



Merri-bek
City Council

Moving Around Merri-bek

Action Plan 2025-2029



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Introduction

Purpose of this document

The Moving Around Merri-bek Action Plan 2025-2029 is an accompanying document to the Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy, adopted by Council in 2024. It is a successor document to the initial 2024-2025 Action Plan.

The Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy sets a long-term vision for a safer, more sustainable and accessible transport system across all parts of the network – including walking, cycling, public transport and driving. It outlines a clear direction to improve the experience of moving around our city, and apply a Streets for People approach to enhance the amenity of our streets. This Action Plan translates that strategic direction into a practical, time-bound program of work.

The Action Plan sets out how Merri-bek will deliver on the Transport Strategy’s vision over the next four years. It moves us from piloting new approaches to scaling up delivery – embedding fairness, sustainability, and sense of place in how we move around and experience life in our city.

The actions in this plan are grouped into three focus areas:

- **Infrastructure** – designing and delivering transformative streetscape projects
- **Plans & Programs** – building evidence, shaping behaviours, and planning for long-term change
- **Policy & Advocacy** – setting the standards locally and pressing for change from the State and Federal Governments

Each of these three focus areas include actions that deliver on the six values which guide Council’s approach to mobility: Safe, Accessible, Sustainable, Healthy, Liveable, and Inclusive.

How this document works

This document follows a similar structure as the Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy. This allows the reader to compare between each of the sections in the Strategy and this Action Plan, clearly showing how we are working to achieve the community’s transport vision.

The Action Plan begins with a summary of what we heard from the community during consultation on the draft plan, and how this feedback changed the final version you’re reading here. It then talks about how this plan fits into Council’s broader Community Vision, outlines what was achieved in the first year of implementing the Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy (2024-2025), and then sets out the forward program for 2025-2029. Each action area is introduced with context and rationale, followed by tables detailing the specific actions, the values they deliver, the parts of the transport network they affect, and when and how they will be delivered.

The Action Plan concludes with an overview of how progress will be evaluated and reported, and how the Streets for People approach – introduced in the Transport Strategy – will continue to guide the design and delivery of infrastructure projects across Merri-bek.

The Action Plan on a page

Moving Around Merri-bek Action Plan 2025-2029



Infrastructure



Actions that make physical changes to our streets and surrounding spaces to create places that are safe, green, accessible and enjoyable to use

Flagship Actions

- Design and deliver Streets for People high priority corridors
- Deliver infrastructure that supports safer school zones, in collaboration with Ride & Stride schools
- Install road safety improvements and safer speed limits

Supporting Actions

e.g. upgrade walking facilities with improvements such as public seating, pram ramps, and crossings

Plans & Programs



Actions that work towards long-term change via planning, partnership and behaviour change

Flagship Actions

- Develop a Road Safety Plan that outlines Council's priorities for improving road safety
- Run innovative community programs that encourage active and sustainable travel
- Expand and strengthen Council's Ride & Stride program, with a focus on increasing the number of participating schools

Supporting Actions

e.g. review and update our approach to managing kerbside space and parking as demand changes in and around activity centres

Policy & Advocacy



Actions to create stronger local policies and advocate to external organisations for changes that Merri-bek can't achieve alone

Flagship Actions

- Develop a Transport Advocacy Strategy that brings Council's existing transport advocacy priorities into a single document
- Work with the State Government to deliver place-based mobility and parking outcomes for activity centres in Brunswick, Coburg, and Glenroy
- Develop a community vision for revitalising Sydney Road and other key tram routes

Supporting Actions

e.g. update Merri-bek's Public Lighting Policy for street lighting installation

Flagship Actions

Strategic, high-level initiatives that set direction and drive major change

Supporting Actions

Targeted initiatives that underpin and enable the flagship work

Our Values

Actions in this plan are guided by the 6 values of Council's Moving Around Merri-bek transport strategy:



Sustainable



Liveable



Inclusive



Safe



Accessible



Healthy

What we heard from the community

Between 23 October and 1 December 2025, we asked the community: Is the draft Moving Around Merri-bek Action Plan 2025-2029 heading in the right direction? We invited people to review the draft Action Plan and share feedback on the proposed actions through an online survey and three in-person pop-up sessions.

