

Improving Public Transport to Meet Community Needs: A Warrnambool Case-study

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Executive Summary

Aim

This study commences Bus Association Victoria's process of seeking to understand the connections between public transport service provision, social exclusion and personal wellbeing in a regional community. This is a vast agenda. The major aim of the present study is a relatively modest first step along this path. The study aims to explore travel patterns of groups that typically include many transport disadvantaged people and to identify the priorities they see for transport improvements that will reduce their disadvantage, using Warrnambool as a case study and with a focus on the role of public transport.

Transport disadvantaged groups comprise young people, seniors, persons with a disability, people on low incomes, rurally isolated and Indigenous people.

Warrnambool and its Transport Services

Warrnambool is located on the coast about 260 kilometres south-west of Melbourne, in Victoria's Western District. The Warrnambool regional economic and social catchment is home to about 35,000 people, who live in one of the fastest growing areas within Victoria. This growth is adding to needs for improved public transport services.

The area has a higher population concentration in the older and younger age groups than the rest of the State. Both these age groups tend to be relatively dependent on public transport for access. They already account for four out of every five tickets sold on the Warrnambool route bus service. Numbers in both age categories are growing. At the same time, the population is ageing, with an associated increase in the requirement for public and/or community transport services.

Warrnambool currently has three major local/regional public transport systems:

1. route bus services: with about 7.8 service kilometers per capita provided, about three quarters the level available in outer Melbourne. Services do not cater for normal journey to work times because of the heavy service focus on school travel;
2. school bus services: half a million service kilometers per year are provided, with about 500,000 student boardings annually. These services are complemented by shuttle services and urban school services that carry an additional half million journeys per year. In total, carriage of school children accounts for five out of every six route plus school service journeys per year;
3. regional bus services (V/Line): 50,000 passengers per year and 450,000 service kms.

There is also a rail service to Melbourne.

In addition to these public passenger transport services, a number of community transport services have grown up, usually centred around various community health, aged or disability services and/or using Council-provided vehicles. These services are meeting vital mobility needs for some groups but many of the transport services are facing operating problems. Service availability is restrictive and efficiency of vehicle use tends to be low.

Taxis play a minor but important complementary transport role.

Transport Disadvantaged Groups and Their Travel Needs

The study focused mainly on travel needs of transport disadvantaged groups but also gathered some comparative information on those without such disadvantage.

A shopping survey, where car use clearly dominated travel mode choice, together with a small household survey, clearly showed the strong attachment to the car in the region and the high level of mobility it provides. Car use frequently involves traveling accompanied, indicating an important social benefit from such travel.

Route bus users tend to see they have no travel alternative, 2/3 having no car available and some others not possessing a drivers' licence. Bus users often travel alone and the travel experience itself is an important part of social inclusion. The two-hour ticket tends to encourage quick trips, which discourages social inclusion and can cause financial difficulties for those on low incomes.

Young people can be both independent and dependent in terms of travel needs. Independence comes from being able to walk or cycle for many trips, with weekends being notable. Dependence comes from reliance on parents/others for car travel, especially during the week and particularly for those living outside urban Warrnambool. Some young people are doubly disadvantaged by living in non-urban locations and in low income households who are unable to pay for alternative transport (e.g. a second household car or taxi fare). Particular problems were found in relation to youth access to alternative educational programs, work and entertainment, with rural youth facing the greatest transport disadvantage.

Deakin University residential students without a car tend to face transport difficulties, particularly outside route bus service times. Reliance on others for travel is common and is seen by many as a source of concern. Female international students face particular problems, being least likely to ask others for lifts. The University sees improved public transport service levels as an important input to increasing overseas student numbers. Wednesday night ("pub night") public transport services were highlighted as an important need.

Seniors are a significant and growing part of the regional population. Car use is high and those with car availability tend to have good accessibility. However, the strong car culture among many seniors is associated with neglect of planning for personal mobility requirements in later years, when car use is less of an option or simply not possible. Road safety issues may arise from this lack of planning.

Those without car access are at greater risk of social exclusion. Community transport services target some of these groups but tend to focus more on those with a disability.

Many **people with a disability** have not been part of the car culture and have organized their mobility requirements around using alternatives. These alternatives include public transport, community transport, walking, friends'/families' vehicles and taxis. Those with a disability living outside urban Warrnambool face particular problems.

Those on **low incomes** are reliant on public transport, being unable to buy other transport options. Those in geographically disadvantaged areas and particularly young single mothers in these areas are a group at high risk of social exclusion.

The region includes several **major employers**. These are not major markets for public transport use at present, because of factors like the timing of services and the car culture in Warrnambool. They remain an opportunity for service development.

The regional **Indigenous community** has its own buses that are well utilized. The need for such vehicles is indicative of transport disadvantage faced by many in this community, who feel uncomfortable using route buses. Many in the Indigenous community experience multiple sources of transport disadvantage.

Tourism is important in the region but the potential for integration with public transport services has not been exploited.

Bus drivers are usually well regarded by bus users and provided ideas for service development that would assist transport disadvantaged groups. Service extensions and further introduction of low floor buses were favoured options.

Accessibility Planning

Personal transport is essentially about meeting accessibility needs and fostering social inclusion. However, institutional arrangements for service delivery tend to occur along different lines (e.g. particular services and modes), such that no government entity is responsible for accessibility. Public transport services, school bus services and community transport services operate mainly in isolation, rather than being seen as part of a single service delivery system.

The British approach is to implement an “accessibility planning” approach, based on giving local government ownership of accessibility problems. By this approach, clear

responsibility is assigned for dealing with issues raised by transport disadvantage/social exclusion.

The nine studies currently being carried out in Victoria as part of the Transport Connections program are, in some ways, attempting to carry out an accessibility planning function. However, these studies lack a strategic framework within which to approach accessibility planning.

