

Draft Knox Mobility and Access Action Plan 2025-2035



Mayor’s message

Life inevitably presents us with a range of challenges, but despite these obstacles, every individual should have the opportunity to live life to their fullest potential. As custodians of our city people, and the natural environment that sustains us, it is our responsibility to foster the growth of our community in ways that promote access to opportunities, experiences, and choices for everyone.

The Mobility and Access Action Plan is an important step in ensuring that no one is left behind in our vision for a more inclusive municipality. While the plan focuses primarily on improving path networks and accessible parking, its impact reaches far beyond these physical changes. By addressing the fundamental transport needs of our community, we aim to create an environment where all individuals, regardless of ability, culture, language, sexuality, gender identity, age, socio-economic status, or life experiences, can fully participate in and enjoy the services, spaces, and experiences our city offers.

The Mobility and Access Action Plan reflects our commitment to building a community that values diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity. It is a recognition that true accessibility is not just about providing physical infrastructure, but about fostering a culture where every person, no matter their background or circumstance, can move freely and engage fully with the world around them. The plan is a small but crucial part of our broader vision to create a community where everyone can thrive, where mobility and access are not privileges, but basic rights. By making these improvements, we hope to empower our residents to live with greater independence, confidence, and connection to one another. Together, we are building a future where all people, regardless of their differences, are valued, included, and supported.

Contents

Mayor’s message	2
Glossary	3
About the plan	4
Engaging our community	5
Disability in Knox	6
Our community is saying	7
What we discovered	8
What we are working towards	8
Action Today, Mobility Tomorrow	9
Community Stories	10
Accessible car parking	11
Pathways	12
Connectivity	13
Supporting infrastructure	14
Working towards a better future	15
Have your say	16



Glossary

Accessible parking	A car parking space that is accessible for people with a disability who are eligible for and display a valid parking permit in their vehicle.
Barrier	Limits people's ability to use and enjoy a public place or space. It can be an obstruction such as tables or chairs along a pathway or missing items such as handrails along stairs.
Bullnose	A vertical rise at the bottom of a pram ramp, which creates a tripping hazard and increases the challenges for people with mobility aids when using pram ramps.
Crossfall	The slope of a path towards the edge.
Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)	A piece of legislation aimed at preventing discrimination against individuals with disabilities, ensuring that they have the same rights and opportunities as those without disabilities.
Mobility device	A device used by people with disability such as manual and electric wheelchairs, walking frames, walking sticks, scooters, canes and crutches to help them move within spaces and places.
Shared zone in an accessible car parking space	A striped space next to the accessible car parking bay that gives extra room for permit holders to enter and exit their vehicles and access pathways
Smart technology	Technology including sensors and high-definition cameras that automatically adjust crossing times by detecting how many people are either waiting at a crossing or currently crossing the road.
Tactile ground service indicator (TGSi)	Raised surface domes or cones on the ground designed to warn pedestrians who are blind or who have a vision impairment with information about features such as stairs, ramps or hazards.
Wayfinding signage	Signs with words or images that help people find their way around a place, such as showing directions to key destinations.



Accessibility: the ability for everyone to participate in day-to-day activities and to use buildings and infrastructure.



Mobility: the ability to move in a physical space with ease and comfort.

When something provides accessibility and mobility, it means it is designed or arranged in a way that allows you to use it easily, regardless of any physical limitations or impairments.

About the plan

The Knox Mobility and Access Plan (KMAAP) is a 10-year plan that focuses on improving people's ability to travel around Knox. While creating public spaces that accommodate all types of disabilities presents challenges, Council endeavours to ensure spaces and places used by people with disability are accessible, safe, convenient and comfortable.

This action plan mainly focuses on improving our paths and accessible car parking facilities managed by Council. However, Council will enhance overall accessibility and mobility in the municipality through providing service and regulation, fostering partnerships with private owners, advocating to State Government and Federal Government, and raising community awareness.

We recognise that "accessibility" means different things to each individual, and achieving full accessibility across Knox will be a long-term journey. Due to Council's financial constraints, it will not be achievable within the next 10 years. However, this plan represents an important step forward. It reflects what we've heard from the community and ensures that improvement works will be guided by community needs and delivered against the new priority criteria that will be developed through this action plan.



What guides this plan?

✓ Disability Discrimination Act 1992 & Victorian Disability Act 2006

Both protect the rights of people with disability from discrimination. These laws ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to services, public spaces, and transportation, promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities for all.

✓ Intersectionality

We understand that every individual has multiple, intersecting identities that shape their unique experiences and mobility needs.

