

Sponsor: Maribyrnong Youth Advisory Committee
Refuter: Hoppers Crossing Secondary College

A Bill for an Act relating to Increased Accessibility of Non-Car Centric Transport
To be enacted by the Y Victoria Youth Parliament

Increased Accessibility of Non-Car Centric Transport Bill 2025

A Bill for an Act to provide standardised and enforceable guidelines, promoting sustainable transport infrastructure and regulation of car-centric design. This Bill also provides guidance for the implementation and evaluation of proposed actions, as well as outlining enforcement mechanisms if standards are not satisfied.

Victoria is estimated to be the fastest growing state in Australia by 2051 (DTP, 2023). In particular, the outer suburban regions are projected to see high growth rates. However, sustainable transport infrastructure – such as public transport, cycling and other forms of active transport – and connectivity fail to keep up with high growth areas, leaving commuters car-dependent (Bugeja, 2024). Current sustainable transport infrastructure often lacks sufficient proactive planning and integrated design, resulting in a poor and frustrating user experience.

PART I—Preliminary

Clause 1 Purpose

The main purposes of this act are;

- (a) To improve accessibility to non-car centric transport options;
- (b) To offer an additional mechanism to finance public transport infrastructure and related services;
- (c) To improve the safety and quality of non-car centric transport.

Clause 2 Commencement

This Bill shall commence upon receiving assent from the Youth Governor of Victoria.

Clause 3 Definitions

In this Bill;

- (a) **Activity centres** means key areas designated for concentrated development of housing, jobs, services and public transport;
- (b) **Binding agreement** means a legally enforceable contract between two parties;
- (c) **Brownfield development** means redeveloping previously used land;
- (d) **Commercial development** means office spaces, retail spaces, restaurants, hotels and excludes residential homes;
- (e) **Cycling infrastructure** means well marked, perceived as safe and accessible bicycle lanes and bicycle storage;
- (f) **Greenfield development** means building on previously unused land;
- (g) **DPT** means the Department of Planning and Transport;
- (h) **High growth** means local government areas with a projected annual population growth of over 4.5%;
- (i) **Levy** means a fee, tax or charge imposed by the Government on businesses or other entities;
- (j) **PTNA** means Public Transport Needs Assessment;

- (k) **Public roads** means any roads owned by the state of Victoria or local municipalities within the state of Victoria;
- (l) **Transport infrastructure** means bus and tram stops, train stations and rail corridor;
- (m) **Rail corridor** means allocated land space for railway to be constructed and operated;
- (n) **Reasonable walking distance** means 800 metres or less from residences;
- (o) **STPA Board** means Sustainable Transport Planning Authority Board;
- (p) **Sustainable modes of transport** means public transport, e-scooters, walking and cycling and excludes automotive vehicles, such as cars;
- (q) **Transport disadvantage** means areas with access to public transport exceeds a walking distance of 20 minutes;
- (r) **Walkways** means any publicly owned resource which are used by members of the public for non-motorised means of travel.

PART II—Establishment

Clause 4 Safe Bicycle Infrastructure Design

- 4.1 The Minister for Public and Active Transport shall ensure that, within three years of commencement, all on-road bicycle lanes are;
- (a) Accessible to all;
 - (b) Physically safe and perceived to be safe;
 - (c) Integrated and connected to bicycle-safe infrastructure and routes;
 - (d) Comfortable, where bicycle lanes are;
 - (i) Well marked;
 - (ii) Consistently of high quality;
 - (iii) Not obstructed by other road users.
- 4.2 The Minister for Public and Active Transport shall ensure state-wide bicycle lane design guidelines are developed within three years of commencement and updated every ten years, containing;
- (a) Guidance of evidence-based bike lane design principles;
 - (b) Alternative best practice options if the preferred design is unfeasible;
 - (c) Examples of hazardous bicycle lane design;
 - (d) Evidence of consultation with;
 - (i) Individuals with experience of road-cycle use;
 - (ii) Other relevant expert individuals or groups.
- 4.3 The Minister for Public and Active Transport shall ensure that the guidelines are adhered to within five years of development.
- 4.4 Failure of the responsible parties to adhere to the proposed design guidelines shall be subject to levy where;
- (a) The Department of Planning and Transport (DPT) shall determine the levy amount;
 - (b) The Minister for Public and Active Transport and/or Minister for Transport Infrastructure shall ensure;

- (i) Relevant parties have identified barriers for adoption;
- (ii) Collaboration with relevant parties to support adoption of safe and accessible bike lane design;
- (c) A reduction from paying the levy shall be available under exceptional circumstances.

