

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

WALK AND TALK PROGRAM

The Guided Neighbourhood Walks Program
of the City of Port Phillip

'More People Walking More'



Streets for Living commits to making walking, cycling and the use of public transport its three priorities in managing traffic and transport within the city. It aims to inspire and promote activity within the streets of Port Phillip in line with State Government programs Walksmart and Cyclesmart.

BACKGROUND

The Walk and Talk program is an annual calendar of guided walks run by the City of Port Phillip through the Sustainable Transport team. Each walk is led by experts in their subject and knowledge of the city. Walk Leaders cover environmental, historical and cultural themes relating to a neighbourhood of Port Phillip. Twelve walks are programmed with additional walks in response to demand. Walks are generally two hours in length conducted on weekends with occasional weekdays or evenings. Sites cover all of Port Phillip's seven neighbourhoods.

The program aims to get more of us on our feet and out into spaces and places not always traversed to increase awareness of our sustainable transport choices. This program has been successfully conducted in the City since 2006.

OUTCOMES 2009

The 2009 Program has built on the success of previous years. An effective booking system has been implemented to ensure timely response to enquiries from across the city. Feedback is actively sought through specially designed postcards to enable ongoing improvement where appropriate. Overall people tell us they love the walks program clearly evidenced by the necessity to put on extra walks in response to unmet demand.

The walk leaders and council staff also now meet four times per year to ensure successful coordination and to closely monitor the quality of the program. New or guest leaders are encouraged to participate to create greater skills and knowledge amongst residents.

Other benefits of the Walk Program in 2009 have included:

Support for traders by promoting walks at their request in regional shopping centres eg Ripponlea.

Highlighting of council initiatives by organising walks in tandem with council events such as exhibitions, local developments and council planning processes such as the council heritage studies in Elwood, East St Kilda and South Melbourne.

Fostering local initiatives. Many residents have contributed valuable heritage information, documents and images to council as a result of the walks program. This year some residents formed an ongoing Middle Park History Group as an outcome of a walk and have since collated invaluable research on the Albert Park area. Other residents have also commenced local projects on their own initiative,

Social inclusion of new residents. Given the high proportion of newly arrived residents in COPP in the past 5-10 years it is a common experience to have new residents attending these walks to learn more about their new suburb and to develop stronger relationships with their neighbours.

Sharing special moments on the Elwood Poets Walk, many of the group shared their favourite poems, reading out Wordsworth, Byron and more in beautiful evocative surroundings

Feedback. A number of councilors and staff have used the walks as an informal means of obtaining feedback from residents on local issues.

Ongoing documentation. Increasing ongoing knowledge of COPP neighbourhoods by documenting selected guided walks and placing them as downloads on the web to be universally available to the public.

FEEDBACK FROM RESIDENTS

Examples of feedback received:

1. *"Really interesting walk - great fun. I found out about a lot of things I didn't know and saw things I pass on a daily basis for the first time. Well worth it."*
2. *"Enjoyed the walk and talk. 2 hours is long enough but not too long, good sized group and we learnt a lot, very informative. Our guide was very nice and easy to understand."*
3. *"Wonderful walk - excellent guide. Lived in Sth Melb for 2 years. Found out things I wanted to know. Interesting and beautiful suburb. All for Free! It's a credit to the organisers."*
4. *Interesting to hear about local places - have energy for more information and longer walk. Morning tea was generous. Not sure it was my first walk - more info about current occupants would be interesting, too. Would like to go closer to the river and hear about the delivery of the steel etc"*

COSTS

Annual cost of the Walks program \$6,000. This program delivers high quality outcomes for modest budget outlay.

Includes:

- 17 Walks in total. 10 Walks incur a Leader Fee. (7 Walks incur no fee)
- Walks research and delivery co-ordinator.
- Printing (in house production of yearly brochure & feedback cards)

Walks Program Themes 2009

Walks	Neighbourhood	Date	Day & Time	Participants	Distance
History Mystery Quiz East St Kilda (<i>Social classes, schools and churches</i>)	East St Kilda	11 January	Sunday 10am-12pm	25	3 km
Art Deco in Port Melbourne (<i>Architecture of Pt Melb</i>)	Port Melbourne	15 February	Sunday 10am-12pm	25	2.5 km
Art Deco in Port Melbourne	Port Melbourne	1 March	Sunday 10am-12pm	25	2.5 km
A New Heritage Precinct for Middle Park (<i>COPP new heritage study sites</i>)	Middle Park	15 March	Sunday 10am-12pm	30	3 km
A New Heritage Precinct for Middle Park	Middle Park	29 March	Sunday 10am-12pm	11	3 km
A Sporting Chance (<i>History of Sport in St Kilda</i>)	St Kilda	26 April	Sunday 10am-12pm	13	3.5 km
Going Round the Bend (<i>History of Fishermen Bend</i>)	Fishermans Bend	17 May	Sunday 10am-12pm	27	3 km
Plaques, Plates and Plinths (Bus Tour – 2 tours on one day) (<i>History of COPP memorials</i>)	City of Port Phillip	21 June	Sunday 10am -12pm	17	N/A
Plaques, Plates and Plinths (Bus Tour – 2 tours on one day)	City of Port Phillip	21 June	Sunday 1pm – 3pm	17	N/A
Angels and Battlers (<i>History of welfare industry St Kilda</i>)	St Kilda	19 July	Sunday 10am – 12pm	20	2.5 km
In the Footsteps of Liardet (<i>History of Pt Melb founder</i>)	Port Melbourne	9 August	Sunday 10am – 12pm	28	2.5 km
In the Footsteps of Liardet	Port Melbourne	23 August	Sunday 10am – 12pm	23	2.5 km
Around the Hill (<i>Emerald Hill Precinct</i>)	South Melbourne	13 September	Sunday 10am – 12pm	27	2 km
More Poetry in the Poetry Streets (<i>Streets of Elwood</i>)	Elwood	11 October	Sunday 10am – 12pm	26	3.5 km
More Poetry in the Poetry Streets	Elwood	17 October	Saturday 2pm – 4pm	17	3.5 km
Fire in the Borough (<i>Fire brigade history in Pt Melb</i>)	Port Melbourne	8 November	Sunday 10am-12pm	16	3 km
Lurking in Lanes (<i>History of S Melb Lanes</i>)	South Melbourne	13 December	Sunday 10am –12pm	27	2 km
Total	Port Phillip		17 Walks	374 Walkers	42 km

