



victorian cycling strategy 2018–2028

Increasing cycling for transport

Transport for Victoria has recently released the Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018–2028 (the 'Strategy'), designed to make cycling more inclusive and actively focused on increasing the number of people riding for transport.

This includes commuter trips to work as well as local trips to schools, railway stations and shops. This is an important focus and is likely to deliver the largest positive modal shift if commensurate investment is made to develop a safe and connected cycling network.

Vision

With more than 50% of all vehicle trips in Melbourne being less than 6km, there is an incredible opportunity to convert many of these trips to cycling. To enable this, the Strategy sets forth the two following goals:

- Investing in a safer, lower-stress, better-connected network, prioritising strategic cycling corridors
- Making a more inclusive experience.

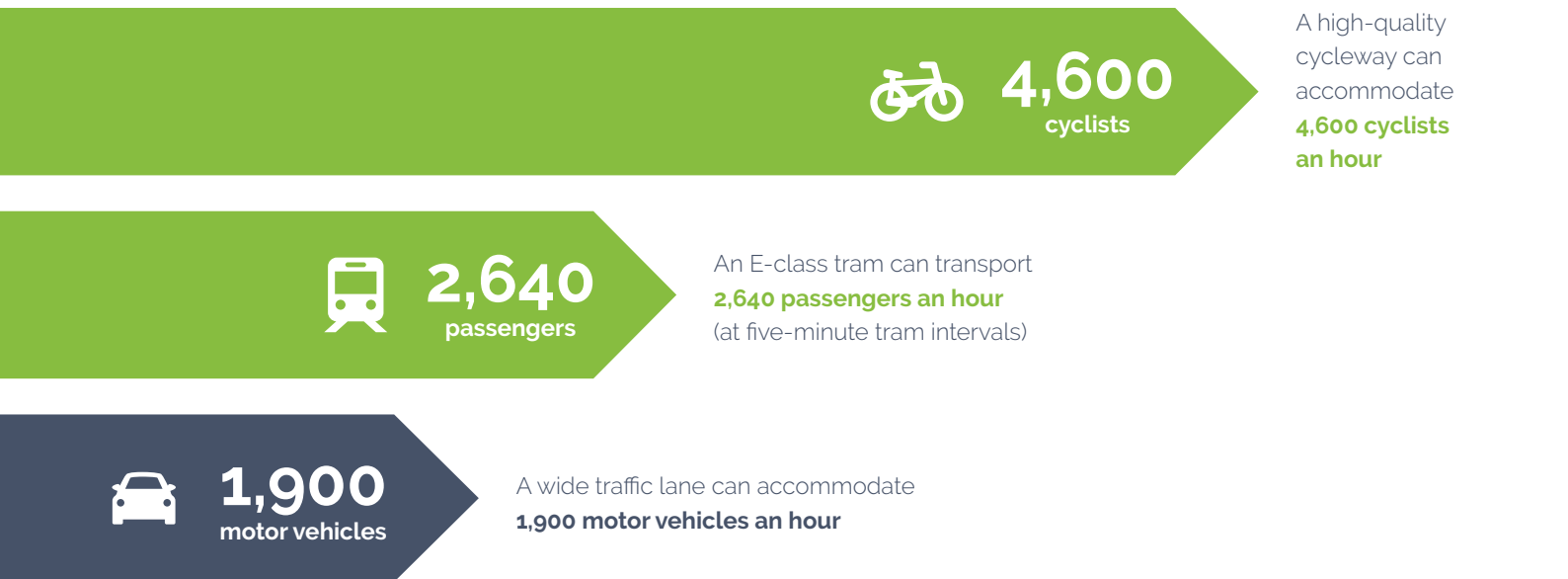
Strategic Cycling Corridors

With an emphasis on functional riding, the Strategy aims to make bicycles the preferred mode for trips to work and local destinations. This will be enabled through prioritised investment in a safe and connected cycle network, with strategic cycling corridors (SCC) proposed to fulfil this role. Strategic cycling corridors are the arterial equivalent for bikes—designated routes to connect important networks such as national employment and innovation clusters, major activity centres and other significant destinations.

For local trips, the Strategy mentions greater collaboration and coordination with Councils to create better connections, including improved integration with public transport and prioritised cycle routes to train stations. Additional end-of-trip facilities are also proposed at train stations—building upon the success of the *Parkiteer* program.



Figure 1: Modes of transport compared



A high-quality cycleway can accommodate **4,600 cyclists an hour**

An E-class tram can transport **2,640 passengers an hour** (at five-minute tram intervals)

A wide traffic lane can accommodate **1,900 motor vehicles an hour**

Source: Figure 5, Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018–2028

Efficiency

In light of Victoria's continuing population growth, which is estimated at over 10 million by 2051, the Strategy hopes to reduce pressure on the transport system. Congestion is also acknowledged to be a continuing major issue unless walking, cycling and public transport trips increase.

The Strategy acknowledges the efficiency of cycling as a transport mode, with high-quality cycleways carrying 4,600 cyclists per hour—**almost 2,000 people more than an E-Class tram**. This is an important consideration and should be at the forefront when prioritising road allocation for different modes.