What you told us

Across all feedback, six key themes emerged. These themes summarise what we heard most consistently, and they directly informed how we refined the final Action Plan. The themes are summarised below:

1. Road safety and speed management are front and centre

Safer speeds, traffic calming, and better crossings were raised more than any other issue. People want 30 km/h zones, raised crossings, and Council to push the State Government harder on safety improvements to major roads.

2. Strong support for walking and cycling – with a call for local detail

People back the focus on active transport but want to know what it means for their street, their school, their shops through clearer examples in the final plan.

3. Equitable, place-responsive mobility solutions matter – including for driving and parking

Fawkner is not Brunswick. One size doesn't fit all. People told us that their mobility needs – including driving and parking – vary significantly by location. Northern suburbs often have fewer alternatives and longer trips, while southern suburbs face different pressures as density increases. Respondents supported improving walking, cycling and public transport, but emphasised that decisions about driving and parking must respond to local conditions, growth patterns, and existing reliance, so that outcomes are equitable and practical in everyday life.

4. Schools and child-friendly mobility are a powerful call to action

Safe routes to school and Ride & Stride received overwhelmingly positive feedback. People see this as where change can be most visible and meaningful – but only if behaviour change programs are backed by safer infrastructure.

5. Advocacy for public transport improvements and other big-ticket items really matter

Upfield line duplication, better buses, accessible tram stops, safer state-managed roads – people want Council to be loud, specific, and persistent in pushing the State Government for improvements that genuinely give people alternatives to driving.

6. Show us the results – accountability matters

Don't just write another plan. Set clear targets, measure what matters, and report back annually on what's actually changed.

Overall message: Merri-bek is ready for change – as long as it is equitable, measurable, and visible in everyday life.

How this feedback shaped the final Action Plan

You spoke. We listened. Here's what we've changed in this final version of the Action Plan:

Making local implications clearer through examples

Many people told us they wanted a better sense of what the Action Plan means for their own neighbourhood. In response, the final Action Plan includes examples of how high-level actions guide on-the-ground projects through annual capital works, programs, and partnerships, while still allowing for flexibility to respond to local needs and funding opportunities.

Stronger focus on road safety and speed management

There was consistent and widespread support for safer speeds, traffic calming, and better pedestrian crossings. The final Action Plan places stronger emphasis on road safety and speed management, including clearer links to the development of Council's Road Safety Plan and the rollout of lower-speed environments and supporting infrastructure.

Addressing equity across all suburbs

Feedback highlighted the importance of ensuring transport improvements are equitable and reach all parts of Merri-bek, particularly areas with fewer alternatives to driving. The final Action Plan more clearly explains how equity considerations will guide monitoring and prioritisation, so investment benefits communities across the whole municipality.

Putting children and schools front and centre

Strong support was expressed for actions that help children travel safely and independently. The final Action Plan strengthens the role of school-focused initiatives, showing how programs like Ride & Stride, safer crossings and traffic management around schools work together.

Strengthening advocacy for public transport and other State-led projects

Many people urged Council to be louder and more specific in pushing for better public transport and safer state-managed roads. The final Action Plan strengthens how we describe advocacy priorities and the role of the forthcoming Transport Advocacy Strategy.

Improving monitoring and accountability

Many respondents were interested in how progress will be tracked. The final Action Plan includes a strengthened monitoring section, with clearer information about how actions will be measured and reported on over time.

Together, these changes helped ensure the final Action Plan reflects community priorities, is easier to relate to at a local level, and provides a clear framework for turning shared goals into action across Merri-bek.

Community Vision 2025-2035

This Action Plan is shaped by the community's aspirations for the future of Merri-bek. In 2025, the Council Plan 2025-2029 was adopted. It formalised a new 10-year Community Vision:

“Merri-bek leads, and leaves no one behind.”

This vision guides how we plan, deliver, and advocate for improvements across our community – including improvements to how we move around and experience life in Merri-bek.