Local government should play a co-ordinating role in local/regional accessibility planning but should not have a direct role in service provision. Higher level (system-wide) co-ordination should be undertaken at State level. Regional Accessibility Planning Councils (RAPCs) should be established, based around transport/activity catchment areas and driven by local government, to undertake needs assessment and propose improvement priorities. Regional transport resources should be managed in a more co-ordinated way to meet such needs. Particular focus should be devoted to making greater use of the school bus fleet to meet transport needs of transport disadvantaged groups.

Main Proposals

The study suggests four main areas for improvements, to better meet the travel needs of transport disadvantaged groups:

1. public transport service frequency, span and coverage;
2. marketing of public transport services;
3. regulatory reform, to increase the flexibility with which services can be made available; and,
4. the arrangements for planning of transport systems within the region and State.

The first two sets of proposals relate specifically to Warrnambool, though the proposals have more general applicability. The last two are proposals for State-wide systemic change.

The main short term justification for local/regional service improvements is social equity: bringing Warrnambool service levels closer to those that are available in outer suburban Melbourne. Longer term, environmental sustainability and road safety arguments also support a greater role for regional public transport.

The major detailed proposals made by the study are:

SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

1. Increase service frequency/span of the Warrnambool route bus service
 - Evenings to 7.00pm
 - Mornings from 7.00am
 - Saturdays add an afternoon and Night Rider service

- Sundays
 - Specific services targeted at major employers
2. Service Warrnambool growth suburbs
 3. Provide Wednesday “pub night” service for Deakin
 4. Trial route/tourist service in Port Fairy, using a school bus
 5. Introduce twice weekly day-time services plus Saturday night services from Mortlake and Hawkesdale to Warrnambool, using school buses
 6. Trial charter bus services to special community events at Deakin

MARKETING INITIATIVES

7. Implement an expanded route service marketing program in Warrnambool.
8. Provide enhanced customer service training to route bus drivers.
9. Provide awareness programs for seniors re route bus services.
10. Route bus operator plus Council to promote bus use among Indigenous community
11. Extend transport concessions to international students and carers (the latter on V/Line)
12. Allow student concession cards to be purchased over time.
13. Change two-hour route ticket to three hours.
14. Route bus service contracts should include marketing incentives.

REGULATORY REFORM

15. Provide greater flexibility in use of school bus services by non-students.
16. Provide Disability Discrimination Act exemption for use of school buses to provide route services in areas/times lacking other services.

SYSTEM PLANNING

17. Encourage school communities, including tertiary institutes, to develop Sustainable Travel Plans.
18. Establish a Regional Accessibility Forum, led by Warrnambool Council, to identify and prioritise regional accessibility needs.
19. State Government responsibilities for transport/accessibility should be centred in the Department of Infrastructure.

In round terms, the annual cost of implementing the regional initiatives is about \$0.38 million in urban Warrnambool, after offsets and increased fare revenue, and \$140,000 in other parts of the region, less increases in fare revenues. In addition, there is some one-off funding proposed for Sustainable Travel Plans and a marketing campaign.

1. Context

1.1 Rationale for this Study

The Australian Bus Industry Confederation's (BIC) *National Policy Statement 2001: Building a Public Transport Culture* (2001), spells out the industry's five key goals for improved sustainability of Australia's land transport passenger task. One of these five goals relates to equity in service provision. The Equity Goal reflects both (1) BIC's view that public transport should be available to provide mobility options for all, and especially for those without access to a private car, and (2) an acceptance by BIC that this is an integral part of providing more sustainable land transport systems.

This value perspective on the need for basic levels of mobility to be available does not take one far, however, in terms of defining more clearly just what levels of mobility are required in particular circumstances. Should there be some basic minimum irrespective of location or should remote regional areas be treated differently to regional cities and to the outer urban fringes? Do all people, especially those groups who have difficulty participating fully in society due to age, disability, low income etc. (i.e. those experiencing social exclusion) have equal access to transport? What measures can be put in place to achieve the equity goal, outlined above? Is there a way that organizations with an interest in these issues of transport accessibility and the problems of social exclusion can work together to improve people's wellbeing and quality of life?

The notion of **social exclusion** is presently in use in many policy contexts as a means of understanding equity issues. Social exclusion is a broad descriptor relating to people or groups of people who have problems in participating fully in activities essential for wellbeing. Problems of mobility/access are recognized as being potentially significant contributors to social exclusion. Groups who are often seen as **transport disadvantaged**, in the sense that they have poor access to transport, often tend to coincide with those groups seen as socially excluded.

Considerable work around the concept of social exclusion has taken place in the United Kingdom in recent years. The term was originally used to broaden understanding about poverty, particularly unemployment. Under this concept, the inability of people to be fully participating members of society is viewed more broadly than only in terms of a shortage of money, to include other forms of disadvantage. Thus, people may be socially excluded due to disability, age, unemployment, lack of transport, race, etc. The logic of this approach is that the way of including people with these disadvantages is not only, or even necessarily, to give them more money but also to develop social policies which specifically address their sources of disadvantage. To give a transport example, a person may be socially excluded due to their unemployment, which in turn may be because of a lack of transport available to take him or her to and from available employment. Reducing transport disadvantage may increase the person's employment prospects and, if successfully realized, increase social inclusion, and a person's wellbeing.

With social exclusion being a significant political issue in the UK, Prime Minister Tony Blair established the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) in 1997, the Unit now sitting in the Office of the Deputy Prime-Minister. Reflecting the expected significance of transport to the whole concept of social exclusion, the SEU undertook a major study on this issue very recently (SEC 2003). Links were drawn between the exclusion of people who do not have access to a car, and their needs for education, employment, access to health and other services and to food shops, as well as to sporting, leisure and cultural activities.

Findings from the SEU's transport study have been organized into five groups of barriers which need to be addressed in order to improve accessibility to key services that are central to social inclusion and where there is a transport connection (Fig 1.1). These are:

1. The availability and physical accessibility of transport
2. The cost of transport
3. Services are located in inaccessible places
4. Safety and security – fear of crime
5. Travel horizons – people on low incomes were found to be less willing to travel to access work than those on higher incomes.