✓ Universal design

We believe that transport infrastructure should be accessible to as many people as possible, regardless of age, ability, gender identity, culture, language, or any other social characteristics.

✓ Co-design

We work towards a "nothing about us without us" approach that includes people living with disability in decisions relating to service design and delivery.

People with disability include, but are not restricted to, those who have long-term physical, mental, cognitive, intellectual or sensory impairments.

Due to limited feedback from the community with mental disabilities, the KMAAP focuses on the specific challenges experienced by individuals using mobility devices, such as electric and manual wheelchairs, long canes, walking sticks, walking frames, and prams, as well as those with body-balancing issues and those with hearing or vision impairments.

Engaging our community

An intensive consultation process was undertaken to understand the issues and challenges people with mobility challenges face when travelling in Knox.

We appreciate the effort of volunteers and community members who contributed to the consultation.

Community engagement

We asked you a series of questions about travel patterns, key destinations, what makes your journey easier or more pleasant, and where you think attractive and easy to travel. Different channels (online versus in person; written versus verbal) were used to cater for the needs of people with different disabilities:

- online community survey
- face-to-face workshop
- online workshop.
- consultation with Knox Disability Advisory Committee (KDAC)



Site walk-throughs

We walked around six activity centres with community members with different disabilities to assess Council's assets through their eyes.

- Ferntree Gully Activity Centre
- Knoxfield Shopping Centre
- Rowville Community Centre
- Scoresby Village Shopping Centre
- The Basin Triangle
- Wantirna Activity Centre



Access audits

We engaged an Access Auditor to undertake onsite inspections of Council-owned assets in the following 11 precinct sites, in accordance with the requirements of the National Construction Code and relevant Australian Standards.

- Bayswater Activity Centre
- Boronia Activity Centre
- Ferntree Gully Activity Centre
- Knoxfield Shopping Centre
- Knox Central Activity Centre
- Mountain Gate Shopping Centre
- Rowville Community Centre
- Scoresby Village Shopping Centre
- The Basin Triangle
- Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centre
- Wantirna Activity Centre



Disability in Knox

*Knox community statistics are sourced from the 2018 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, Census 2016 and Census 2021.



17.2%

of people in Knox live with a disability, which includes all reported disability.



9.8%

of people in Knox have a physical disability that likely impacts mobility across all levels of restriction (mild to profound)



18%

of people in Knox suffer from the most prevalent long-term health condition – arthritis.



13.3%

of people in Knox provide unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long-term illness or old age.



12.4%

of people with disability use mobility aids or equipment.



40%

increase in people with core daily activity limitation is forecasted from 2018 to 2031.