As part of defining this vision, community members laid out the following aspirations to describe the Merri-bek they want to see in 2035:

- We are a welcoming, safe and thriving community
- We are sustainable and our environment is respected
- Our community is engaged and informed
- Our streets are full of life
- One community, proudly diverse

Transport and the Council Plan

Transport plays a vital role in achieving the Community Vision. It sits within the ‘Beautiful and Liveable City’ theme of the Council Plan, which focuses on:

- Keeping public spaces safe, clean and inviting
- Fixing and improving streets and footpaths
- Encouraging walking, bike riding and scooting – especially for school trips
- Supporting safer and more accessible public transport use

This Action Plan helps deliver on that goal – making Merri-bek's streets safer, more inclusive, and easier to use, no matter how you get around.

Access for elderly and vulnerable residents

An important consideration of the Action Plan will be ensuring sufficient parking to meet the needs of the vulnerable, the elderly, local business and the broader community.



What we achieved in 2024-2025

The 2024-2025 financial year marked the first year of delivering the *Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy*, adopted by Council in March 2024. Alongside adoption of the *Streets for People Plan*, Council delivered several major street transformation projects, behaviour change programs, and transport advocacy wins – laying solid foundations for the 2025-2029 Action Plan.

Highlights of achievements

Streets for People

- Finalised development of the Streets for People Plan, translating high-level transport strategy into practical street-level delivery frameworks and project prioritisation.
- Delivered shared zones on Albert and Victoria Streets, Brunswick East – creating safer, more accessible public spaces with widened footpaths, landscaping, seating, and places to spend time.



Public realm improvements

- Completed permanent streetscape upgrades on Carlisle Street, Coburg, including tree planting, traffic calming, shared zones, improved footpaths, and drainage. The corridor now supports vibrant walking and cycling connections and contributes to local greening.

Concept design and community consultation

- Co-designed concept plans for Harding-Munro Street, Coburg with the community, improving accessibility, safety, and greening for walking, cycling and public transport.
- Advanced design of bike lane extension and crossings on O’Hea Street, which will strengthen a key east-west active transport link in Coburg.



Roll out of safer speed zones

- Council completed the roll-out of 40 km/h safer speed limits on all local roads across Merri-bek, reducing crash risk and making streets safer for walking and cycling.
- Approval was secured for 30 km/h speed limit trials in parts of Brunswick and Coburg, to test even safer conditions in busy local centres and work to make them more vibrant places.

Sustainable transport

- The Merri-bek E-bike Library was launched in September 2024, providing access to four shared e-bikes (two standard and two cargo) hosted at two neighbourhood houses – Sussex and Fawkner.
- Over the first 18 months of operation (September 2024 to December 2025), more than 100 residents borrowed an e-bike, using the two-week loans to trial e-biking for commuting, shopping, and family trips. The program helps to reduce cost barriers of trying new ways to get around and encourages more people to travel sustainably.
- Continued roll-out of publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure, aligned with Council's climate targets and zero-carbon ambitions.



Strengthening local community programs

- Scaled up the Ride & Stride program with local schools, delivering innovative behaviour-change activities to support walking and riding for children and their families.
- Expanded the Wheel Sisters program from Fawkner to Glenroy, enabling women – particularly from culturally diverse backgrounds – to gain cycling confidence, independence, and new social connections.



Advocacy and collaboration

- Council partnered with the Northern Councils Alliance to launch the Connect Melbourne's North campaign – a united call for better transport investment across Melbourne's north.
- The campaign highlights urgent needs such as more frequent and reliable public transport, safer walking and cycling links, and improved connections to jobs, education, and homes.

A new structure for 2025-2029

The 2024-2025 Action Plan grouped actions under twelve categories drawn from our values, network layers, and the Streets for People program. While comprehensive, this approach proved difficult to track and sometimes duplicated work across categories. It also listed more actions than could reasonably be delivered in a single year, which made it harder for the community to see where Council's biggest moves were being made.