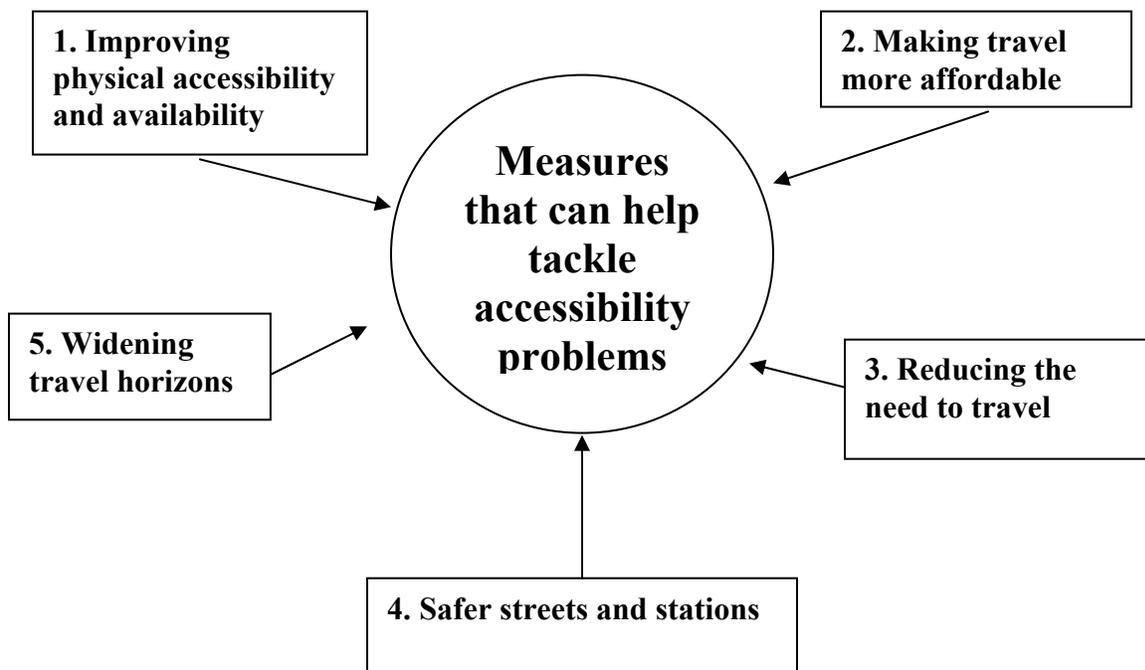


Fig. 1.1: An Accessibility Planning Framework (drawing on SEU 2003, p.6)

The SEU argued that to remove these barriers and reduce social exclusion through transport improvements, there is a need to understand how people access key activities

and link this with planning to improve such accessibility (accessibility planning), as well as undertaking key strategic policy initiatives, such as:

- reviewing the regulations governing provision of bus services (especially relevant to the UK context where de-regulation of service provision has taken place outside London);
- integration of transport planning into planning for services provision (e.g. education);
- a range of initiatives to make transport more accessible, such as reducing cost and addressing the fear of crime associated with public transport;
- the formation of partnerships between transport providers, local authorities and local service providers, such as education and health, and work on transport solutions.

To a large degree, the work on transport and social exclusion has been a conversation about accessibility in a narrow sense, about the need for people to obtain goods and services and get to work, school, recreation, etc. There does not appear to have been any systematic attempt to go further and examine how reducing transport disadvantage can impact on the general wellbeing of those who benefit from transport improvements. Brief mention has been made about the dynamic nature of the relationship between transport and social exclusion. For example, as noted above, a person may be socially excluded because he or she is unemployed, and due to their unemployment status, they are unable to afford the cost of travel (or there may be no public transport) out of their local living area in order to seek employment. There is also some discussion in the literature on the interface between health and transport. For example the UK Royal Commission on Health (Acheson 1998) argues that better public transport leads to lower car usage, with resultant health benefits for the general population (e.g. through gaining the benefits of exercise and resultant impacts on obesity and stress levels). There is also a beneficial health impact through lower pollution levels. Such issues have recently received press coverage in Australia in relation to population health in Western Sydney (Sydney Morning Herald 2004).

The present report also identifies another area where transport may impact on personal issues around social exclusion and personal wellbeing. Transport accessibility enables people to form associations or relationships and engage with other people and groups. This can be understood in terms of the development of social capital (see definition 1.4), that leads to improved wellbeing, a reduction in stress, anxiety and depression levels. The act of being on public transport, in itself, may improve social capital, as travel offers opportunities to engage with other travelers.

BIC is unaware of any Australian Federal or State Government ever having explicitly tried to deal with the issues discussed above (accessibility, social exclusion, equity, transport disadvantage etc) in a systematic manner. Instead, governments tend to make particular decisions that have direct or indirect access rationales and/or consequences (e.g. subsidizing sea passenger transport to Tasmania; subsidizing regional rail and bus services), usually without seeing these as part of a specific and comprehensive policy agenda on meeting access/mobility needs.

Given:

- the large amounts State Governments, in particular, spend on supporting public transport services,
- the widely recognized need to improve the sustainability of our land transport systems,
- the role that changing modal shares in favour of low impact modes such as walking, cycling and public transport can play in enhancing land transport sustainability, and
- the growing recognition that the social exclusion of some groups/individuals in society can underpin many wider social and personal problems, such as ill-health, vandalism, etc,

there are strong grounds for seeking a better understanding of the role that public transport systems play in providing mobility/accessibility and preventing social exclusion.

To further its own understanding of the role that access/mobility play in community and individual welfare and to explore the role that public transport plays in this regard, Bus Association Victoria, a member of BIC, has initiated two studies:

- this Warrnambool case study, examining access/mobility issues in the Victorian coastal town of Warrnambool and its surrounds, supported by Warrnambool Bus Lines;
- the Victorian Access Study, a broader study undertaken with the support of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, the Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Transport Association. This latter study is examining access/mobility issues in several Victorian regions but in less detail than the Warrnambool study.