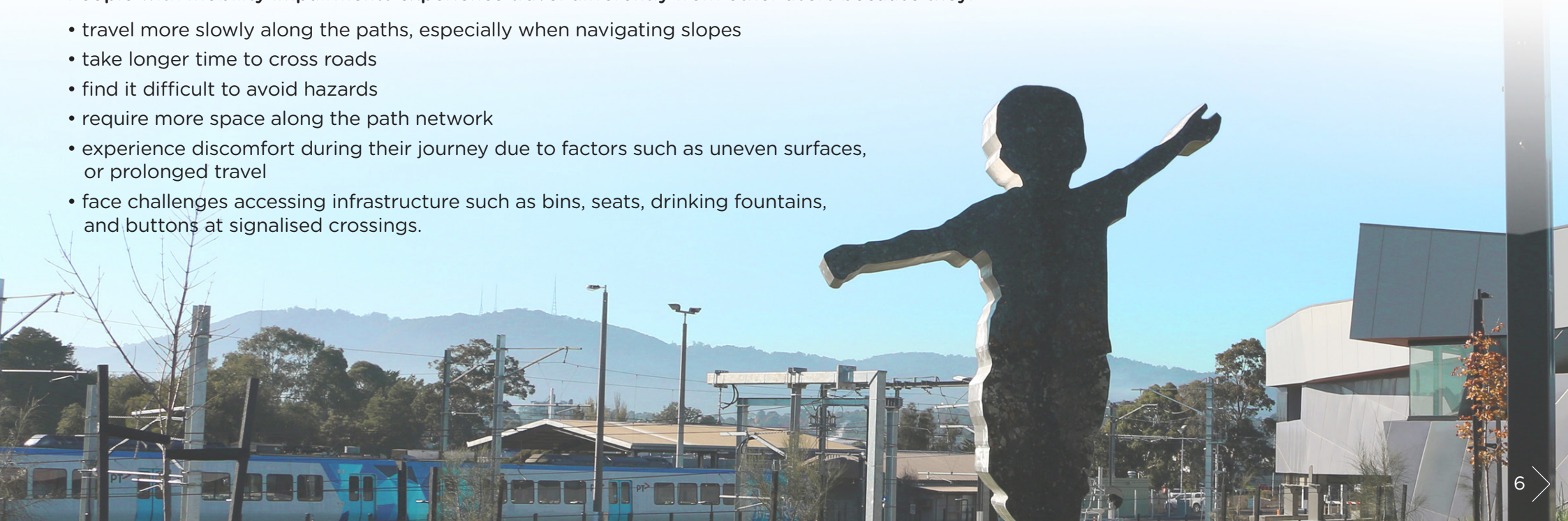


38%

of people with disability find it difficult using some or all forms of public transport. One of the main reasons for this is not being able to reach stops or stations.

People with mobility impairments experience travel differently from other users because they:

- travel more slowly along the paths, especially when navigating slopes
- take longer time to cross roads
- find it difficult to avoid hazards
- require more space along the path network
- experience discomfort during their journey due to factors such as uneven surfaces, or prolonged travel
- face challenges accessing infrastructure such as bins, seats, drinking fountains, and buttons at signalised crossings.



Our community is saying

'The pram ramp is too steep and narrow, so I have to be dropped off instead of coming alone.'

'The distance between the bus stop and my house is too far, even though it is considered 'reasonable' for people without disabilities.'

'If I was by myself, I would rush across the pedestrian crossing which means I'm likely to fall. I would probably avoid the crossing.'

'If there aren't enough accessible car spaces, I have to park in the street which is dangerous, go somewhere else or go home.'

'It is frustrating when finding out the path ends nowhere.'

'I like the painted yellow markings; I can see them from a mile off.'

'I have found the footpaths very uneven, particularly where the bitumen has been used to try to level the concrete slabs. Tree seeds and small broken branches are continual hazards.'



What we discovered

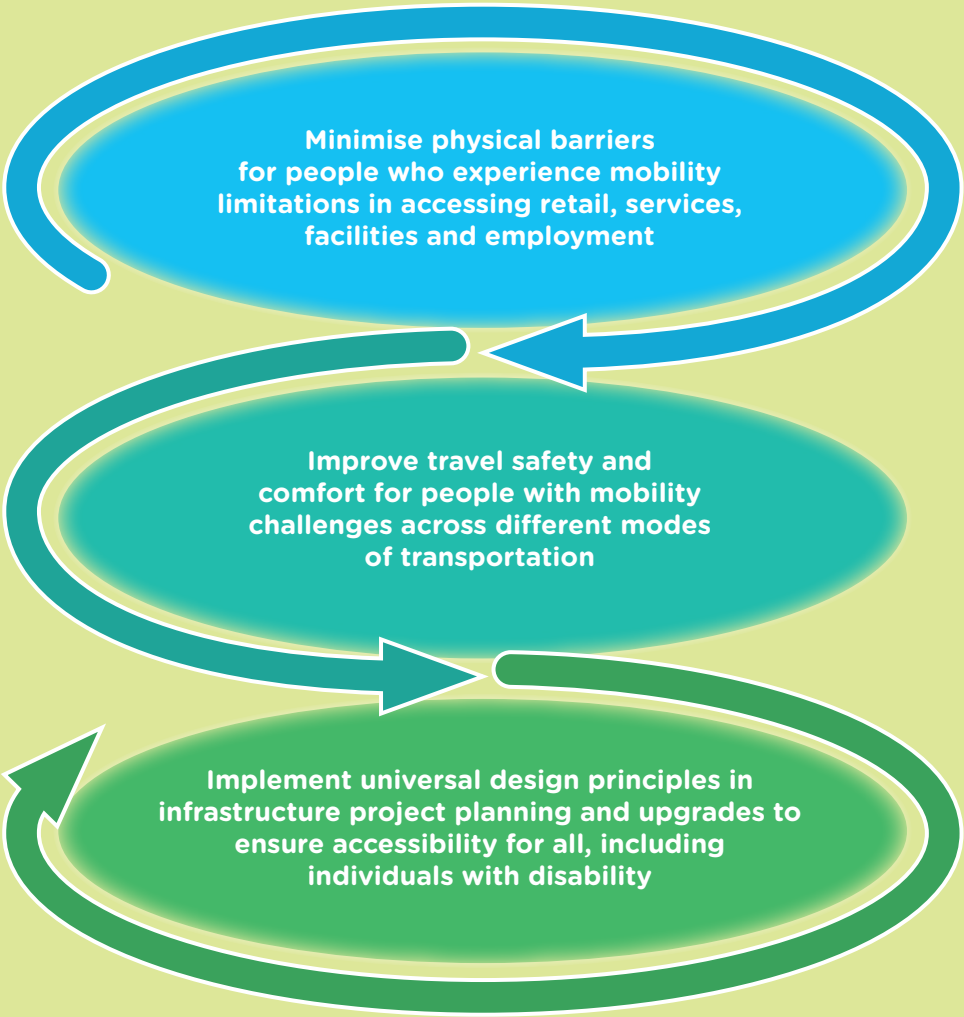
Every finding matters, whether gathered from community input, site walk-throughs, or access audits, in identifying the challenges faced by people with mobility issues. These insights help uncover issues and highlight barriers hindering independent and safe travel, serving as the first step in developing effective actions.