The Strategy seeks to align with Plan Melbourne's aim of 20-minute neighbourhoods¹, meeting most people's needs within a 20 minute walk, cycle or public transport journey from their home. To achieve this goal there will need to be significant Council investment in local routes.

Regional areas are also identified, indicating that the Government will work with local councils to provide good paths and signage directing users towards public transport and attractions. Initiatives also include investigating ways to carry more bicycles on public transport.

¹ Plan Melbourne, Direction 3.3

Strategy Goal 1: Invest in a safer, lower-stress, better-connected network.

This provides the requisite safe infrastructure required by vulnerable road users to be able to make real transport choices. The Strategy outlines various elements to achieve this goal.

Improve Safety

Safety is rightly the first consideration under this goal and it is recognised that both real and perceived safety are the most important determinant of whether people cycle. The Safe System approach will be applied as follows:

- **Safer Roads** — provide separation for cyclists; manage interface with parking to reduce dooring
- **Safe Vehicles** — facilitate uptake of driver-assistance technologies via ANCAP; advancements in AVs
- **Safe Speeds** — lower speeds on local streets; educating drivers (e.g. speeding is akin to drink driving)
- **Safe People** — cultural change needed; all road users to comply with road rules; safe behaviour is the responsibility of every road user.

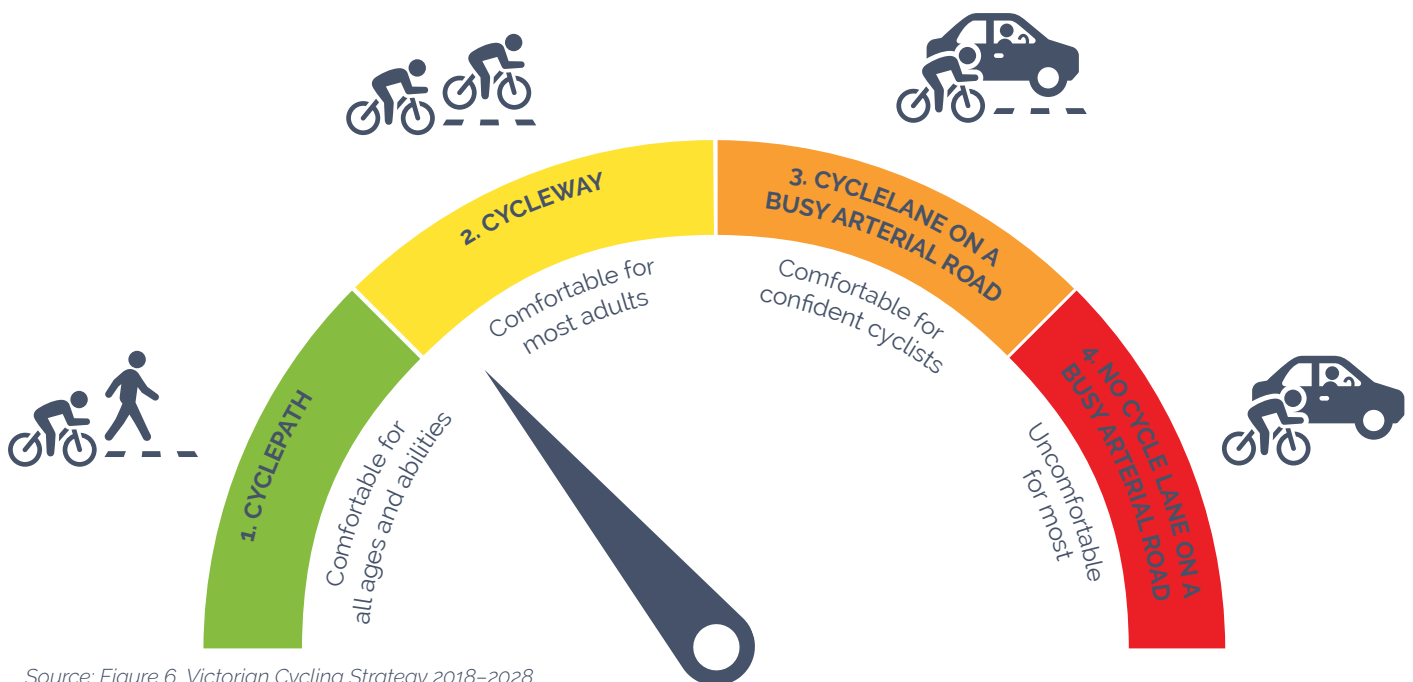
“Strategic Cycling Corridor should **provide a safe, lower-stress... experience** without undue impact on other modes of transport...”

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Lower-stress cycling experience

Traffic stress (including vehicle volumes, speed and parking activity) is a significant concern and people often avoid high-stress areas. Protected infrastructure will minimise traffic stress and a level-of-traffic-stress approach will be utilised to guide investment in cycling infrastructure. High-stress sections on a corridor will be prioritised and modes will be reviewed on Strategic Cycling Corridors which may result in alignment changes to enable separation.

