



Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety National Conference

9 June 2006, Transport Accident Commission, Melbourne

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An introductory perspective on Walking and Cycling

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Chair – Melbourne Walk21 International Conference

Both Government and non-government agencies urge communities to become more socially engaged and active physically.

WHY?

The active, sporting nation – a health perspective

- About 50% of Australian population insufficiently active
- Inactivity responsible for 8,000 deaths per year
- 77,000 premature potential years lost
- Cost \$400M in direct costs
- 6% total burden of disease in males and 8% females
- 50% population overweight or obese
- 27.5% of children overweight or obese; tripled in ten years
- Cost of obesity \$1.3 billion and increasing
- Diabetes increased 300% in last decade
- Physical inactivity ranks with smoking as primary risk factor

Benefits of participation in moderate activity

- Half the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers
- Half the risk of premature death from all causes
- Key to reduction in obesity
- Improved mental health and reduced depression
- Reduction in risk of fall injuries
- Increased mobility
- Increased social interaction

Why promote walking and cycling?

Best buy for public health

- Accessible
- Convenient
- Minimal risk
- Enjoyable/palatable
- Social
- Beneficial
- Fundamental

Walking most popular recreational activity

Cycling fourth ranked activity

Walking and cycling not just a public health issue!

Environment

- Air pollution
 - Transport second largest source of GHG; increasing
 - Short trips 4 x more pollution than longer trips
 - 40% of all trips in Melbourne under 3kms
- Noise pollution a growing impact
- Land usage
 - Urban sprawl
 - Land degradation with increased roads

Walking and cycling not just a public health issue!

Transport

- Increasing traffic congestion
 - Cars making short trips during peak hours: 20% of traffic
- Public transport
 - Walking/cycling access to public transport critical for increased patronage
 - Combination of walking/cycling and PT vital for longer trips

Walking and cycling not just a public health issue!

Community

- More walking means increased interaction, reduced isolation
- Interaction with people and environments builds stronger sense of community/belonging
- People want to live in safe, clean, sustainable environments
- Increased accessibility for people of all ages
- Reduced crime rates

Walking and cycling not just a public health issue!

Economic

- Reduced costs: health, infrastructure development, environment
- Oil costs and availability
- Evidence of increased retail demand, elevated real estate values with increased walkability
- Evidence to suggest that the cities and places promoting walking and cycling are performing better than cities dominated by cars

Future Directions

- Not anti-car; move towards a better balance
- International trend towards the creation of walkable/liveable communities
- Growing focus on public transport development
- Move towards higher density, activity centres
- Public health campaigns and programs emphasising walking and cycling
- Cultural change towards sustainability, liveability and community

Melbourne Walk21 23-25 October 2006

Generate momentum, provide direction for walkable and liveable communities

Key themes: Making it Possible, Making the Choice, Making the Case, Making it Happen.

www.melbournewalk21.com.au

Outcome

Increased levels of walking and cycling

Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety

Fundamental Issue:

How do we make it safe for people to walk and cycle

- Traditional approaches focused on reducing exposure
 - Reduced casualties
 - Restricted amounts of walking
- Need to adopt a road danger reduction approach
 - Encourage walking and cycling
 - Reduce traffic speed, better facilities, changed priorities
 - Risk inversely related to frequency

Absolutely critical that this is an intersectoral approach.

Pick up on outcomes of today in MW21



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