Clause 5 Property Developer Transport Infrastructure Contributions Fund

- 5.1 The DTP shall introduce a state-wide levy calculated for the construction or acquisition of land for transport infrastructure;
 - (a) Infrastructure levy amounts shall be based on the estimated cost of providing the infrastructure with either;
 - (i) Documentation detailing the costs associated with delivering the transport project;
 - (ii) Documentation detailing the cost associated with reserving public space for future transport planning.
 - (b) All developments across the state shall be subjected to the infrastructure levy;
 - (i) Failure to pay the levy in full or by the due date shall be subject to penalties, as per Clause 9.2;
 - (ii) An exemption from paying the levy shall be available under exceptional circumstances.
- 5.2 The DTP shall refund any amount of levy paid to it with respect to a development if it is satisfied that the development is not to proceed.
- 5.3 If the amount of levy paid to provide transport infrastructure in an area has not been expended within the period required by the approved development plan;
 - (a) The DTP shall, within six months after the end of that period and with the written approval of the Minister, either;
 - (i) Pay that amount to the current owner(s) of land;

- (ii) Expend that amount for the provision of transport infrastructure in that area.

Clause 6 Walkability and Pedestrian Mobility

- 6.1 Under the direction the of DTP, local governments shall be required to;
 - (a) Perform municipal audits to identify and prioritise the remediation of accessibility-impaired walkways where they impede residents, including disabled residents;
 - (i) In accessing activity centres within a radius of 1.5 kilometres;
 - (ii) In accessing emergency, transport, education, public health and commercial services;
 - (iii) Except in cases where such walkways are subject to cultural heritage protections or are privately owned.
 - (b) Appoint municipal development advisory committees for the purposes of;
 - (i) Providing councillors and urban planners with strategic direction over the community's pedestrian and mobility interests;
 - (c) In partnership with the DTP, establish a road pedestrianisation program which;
 - (i) Closes nominated streets to vehicular traffic during certain times, except for emergency or local access;
 - (ii) Promotes pedestrian mobility and engagement with local events, merchants and vendors to stimulate participation and economic growth.
- 6.2 Victoria Police shall work with authorised planning partners to establish and maintain dedicated 'public safety shelters' that are;
 - (a) Well-lit;
 - (b) Monitored by Closed Circuit Television cameras on a 24/7 basis;

- (c) Equipped with emergency call stations;
 - (d) Strategically positioned at recurring intervals along municipal walking paths, or as nominated based on community advocacy, as a way to;
 - (i) Prioritise prevention-focused community infrastructure;
 - (ii) Improve public confidence in the security of night-time mobility.
- 6.3 Existing wayfinding signage, including maps, shall be updated to account for the addition of the 'public safety shelters' as per Clause 6.2.

Clause 7 Public Transport

- 7.1 The DTP shall ensure that all new greenfield and significant brownfield developments incorporate adequate public transport infrastructure as a core requirement of the planning and approval process within three years of commencement.
- 7.2 For the purposes of Clause 7.1, public transport infrastructure shall be:
- (a) Planned and integrated in coordination with roads, utilities and other essential infrastructure;
 - (b) Operational or under construction prior to, or concurrent with, the occupation of newly developed residential areas;
 - (c) Accessible to residents within reasonable walking distance;
 - (d) Suitable for the transport needs of projected population growth, as informed by demographic modelling.
- 7.3 The DTP, in consultation with local councils and communities, shall publish a Public Transport Needs Assessment (PTNA) for each new major development within six months of project approval, outlining;
- (a) The type and frequency of transport services required;
 - (b) Proposed stops, routes, and integration with existing transport infrastructure;

- (c) Timelines for implementation;
 - (d) Mechanism for public feedback prior to finalisation.
- 7.4 Developments that do not meet the minimum public transport planning standards outlined in the PTNA shall, either;
- (a) Be denied planning approval until transport planning standards are satisfied;
 - (b) Require a binding agreement with the DTP to deliver transport infrastructure within a specified timeframe.
- 7.5 The Minister for Public and Active Transport shall declare certain areas of high growth or transport disadvantage as Public Transport Priority Zones, where public transport infrastructure shall be delivered prior to major development approval;
- (a) These zones shall be reviewed and updated every three years;
 - (b) The designation of a Priority Zone shall be accompanied by a funding and land-use plan.