POLICY FRAMEWORK – THE WALKS STRATEGY

WHY WE NEED TO WALK

'Why just drive down your street when you can live in it?'
Streets for Living

Why in Port Phillip?

Port Phillip was designed for walking. It is built on a walking scale with shopping Centres, parks and local facilities such as libraries and schools all within walking distance. There are great footpaths to walk on, seats on which to rest and plenty of coffee shops and cafes to provide sustenance. There is ample public space for people to stop, meet friends, sit and enjoy their local environment.

Great for our environment!

Walking makes our environment healthier happier and safer. More people walking will lead to safer and more socially integrated communities. Improved safety will encourage people to walk which will increase the number of people on the streets.

Great for our health!

The exercise people get while walking will have positive effects on the rate of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, blood pressure, cancer, mental health and the maintenance of mobility and personal independence. Furthermore more walking (and less car use) reduces emissions and problems such as pollution, greenhouse gas emission and climate change.

Great for our local economy!

Walking is also good for the economy. People shop at a walking pace and as they walk around the local streets they buy what they need within the local community. If people need to access shops and other destinations that are further away, good walking facilities and connections providing easier access to public transport make it more likely that a walking trip may be combined with a public transport trip.

Great for our neighbourhoods!

Cities and areas that foster legible and walk-friendly environments are likely to be successful and vibrant from a range of perspectives. Cities that are good for walking are also good for meeting, visiting, shopping and watching the world. Spaces that attract pedestrians are places where people want to be. More people in these areas will make them more vibrant, attractive and safer places.

It's Free!

Walking is free. We can do it when and how we choose. We can walk alone, or enjoy walking in the company of others. It gives us the opportunity to see things with new eyes and in much greater detail than usual

City of Port Phillip Walk Plan 2005-2010

http://intranet.portphillip.vic.gov.au/default/CommunityGovernance-Documents/Walk_Plan_2005_to_2010.pdf

HOW DOES THE CITY OF PORT PHILLIP SUPPORT WALKING?

'Walking makes our environment and community healthier, happier and safer. Getting more people walking will lead to safer and more socially integrated communities, the best way to improve safety is get people out onto the street and inspiring people to walk will increase the number of people on the street'.

City of Port Phillip Walking Plan 2005 – 2010 'More People Walking More'

What is the 'Walk and Talk' Neighbourhood Walking Program?

Walk and Talk is a free program of monthly walks that equally explores the seven neighborhoods of the City. It is guided by experienced leaders or guest leaders who have knowledge of those neighborhoods. Each year a new program of walks is created. Most walks are of one to three hours duration. The walks explore the built, social and natural heritage of neighborhoods.

Why a Neighbourhood Walking Program?

The program is administered by the Sustainable Transport Unit of the City to assist in implementing the **Walking Plan 2005 – 2010**. The plan encourages residents to walk rather than drive, to use public transport and to connect with the greater places and the great people in their neighbourhoods. It supports initiatives that encourage higher levels of walking. Participation in the Walk and Talk is a monitoring tool to ensure implementation of the Walking Plan.

What other initiatives support walking?

Walk and Talk is one of a range of diverse initiatives by the City of Port Phillip to maintain and improve the quality of life for residents of the city including promoting local tourism, supporting local shopping centres, heritage planning controls, park management, walking school bus and active ageing. In addition:

The Sustainable Transport Unit Framework

This aims to raise the profile and benefits of walking, cycling and public transport with information, facilities and active promotion. It promotes sustainable transport options within the municipality in the areas of walking, cycling, public transport and road user safety.

The Road Safety User Strategy

Promotes alternative use to cars and working with pedestrian groups to achieve this

The Annual Council Plan

Walk and Talk implements the values and aspirations of the four key directions on which council plans are based:

1. Engaging and Governing the City

The Walks program of activities is high quality, providing Port Phillip community with a service they value and want.

2. Taking Action on Climate Change

Getting people out & about on their feet with others helps build the community enthusiasm for sustainable modes of travel. Walking is the most environmentally sustainable form of transport.

3. Strengthening Our Diverse and Inclusive Community

Walking with others builds our sense of belonging. This program provides opportunity for people to spend time together. The free Walk and Talk encourages all members of community out on the street together to create socially integrated neighbourhoods.

4. Enhancing Liveability

Walking through our open spaces with others enriches our knowledge of place and our commitment to being part of the solution to the challenges of climate change. Walk and Talk increases access to our rich built, social and natural heritage.