IMPROVING WALKABILITY & WAYFINDING IN TOWNS & CITIES IN WA

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Surge of interest in Walking & Wayfinding in the 21st Century

• Recognition of all the current and ongoing factors that make walking relevant – climate, health, fuel costs, congestion, tourism, etc

• Successful annual Walk 21 Series, held in major cities throughout the world since 2000

• Development of (and sign-up to) the INTERNATIONAL WALKING CHARTER

• Significant volume of both research and ACTION on the walking/wayfinding front
Improved walking & wayfinding results in behaviour change
Countries leading the way
(Australia approx 7-8% of trips by walking)
Cities leading the way

• Copenhagen pedestrianisation has resulted in 330% increase in people walking & “browsing” from late 60’s to late 90’s. Work ongoing.
• Legible London & other wayfinding programs
• Closure of Times Square/Broadway NYC
• “Shared Space” redevelopment Bendigo CBD
• Replacement of car parking bays with seating (Acland Street) and bike parking (Lygon Street) in Melbourne.
Acland Street - Less parking, more seats, bike racks and footpath
Govts and organisations

• Governments around the world are developing policies and strategies to support walking and active transport.

• Lead organisations promoting and supporting walking include WHO, Heart Foundation and health promotion bodies, Govt Departments for health, sport & recreation, disability, ageing, etc. Momentum is building.

• Academic research/study has incr. vastly

• Road Auth/Depts. can still be a major barrier
New X’ing and footpath-Heidelberg
The Victorian experience

- Until about 2000 VicRoads argued that peds were “vulnerable” and not encouraged to cross roads.
- Since then pressure from VicHealth, HF, VicFit (now Kinect Aust.) inner-city Councils, community, environment, public transport, and some trader groups, has changed attitudes.
- In Vic Councils can now easily install slower speed limits, ped X’ings, traffic m’ment devices and a wide range of ped facilities (e.g. CPT raised X’ings, Greenlight treatments) Peds now seen as an important part of the economic and T’port system.
These are being installed in Melbourne (and Freemantle)

Figure 1 – pre-treatment  
Source: City of Port Phillip Council

Figure 2 – post-treatment  
Source: City of Port Phillip Council
Roundabouts need to be made safe for pedestrians

“One study undertaken in Western Australia found that of the pedestrians interviewed, 54% found the rules associated with roundabouts confusing and 72% found it harder to cross at a roundabouts than at a conventional crossing (Browning, 2001), further exacerbating pedestrian safety issues at roundabouts.”
We need to make walking safe – actual and perceived

“If your mother asks, we crossed at the corner.”
Impressions of WA


• Introduced TravelSmart into Aust.

• Active promotion of walking through WA DOT Walking Unit and HF (incl 2 events in Bunbury March 2011) + others

• Eg’s of “Greenlight” projects and some ped crossings in inner Perth BUT it is difficult to get DMR to support ped initiatives that impact on road system.

• DMR has indicated it will approve reduced speed limits
PLANS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

• Almost all Strategic, Structure, Transit City, CBD, and other plans (X2020) produced by Councils/Regions cite the need to improve sustainability and walkability.

• Almost all disability, ageing, road safety, health, community, economic devpt, and other plans cite the need for impr. access, safe envt, liveability, equity etc. = impr. walkability.

• Consultations reveal public demand for better public spaces/amenity etc.
Two major products of our work

1. Audit and evaluation of the walking environment of a study area with clear recommendations on what needs to be done to create a quality pedestrian (+ cyclist ?) area = A WALKING STRATEGY

2. A) Audit and evaluation of the signage for peds, with clear recommendations on signage needs = A SIGNAGE STRATEGY.
   B) SIGNS ARE THEN DESIGNED IN DETAIL
   C) SIGNAGE IS THEN MANUF & INSTALLED
Walkability and Wayfinding Strategies produced for a wide range of clients
Experience in WA

Work to date in WA includes:

- Gosnells, Victoria Park, South Perth, Guildford, Midland, Rockingham, Mandurah & Bunbury
- Most projects have been or are in process of implementation
- Work also conducted in Vic, NSW, Qld, SA & Tas
People want to walk more – if they can

• About 1/3rd population need to walk (or cycle, or use public transport) due to their age, disability, income etc
• A lot recognise the issues of health, climate change, congestion, etc. and want to walk
• They have experienced good environments for walking elsewhere – know it can be done
• In our surveys most say they would walk more if the walk envt. was improved
• All drivers need to walk to shop, cross roads, etc.
Non-drive-in spend can be substantial

The level of visitation and spend in Mainstreets and Centres by those who do not drive in, but already:

1. Walk, cycle, catch public/community transport or taxi to the centre, and/or;

2. Live, work or study in/near the centre;

is much higher than we usually think.

The needs of “non-drive-in spenders” are not being properly met to provide full advantage to the centre’s retailers and services providers.

