

21.10 TRANSPORT

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C61

This clause provides local content to support Clause 18 (Transport) of the State Planning Policy Framework.

Overview

The Shire is strategically located in Central Victoria and has extensive rail and road transport links to Melbourne and Bendigo via the Calder Highway and the Melbourne-Swan Hill Railway Line. Other major centres linked to Mount Alexander Shire include Ballarat (Midland Highway) and Maryborough (Pyrenees Highway).

Transport and movement are important issues for the Shire due to its low density settlement patterns, high levels of commuting and connections with larger regional centres such as Bendigo and growing relationship with the Melbourne metropolitan area. The size of the Shire's towns limits the development of public transport in township areas, however, bus services link Castlemaine with most of the Shire's towns and there is a Castlemaine loop service.

Walking and cycling are popular forms of transport and recreation in the Shire. There is significant potential to improve walking and bicycle infrastructure in the Shire to encourage these forms of transport. Council has prepared the *Mount Alexander Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy (2010)* to guide the location and design of new walking and cycling infrastructure in the Shire's towns and rural areas. The Strategy recommends the establishment of three zones around population centres in the Shire (a Town Centre zone, walking zone and cycling zone). Its recommendations relate to the footpath network, bike lane network (on road for cyclists) and the trail network (off road for walkers and cyclists).

Key issues

- Improving pedestrian access and amenity in town centres.
- Connecting smaller towns and settlements with Castlemaine.
- Enhancing bicycle and walking infrastructure in the Shire's towns.
- Preserving opportunities for the expansion of public transport in the future.
- Uncertainty about whether the identified road bypass route to the south east of Maldon is required.

Objective 1

To integrate and co-ordinate transport connections in the Shire.

Strategies

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| Strategy 1.1 | Integrate land use and transport planning to facilitate better use of existing bus, rail, private and community transport services. |
| Strategy 1.2 | Ensure new residential areas are integrated with existing urban areas to facilitate permeability for pedestrians and vehicle traffic. |

Objective 2

To encourage higher levels of walking and cycling in the Shire.

Strategies

- Strategy 2.1 Build a more extensive footpath network that will connect townships in the Shire to all the main attractions in their surrounding ‘walking zones’, as defined in the *Mount Alexander Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy (2010)*.
- Strategy 2.1 Continue to work with VicRoads towards making the Primary and Secondary Cycling routes on the main roads through the Shire’s townships part of the Bike Lane Network.
- Strategy 2.3 Develop off-road trails and rail trails that serve both recreational and transport walkers and cyclists by providing off-road access to towns in the Shire, in accordance with the *Mount Alexander Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy (2010)*.
- Strategy 2.4 Improve the existing informal trails along the Maldon to Castlemaine and Newstead to Castlemaine railways and work with relevant authorities to secure these trails for the community’s use.

Objective 3

To maximise the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

Strategies

- Strategy 3.1 Slow traffic conditions in the ‘walking zones’ of the town centres in consultation with VicRoads.
- Strategy 3.2 Construct bike lanes that are wide, well marked and well signposted, in accordance with relevant standards.

Implementation

The strategies in relation to transport will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

Policy guidelines

- When deciding on applications that may require developing, upgrading or maintaining footpaths, consider implementing the design guidelines in Section 3.2.2 of the *Mount Alexander Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy (2010)*, as appropriate.

Further strategic work

- Engaging with VicRoads to investigate the future need to retain the proposed road bypass route of Maldon and identify potential alternative uses of the land.
- Engaging with VicRoads to ensure that the reservation of the Calder Freeway is appropriately zoned.

Reference documents

- Calder Freeway Studies, VicRoads
- Calder Highway Strategy, VicRoads, 1995
- Mount Alexander Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy, 2010-2020