

Mornington Peninsula Shire



Footpath Construction Strategy

Revision No 1

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Footpaths play a vital role within communities. They provide a means of access within urban areas to facilities and services and promote greater health and wellbeing. Having identified the need for a Strategy to guide the design, location and prioritization of footpath projects, Council adopted the original strategy on 7th November 2007. This document is the first revision of this Strategy.

The *Footpath Construction Strategy* applies to all urban areas of the municipality (including Low Density Residential zones) as defined by the Urban Growth Boundary and focuses on the provision of permanent paths for pedestrian use. This Strategy needs to be considered as a complementary strategy to Peninsula RideSafe – MP Bicycle Strategy and to a lesser extent the *Shared Trails Strategy*. Shared trails are found throughout the municipality and are off road trails, tracks or paths that cater for a variety of users not just pedestrians.

Since the original Strategy was adopted Council has adopted Peninsula RideSafe (the Bicycle Strategy) which has identified the overlap with the Footpath Construction Strategy when it comes to Shared Paths. These Shared Paths could be funded through either Strategy or both as appropriate. This revised Strategy recognizes these developments but no specific changes of policy have been required.

Generally only previously identified or requested footpath projects were included in the *Footpath Construction Strategy*, as it was considered impractical to evaluate every possible footpath project. After four years of operation the Strategy now represents a comprehensive list of footpath projects although new projects are continually being added especially where circumstances change. All Shared Paths identified in the Bicycle Strategy have now been included in the Footpath Construction Strategy.

The need for footpaths is very dependent upon the traffic and physical conditions on any street, road or other location and the nature of the pedestrian demand at that location. These conditions and the pedestrian demand can vary over time and consequently, a flexible methodology for assessing footpath requests was considered necessary in preference to adopting an ideal network to be implemented over time. The *Footpath Construction Strategy* includes a strategic tool for assessing and prioritising requests for footpaths (the Evaluation Matrix) which takes into account all these issues. The needs of vulnerable road users such as children, elderly or disabled are also given priority.

The adoption of this *Strategy* and the Evaluation Matrix will enable Council officers to evaluate and prioritise requests for the construction of footpaths (including Shared Paths). The most highly ranked footpath requests can then be considered for inclusion in the Capital Works Program. In some cases a mandatory or voluntary landowner contribution will apply

and Special Charge Schemes may be required. Mandatory landowner contributions, when they apply, vary from 25% to 66% of the cost. Shared funding arrangements with the Bicycle Strategy will also be considered.

The *Strategy* allows requests for footpaths to be considered at any time and prompt advice to be provided to those requesting paths. The priority of any path can also be easily re-evaluated if circumstances change. The listing of footpaths for construction is consequently tentative and will be reviewed annually and updated on an on-going basis as more projects are assessed for inclusion. This approach has not led to a significant increase in the number of high or very high priority projects but many additional medium and low priority projects have been identified.

Between 2007 and 2011 the number of projects qualifying for a Council contribution and waiting to be funded, has increased from 107 to 175 with 35 projects completed in that period. The potential liability for Council over the same period has increased from \$8 to \$15 million.

Design and management issues have also been considered including width requirements (minimum of 1.5m recommended), the need for ramps, gradients and the preferred surface treatment which is exposed aggregate.

INTRODUCTION

Footpaths play a vital role within communities. They provide a means of access within urban areas to schools, commercial centres, and other facilities and services. They also provide a means to greater health and wellbeing through exercise and reduced car usage. Currently, the Shire's footpath network incorporates 475km of constructed footpath valued at approximately \$30M.

The *Footpath Construction Strategy* has been developed by the Infrastructure Strategy Team to enable Council officers to evaluate and prioritise requests for the construction of footpaths across the Mornington Peninsula Shire within the Urban Growth Boundary. Council receives regular requests for footpaths from the community, Councillors and Council officers and this *Strategy* includes a tool (the Evaluation Matrix) which enables Council officers to rank each request. The most highly ranked footpath requests can then be considered for inclusion in the Capital Works Program.

Need for a Review

The need for new footpaths across the Shire has been known for many years and culminated in Council adopting the original Footpath Construction Strategy on 7th November 2007. This Strategy was well received and has now operated for four years. During that time 35 footpath projects have been successfully completed. However, the number of projects waiting for funding has grown from 107 in 2007 to 175 in 2011. These projects range from low priority to very high priority and all require a Council funding contribution (see below).

