel infrastructure
- Update the [Street Tree Policy](#) so that trees are planted where they don't block future bicycle lanes
- Estimate the total investment required to build safe travel networks over the next 10 years; as well as the resulting financial benefits including increased numbers of people moving during peak hour, jobs, income tax, payroll tax, company tax, social inclusion; and decreased personal transport costs, population health costs, and isolation.
- Apply to State and Federal Governments for funding that is commensurate with the benefits that accrue, thus addressing [fiscal imbalance](#)

Of all the recommendations, the top priority is to develop a north-south bicycle path that runs from the Main Yarra Trail right up to Highett Street. The best option is to convert Coppin Street into bicycle boulevard, running past Richmond Primary School and Barkly Gardens:

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/coppin-street>