These studies will be supported by a theoretical paper which examines the present understandings of transport and social exclusion. This report outlines the findings from the first of these studies, the Warrnambool case study.

1.2 Aims of the Study

The Warrnambool case study commences the BAV's process of seeking to understand the connections between public transport service provision, social exclusion and personal wellbeing in a regional community. This is a vast agenda. The major aim of the present report is a relatively modest first step along this path. The study aims to explore travel patterns of groups that typically include many transport disadvantaged people and to identify the priorities they see for transport improvements that will reduce their disadvantage, using Warrnambool as a case study.

The major focus is on the current and prospective role of public transport in meeting the needs of transport disadvantaged groups, both because public transport (or, more specifically, buses) is the constituency that BAV represents and because public transport

is believed to play a vital role in providing mobility for transport disadvantaged groups and individuals.

This process will shed light on the broader question of social exclusion and it will suggest ways in which public transport improvements can assist in reducing such exclusion. It should also help to more clearly define a longer term study process that will enable a broader understanding of the links between public transport service provision, transport disadvantage, social exclusion and personal wellbeing. BAV/BIC's suggested model of the relationships between these conditions is shown in Figure 1.2, with the present study working at the front end of the model. BAV and BIC are in discussion with Monash University about a more comprehensive study that will examine the connections through to social exclusion and wellbeing.

While this study is an investigation into the connections between public transport services and transport disadvantage in a Victorian regional community, it is intended to both (1) produce specific proposals for improving public transport services that will meet the needs of transport disadvantaged people in the Warrnambool community and (2) to suggest ways in which regional public transport service provision more generally might be better organized to meet the needs of transport disadvantaged groups and individuals.

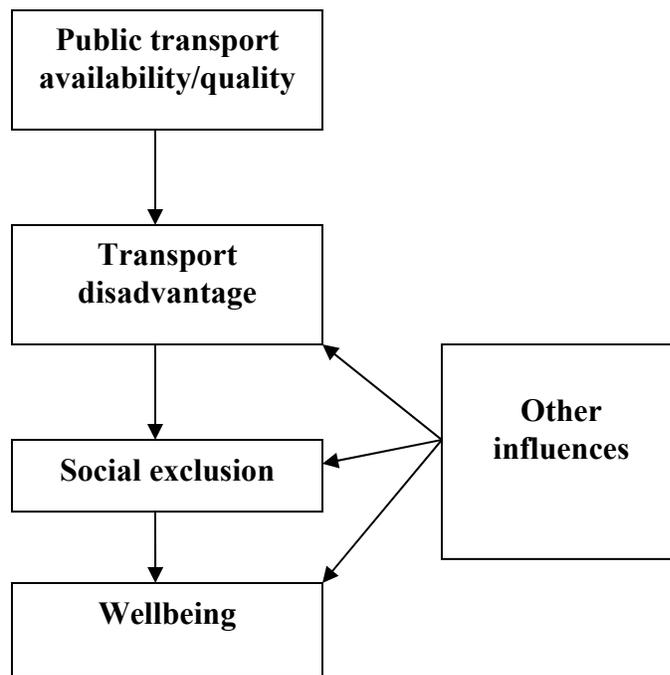


Fig 1.2: Model of relationships between public transport and personal conditions

1.3 Definitions

In this report, the following definitions are used:

accessibility = the ease with which a person can get to particular services, locations, and/or other people, as required by that person;

mobility = the ease with which a person moves around;

transport disadvantage = a situation where people experience a shortage of transport options, which restricts their mobility and hence their access to goods, services and relationships;

social exclusion = the existence of barriers which make it difficult or impossible for people to participate fully in society

social capital = a measure of networks, trust and reciprocity within a community.

Thus, it is possible (for example) for a person to be able to move around freely (have high levels of **mobility**) but not have good access to shops, banks, etc, because of a poor residential location choice. Equally, a person may live next door to a bank but not be able to **access** this facility because of some personal disability. Other factors relevant to **social exclusion**, such as low income, ethnicity or disability, may reduce **accessibility**. A person's **social capital** reflects that person's social networks or contacts and is both a contributor to, and a resultant outcome of, **mobility**, **accessibility** and **social exclusion**.

1.4 Report Structure

As background to considering travel needs of transport disadvantaged groups in the Warrnambool area, Chapter Two of this report provides an overview of the Warrnambool area and its surrounds in terms of location and demographics and its various forms of public and community transport, including some benchmarking of services. This highlights some of the demographic trends affecting the likely incidence of transport disadvantage in the community and places service provision in a broader Victorian context. It also summarises some of the community transport services that exist in the area and highlights some of the issues facing services delivered through that sector.

Chapter Three focuses on transport disadvantaged groups and on bus users, because many bus users experience transport disadvantage. It presents information gained from consultations and surveys with such groups about their travel patterns and needs and identifies some ways in which transport services could be improved to assist such groups, focusing on issues raised by the groups concerned.

Chapter Four deals with institutional arrangements for the delivery of public and community transport services. It presents the concept of accessibility planning, as a new framework within which regional public transport service provision might be improved. This framework seeks to involve key regional stakeholder groups and individuals in the process of identifying priorities for regional public/community transport improvement and to improve the efficiency with which resources are used in service delivery. The

discussion in this chapter emerges from the Warrnambool analysis but is relevant State-wide.

Chapter Five sets out the report's main findings and recommendations for improving public transport in the region. It indicates the expected beneficiaries, if the recommendations are implemented, together with the expected costs of implementation. Adoption of the proposals that are presented should do much to reduce social exclusion in the region and enhance the equity of service provision, both within the region and between the region and other parts of the State. It is only, however, one step along the path of better understanding the connections between regional public transport provision, social exclusion and personal wellbeing.

2. The Warrnambool Area and its Public Transport Services

2.1 Location and Demographics

Warrnambool Local Government Area is located on the coast about 260 kilometres south-west of Melbourne, in Victoria's Western District. The Princes Highway provides a direct road link to Geelong and Melbourne to the east and Adelaide to the west. The central core of Warrnambool is south of the Princes Highway, just inland from the coast. Portland and Port Fairy, both on the coast to the west, are also significant centres, Portland well known for its aluminium smelter and port and Port Fairy for its heritage values.