Element	Key Issues
Accessible car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">insufficientused without a valid permitpoorly locatedshared zones absent, blocked or on the wrong sideno pram rampunclear/incorrect line markingdifficult to find
Stairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">absence of compliant handrailsno Tactile ground service indicator warningsedges of steps not easily visible
Pathways and walkways	<ul style="list-style-type: none">not provided/terminatespathway edges not level with nature striptoo steepobstacles present such as encroaching vegetation, overhanging branches, rubbish bins, shop furnitureuneven and/or brokenunsafe crossings
Furniture and fixtures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">no backs or armrests on benchesno space for mobility devices to parkno shade
Wayfinding signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">incorrectlack of informative signage to assist in decision-making and navigation
Tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">broken or lifteddirectional or warning TGSIs not provideddifficult to seenot aligned with the path of travel
Kerb ramp	<ul style="list-style-type: none">bullnosenot aligned with direction of traveltoo steepa landing is not provided

What we are working towards

We are committed to implementing a series of actions to effectively address the barriers identified above.

Through these actions, we aim to:



Action Today, Mobility Tomorrow 2025 - 2035





Community story 1:

Lawrence, a wheelchair user, enjoys the freedom of driving his car everywhere, finding it much faster and more convenient than relying on public transport. He often visits Stud Park Shopping Centre and Wellington Village, but sometimes struggles to find an accessible parking spot. He's hoping for more accessible parking spaces and better enforcement of illegal parking.



Community story 2:

Shelley loves being independent and staying connected with her community through social activities. She takes great joy in being active and involved in many community activities. However, she has to move slowly and cautiously as she has cerebral palsy which impacts her balance, fatigue levels and hearing. She's advocating for safer crossing points to make walking easier and give her the chance to drive less.



Community story 3:

For over 40 years, Geoff and Leonie have called Ferntree Gully home. Leonie, who uses a mobile scooter, and Geoff, who is partially vision-impaired, love walking their grandchild to his kindergarten, local parks, and playgrounds. They're asking for better footpath maintenance to keep the paths wide, smooth, and safe for everyone.



Community story 4:

Shirani, who uses a walking stick to navigate daily activities and has experienced muscle weakness from childhood arthritis, finds joy and peace in walking through local parks. She looks forward to seeing more accessible seats along the paths in the future, so she and others like her can take short rests and continue enjoying the outdoors with comfort. In addition, she has been advocating for an accessible parking spot at The Basin Triangle!

Accessible car parking

People who experience mobility issues mainly travel as a passenger or driver in a private car or in a taxi. Therefore adequate, well-designed and well-located accessible car parking enable people with mobility impairments to use public places and spaces comfortably and safely.

Our goal for accessible car parking is that people with mobility challenges can park comfortably and conveniently.

We aim to:

- ✓ Provide more accessible parking spaces in Council-owned car parks
- ✓ Ensure accessible car spaces in Council-owned car parks are well designed, located and connected to the footpath and public amenities
- ✓ Encouraging developers and the private sector to increase the number of accessible parking spaces at key activity precincts
- ✓ Educate the public to keep accessible parking spaces clear and available for those who need them



We will achieve it by:

1.1

Installing at least one accessible parking space for every 50 regular parking spaces in Council-owned car parks



1.2

Considering increasing enforcement to prevent the illegal use of accessible parking spaces by a person without a valid permit



1.3

Retrofitting existing non-DDA-compliant parking spaces to address current community concerns through capital work programs



1.4

Seeking Knox Disability Advisory Committee's feedback on the current supply of accessible parking as part of Knox Parking Management Plan consultations



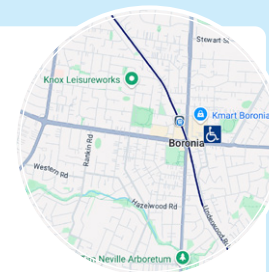
1.5

Advocating to developers and the private sector to maximise the provision of accessible car parking spaces



1.6

Creating accessible parking maps for Council-owned car parks



Pathways

Pathways are fundamental to enabling safe, independent, and inclusive mobility for people with mobility challenges. Properly designed footpaths contribute to greater social participation, improved quality of life, and well-being of individuals.

