The economic case for investment in walking

Dr Francesca Maclean
Cities Economics & Planning
Walking in Victoria

Benefits of walking

Current investment decisions

Recommendations
The invisible transport mode
Weekday trips in Victoria:

- **10.29 m** private vehicle
- **2.6 m** active transport
- **1.6 m** public transport
- **0.3 m** other

- **10%** cycling
- **90%** walking

**3.6 million** weekday trips
More than 55% of women walk for exercise each week.

Men feel significantly safer than women walking alone at night.

Safe and Strong
This Girl Can
The benefits of walking
54% women and 51% men are insufficiently active in Australia.

- Decreases sedentary lifestyles in senior citizens.
- Reduces disease burden.
- Physically active people have up to 30% reduced risk of becoming depressed.
Walking promotes **social connections** and cohesion.

Increases perceived and actual safety.

63% women and 27% men feel **unsafe** walking at night.
Walkable cities support mobility independence for 8-80 year olds

Helps children focus

Improves children’s confidence and ability to travel independently

Accessible recreational activity for all socio-economic groups
Reduces household spend

High benefit/cost ratio for walking interventions

Boosts trading, rental values and productivity
Investing in walking
ATAP doesn’t capture many walking benefits

Trade offs for other transport modes

Overlooked in funding allocations

Recreational and a transport mode
Where to from here?
1. Increased and dedicated funding
2. Targets for more short trips
3. Clear governance group
4. Strategy and action plan
5. ATAP guidance
6. Delineate walking budget and spend
7. Collect data for decision making