While the Strategy has worked well in prioritizing and evaluating projects, the sheer size of the task has resulted in continuing and increasing enquiries from the public for new footpaths. In response to the high level of public interest, a review of the Strategy and future funding implications was undertaken.

Scope of Strategy

The *Footpath Construction Strategy* applies to all urban areas of the municipality (including Low Density Residential zones) as defined by the Urban Growth Boundary and focuses on the provision of permanent paths for pedestrian use. Rural and green wedge areas are generally excluded and requests for paths in these areas should be considered under the *Shared Trail Strategy*. In unusual circumstances footpaths could be considered outside areas zoned for urban development and would (as far as practicable) be subject to evaluation using the Evaluation Matrix.

The original Strategy identified that it was impractical to evaluate every possible footpath project. Consequently, a flexible and responsive approach was developed with all known requests added initially to the Strategy including those identified in a draft strategy prepared in

2003. Inspections were also undertaken of all significant developed areas of the municipality to help develop the initial listings. Over time other projects have been added as identified or requested including Shared Paths identified in the new Bicycle Strategy. All projects included in the Evaluation Matrix have been inspected with higher priority projects being inspected a number of times.

Projects from anywhere within the Shire can be added at any time for assessment under the established criteria. Therefore the recommended listing of footpaths for construction is tentative and will be reviewed annually and updated on an on-going basis as more projects are assessed for inclusion. However, from a practical point of view it has proven necessary to have an approved list of projects for construction in the first or current year with those projects requiring schemes needing to be identified in year two to allow time to complete the schemes prior to listing for construction.

POLICY CONTEXT

A number of key policies, strategies and other relevant guidelines influence the construction requirements for new footpaths and have been considered in preparing this strategy.

Access All

AS 1428.1, 2009, Design for Access and Mobility Part 1: General Requirements for Access-New Building Work provides guidelines for the provision of appropriate accessibility for disabled persons within buildings. While this Standard doesn't provide specific guidelines for footpaths it does make recommendations regarding walkways; gradients, curbs, ramps, circulation spaces and handrails. These recommendations are incorporated in *The Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice: Part 13 – Pedestrians*. These guidelines have been considered under the section Design and Management Issues below.

Community Plan

This Strategy has been developed and produced in accordance with the Mornington Peninsula Shire's *Community Plan*. The *Community Plan* provides the framework for future directions for Council activities. Specifically, the *Community Plan (2009-2013)* states that:

One of the most important roles of Council is to promote the health and wellbeing of Communities across the Peninsula. The role of Council extends ... to providing infrastructure ... that maximise participation and encourage inclusive and resilient communities.

Access to transport is a critical component for achieving a socially inclusive and cohesive community ... Ensuring that local roads, bicycle paths and pedestrian paths are maintained to a high standard is an important Shire function.

... A key focus for the Shire into the future is to encourage and enable a reduction in car dependency and green house gas emissions across the Peninsula.

Contributory Schemes Policy for Infrastructure Works

Council on 31 January 2011 adopted a policy to guide the use of Contributory Schemes (also known as Special Charge Schemes) for the provision of infrastructure including footpaths and Shared Paths. The Policy defers to this Strategy for further details regarding the use of schemes including the level of contribution that may be provided by Council.

Road Classifications (Road Hierarchy)

In December 2004 Council adopted Road Classifications applying to all streets and roads in the municipality, to be used to guide the management and development of these roads. The classifications that apply (and reflect the function of each street or road) are listed below and group into three main groupings for the purpose of this Strategy.

1. **Arterials** - Local (Council), Declared (VicRoads) or Freeways (VicRoads).
2. **Collector Road**
3. **Other** – Principal Local, Access Roads or Limited Access (laneways).

The classification of Principal Local was introduced as part of the Contributory Schemes Strategy for Road Construction in Urban Areas adopted on 31 January 2011. That change does not impact on this Strategy.

Shared Trails Strategy

A shared trail is an off road trail, track or path that caters for a variety of uses. The focus is not on the provision of footpaths in residential areas but rather significant trails throughout the municipality that provide access for a range of activities such as walking, bike riding and equestrian usage or provide critical linkages in rural townships. In more urbanised areas, shared trails may be utilised mainly by pedestrians, while in rural areas, use of shared trails may be more balanced between walkers, bikes and equestrian users.

The *Shared Trails Strategy* provides a clear vision direction regarding the purpose, provision, development priorities, management and use of the shared trail network within the Mornington Peninsula Shire. It is currently under review.

