



Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy

As Australian cities grow to accommodate increasing populations, local councils are tasked with managing this growth while delivering liveability, prosperity and social equity.

As a growing number of people join our cities, Australia's urban centres are becoming denser. While this trend can ultimately minimise sprawl, urban densification also creates challenges around maintaining liveable places for our communities. A major part of this balancing act is creating the right housing, but of equal importance is maintaining adequate education, health and transport systems.

In inner city locations, where space is not readily available, increasing transport amenity is not always a viable solution to meet growing demand. This is most

obvious when managing road congestion: it is not always feasible to build more road capacity and seldom does this provide a long-term solution to network performance, particularly if this is at the cost of active transport and environmental outcomes. Councils are now seeking to address local congestion on the road network with an integrated and balanced approach to transport that establishes a vision for how the community wants to travel. One municipality in Victoria who followed this approach is Moreland City Council.

Introduction

Moreland City Council, in Melbourne's north, like the rest of the city, is facing strong population growth. If Council were to maintain their current approach to transport planning amidst this growth and evolution, there would be a risk of eroding the liveability of the community through worsening congestion, safety, and amenity. It would also fail to progress action required at a local level to address climate change impact.

In 2017, Council set a vision for the future whereby "Moreland will be known for its proud diversity, and for being a connected, progressive and sustainable city in which to work, live and play." Amongst a range of objectives, the Council Plan committed to delivering on this vision by "facilitating a demonstrable shift to more sustainable modes of transport that also targets a long-term reduction in car use." GTA played a critical role by developing an integrated transport strategy to deliver this goal.

The Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy (MITS) was released in 2019 and sets out Council's strategic direction for integrated transport planning for the next decade and beyond. Though significant consultation with the community and council, the strategy delivers a bold and realistic agenda.



Strategy approach

Working in partnership with Moreland City Council, GTA led a discussion with the community about how they saw themselves travelling in the future and some of the key challenges facing the municipality. The issues impacting transport within Moreland include population growth, congestion, climate change, health, safety, air quality and equal access. GTA worked with Moreland to identify and prioritise these challenges to focus the Strategy's purpose and enable the strategic directions necessary to deliver Council's transport objectives.

At its core, the strength of the Strategy is its understanding of these key issues and their causes, and their place at the heart of the document. Similarly, MITS recognises that Council must address these issues to maintain the prosperity and well-being of the community, as well as creating further plans for future decades which are likely to see additional challenges.

Building upon existing policies and strategic direction; and referencing Moreland's future ambitions, GTA led a process that prioritised evidence-based research to

understand how future transport trends and technology will impact people. As detailed on Page 3, Public consultation and collaboration with Council staff was sought throughout the project, ensuring the advice had the endorsement of stakeholders and the Council team.

Key components of this process included:

- Background papers that mapped future transport trends
- Three phases of community consultation and public engagement
- An interactive process involving community input to form the draft and final strategy
- Regular conversations with councillors to discuss and resolve potential concerns
- Final strategy adoption supported by council staff

Each component of the process provided support and endorsement for the next, allowing the process to follow a clear program with checkpoints designed to ensure its accuracy and strategic path. Working with community and the Council also established openness throughout the project and created reassurance around delivering meaningful outcomes for the public.

Consultation program



TIME	ENGAGEMENT	OUTPUT
December 2017	<p>ASPIRATIONS FOR TRANSPORT IN MORELAND <i>Build community awareness around development of MITS, flag upcoming opportunities to participate and understand the community's vision for the future of travel in Moreland.</i></p> <p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Online survey 	<p>350+ RESPONSES</p> <p>Emphasis on reduced car usage</p> <p>Service frequency and convenience identified as barriers to public transport uptake</p> <p>Safety identified as a major deterrent for people on foot and bicycle</p> <p>Public transport, walking and cycling cited as a major component of their future travel choices</p>
February to March 2018	<p>IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS, GAPS & PRIORITIES <i>Deeper understanding of transport needs, gaps and priorities to inform Draft MITS.</i></p> <p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Internal stakeholder workshop ■ External stakeholder workshop(s) ■ Face-to-face community events ■ Focus group ■ Online survey ■ CrowdSpot online map platform 	<p>1200+ RESPONSES</p> <p>Strong support for a walking/cycling environment.</p> <p>Walking issues flagged, particularly around the Sydney Road/Upfield Corridor — severance is a major issue.</p> <p>No matter how they travel, people want safe, frequent, reliable and direct public transport.</p> <p>The community focussed on the negative effects caused by driving (congestion, queuing), but not the causes (driving itself)</p> <p>Parking polarised the community</p>
July to October 2018	<p>KEY ISSUES — DRAFT MITS <i>Sought feedback on Draft MITS and identification of key issues, including what would work well and what would have unintended consequences.</i></p> <p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Distribution of 40,000 letters ■ Online survey ■ Community popups in Glenroy, Fawkner and Brunswick ■ External Stakeholder workshop(s) ■ Internal Stakeholder workshop ■ Hearing of submissions 	<p>950+ RESPONSES</p> <p>General support for uplift in walking and cycling.</p> <p>While other initiatives (car parking changes) had a balance of views (i.e. mix of support in favour and against proposed changes).</p>
March 2019	<p>COUNCIL MEETING <i>MITS adopted by Council, with changes.</i></p>	<p>Public submissions at Council meeting.</p>