We need to recognise and cultivate the “non-drive-in spenders”
Trader support can be generated

• They appreciate the benefits of a high quality shopping environment, where people can meet, sit, spend and browse in safety
• High speed through traffic is of no benefit
• Traders often unaware of the importance of “non-drive-in-spend”
• Following a survey of spend x mode of arrival Acland Street traders asked Council to remove some on-street parking
Pedestrian counts can be revealing

Glenferrie Road Precinct – used 17 count points
  Estimate of 100,000 ped m’ments /day (more than vehicles)

Kew Junction – most of the main intersections
  had 3500-4500 ped crossings/day

Ringwood Transit City – 5000 peds/day crossing
  busy highway from transit station to Eastland and nearby shops - on a very poor crossing. QIC surprised by nos.
Studies usually include on-site questionnaires

- Designed to identify where people come from, how they got to X and why etc. (min. of 20-30% arrive by active transport, often more)
- What they like/dislike about the local walk/cycle/pt environment
- Large no – usually 60-70% would walk, cycle or use pt more if envt improved.
- Q’aire. results complement audit and other consultation
People with a disability have a range of access problems – damaged or blocked footpaths

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The attributes of a “Walkable” Public Realm – The “5C’s” Audit

The 5C’s approach:
• Is the route Connected?
e.g. are there good connections to major origins and destinations including public transport?
• Is the route Comfortable?
e.g. are there good footpaths, lights, seats etc?
• Is the route Convenient?
e.g. are there good and safe road crossings?
• Is the route Convivial?
e.g. are the routes interesting and free from threats?
• Is the route Conspicuous?
e.g. is the route “signed” and easy to follow?
SPOT THE MISTAKE
Typical outcomes

• **Connectedness is poor** – not easy to get from station, or car parks to other destinations, or between major attractions.

• **Comfort levels are low** – footpaths, pram ramps, seating, lighting etc have “gaps” that make a route unusable for some.

• **Convenience is poor** – roads are time-consuming, difficult or dangerous to cross. There are detours - pedestrians are deterred from using the public realm.

• **Places are not Convivial** – fear of empty spaces, poor sight lines, graffiti, broken lights. Convivial places look and feel good and contain people.

• **Routes and destinations are not Conspicuous** – the assumption is that we all know our way. Wayfinding signage is usually poor.
LETS BE POSITIVE

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Will they respond?

Lots of evidence from overseas – improved pedestrian environments = increased walking, less driving, significantly increased footfall/retail turnover. Birmingham and Norwich 2 good examples. In Australia/Victoria we have the evidence of:

- TravelSmart – advice & information
- Physical improvements – especially around schools (sites where results have been assessed) and in the CBD
Just talking and advising people helps

In three UK “sustainable travel towns” car use fell by 12% between 2004-6 following a suite of transport measures including travel plans and household marketing of the alternatives to car travel, with limited engineering interventions.
Range of elements needed - both hard & soft improvements

A spectrum of Activities and Actions
To increase walking and active transport

Information – Promotional media, Advice (Travelsmart)
Leadership – Policy (setting an example)
Events – Walktober, unique local initiatives
Programs – Walking School Bus, corporate challenge

Signage/information
Install pedestrian/cycling wayfinding signage
Develop Transport Access Guides

Urban space improvements
Improve footpaths & shared paths, add amenity (seating)
Improve road crossings, speed limits
Leadership is important

• Council Travel Plans – set a great example and provide “credibility”
• Gives Councils understanding of the barriers and how to overcome them
• Good media when the CEO/executive walks to work, meetings etc
• Enables Council to ask other stakeholders to produce and implement TPs
Programs

• Involve people on a regular basis
• Provide support and companionship
• By-products include community auditing, community skill development and group formation
• Group voices heard by decision makers
Typical Infrastructure Recommendations - Off-Road

1. **Improve off-road maintenance** – footpath condition/finishes, crossover gradients and colours, tree roots, graffiti, pit covers, remove blockages, etc

2. **Install off-road infrastructure** - seats, lights, missing footpath links, pram ramps (including correct alignment). *This group also includes signage* – street names, lane names, car-park names, wayfinding signage and removal of clutter.
New CPTs in Kew
Typical Infrastructure Recommendations - On-Road

1. Improve on-road maintenance (especially at existing crossings) – lane and crossing markings, lights in working order, traffic light responsiveness, pavement condition, sight-lines and clutter,

2. Install on-road infrastructure - new “supported” crossings, “green-light” suite of treatments at traffic lights, driver advisory signage, speed limits and signage, median islands/refuges.
Reduced speed limits in Kew
Both hard and “soft” infrastructure is valuable

“Infrastructure” can range from

• Wayfinding maps
• Transport Access Guides
• Wayfinding systems on the ground
• Footpaths and walking tracks
• Improve road crossings + remove give way to cars signs
• Slower speed limits (+ signage)
• + All those important bits – pram ramps, seats, etc. etc. that are often forgotten – that people want and need.
Soft Infrastructure – Walking maps
Information and encouragement
Useful Information

Useful numbers

To plan your journey and for fare information visit www.transperth.wa.gov.au or call Transperth 13 62 10

City of Mandurah www.mandurah.wa.gov.au .......................... 9550 3777
City of Mandurah Rangers .................................................. 9550 3630
Mandurah Library ............................................................... 9550 3650
Mandurah Aquatic & Recreation Centre ............................. 9550 3690
Billy Dower Youth Centre .................................................. 9550 3070
Ac vent Mandurah (Seniors on the go) ............................... 9550 2790
Mandurah Performing Arts Centre .................................... 9550 3333
Mandurah Community Museum ........................................ 9550 3680
Mandurah Visitors Centre ................................................. 9550 3999
Mandurah Welcome Centre ............................................... 9550 3222
City of Mandurah Bicycle User Group ............................... 9550 3777
Pool Health Campus ......................................................... 9551 3000

Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance) ............................... 000
Police (non-urgent police attendance) ............................... 13 14 44
Mandurah Taxi .................................................................. 13 10 08
Grants Hotline ................................................................. 1800 442 255

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IMPROVED WALKABILITY IS ENHANCED BY IMPROVED LEGIBILITY AND WAYFINDING SIGNAGE