Peninsula RideSafe – MP Bicycle Strategy

Since the original Footpath Construction Strategy (FCS) was adopted, Council has adopted a new Bicycle Strategy. One of the aims of that Strategy is to *provide a range of bicycle facilities on and off road that link Mornington Peninsula communities to public transport, activity centres, recreation areas and provide access to other regions.*

The development of Shared Paths as part of the FCS has been welcomed by cyclists and recognised in the Bicycle Strategy. Further, that Strategy proposed using the Evaluation Matrix in the FCS to determine construction priorities for Shared Paths under that Strategy. This will provide a consistent approach for all path construction with an underlying safety focus.

Shared Paths could be funded through either Strategy, as appropriate, or on a shared cost basis through the FCS. Any Bicycle Strategy funding provided to the FCS would be treated as a contribution and raise a projects priority for construction.

This revised Strategy recognizes the above but no changes of policy have been required.

METHODOLOGY

The need for footpaths is very dependent upon the traffic and physical conditions on any street, road or other location and the nature of the pedestrian demand at that location. These conditions and the pedestrian demand can vary over time and consequently, a flexible methodology for assessing footpath requests was considered necessary in preference to adopting an ideal network to be implemented over time. Even if an ideal network could be identified, the problem of needing to priorities works would still exist. Also, the need for footpaths is not always about networks but rather local links to services and facilities.

This approach will allow requests for footpaths to be considered at any time and prompt advice to be provided to those requesting paths. A new request does not need to be added to the end of the queue but can be given its appropriate priority immediately. Further, as conditions change (e.g. a new development in a street or increased traffic volumes) the priority of any path can easily be re-evaluated. This approach also avoids the need to assess every possible footpath before adopting a strategy.

The following general principles have been followed in developing this *Strategy* and the Evaluation Matrix (described below).

- Most roads should desirably have some type of walking facility (e.g. shoulder or grassed verge) out of the normal vehicle path.
- On low volume and low speed roads it may be acceptable for pedestrians to share the road space with vehicles.
- The need for segregation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic increases with increasing vehicular volumes and speeds.
- The need for footpaths should be related to the safety issues at a particular site, the function of the path in the overall path network and the anticipated usage.
- The needs of vulnerable road users such as children, elderly or disabled should be given priority.

- Landowner contributions should decrease as the broader community benefit increases and should decrease as the importance of a street or road increases (i.e. be significantly less or zero on arterial roads).

Strategic Objectives

A number of strategic objectives have also been established to guide the provision of footpaths.

- 1. To ensure that the community's needs for pedestrian access and mobility are met in a sustainable manner.**

Develop a rolling program of footpath construction works.

Review the rolling program annually to include new requests.

- 2. To provide safe passage for pedestrians especially for vulnerable members of the community such as school children, the aged and disabled.**

Give appropriate weighting to the location of paths that service educational institutions, aged care facilities, commercial centres and local shopping centres.

- 3. To use limited funds to maximise the community benefit of new footpath constructions.**

Develop a scoring and ranking methodology to assess requests for new footpaths

- 4. To ensure that footpath requests from members of the community are evaluated in a consistent and efficient manner.**

Develop a scoring methodology that can be quickly completed and is repeatable.

- 5. To provide appropriate access for all consistent with the Disability and Discrimination Act 1992.**

Ensure appropriate standards are used when constructing new paths.

Give appropriate weighting to paths that service the needs of the elderly or disabled.

- 6. To minimise the removal of significant vegetation in the location and construction of new footpaths**

Assess site in accordance with Native Vegetation Management Guidelines. Seek advice from Natural Systems before construction to ensure that significant floral species are identified and conservation measures taken where appropriate.

- 7. Provide clarity for Mornington Peninsula Shire staff, service providers and the community with regard to the provision of new urban footpaths.**

Develop a *Footpath Construction Strategy* and provide funding on an on-going basis.

EVALUATION MATRIX

In 2007 there were around 170 requests from the community, Councillors and council officers for new footpaths across the Shire with an estimated total cost to construct of around \$18

million. A consistent and efficient method of prioritising these requests was required. Correct identification of higher priority footpaths will also ensure that Council funds are spent to achieve the greatest community benefit.

An Evaluation Matrix has been developed for this purpose which scores each request and then ranks it against all other requests. The Evaluation Matrix contains a list of criteria (refer to Table below) in the form of questions designed to prompt the officer when considering each request. The criteria are grouped into social, environmental, and economic issues in accordance with the sustainability principles set out in the Community Plan. The Evaluation Matrix allows for contributions to any project (from developers, residents, business operators etc) to be taken into account in setting priorities.