Residential development in Warrnambool is located mainly north of the Princes Highway but also to the east and west/north-west on the southern side of the Highway. Small satellite towns have developed at Allansford (east) and Dennington (north-west), with small rural residential developments at Woodford and Bushfield to the north.

Industrial development is mainly located to the north west of the centre. Major employers include Midfield Meat, Nestle, Dairy Farmers, two large hospitals (St John of God and Warrnambool Base) and Deakin University. Future industrial development is likely to include the Allansford area.

At the time of the 2001 Census, Warrnambool City had a population of about 27,750 (rounded, including Dennington and surrounding rural areas). Population grew by about 4,200 from 1991 to 2001, a gain averaging over 400 persons per year. The population growth rate averaged 1.8% p.a. from 1991-96 and 1.5% p.a. from 1996-2001 (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2004). These are strong growth rates. This high rate of population growth, well above the State average, will quickly put pressure on land supply, reflected in Council's decision to undertake the *Warrnambool Land Use Strategy*.

Table 2.1 compares the age structure of the Warrnambool municipality with that for Victoria as a whole, in 2001. It shows that Warrnambool has a higher concentration in the 60+ age groups than the state as a whole (17.74%, compared to 16.86%), with the difference mainly concentrated in the 70-84 years age group. Warrnambool is also more highly concentrated in the younger age groups (0-4, 5-17, 18-24), with the 5-17 years grouping being 1.5 percentage points higher than the state average in 2001. The higher share in the 18-24 years age group may reflect the tertiary educational role played by the area (e.g. Deakin University; Warrnambool TAFE). Conversely, Warrnambool's population shares are a little lower than the state as a whole in the working age groups of 25-59.

Table 2.1: Age Structure

Age Group (years)	Warrnambool (%)	Victoria (%)
0-4	7.24	6.50
5-17	19.66	18.15
18-24	10.12	9.54
25-34	13.16	14.95
35-49	21.48	22.42
50-59	10.6	11.63
60-69	7.61	7.59
70-84	8.43	7.74
85+	1.7	1.49

Source: <http://www.doi.vic.gov.au/Doi/knowyour.nsf>

The *Warrnambool Land Use Strategy* (Parsons & Brinkerhoff, 2004, p.4) refers to two sets of population projections for the area. It points out that the Department Of Infrastructure's projections suggest population growth rates averaging 0.4 to 0.8% over the two decades to 2021, while the Department of Sustainability and Environment's projections are for an average growth rate of 0.6% per annum. Both sets of projections are low in comparison with the experience of the preceding decade. The *Warrnambool Land Use Strategy* quite rightly implies that a higher population outcome would not surprise. The number of households is projected to grow faster than the population (at 1.0% p.a.), in light of the trend to smaller household sizes.

The *Warrnambool Land Use Strategy* quotes State Government projections that the 60-69 and 50-59 years age groups will have the greatest net growth over the coming two decades (Parsons & Brinkerhoff 2004, p.5). The *Warrnambool Aged and Disability Strategic Plan* (J. Prideaux and Assoc. 2003) points out that 6,610 people are expected to be aged over 60 in 2011, up from 5,070 in 2001, a growth rate averaging a high 2.7% p.a. By 2021, the number aged over 60 is projected to increase to 8,800 people, or 26.2% of the Warrnambool population. This reflects both the general ageing amongst the Victorian (and Australian) population and the tendency for coastal locations with well developed service centres, including regional health and community facilities, to be attractive retirement destinations.

The numbers of young people (5-19) are projected to grow by about 860 between 2001 and 2011 and then to fall by about 680 to 2,021. If overall population growth exceeds the rates projected by DOI/DSE, then the rate of decline on the younger age groups would be expected to slow. These numbers suggest that the market for school bus travel in Warrnambool (ignoring surrounding municipalities) is growing at present, is likely to continue growing for some years and then to decline by about 10% between 2011 and 2021, unless strong population growth is sustained. Numbers in 2021, on this basis, would probably be similar to today, in total.

Associated with the projected increase in numbers of older people is a projection of growing numbers of people with a disability. The *Warrnambool Aged and Disability*

Strategy estimates that 5,550 people in Warrnambool had a disability in 2001. This number is expected to grow to 6,810 by 2010, with the number aged over 65 growing fastest. Those with mobility difficulties are, and are projected to remain, the largest disability group (about 930 estimated to be in this group in 2001). Those requiring transport assistance were estimated at 1,370 in 2001.

Halstead (2002) summarises a range of socio-economic indicators for Warrnambool and the neighbouring Corangamite and Moyne municipalities, in the *Healthy Communities: Community Profile* report. That report concludes:

Taken as a separate Local Government Area, Warrnambool has a higher proportion of single parent families, Indigenous Australians, more single person households, more single parent households, fewer sixteen years olds at school, a higher unemployment rate and fewer households in owner-occupied dwellings, than the other two municipalities and the state as whole. It scores lower on the Index of Relative Disadvantage (ie is more disadvantaged) ... than Corangamite, Moyne and the state as a whole (p.16).

In short, there is a higher than usual likelihood of disadvantaged people living in the area, with an associated likelihood of higher than usual numbers of transport disadvantaged people.

Halstead (2002) also summarises a number of health indicators for Warrnambool. Injury rates are above average for both males and females, road traffic accidents being suggested as a contributor. Hospital admissions were higher than expected for both men and women. Some of these indicators may be high because Warrnambool is a regional base for health and medical services, attracting people needing such services. From a transport planning and policy perspective, however, the area is starting with some issues in the health area and these will presumably only get worse as the population ages. This will create growing demands, for example, for health-related transport.

2.2 Transport Services and Use in Warrnambool

There were just under 11,000 households in Warrnambool in 2001. Of these, 8.8% had no motor vehicle and 38.4% had only one vehicle. In short, almost one in two households had only one or no cars.