For 2025-29, we are taking a future-focused, strategic approach. Actions are now grouped by what they deliver:

1. **Infrastructure**
2. **Plans & Programs**
3. **Policy & Advocacy**

Within each category, actions are organised as either

- **Flagship Actions** – strategic, high-level initiatives that set direction and drive major change
- **Supporting Actions** – targeted initiatives that underpin and enable the flagship work

This sharper structure is designed to make it easier for the average community member to understand where we are focusing effort, while leaving space for new opportunities over the next four years. It also makes accountability clearer, as progress can be reported meaningfully and publicly, beyond simply counting numbers of projects or kilometres of upgrades delivered.

Importantly, if a specific project or program isn't explicitly listed in an action, it does not mean Council isn't doing it. Many ongoing priorities – such as routine road safety upgrades, footpath improvements, and other smaller-scale works – continue to be delivered through Council's Capital Works Program, Customer Request System, and other business-as-usual programs, each with their own governance and reporting processes. This Action Plan is deliberately high-level and strategic: it sets our direction for the future while ensuring that our current commitments remain firmly on track.

Community engagement on the Action Plan also highlighted the importance of equitable, place-responsive investment – with solutions tailored to local contexts so improvements are effective and responsive to the diversity of places across Merri-bek. The higher-level, strategic nature of the Action Plan enables Council to apply changes more thoughtfully – using local context, trials and evaluations where appropriate, and ongoing engagement with affected communities as projects are scoped, designed, and delivered.

Overall, the new structure in this Action Plan provides:

- **Clarity** – the community can see and easily understand the big moves Council is making
- **Transparency** – reporting that focuses on meaningful outcomes, not just lists of projects
- **Flexibility** – space to add new priorities as they emerge across the plan's four-year horizon
- **Impact** – resources targeted to initiatives that truly change how people move around and experience life in Merri-bek

By reshaping how we define and group actions, this Action Plan sets Merri-bek up for the years ahead – delivering streets and surrounding spaces that are easier to move through, more inviting to spend time in, and central to the vibrancy and fairness of everyday life.

Actions for 2025-2029

Infrastructure

Delivering safer streets where they are needed most

We will transform our streets and surrounding spaces into places that are safer, greener, and more enjoyable. Infrastructure actions are about delivering physical improvements to the spaces our community sees and uses every day.

Community feedback showed strong support for Council investing in more people-focused streets – with safety consistently identified as the foundation for all other outcomes. Infrastructure actions in this Action Plan focus on delivering visible, practical changes to streets and public spaces, including safer speeds, safer crossings, traffic calming, and streetscape improvements that support walking, cycling and enhanced amenity to support everyday activities.

Rather than listing every individual project, the Action Plan sets out clear priorities and decision-making principles that guide how projects are identified and delivered through annual capital works programs, grant funding and partnerships. This approach helps make local implications clearer, while still allowing flexibility to respond to emerging safety risks, community feedback, and funding opportunities.

Infrastructure delivery will be prioritised based on:

- Road safety risk and crash history
- The presence of children and other vulnerable community groups, particularly around schools
- Equity considerations and place-responsive needs
- The role of streets as local places, including activity centres and neighbourhood hubs

This means that while treatments will differ from place to place, the intent is consistent: to make Merri-bek's streets safer, more accessible, and more welcoming for everyone.

What this can look like at the local level: Streets for People

One of the flagship Infrastructure Actions is to design and deliver Streets for People high priority corridors. Our Streets for People plan includes guidelines on how potential design elements should change based on local context, specific needs of the area, and the people who use the street. This place-responsive approach will inform how we design and deliver high priority Streets for People corridors.