Figure 2: Level of traffic stress scale



Source: Figure 6, Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018–2028

Prioritise Strategic Cycling Corridors (SCCs) for investment

Investment in SCCs will be prioritised according to the current and potential highest demand. They will be designed to maximise separation, with infrastructure type determined based on: users, level of traffic stress, land use, road environment, network hierarchy, natural environment and heritage factors. Pilot projects for new/innovative treatments are also encouraged.

Update SCC guidelines

Review and update existing guidelines for SCCs with a focus on treatments (e.g. protected intersections) at intersections.

Integrate cycling and public transport

Prioritise SCCs to train stations and improve end-of-trip facilities at major public transport interchanges.

Work with councils to address SCC gaps

Collaboration with councils to plan and deliver SCCs and support the 20-minute neighbourhood concept. Focus on cycling to schools, train stations and activity areas.

Cycling infrastructure in major transport projects

The Victorian Government will continue to require high-quality cycling infrastructure as part of major transport projects (e.g. West Gate Tunnel).

Improve outcomes for cyclists in planning

The Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP) does not currently recognise SCCs, therefore, the Government will amend the VPP to recognise SCCs and improve the provision of cycling infrastructure in new developments. The Government will also collaborate with Councils to enable an increase in the number and standard of EOT facilities in high-demand areas.



Strategy Goal 2: Make cycling a more inclusive experience

The second goal recognises that **cycling in Australia needs to be normalised and accessible to all users**. Currently there is a perception that cycling relates more to lycra-clad, fast-moving (male-dominated) riders. The Strategy acknowledges that education and cultural changes for all road users is required.

Improve awareness and acceptance of cycling for transport

Many people are put off from cycling due to anxiety and fear around riding in traffic and driver education. Educating new drivers provides an opportunity to instil an awareness and positive safety culture towards cyclists.

Increase participation of underrepresented groups

The Strategy aims to increase participation in cycling by women, children and seniors. This can be achieved by creating low-stress, connected networks and making these groups feel confident and comfortable cycling.

Support cycling to school

In the last 40 years there has been a substantial drop in the number of students walking and cycling to school. The Strategy hopes to encourage more children to cycle by working with Councils to improve cycling routes and facilities at schools. Part of this could include management of vehicle access (drop-off/pick-up) near schools.

“With only **two goals**, the Strategy is succinct, and the intent is clear. It could, however, be strengthened by including measurable mode share targets.”

Plan for emerging technologies

The Strategy outlines improved data collection opportunities. Current data collection for cycling is not sufficient to allow accurate and reliable predictions to be made, thereby impacting planning and prioritisation of cycling infrastructure. Data collection opportunities include: journey mapping the stress levels of cyclists on SCCs; more permanent bicycle counters; market research to identify profiles of cyclists and non-cyclists; better utilisation of smart phone data.

Support for recreational cycling

Measures include investigating design options to carry more bikes on regional trains, strengthening cycle tourism and supporting community cycling events. Similarly, Council-led initiatives will seek to increase use of bike-share programs for leisurely riding.



Will it work?

The theme of focussing on cycling for transport is not new. The goal of the 2009 Victorian Cycling Strategy was to grow cycling into a major form of transport. The Victorian Auditor General's Report on the effectiveness of the 2009 Strategy cited serious limitations by not being comprehensive and not including "sufficient measures to effectively protect and educate cyclists, to promote cycling, to invest in facilities and to make car travel less attractive". It also failed to understand sufficiently what was required to 'mainstream' cycling.

For the current (2018–2028) Strategy to be successful in implementation it must learn from these past critiques. Similarly, if cycling is truly to become a tangible and viable transport option, accessible to everyone, a significant shift in how we allocate road space is required.

The Strategy references international case studies, including the success of London's cycling superhighways and the need to provide separation for cyclists. Victoria's Strategic Cycling Corridors are proposed to be the tool to create a quantum shift towards cycling for transport. It remains unclear whether the State is ready to hand over traffic/parking lanes to bikes or whether commensurate investment will be allocated to enable cycling to become a preferred choice.

What's needed?

The strength of the strategy is that it addresses the sort of infrastructure and regulatory framework we need to create the best environment for cycling uptake. Where the strategy seems to fall short is on examining ways in which we can affect or change the attitudes towards cycling. Why do people choose to cycle? What are the emotional triggers that determine their behaviour? While the Strategy provides a series of "enablers" to provide safer, more accessible cycling networks, it lacks a clear sense of which "motivators" are required— influences that will inspire new users to take up cycling.

For the Strategy to become an active public document that can draw in new cyclists, it needs to go beyond addressing convenience, safety or practicality—assertions that if we create the right environment, cycling will increase its share. Deciding to cycle is not only a rational decision, it is also driven by how people feel about cycling as well as their perceptions of the cycling community.

Until we address fundamental emotional factors that change people's attitudes and inspire them to change behaviour, cycling will remain the second choice. Logic can only go so far in changing actions—what's needed is an emotional appeal that excites and inspires people. It's about hearts as well as minds.