The range of scores available for each criterion varies to reflect the weighting given to each particular criterion. Minor criteria have a maximum score of 3, significant criteria 5 and major criteria 10. The higher range of potential scoring for vehicular traffic counts for example implies a greater benefit to the community if a footpath is built along a very busy road. All positive scores imply a community benefit while negative scores relate to situations in which the criteria would mitigate against building the footpath; (i.e. vegetation removal, availability of alternative access, construction cost or low demand).

The following table summarises the criteria used in the Evaluation Matrix which also costs and sorts the requests.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	Justification	Ranking System (Score)	
Environmental Impact			
<u>Vegetation Removal</u>	Will vegetation removal be required? The extent and type of vegetation removal required will result in a greater or lesser number of points being deducted.	Significant species	-5
		Extensive	-3
		Moderate	-1
		Minor	0
Social Impact			
<u>Requests and petitions</u>	Have individual requests or petitions for footpath constructions been received? The number of individual requests or signatures on a petition may be indicative of the level of community support for a footpath. A higher level of support receiving more points and individual requests weighted higher than signatures on a petition.	Large petition (200+ signatures)	5
		Med petition (100-199 signatures)	4
		Petition (40-99 signatures)	3
		Petition (11-39 signatures)	2
		Petition or Joint letter (up to 10 signatures)	1
		Over 10 requests	4
		6-10 requests	3
		4-6 requests	2
		2 or 3 requests	1
		1 request	0

<u>Disability access</u>	Is the path specifically required to allow access by disabled or elderly people? It is important that disabled and elderly people do not have their mobility restricted by a lack of footpaths.	Frequent use by many users	10
		Regular use by a small number of users	5
		No	0
Social Impact (Pedestrian Safety)			
<u>Road Formation Width</u>	Narrow roads are more hazardous to pedestrians as are multi-lane roads. The width includes shoulders.	Multi-lane roads	3
		Narrow <6m	3
		Medium 6-6.9m	2
		Moderate 7-7.9	1
		Wide > 8	0
<u>Speed limit</u>	The higher the speed limit the greater the risk to pedestrians.	80km/h or >	5
		70km/h	3
		60km/h	2
		50km/h	0
<u>Site distance</u>	Road geometry can reduce visibility of pedestrians to drivers. Hazards include sharp bends and crests.	Serious restrictions	5
		Serious isolated restrictions	3
		Moderate restrictions	2
		Few restrictions	1
		Unrestricted	0
<u>Daily traffic</u>	A higher volume of vehicles travelling along a street or road increases the risk to pedestrians who may be forced to walk on a road or road shoulder.	>10000vpd	10
		5001-10000vpd	8
		3001-5000vpd	6
		2001-3000vpd	5
		1001-2000vpd	4
		501-1000vpd	2
		0-500vpd	0
<u>Parking demand</u>	Parked cars can force pedestrians into the middle of the road.	High parking demand	3
		Frequent parked cars	2
		Occasional parked cars	1
		Minimal parked cars	0
<u>Alternative access</u>	Is alternative access available off the road formation that can be used by most pedestrians? There may be a serviceable path on the other side of the road that is safely accessible. (Ignore access on other side of multi-lane roads or roads with >10,000vpd.) If there is a safe alternative points will be deducted.	Concrete or asphalt path on other side of road with <5,000vpd	-10
		Gravel path on same side or other side road with <5,000vpd	-6
		Concrete or asphalt path on other side of road 5,001- 10,000vpd	-5
		Gravel path on other side of road with 5,001- 10,000vpd	-4
		Both nature strips	-3
		One nature strip only	-2
		None or limited	0
Social and Economic Impact			
<u>Surrounding Zoning</u>	The density and type of surrounding development will influence the level of usage. Select the option that best describes the surrounding development (or would generate a similar level of pedestrian activity) while ignoring Activity Nodes which are covered in the next 2 criteria.	Residential 1zone	0
		Industrial area	-5
		Low density residential	-10