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| <p>Local Streets ●</p> <p>Low Movement and Low Place Function Changes would be to improve make these streets quiet and safer for residents and people walking and riding.</p> | <p>Activity Streets and Boulevards ●</p> <p>High Movement and High Place Function Improvements would balance the competing needs of these Streets.</p> |
| <p>City Places ●</p> <p>Low Movement and High Place Function. Improvements would improve amenity and make these places nicer to visit.</p> | <p>Connectors ●</p> <p>High Movement and Low Place Function. Improvements would seek to separate transport modes and improve safety.</p> |

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|  <p>Shared zones ● ●</p> |  <p>Slow points ● ●</p> |  <p>One-way filter ● ●</p> |
|  <p>Outdoor Dining ● ●</p> |  <p>Protected bike lanes ● ●</p> |  <p>Shared paths ● ●</p> |

List of Infrastructure Actions for 2025-2029

| | Action Number | Action Description | Values | Timeframe | Commencing Year | Capital Cost | Operational Cost |
|------------------|---------------|--|---|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
| Flagship Actions | 1.1 | Design and deliver Streets for People high priority corridors, as outlined in Council's Streets for People Plan. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Accessible • Healthy • Liveable • Sustainable • Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | High | High |
| | 1.2 | Build on the Ride & Stride behaviour change program by delivering safer school zone infrastructure, in collaboration with Ride & Stride schools and their school communities. This will include infrastructure interventions at the school precinct level, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer school crossings • Designated school zone asphalt treatments • Lower speed limits in school zones • Modal filters and traffic calming infrastructure • Tactical urbanism and placemaking infrastructure • Tree planting to create cool routes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Accessible • Healthy • Liveable • Sustainable • Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | High | High |
| | 1.3 | Deliver road safety infrastructure improvements alongside safer speed limits on local streets, guided by Council's forthcoming Road Safety Plan. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling out 30 km/h speed limits in priority areas such as on or around school and childcare precincts, Streets for People corridors, aged care facilities, local shopping strips, and community venues • Progressively introducing safer speed limits and supporting traffic calming infrastructure on all council-managed roads • Continue delivering road safety infrastructure such as new pedestrian crossings, improved street lighting, improved visibility at junctions, slip lane closures, and more in priority areas • Continue to prioritise road safety infrastructure in areas of high need | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Liveable | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | High | High |

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|--------------------|-----|--|---|---------------------------|-------|--------|--------|
| Supporting Actions | 1.4 | <p>Improve walking facilities and amenity through infrastructure upgrades, such as pram ramps, public seating, new or improved crossings, and the removal of tripping hazards, focused on or around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets for People corridors • Principle Pedestrian Network corridors • Streets that carry higher numbers of vulnerable road users, such as those near childcare centres, schools, or aged care facilities • Activity centres, neighbourhood centres, and local shopping strips • Train stations and public transport stops • Parks, leisure centres, and other key destinations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Accessible • Healthy • Liveable • Sustainable • Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Medium | Medium |
| | 1.5 | <p>Improve cycling facilities and amenity through small scale infrastructure upgrades, focused on or around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets for People corridors • The State Government's Strategic Cycling Corridors network • Streets that carry higher numbers of vulnerable road users, such as those near childcare centres, schools, or aged care facilities • Activity centres, neighbourhood centres, and local shopping strips • Train stations and public transport stops • Parks, leisure centres, and other key destinations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Accessible • Healthy • Liveable • Sustainable • Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Medium | Medium |
| | 1.6 | <p>Deliver improvements to existing shared paths across Merri-bek, addressing issues with surface quality, safety, and accessibility gaps.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Accessible • Healthy • Liveable • Sustainable • Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Medium | Medium |
| | 1.7 | <p>Trial and evaluate on-street secure bike parking in select locations, with a focus on areas with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High density • High mix of apartments • Council owned community facilities • Limited access to secure off-street parking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy • Liveable • Sustainable | Short Term: 1-2 Years | 25/26 | Low | High |

Plans & Programs

Building confidence, capability, and the groundwork for long-term change

We will shape long-term outcomes through evidence, partnerships, and behaviour change. Plans & Programs Actions for 2024-2029 build the knowledge, habits, and planning frameworks for the future.

Community feedback consistently highlighted the importance of clear investment prioritisation, behaviour change, and follow-through, particularly when it comes to children's travel and road safety.

Our Plans & Programs actions are designed to provide that bridge between strategy and delivery. They shape how priorities are set, how projects are sequenced, and how Council works with schools, communities, and other delivery partners to build the groundwork for long-term change.