Originality and innovation

Part of the process meant understanding the limitations of previous transport strategies — reasons for lack of progress, failed implementation or ambiguity in objectives.

The previous strategy struggled to deliver meaningful change partly because its recommendations depended on other entities, primarily State Government. To this effect, MITS focused on aspects over which Council has direct control. This enabled the Strategy to recommend changes, such as re-thinking the amount of space allocated to cars and parking, and big changes to on-street parking and new developments. While there is some focus on advocacy, it is restrained and nuanced, reflecting the fact that State Government priorities/ infrastructure commitment will change.

MITS does not aim to have all the answers and it does not bind Council to a set of actions or long-term infrastructure commitments. Rather, it creates a framework for assessing new developments and opportunities, so that when they arise, they can be considered on their own merit in accordance with the strategic direction.

One headline change is that Moreland City Council is one of the first non-CBD municipalities to seek to adopt a car parking policy that does not mandate a parking minimum for new developments. It is a bold action within Council's control that enables the private sector to innovate while not disadvantaging sustainable modes of transport. To support this, the Council is making street space more equitable while ensuring that parking stays available for those who truly need it.

Alongside changes to parking policy, the strategy also adopts best-practice that prioritises road space reallocation to favour walking, cycling and public transport; while also creating more space for greener streets. The strategy also includes a user hierarchy to guide Council in prioritising improvements to the transport network, advocacy or in assessing infrastructure proposals. In order, Council prioritises people who are walking; people who are cycling; people who are using public transport; and people who choose to drive.

To facilitate this priority of users, Council has approved the following transport planning strategies across the Municipality:

TRANSPORT PLANNING STRATEGIES

1. Make changes to car parking to contribute to better transport, land use, economic and community outcomes.
2. Reallocate road space and car parking according to the road user hierarchy.
3. Protect local streets from the impacts of increasing vehicle traffic.
4. Prioritise access for walking, cycling and public transport over car-based travel.
5. Establish high-quality pedestrian routes and places that are safe, comfortable and accessible.
6. Create a safer space for all users, day and night.
7. Make cycling safe, comfortable and a preferred mode of travel in Moreland.
8. Advocate for more frequent, reliable and accessible public transport in Moreland.
9. Encourage zero-emissions transport modes.
10. Collaborate with partners to deliver sustainable transport outcomes, provided they align with the vision and outcomes for MITS.

“ What we have here is a huge strategy that focuses on congestion, it focuses on human health, it focuses on liveability, it focuses on safety and it focuses on the decarbonisation of our transport sector. This strategy right here is Victoria, if not Australian-leading in its approach, in the direction that it is taking. ”

— Cr. Dale Martin, Moreland City Council



Expected or delivered benefits and outcomes

The Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy is a response to previous strategies for the Council that were strategically unsuccessful in delivering their aims. This Strategy provides tangible action plans that enable Council to deliver an aspired mode share across the Municipality and more equitable land use that prioritises active travel, sustainable transport and healthy communities.

Since adoption in March 2019, there has been a shift in responses from industry members, highlighting the desire for transport strategies to provide effective direction that can improve mode share beyond private vehicle use. Architects, urban planning researchers and developers have praised the Strategy and highlighted the often-discredited measure of car parking restriction as a means to re-purpose land use in urban areas.

Long-term benefits and outcomes are estimated, with evidence. In the Strategy document, however, the process has led to more immediate changes in direction at Moreland City Council, including:

- Council is currently in the process of preparing a planning scheme amendment
- A cycling and walking infrastructure funding pipeline is currently subject to consultation
- Council is pursuing multiple developments with zero or low-parking numbers prior to planning changes

The Implementation Plan, which is part of the Strategy, outlines actions that will bring MITS to reality and support the delivery of various initiatives. These actions seek to overcome the key challenges envisaged for the municipality over the coming decade, and are consistent with measures being delivered in other areas of Melbourne and major cities across the globe.



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