Reflecting the orientation of peak hour bus services to school travel (discussed further below), only 41 people used bus services for their journey to work at 2001 census time. Only 173 rode a bicycle to work. Bus services sought to cater for the journey to work some years ago but declining patronage led to the deletion of these services. Nearly 9,000 people travelled to work by car at 2001 census time, 8,083 as a car driver (75.3%) and 904 (8.4%) as a passenger. 5.9% walked.

There are four major sets of public transport services provided for people in the Warrnambool area. These are:

- route bus services;
- school bus services;
- regional coach services, including the Warrnambool to Port Fairy services; and,
- the rail service to Melbourne via Geelong.

In addition to these “regular” services, there are various charter services, provided to groups such as schools, seniors, etc, and services provided by a range of community transport providers and taxi operators, together with air services.

2.2.1 Route Bus Services and Their Use

Transit Southwest provides regular route bus services in Warrnambool. There are seven main routes, as shown in Map 2.1: West; North and Brierly; North West; Gateway Plaza; South and Merrivale; East; and Deakin. A further Transit Southwest route service operates between Warrnambool and Port Fairy, and there are morning worker services to the industrial locations of Fletcher Jones and Nestles.

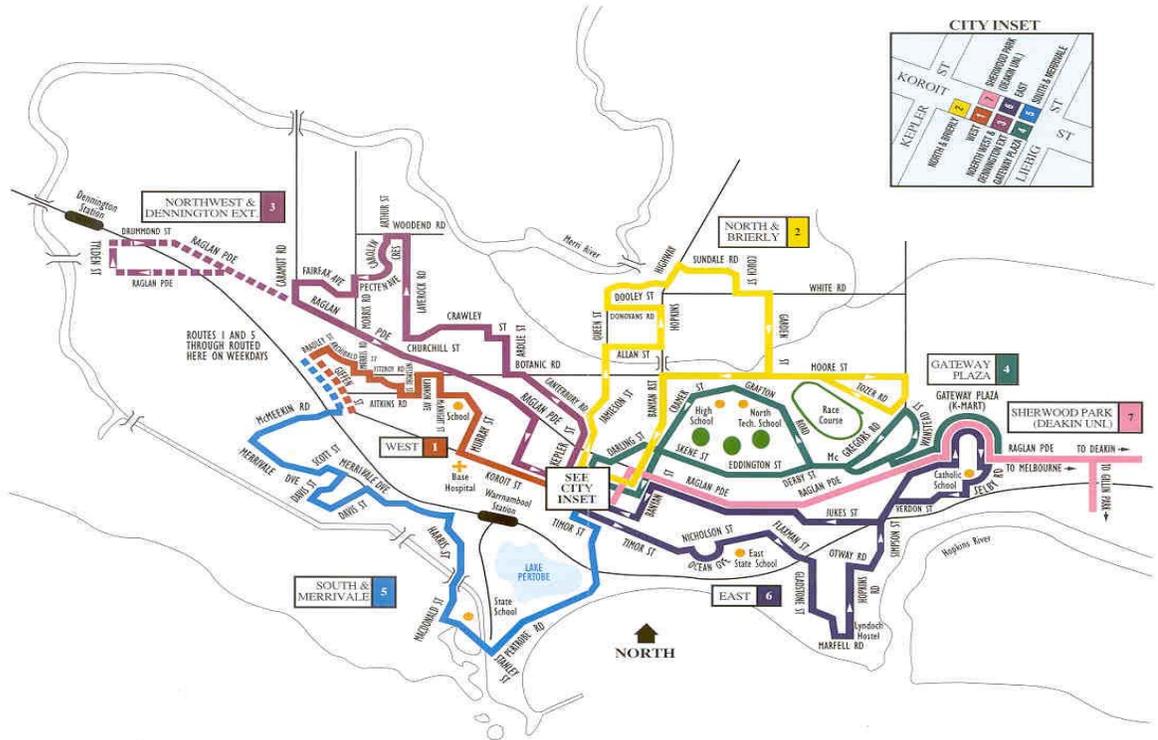
During the week, the route services primarily operate on an hourly frequency, commencing after the school peak and finishing around 6.00pm. On Saturdays, most services have three or four runs, with an hourly frequency and the last service finishing before 1.00pm. There are no Sunday services. Dennington and Allansford, growing suburbs on the western and eastern edges respectively, have considerably fewer daily services than are provided to most areas (4 compared to 8-10 to most areas on weekdays with no Saturday services to Dennington and Allansford).

Service frequencies are lower and the span of hours is shorter than in Metropolitan Melbourne. Saturday services are also lower in Warrnambool, and Sunday services non-existent.