Our goal for pathways is that they are well-maintained, wide and gently sloping with compacted surfaces and gentle edges.

We aim to:

- ✓ Continue to increase the provision of safe and accessible footpaths and shared paths across the municipality
- ✓ Continue to address footpath obstructions by monitoring and enforcing local laws and educating retailers and residents
- ✓ Maintain the surfaces and edges of paths to reduce tripping and slipping hazards



We will achieve it by:



Connectivity

Effective footpath connectivity enhances walkability and makes it easier for people to safely and easily reach their destinations.

Our goal for connectivity is pathways are connected and crossings are safe, ensuring easy access to community destinations and public spaces.

We aim to:

- ✓ Create a connected and safe pathway network
- ✓ Improve accessibility to activity centres, buildings, facilities and public transport
- ✓ Update wayfinding signs to help people using mobility aids easily navigate and access DDA-compliant infrastructure



We will achieve it by:

- 3.1** Prioritising the construction of missing links of footpaths with high footpath hierarchy



- 3.2** Continuing to address unsafe crossings across the municipality and to prioritise pedestrian crossings in key activity centres



- 3.3** Improving wayfinding signage to support accessible needs



- 3.4** Advocating to State Government to provide DDA-compliant pathways that connect to bus stops



- 3.5** Seeking external funding to fast-track construction of accessible pathways and improvement of pedestrian crossings



Supporting infrastructure

Supporting infrastructure such as seating, toilets, handrails, TGSi tactile markers and drinking fountains maximises the comfort and convenience of public places and spaces.

Our goal for supporting infrastructure is to ensure that it is well-designed and easy to use for the community, regardless of individual mobility needs.

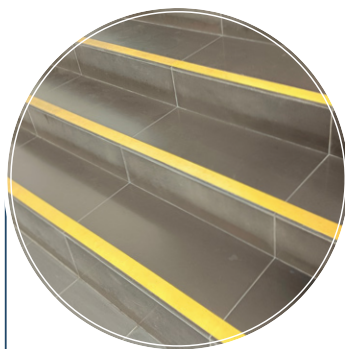
We aim to:

- ✓ Install benches, resting areas and shade structures in public spaces, providing opportunities for people with mobility impairments to rest during their travels
- ✓ Advocate to State Government on public transport issues impacting people with disability
- ✓ Enhance physical access for the whole experience or journey

We will achieve it by:



4.1 Increasing pathway project budget to include DDA-compliant seats with extra space for mobility aids along pathways



4.2 Using materials with luminance contrast in the new and upgrade works to improve people's awareness of potential hazards and obstructions along footpaths, particularly in areas with higher footpath hierarchy



4.3 Considering installing landings along steep paths and DDA-compliant handrails along stairs to improve accessibility through renewal projects



4.4 Installing and maintaining clearly visible TGSIs for people with visual impairment in key activity centres



4.5 Advocating to State Government for DDA-compliant bus stops/shelters in Knox



4.6 Increasing tree canopy along paths and reserves to enhance the natural experience and promote a more inviting, green environment

Working towards a better future

Council is committed to creating an inclusive infrastructure environment where people of all abilities can access and enjoy the municipality’s public places and spaces, ensuring safety and comfort for everyone well into the future.

We aim to:

- ✓ Incorporate universal and accessible design principles throughout the planning and designing phases into Council’s updated standard drawing, in Council’s public transport and safety advocacy.
- ✓ Create mobility fund category under Capital Works Programs to constantly improve transport infrastructure accessibility

We will achieve it by:

5.1

Developing a best-practice toolkit that provides guidance to Council officers and private developers in embedding the principles framing the KMAAP in all its planning and decision-making processes



5.2

Generating a priority list and criteria for mobility projects focused on maintaining, upgrading and expanding infrastructure to promote more accessible and interconnected transport infrastructure network



5.3

Advocating State Government to investigate and implement smart technologies such as dynamic pedestrian crossings to improve safety at signalised crossings.



5.4

Encouraging EV Charging Stations to be designed and located with accessible pathways to allow mobility aid users access to the EV charging stations.



Have your say

Did we get it right?

The draft action plan will be placed on the “Have Your Say” page of our website for public consultation; tell us what you think.

Have your say:
haveyoursay.knox.vic.gov.au

Alternatively, contact the Traffic and Transport team:

Phone: 9298 8000

Email: knoxcc@knox.vic.gov.au

Social media: facebook.com/knoxcouncil
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