

Transport Policy Statement

The MAV's high-level position on key transport policies.

Local Government's Role in Transport

- Victorian councils play a critical role in the planning, funding, delivery and maintenance of transport infrastructure. They use their strong community connections and intricate understanding of local needs to support decision-making and investment.
- Councils make land use planning and broader policy decisions that reflect community aspirations to create more liveable, productive and safe environments. They also advocate on behalf of local communities for further investment in local transport options. In some cases, they provide specific services such as community or school buses.
- State and Federal governments must recognise the important role of councils in transport planning for local community needs. They must ensure greater alignment between funding streams, major projects and local priorities.

Transport Planning and Engagement

- Victoria's population is projected to grow, particularly in regional areas. Communities across the state are seeing increased pressures on paths, roads and transport services driven by population growth. Better integration of land use and infrastructure planning is essential to control congestion, increase accessibility to critical services and improve community connection.
- Victorian councils are committed to a collaborative approach to transport planning. They expect early engagement from State and Federal governments. This must include consultation on project sequencing and timelines for investment to support local planning.
- Roads don't stop at municipal borders – funding programs should support greater collaboration between councils.
- The MAV calls for funding of long-term state-wide infrastructure plans and importantly, Victoria's transport plan – required under legislation.

Transport Mode Choice and Accessibility

- Greater choice in transport options is an important priority for councils and communities. Equitable investment in all transport modes, in all communities, is essential and supports a more efficient network.
- Transport modes that support healthier and more resilient communities, such as walking and bike riding, should be prioritised for funding by all tiers of government.
- The transport network must be inclusive and accessible for all Victorians.

Roads

- Victorian councils are responsible for 87 per cent of the state's road network – approximately 132,420 kilometres in total – with a critical role in managing and maintaining safe local networks and associated assets.

- Councils and communities across Victoria need greater support from the Victorian and Australian Governments to deliver safe and well-maintained roads.
- In many rural and regional areas, the limited council revenue and large road network responsibilities makes it very difficult for councils to deliver other important community services.
- Existing funding from other tiers of government is unsustainably low. Local road funding contributions from the Victorian and Australian Governments need to be substantially increased in an ongoing and sustainable manner.
- There needs to be a shift away from programs requiring quick delivery of shovel-ready projects to programs with minimal administrative burdens and greater flexibility.

Walking and bike riding

- Improving streets and paths for walking and bike riding and encouraging more people to take up active transport are important priorities.
- Walking and bike riding supports the social, economic, physical, and mental well-being of our communities
- It helps us to bust congestion across the road and public transport networks.
- Building walking and riding infrastructure, including paths and safe crossing points, threshold treatments, separated lanes and increased footpath width are all great ways to deliver local jobs as well as deliver wellness, social connection, and mobility benefits.

Freight

- Victorian councils are passionate supporters of local economies, job creation and sustainable business growth in communities right across the state. Strong economic growth is important for our recovery from COVID. However, we don't want to see more freight movements and larger trucks on local streets.
- Freight movements in Victoria should occur primarily on the Principal Freight Network – on major roads and arterials away from quiet residential areas.
- In metropolitan areas, we want to make sure deliveries can get to businesses, shops, and homes safely and on time, while minimising inappropriate noise impacts after hours and in quiet residential areas.
- In rural and regional areas, we want to make sure local road and freight infrastructure is prioritised for increased funding by the Victorian and Australian Government. This will help to ensure farmers and regional businesses can get their produce, goods and other commodities to markets safely and efficiently.

Electric Vehicles

- Victorian councils and the MAV support a smooth transition to electric vehicles (EVs).
- Victorian councils are already investing in EVs and associated charging infrastructure as part of broader objectives to reduce emissions, improve air quality, protect and enhance local amenity, and reduce lifecycle fleet maintenance costs.

- The MAV recognises that we are in a state of climate emergency that requires urgent action by all levels of government. Noting that light vehicles account for 10 per cent of Australia's total greenhouse gas emissions, we consider a transition away from internal combustion engine vehicles to EVs to be one of a number of necessary actions to reduce emissions.
- Victorian councils support greater investment by all tiers of government in enhancing policy settings to encourage uptake of EVs. Such settings must ensure a cost effective and sustainable approach that encourages community uptake and supports Australian innovation and business growth in this important industry.
- Investment in community charging and related road infrastructure should also be prioritised by all tiers of government.

Public Transport

- Better access to fast, frequent and safe public transport options is a priority for the MAV and Victorian councils.
- Improving access to public transport means people can get to where they want to go faster, opens the door to job and education opportunities, and reduces congestion on our roads.
- Trains, trams and buses should run more frequently. Investment in rolling stock and increased service frequency is supported along with a network-wide review of stops, stations and associated infrastructure to ensure an efficient and accessible network for all Victorians.
- Upgrading of public buses to zero emissions vehicles must be expedited in recognition of the climate emergency and improvements to local amenity.