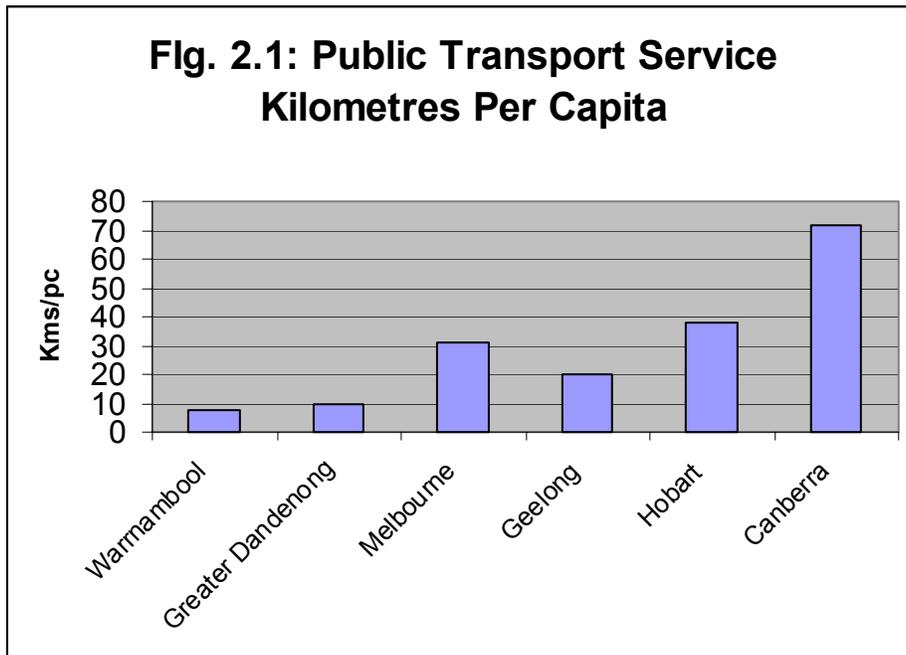
Bus service provision can be looked at in terms of the **amount of service provided** relative to population size (vehicle kilometers per capita). Warrnambool has 266,000 vehicle kilometers of route bus service for a population today in route service areas of about 34,000, or about 7.8 vehicle kilometres/per capita. This compares to about 10 in the Greater Dandenong area, an area encompassing the very fast growing outer suburb of City of Casey, with low levels of public transport service, as well as the central area of Dandenong, with much higher service levels. Bus services in the Greater Dandenong area have poor frequencies in the growth areas, poor weekend service availability and poor weekday service spans, which is similar to the Warrnambool service characteristics.

Figure 2.1 broadens the comparison and shows that Warrnambool has a relatively low level of service provision compared to a number of larger centres. Its service level is closer to that in outer suburban Melbourne, where the need for improved service levels is recognized by the State Government’s Melbourne 2030 Strategy (Booz Allen Hamilton 2002), than to the other centres shown.

WARRNAMBOOL NETWORK MAP



Map 2.1: Warrnambool Route Services



If all the route and school bus services (including shuttles) are combined, the end result is a total of about 25 vehicle kilometers per capita per annum of service available in the wider Warrnambool area (excluding V/Line), which is about 6 kms/p.c. below the figure for metro public transport services provided in Melbourne as a whole. The main difference is that the Warrnambool outcome is very heavily geared towards school student travel, where the services are for particular users and are not available to any user wishing to travel, whereas the Melbourne services cater for a wider range of users and travel purposes.



The Koroit Street bus interchange

Figure 2.2 shows **boardings** on each of the Warrnambool urban bus routes in 2003, based on ticket sales plus passenger transfers data. Total boardings were 163,000 in that year, with the most highly patronized services being North West, Gateway Plaza, East and Deakin (all exceeding 20,000 boardings for the year). The services with the lowest patronage levels were the “Other” services in Figure 2.1, these being the limited worker specials run to Fletcher Jones and Nestles and a connection to the station. It is suggested that the two special worker runs be reviewed to understand why patronage has decreased, investigate whether other work locations can be encompassed in this run or whether the runs should cease. The connection to the station only counts those people traveling between the station and Koroit Street. Most people will board elsewhere and will be therefore counted in their longer route trip. Apart from these very minor services, the West service and South and Merrivale service are the two that stand out as having the poorest patronage performance in aggregate terms.

Patronage can also be looked at in terms of **boardings per vehicle kilometer (BVK)**, to get around the problem that low patronage on any particular route may be due to low service kilometers. Figure 2.3 shows BVK for the Transit Southwest routes, arranged in descending order. The best patronized route is Gateway Plaza at 1.13 BVK. This is very similar to the average BVK for all Melbourne route bus services (1.16), as identified in Melbourne Bus Plan (Booz Allen Hamilton 2002). Both the North West and East

services also exceed 1.0 BVK. The Other and West services are again ranked lowest in patronage terms, as they were in the aggregate patronage analysis. South and Merrivale is also on the low side. All other services equal or exceed 0.66 BVK, which is reasonable for a centre of the size of Warrnambool. These data suggest the ‘Other’ services need to be closely examined for justification and ways of increasing patronage should be pursued on the West and South and Merrivale services.

