

## 1.11 IMPROVED CYCLE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS

Council has been actively engaged in developing facilities for cyclists since the first bike plan in the 1980s. Cycling has grown significantly throughout Melbourne due to its relatively flat topography, wide streets and temperate climate. The most popular form of cycling has to date been recreational, although cycling for commuting has been gaining interest. This has been stimulated by advocacy from user groups, an increasing number of events that publicise and introduce people to cycling, support from a range of local, state and federal agencies, and higher density developments where a combination of nearby destinations and provision of cycling infrastructure makes cycling a mode of choice.

Results of a survey under a 2004 study indicated that of the 570,000 people visiting the city each weekday and the 320,000 per weekend day, 2 per cent travel by bicycle in both cases – 11,000 and 6,500 respectively. While no definite travel patterns could be identified on the city streets, it was apparent that cyclists are present on every street despite safety issues and high traffic volumes to contend with. There was a predominance of north-south travel, particularly on Swanston, Elizabeth and Queen Streets, and less east-west movement.

The competing demands for CBD road space has impeded the development of a central area bicycle network providing the required level of safety and comfort for bicycles. While streets within the city centre still have no dedicated bicycle space, Swanston Street is obviously the focus for north-south movements, and refuges have been established along Collins Street. Other more cycle-friendly works have been installed along Bourke and Elizabeth Streets, and LaTrobe and William Streets in peak clearways. On-road cycle lanes have been established on many city approach routes.

Incremental network development within the city centre and wider municipality has been supported by high quality off-road dedicated cycle paths along river, bay and rail corridors.

Public transport has traditionally been, and will continue to be, a preferred mode of transport for the city community. Data gathered in recent studies shows that travelling by public transport for work dominates the weekday travel to the city centre, although large numbers of people also travel by public transport for shopping and social activities.

Of the 570,000 people visiting the city each weekday, 58 per cent of all travel is undertaken by public transport. In 1994, private cars accounted for 49 per cent of the work trips to and from the City of Melbourne. By 2001 this had reduced to 42 per cent of work trips, with commensurate increases in train, tram and bus travel shares over this period. Of the 45 per cent of all weekday trips, train travel comprised 31 per cent, tram 12 per cent and bus 2 per cent.

As the majority of public transport trips to the city are taken by train, railway stations are major points of disembarkation and pedestrian activity and more adequate provision on the adjacent streets is still required to cope with the pedestrian pressure, particularly during peak times. Tram travel has been assisted by the establishment of tram ‘superstops’ at key destinations and interchange points, and bus travel will be improved by development of a major bus terminus and interchange at Spencer Street Station.

Council is also supporting and facilitating the rollout of the State Government’s TravelSMART program that measures and influences travel behaviour.



*Above and page opposite: Measures such as linemarking for cyclist movement and superstops for tram passengers have been implemented, however there are still many opportunities to further support sustainable transport.*