<u>Activity Node 1</u>	Will the path serve an adjacent facility that attracts pedestrians and cater for a significant number of them? Select highest score. If facility is not listed pick a facility with similar pedestrian activity.	Primary School	10
		Secondary School	8
		Shopping centre	7
		Community facility (high use)	6
		Large Offices or Tertiary Institute	5
		Community Halls, Senior Citizens, Scout Halls etc	4
		Local Shops or Child Care Centre	3
		Local Medical Centre or similar	2
		No	0
<u>Activity node 2</u>	Will the path serve a second separate adjacent facility (or route bus stop) that attracts pedestrians and cater for a significant number of them? If facility is not listed pick a facility with similar pedestrian activity.	Primary School	10
		Secondary School	8
		Shopping centre	7
		Community facility (high use)	6
		Large Offices or Tertiary Institute	5
		Community Halls, Senior Citizens, Scout Halls etc	4
		Local Shops or Child Care Centre	3
		Local Medical Centre or similar	2
		Route bus stop	2
		No	0
<u>Footpath Hierarchy</u>	Refer to Council's adopted Road Classifications for default Footpath Hierarchy. Specific provision is made for cases when the function of a footpath varies significantly from that of the street or road it is located on.	Declared Arterial	3
		Strategic Regional Path	3
		Local Arterial	2
		Strategic Local Path	2
		Collector Road	1
		Local Footpath	0
		Other local street	0
Economic Impact			
<u>Terrain</u>	The type of terrain will influence construction costs. For example a steep cross fall will add cost to the construction with retaining walls or a boardwalk probably required. If extra cost is involved points will be deducted on the basis of the typical conditions.	Extensive earthworks	-3
		Significant earthworks	-2
		Some cross fall	-1
		Flat cross section	0

In scoring or considering requests for footpaths the following principals should be followed:

- Daily traffic should relate to typical conditions during the tourist season. This should correspond to typical conditions during January but not busiest times (Christmas & New Year period or Australia Day, Labour Day or Easter).
- For the criteria of vegetation removal, and terrain average conditions should be used while all other criteria should consider the worst or limiting conditions that result in the highest score.
- Where conditions vary significantly along a proposed footpath route consider splitting the request into two or more sections. One section may have a much greater need than others.
- Requests where formed service roads exist should be considered based upon conditions in the service road not the main road. Existing facilities on the other side of the main carriageway or carriageways may be considered depending upon the ease of access to these facilities.
- Where a substantial bridge is required (or other factors make the provision of a footpath many times more expensive than would otherwise be the case) a separate application to the Capital Works Program, supported by a Council resolution and detailed business case would be required.

The Evaluation Matrix calculates a raw score by adding all the scores together. This raw score is used to calculate the basic ranking of a request. If an external funding contribution is confirmed, the footpath may increase its ranking (and priority for funding by Council) on the basis that it reduces the cost to Council. The final ranking is determined using an adjusted score provided the conditions set out in this strategy relating to the minimum contribution required based on the raw score, are met. The adjusted score is calculated by:

- Dividing the raw score by Council's contribution as a fraction of the total cost (i.e. if Council's contribution is $\frac{1}{2}$ the raw score is doubled).
- Limiting the maximum increase to 5 times the raw score. (This equates to an external contribution of 80% of the cost.)
- Adding an additional 3, 2, or 1 points in priority order to the three projects nominated by each Ward Councillor as their current highest priorities. Councillor priorities to be updated annually and can be for any paths in the municipality. The same path can be nominated by more than one Councillor and if needed the three highest ranking projects in each Ward will be treated as the Ward Councillor's default priorities.

The scoring system underpinning the Evaluation Matrix originally received input from selected Council officers and all Councillors. The Evaluation Matrix was originally tested over nearly 12 months using various alternative weightings of criteria and variations of criteria using theoretical and real cases. The current criteria and weightings are considered to provide a fair and equitable ranking of all requests evaluated and this has been confirmed over the last

4 years. It should be noted however, that the ranking on its own can not always indicate the final priority for funding that should be given to any request. It is however, a very strong indicator of the priority for funding.

IMPLEMENTATION

The following ranges of **raw scores** have been established in using the Evaluation Matrix.