There is a strong focus on road safety and speed management in this group of actions. Development of Council's first Road Safety Plan is a key commitment, responding directly to community support for safer speeds, traffic calming, and better crossings. The Road Safety Plan will guide future investment, align safety actions across the municipality, and strengthen Council's advocacy on state-managed roads.

Children and schools are also placed front and centre. Community feedback showed strong support for building on our efforts to support children traveling safely and independently – with a clear message that encouragement and education must be backed by safer environments. Plans and programs bring together Ride & Stride, school precinct planning, safer crossings, speed management, and engagement into a coordinated, place-based approach.

What this can look like at the local level: Ride & Stride

One of the flagship Plans & Programs actions is to expand and strengthen the Ride & Stride program across Merri-bek. Ride & Stride supports schools and families to shift how children travel to school through behaviour change activities, community-led initiatives and school partnerships that build confidence to walk, ride and scoot.

To date, Ride & Stride has focused on helping school communities trial and normalise active travel – laying important groundwork for long-term change. The Action Plan builds on this success by expanding the number of schools participating in Ride & Stride, particularly in areas with lower rates of active travel, and for the first time pairing the program with dedicated, place-based infrastructure improvements.



List of Plans & Programs Actions for 2025-2029

| | Action Number | Action Description | Values | Timeframe | Commencing Year | Capital Cost | Operational Cost |
|------------------|---------------|--|---|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
| Flagship Actions | 2.1 | <p>Develop a Road Safety Plan that outlines Council's priorities for addressing road safety across the municipality and informs future capital works planning. The Plan will identify priority locations for interventions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer speed limits • Traffic calming infrastructure • Traffic management measures • Safer crossings • Safer intersections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Liveable | Short Term: 1-2 Years | 25/26 | Low | High |
| | 2.2 | <p>Design and deliver innovative programs and initiatives to support active and sustainable travel, prioritising initiatives that target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short, local trips • Areas with existing or planned walking or riding infrastructure • Demographic groups with low levels of active travel equity or uptake • Schools, kindergartens, and childcare centres not involved in Ride & Stride | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Healthy • Sustainable • Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Low | High |
| | 2.3 | <p>Expand and strengthen Council's flagship Ride & Stride program, focusing on increasing the number of schools participating. Continue to scale our innovative, holistic, and collaborative interventions with engaged Ride & Stride primary schools.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Healthy • Sustainable • Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Low | High |

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| Supporting Actions | 2.4 | Review and update our approach to manage kerbside space and parking. Work toward a place-based approach that responds to growth, increased density in and around activity centres, and changing demand for on-street parking. This will balance access, movement and place priorities, and support fair, transparent decisions as travel patterns and parking needs evolve over time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible • Liveable • Sustainable • Inclusive | Short Term: 1-2 Years | 26/27 | Low | High |
| | 2.5 | Embed the Healthy Streets Framework across relevant Council works, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Healthy Streets Design Checks for identification and delivery of all street related projects - including road reconstruction and streetscape improvement programs • Upskilling Council staff in application of Healthy Streets through Healthy Streets training and refreshers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Accessible • Healthy • Liveable • Sustainable • Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Low | Medium |
| | 2.6 | Deliver and evaluate a program for shared e-bikes with a designated parking zone approach. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy • Liveable • Sustainable | Short Term: 1-2 Years | 25/26 | Low | Medium |
| | 2.7 | Support expansion of a renewably-powered Electric Vehicle charging network across Merri-bek by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping to facilitate the roll out of on-street EV charging options • Promoting EV charging infrastructure within or adjacent to new private developments through the planning process and advocacy. • Collaborating with 'car share' businesses to accelerate their transition to electric vehicles. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Medium | High |

Policy & Advocacy

Being clear, consistent, and louder where Council can't act alone

We will set stronger local policy and advocate to higher levels of government for the changes Merri-bek can't achieve alone.

Many of the transport issues raised during engagement sit beyond Council's direct control. Community members were clear they want Council to be more vocal, more specific, and more persistent in pushing for better public transport, safer state-managed roads, and stronger outcomes from major projects.