Clause 8 Car Park Regulations

- 8.1 The DTP shall remove minimum car parking requirements in areas located within a short walking distance from public transport within three years of commencement;
- (a) Sustainable transport infrastructure shall be delivered in partnership with local Councils to ensure infrastructure is developed in accordance with this Bill;
 - (b) Exemptions shall be available under exceptional circumstances;
 - (i) Failure to pay the levy in full or by the due date shall be subject to penalties as per Clause 9.3.
- 8.2 If car parking is provided for commercial developments and train stations, the DTP shall ensure designated and secure bicycle parking storage is delivered within a 150-metre radius;
- (a) If existing cycling infrastructure is available, access to secure bicycle parking storage shall be integrated;

- (b) If cycling infrastructure in an area has not been yet developed;
 - (i) Means of integrating bicycle parking storage into future cycling infrastructure shall be provisioned and outlined in planning documents;
 - (ii) Integration of cycling infrastructure and bicycle parking storage shall be implemented within one year of cycling infrastructure completion.

Clause 9 Enforcement Mechanisms

- 9.1 The DTP shall designate a Sustainable Transport Planning Authority Board (STPA Board) to oversee the sustainable and adequate development of neighbourhoods;
 - (a) The STPA Board shall be comprised of eight to ten professionals employed by the DTP;
 - (i) Employees must have experience in planning, infrastructure or other related industries;
 - (ii) The STPA Board must include a chairperson to oversee other board members;
 - (b) The STPA Board shall enforce this Bill and deem whether the planning regulations have been followed adequately according to the standard outlined in the Bill;
 - (i) The STPA Board shall consider feedback from community working groups to determine whether a council has adequately included community feedback in their planning;
 - (ii) The STPA Board shall use community working group feedback to make necessary adjustments to their acceptable standards for each council;
 - (iii) The STPA Board shall determine whether the council has adequately implemented policy changes outlined in the Bill, considering factors that may affect capability.

- 9.2 If a council breaches standard, as decided by the STPA Board, the STPA Board shall;
- (a) Issue a warning notice;
 - (i) Notice shall be both emailed to the council's main inbox and mailed to the main council building;
 - (ii) Notice shall outline the breaches clearly and concisely;
 - (iii) If a message of reply outlining change in policies is not sent to the DTP within 30 days, refer to Clause 9.2b;
 - (iv) If a message of reply is sent but the Council does not change policy within six months of receiving the notice, refer to Clause 9.2b;
 - (v) Councils are permitted to request clarification regarding the breach, which the DTP shall provide;
 - (vi) Councils are permitted to request guidance in policy changes or outline reasons to why changes are unable to be made, as per Clause 9.2b.
 - (b) The STPA Board shall collaborate and negotiate with relevant council officials to develop an action plan to support adherence with standards;
 - (i) Council representatives and DTP shall agree on goals and a timeline;
 - (ii) If the goals are not agreed upon, the case shall be referred to other officials within the DTP;
 - (iii) If the DTP deem it necessary, they shall enforce fines on the council of up to five per cent of annual council budget.
 - (c) If a council refuses to follow their plan or is uncooperative with the Board, a fine of up to ten per cent of the annual council budget shall be imposed;
 - (i) The exact monetary value of the fine shall be decided upon by officials within the DTP.

- 9.3 If a private entity breaches standards as decided by the STPA Board, the STPA Board shall;
- (a) Issue a warning notice to the council for a breach in the standards outlined;
 - (i) Notice shall be emailed to the council's main inbox and sent to the town hall/equivalent council building;
 - (ii) Notice shall outline the breaches clearly and concisely;
 - (iii) Rationale for non-compliance or evidence of adherence shall be provided to the DTP within 30 days;
 - (iv) The STPA Board shall mandate a minimum 10% financial penalty to be paid to the DTP within four months of warning notice;
 - (v) Commencement of project shall be prohibited unless levy and financial penalty is paid in full.