- **The maximum likely raw point score is 50 points.** Any footpaths with this score would have been addressed long ago because of the obvious need.
- **Very high priority projects would have a raw score of 35 points or more.** These projects should be implemented with minimum delay (desirably within 12 months) and be fully funded by Council. Only one project has been identified that fits into this category and it has been implemented.
- **High priority projects score between 25 and 34 points inclusive** and should desirably be implemented within one to two years of being identified. Many projects have been identified in this category with all except four (4) implemented by June 2011. Footpaths on Arterial Roads should be fully funded by Council while footpaths on other roads should require a landowner contribution of at least 25%. These should proceed on a priority basis regardless of landowner support due to the broader community benefit.
- **Medium priority projects score between 15 and 24 points inclusive** and will need to be implemented over a much longer period. Fifty two (52) medium priority projects totalling \$7 million are currently outstanding. The broader community benefit and benefit to residents is similar for these footpaths. Only a strong landowner objection should prevent a project from proceeding while the maximum landowner contribution is between zero and 50% depending upon road hierarchy. These footpaths should proceed in normal priority order (based on raw points score) unless a significant number of residents request an earlier implementation. In this case the priority for funding should be based on the adjusted points score as discussed earlier taking into account any mandatory or voluntary landowner contribution. Voluntary contributions can be used to further improve the priority for construction of any project.
- **Low priority projects score between 5 and 14 points inclusive.** These footpaths have some general community benefit but would predominately provide for local residents. It would therefore be appropriate to only implement these on the basis of property owners contributing (25 to 66%) to the cost depending upon the road hierarchy, probably through a special charge scheme. A special charge scheme would only proceed for these projects if a majority of property owners supported the need for the footpath.
- **Very low priority projects score less than 5 points** and have little or no merit. These could proceed by agreement, on the basis of property owners funding the total construction cost without the need to implement a special charge scheme. These

projects would only proceed if there was unanimous resident support. Council’s contribution would be limited to administrative costs.

- **A typical court in flat terrain in a Residential 1 zone would score 0 points.**

In establishing the final priorities for funding of footpath projects the final ranking from the Evaluation Matrix is a strong indicator of the priority for funding that should be used. Where projects have a similar score and/or special circumstances exist some variation of the final priorities may be warranted. In establishing the final construction priorities the following should be considered.

- Ranking (based on raw score) and adjusted score when funding contributions confirmed.
- Any external contributions and associated conditions.
- Project cost and available funding (only larger projects should be staged if necessary).
- Short gaps in the network (less than 150 metres) should desirably be eliminated and these could be given a higher priority.
- Any other relevant issues not covered by the Evaluation Matrix.

The construction of footpaths should normally be funded by Council under the Footpaths Annual Program of the Capital Works Program or by developers as part of new developments where appropriate. This Strategy does not apply to development works where footpaths should be provided at the developers cost whenever the development significantly contributes to the need for the footpath. If footpaths are funded in whole or part by other Council budgets (e.g. Bicycle Strategy funding), this Strategy shall still apply in as much as it can and these other funds may be treated as funding contributions.

Table 2: Maximum Council Contribution*

Priority	Raw Points Range	Arterial Road#	Collector Roads#	Other Streets#@
Very High	35 and above	100%	100%	100%
High	25 to 34 inc	100%	75%	75%
Medium	15 to 24 inc	100%	75%	50%
Low	5 to 14 inc	75%	50%	34%
Very Low	less than 5	Admin costs	Admin costs	Admin costs

* Excludes any contribution as landowner.

The landowner contribution required is the percentage of the total cost that must be paid by landowners. It does not represent the contribution of any individual landowner which may vary.

@ Other Streets include Principal Local, Access Streets and laneways.

It is recommended that Council’s maximum contribution to a footpath project (excluding any contribution as a land owner) be as set out in Table 2 above. An exception to Table 2 would

be where a scheme is considered impractical because of the short length of a footpath (less than 150 metres) in which case the project may be fully funded by Council or a lesser voluntary contribution accepted.

The above funding contributions recognise the practical aspects of Council fully funding the higher priority projects on a priority basis. In other words it is not practical to prepare a scheme to collect less than 25% of the cost.

Abutting land owners should contribute to footpath projects as indicated above or if a higher adjusted points score is required for the project to receive funding earlier than would otherwise happen. Schemes should be used where a contribution by all benefiting parties is appropriate. Otherwise contributions could be accepted without introduction of a scheme although in some cases this may raise equity issues.

When a scheme is implemented to construct a footpath the cost apportionment should be based on Table 2 and landowners along the path only contributing on the basis that Council's contribution will cover the broader community benefit. When a path is constructed on one side of the road only, the side with the path shall contribute twice the amount per metre of abuttal than the other side. Where the street or road carries more than 5000 vehicles per day then only the one side shall contribute. The landowner contribution required by Table 2 above is the percentage of the total cost that must be paid by landowners. It does not represent the contribution of any individual landowner which may vary.

FUNDING IMPLICATIONS AND PROGRESS

All requests for new footpaths (and Shared Paths) have been evaluated and ranked using the Evaluation Matrix. Table 3 below summarises the cost of these footpaths by general priority (i.e. very high, high, medium, low and very Low) and road hierarchy as they were in 2007 compared to 2011.