Policy & Advocacy actions respond directly to that call. They clarify Council's role in setting expectations locally, building partnerships, and advocating for action from the State and Federal Governments.

A key commitment is the development of a Transport Advocacy Strategy. This will turn community priorities into a clear and coordinated advocacy agenda – setting out what Council is asking for, why it matters for Merri-bek, and how advocacy efforts will be sustained over time. This includes advocacy for:

- Safer speeds, crossings, and designs on state-managed roads
- Better and more accessible public transport, particularly in areas with few alternatives to driving
- High-quality place outcomes for state-led projects in activity centres and along major corridors

Strengthening advocacy also means being honest about where Council can and cannot act. This Action Plan makes those boundaries clearer, while committing to stronger, more transparent advocacy on the issues the community has told us matter most.

What this can look like at the local level: Advocacy for the Upfield Line

The Upfield Line has long been one of the poorest-performing train lines in Melbourne in terms of frequency and reliability, making its duplication and the removal of level crossings enduring advocacy priorities for Merri-bek. Council's advocacy has already contributed to tangible progress along the corridor, including delivery of the Coburg level crossing removals and ongoing work with the State Government to progress the Brunswick level crossing removals – both critical precursors to future duplication. Improving train service frequency and reliability, alongside safer and more liveable conditions for communities in Brunswick, Coburg, Fawkner and Glenroy, remains central to this work.

While rail infrastructure is owned and delivered by the State Government and major projects can take many years to achieve, the Action Plan commits Council to continuing clear, specific and persistent advocacy to help move these priorities forward.

An example of how we will do this is Council's collaboration with neighbouring councils via the Northern Councils Alliance, allowing Merri-bek to speak with a unified regional voice. By combining local evidence, community priorities and coordinated advocacy, Council is working to ensure the State Government understands both the transport and place-based benefits of Upfield Line duplication – including better access to jobs, education and services, and safer, more liveable communities along the corridor.



List of Policy & Advocacy Actions for 2025-2029

| | Action Number | Action Description | Values | Timeframe | Commencing Year | Capital Cost | Operational Cost |
|------------------|---------------|--|---|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
| Flagship Actions | 3.1 | <p>Develop a Transport Advocacy Strategy to formalise Council's continued advocacy to the State Government for the advancement of key transport priorities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved safety on state-managed roads More frequent and accessible public transport Increased investment in active transport, including shared use paths that travel between council areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Accessible Healthy Liveable Sustainable Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Low | High |
| | 3.2 | <p>Work with the State Government to deliver well-designed, place-based mobility and parking outcomes for the Brunswick and Coburg Activity Centres that support high-quality housing, sustainable travel options, and a functional public realm. This includes advocating for a coordinated approach to changes in car parking requirements, managing impacts on local streets and access. Advocate for similar, locally appropriate outcomes in Glenroy.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Accessible Healthy Liveable Sustainable Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Low | High |
| | 3.3 | <p>Develop a clear and shared community vision for the revitalisation of Sydney Road and other key tram activity corridors across Merri-bek, and advocate to the State Government to fund and deliver that vision.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Accessible Healthy Liveable Sustainable Inclusive | Core Program - Continuous | 25/26 | Low | High |

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|--------------------|-----|---|---|------------------------|-------|-----|--------|
| Supporting Actions | 3.4 | Advocate to the State Government to update legislation relating to Council authority to deliver changes supporting safe and sustainable transport outcomes on Council-managed streets, with a focus on regulatory processes related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic management on local roads • Traffic filtering on local roads • Safer speed limit mandates on local roads, particularly in priority areas such as school zones | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Healthy • Liveable | Medium Term: 2-4 Years | 25/26 | Low | Medium |
| | 3.5 | Update Merri-bek's Public Lighting Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Accessible • Inclusive | Short Term: 1-2 Years | 25/26 | Low | Low |
| | 3.6 | Prepare a report on the future of bus stop asset ownership and advertising, and implement Council's decision on the bus shelter contract and long-term ownership model. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible | Short Term: 1-2 Years | 26/27 | Low | Low |
| | 3.7 | Develop a Streetscape & Public Realm Design Manual to guide design policy for all street improvement projects in Merri-bek, and serve as a companion document to technical notes. Design guidance provided within the manual will be linked to Movement & Place street types, Healthy Streets principles, and support other Council policies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Accessible • Healthy • Liveable • Sustainable • Inclusive | Medium Term: 2-4 Years | 27/28 | Low | High |