Between 2007 and 2011 the number of projects qualifying for a Council contribution and waiting to be funded, has increased from 107 to 175 with 35 projects completed in that period. A total of 103 new projects were identified and the potential liability for Council has increased from \$8 to \$15 million, over the same period.

The total cost to Council of constructing all projects with a priority of low or above is estimated to be \$15.5 million which at current levels of funding will take around 10 years to implement. However, additional projects will continue to be identified particularly as an aging population seeks improved mobility through the provision of more footpaths.

Table 3: Footpath Construction Costs

Priority	Raw Points Range	Road Hierarchy	No of Projects		Total Cost		Max. Council Cont.*	Maximum Council Cost	
			2007	2011	2007	2011		2007	2011
Very High	35 and above	All	1	0	\$283,500	\$0	100%	\$283,500	\$0
High	25 to 34 inc	Arterials	11	1	\$876,600	\$149,500	100%	\$876,600	\$149,500
		Collectors	2	3	\$155,070	\$685,200	75%	\$116,303	\$513,900
		Other	1	0	\$54,000	\$0	75%	\$40,500	\$0
Medium	15 to 24 inc	Arterials	12	20	\$2,321,175	\$4,063,830	100%	\$2,321,175	\$4,063,830
		Collectors	6	12	\$482,310	\$1,694,500	75%	\$361,733	\$1,270,875
		Other	8	20	\$448,875	\$1,561,325	50%	\$224,438	\$780,663
Low	5 to 14 inc	Arterials	22	30	\$3,309,900	\$6,865,375	75%	\$2,482,425	\$5,149,031
		Collectors	17	20	\$1,726,425	\$3,873,060	50%	\$863,213	\$1,936,530
		Other	27	69	\$1,812,375	\$4,875,065	34%	\$616,208	\$1,657,522
			107	175	\$11.5 M	\$23.8 M		\$8.2 M	\$15.5 M

* Voluntary external contributions beyond the minimum indicated will improve the ranking of any project.

DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Footpaths that meet recommended dimensions, surface requirements and which are free of obstructions are particularly important for people with vision impairments or those who use mobility aides such as wheelchairs or scooters.

Width and Height Requirements

A general minimum footpath width of 1.2m has in the past been considered adequate for most low use road and street situations although Councils have traditionally build footpaths to a width of 1.4m.

Increasing importance is now being placed on the need for disability access. Where possible sufficient footpath width should be provided to allow 2 wheelchairs to pass, i.e. 1.5m minimum and 1.8m is desirable. Any surface scoring, guidance strips or other treatments that may impede passage should be added outside the minimum widths recommended.

In high activity areas such as commercial and shopping areas wider than minimum widths are likely to be necessary, as well as at locations where pedestrian's gather such as entrances to schools, and associated crossings, recreational facilities and important bus stops.

It is recommended that a general minimum width of 1.5m be adopted for footpaths with a wider width of 2.0m (minimum 1.8 at restricted locations) adopted where disability access is identified as a significant issue. A minimum width of 2.0m should also be adopted if the footpath forms part of the Shared Trails Network or could potentially become a Shared Path.

The normal height clearances for the appropriate users should be provided. For example an absolute minimum of 2.0m is required for pedestrians.

Kerb Ramps (Pram Crossings)

Kerb ramps should always be provided in association with footpath construction and should comply with appropriate standards including the provision of warning tactile strips 300mm from the kerb.

Ramps

Ramps should be provided where possible as an alternative or in addition to stairs. For people in wheelchairs or with prams it is important that minimum standards be met in order that ramps can safely and conveniently be used. The Standards suggest that rest areas (landings) be provided every 9m for grades of 1:14 or every 15m for grades of 1:20. The need for handrails should also be considered.

Gradients

AS 1428.1 lists requirements for design of sloping walkways which can be applied to footpaths. Where the gradient is between 1:33 and 1:20, level rest areas 1.2m long should be provided at distances between 25m and 15m. Paths with a steeper gradient, than 1:20 are to be considered as ramps for design purposes. Adjacent ground for all footpaths should be within 25mm of the level of the footpath. If adjacent ground has a steep slope or drop off, a kerb or handrails may be required.

Cross fall

Footpaths should be as flat as possible but should achieve an adequate drained surface. AS1428 specifies any cross fall should not exceed 1:40.

Surface Treatments

Surface treatment material preferred and recommended by the Mornington Peninsula Shire is exposed aggregate. Exposed aggregate consists of a concrete base topped with fine pebble material. Asphalt, while cheaper to lay results in greater maintenance costs in the long term. In addition, exposed aggregate fits well with existing streetscape character in urban areas and is “softer on the eye” than say coloured concrete and has less glare than normal concrete. It also blends into the surroundings looking like a gravel path.