Monitoring progress and building on the momentum

This Action Plan is not a “set and forget” document. Council is committed to annual public reporting throughout 2025-2029, with a focus on whether our actions are delivering outcomes that matter to the community – not just counting projects delivered.

What we will monitor

Reporting won’t only be about kilometres of bike lanes or numbers of crossings delivered. Instead, we will measure and communicate outcomes that matter to people, structured around the six values of the Moving Around Merri-bek Transport Strategy: Safe, Accessible, Healthy, Liveable, Sustainable, and Inclusive. These values provide a clear, consistent lens for understanding how transport investment is improving everyday life across Merri-bek.

Council will track a set of indicators for each value, drawing on established datasets and targeted evaluation tools. This approach will allow us to understand both the scale of change and who is benefiting. The metrics and data sources we will use in our annual reporting are outlined below:

| Value | What monitoring will focus on | Primary data sources |
|-------------|--|---|
| Safe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trends in road trauma and crash severity, plus publish quarterly reports of road trauma for fatalities and serious injuries based on RCIS data including similar scope to the recent City of Yarra’s quarterly reporting model Exposure to vehicle speeds and conflict Community perceptions of safety when walking, cycling, and using public transport | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VicRoads CrashStats Speed and traffic volume data Community surveys and project evaluations |
| Accessible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to reach daily needs without a car Quality and continuity of walking, cycling and public transport access Barriers experienced by people living with a disability, older people, and carers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Census and VISTA Accessibility audits Equity and access mapping |
| Healthy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levels of active travel for local trips Opportunities for physical activity in streets and public spaces Exposure to air and noise pollution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VISTA Local counts and surveys Environmental and traffic datasets |
| Liveable | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streetscape amenity outcomes Use of streets and public spaces Greening, shade, and comfort along key routes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Streets assessments Project-level evaluations Urban greening and public realm data |
| Sustainable | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport-related greenhouse gas emissions Mode shift to walking, cycling and public transport Climate resilience of streets and infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council emissions inventories VISTA and Census Climate Emergency Action Plan reporting |
| Inclusive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution of benefits across neighbourhoods Outcomes for priority communities Participation in engagement and programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity mapping tools Program participation data Engagement reporting |

How we will report back

Council will develop and maintain a Measurement and Evaluation Framework that brings these indicators together in a consistent and transparent way. Where possible, we will align with existing Council reporting – including on the Climate Emergency Action Plan – to ensure consistency and avoid duplication.

Each year, Council will publish a public Progress Report that reports against these six values. The report will be designed so with community in mind, so that you can read, use and challenge us on our progress – closing the loop, holding ourselves accountable, and ensuring that the voices of Merri-bek continue to guide our journey.

By reporting through the Strategy's six values, the Action Plan will continue to evolve with the community, demonstrating year by year how our collective choices are shaping safer streets, fairer access, healthier environments, and more vibrant neighbourhoods.



Moving forward, together

At its heart, the Moving Around Merri-bek Action Plan 2025-2029 brings the Community Vision to life: Merri-bek leads – and leaves no one behind. Over the next four years, it will help ensure our streets and surrounding spaces are full of life, welcoming people to move, connect and thrive.

Engagement on this plan showed a community that:

- Wants safer, calmer, and more pleasant streets to move through and spend time along
- Wants better walking, cycling and public transport – but expects place-responsive solutions
- Understands change takes time, but wants accountability and visible progress
- Believes Merri-bek can lead on creating streets that work for everyone

Your expectations are clear: Don't just write another plan. Make it happen. Report on it. And bring the whole community along. That's exactly what we'll do.