Loose surface materials (gravel, soil, sand etc) should be avoided on pedestrian routes other than recreational routes because some people find them difficult to walk on and they can impose severe difficulties for people in wheelchairs. Crushed rock is only suitable as a temporary path or for a specific purpose such as horse trails or recreational routes (refer to Shared Trail Strategy). Crushed rock paths should not be provided under this strategy.

CONCLUSIONS

The continued need for this Strategy and associated footpath works has been reinforced by a recent review and Council’s recent adoption of a new Bicycle Strategy.

The adoption of the *Footpath Construction Strategy* and Evaluation Matrix has enabled Council officers to evaluate and prioritise requests for the construction of footpaths (and Shared Paths) across the Mornington Peninsula Shire within the urban growth boundary. The most highly ranked footpath requests have been included in the Capital Works Program and 35 projects constructed over the past 4 years. In some circumstances, land owner contributions through Special Charge Schemes have applied and these have generally been accepted by landowners.

The recent review process has identified one area of improvement. That is, the inclusion of the Ward Councillor’s top three priorities in the determination of project rankings for construction.

The *Strategy* allows requests for footpaths to be considered at any time and prompt advice to be provided to those requesting paths. The priority of any path can also be easily re-evaluated if circumstances change. The listing of footpaths for construction is consequently tentative and will be reviewed annually and updated on an on-going basis as more projects are assessed for inclusion.

To ensure this strategy remains relevant and reflects the needs of the municipality it should be reviewed after a further 5 years of operation.

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

Related Documents

1. AS 1428.1, 2009, Design for Access and Mobility Part 1: General Requirements for Access – New Building Work.
2. Community Plan (2009 – 2013)
3. Footpath Construction Policy
4. Peninsula RideSafe – Mornington Peninsula Bicycle Strategy, 2010
5. Shared Trails Strategy
6. AustRoads, Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice: Part 13 – Pedestrians.
7. The Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy, 2004.
8. Contributory Schemes Policy for Infrastructure Works.
9. Contributory Schemes Strategy for Road Construction in Urban Areas.

Related Legislation

1. Disability Discrimination Act 1992

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Access All – A facility, amenity or service is designed, available and promoted for use by anyone, regardless of ability.

Collector Road – A road whose prime function is the distribution of traffic between arterial roads and local streets.

Declared Arterial – These roads along with Freeways for the primary road network for the movement of goods and people by motor vehicle. The primary road network is managed by VicRoads and supplemented by the local arterial road network (Council managed).

Evaluation Matrix – Assessment tool designed to rank requests for footpath construction

Footpath – That portion of a road or street or other public place set aside for use by pedestrians only.

Local Arterial – Provides primarily for the main connection from, urban centres and local areas to the wider State main arterial road network (Mornington Peninsula Shire Council managed).

Local Footpath – Provides only pedestrian access to abutting properties or properties in nearby streets. A path with no strategic function.

Pedestrian – A person walking, and including people in wheelchairs, on rollerskates/blades or riding on 'toy vehicles' such as skate boards or other vehicles, other than a bicycle, powered by human effort or a motor and with a maximum speed of 7 km/h.

Principal Local – A street which has equal functions of access to properties and distribution of traffic between arterial roads or collector roads and local streets.

Local Street – A road whose main function is to provide access to properties. Includes Access Roads (which are not Principal Locals) and Limited Access streets under Council's adopted Road Classification.

Roadway – That part of a road or street set aside, designed or otherwise normally used for vehicular traffic.

Shared Trail – A footpath on which pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrian riders mix, but on which bicyclists and equestrian riders must give way to pedestrians.

Special Charge Scheme – A Council may declare a special charge under Section 163 of the Local Government Act 1989 for the cost of constructing a footpath. This cost is apportioned over the properties that Council considers will gain benefit by the construction. Council may contribute to the cost based on a number of criteria. For example, that status of the road, benefit to all the community, Council properties in the street.

Strategic Local Path – A Local Footpath that has been identified as having a strategic function in providing pedestrian access to a broader local area.

Strategic Regional Path – A footpath that is not located on an arterial road but has been identified as being of regional importance for longer distance pedestrian movements.

Urban Growth Boundary – A notation on a planning scheme map that delineates the extent of the ultimate urban area(s) within a particular planning scheme, to enable the application of specific planning controls for land outside that urban area.