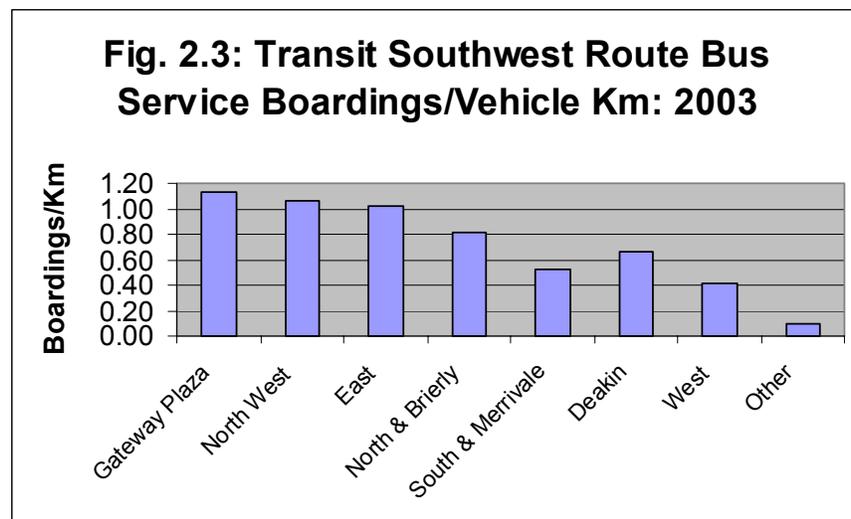
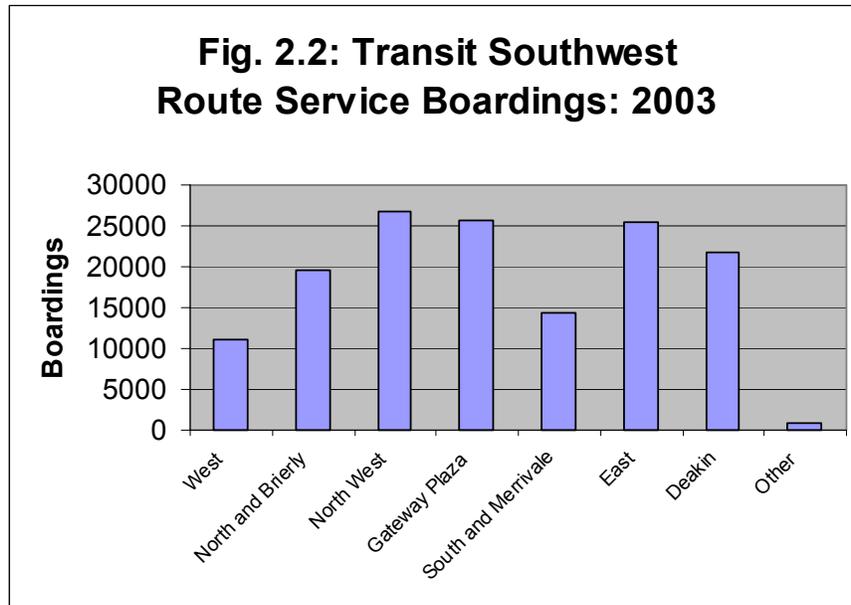
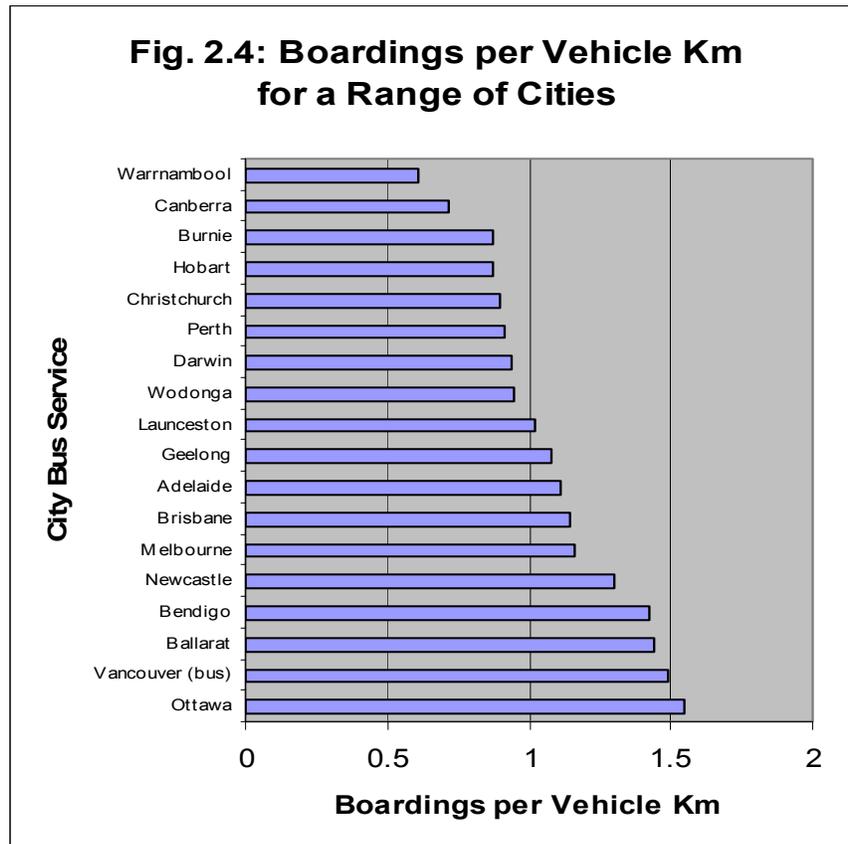


Figure 2.4 shows Warrnambool lagging behind a range of cities shown in terms of BVK¹. However, except for Burnie, those cities are all considerably larger than Warrnambool and there is no doubt that a scale effect exists in public transport patronage: small urban areas find it hard to achieve the critical mass in service provision to attract high loadings. Equally, service levels in Warrnambool have been shown to lag those in Melbourne, for example, which itself has a relatively low level of bus service provision.



The Transit Southwest urban route services in Warrnambool are primarily used by pensioners and students. Ticket sales data² show pensioners accounted for 57.3% of tickets sold in 2003 and students a further 23.4%, these two categories representing over four out of every five tickets sold. This is higher than in Melbourne, primarily because the Warrnambool route services do not commence until after the student peak. This means that many workers simply cannot catch a bus to work, whether they would like to or not.

¹ The data in this figure was kindly supplied by Professor Graham Currie of Monash University Institute of Transport Studies.

² Excluding transfers (where customer type is not recorded).

2.2.2 School Bus Services

There are two major types of school bus service provided in Warrnambool area. The first is the free country school bus service provided for students living more than 4.8 kilometres from their school. There are 29 services to the Warrnambool Service Centre, with load capacity of 1,525 students a day and total eligible numbers of 1,471 as at April 2004^{3,4}. Numbers on the service have been increasing, with an additional 195 students this year. Based on a daily loading rate of 85% of the 1,471 eligible students (as estimated by the School Bus Co-ordinator at Warrnambool Secondary College) and assuming 195 student days a year, some 244,000 student return bus trips per year, or 488,000 one-way trips, are implied. Total daily distance traveled by the 29 services is 2,524 kms, or 502,256 kms per year (199 days).

Many of the students using these bus services transfer to a school shuttle service at Brauer College or at Warrnambool Secondary College. Typical daily numbers are 1,400 or about 273,000 boardings on these shuttles per year. The shuttle service appears to work very well and loading operations are undertaken in a carefully managed environment, as shown in the accompanying photo.

There are also school students taking trips on City School Bus services within the Warrnambool area. There are 19 such services, carrying an estimated 228,000 student trips over the course of a year (based on average daily loads in March 2004⁵). The vehicles performing this transport task travel an estimated 106,000 vkms/year.



The well-managed load/transfer point at Brauer Secondary College.

³ This is 96.5% capacity utilization if full, which is indicative of a well-run program, a view supported by the Warrnambool School Bus Co-ordinator, who commented on the good relationship between bus operators providing the service and the school system.

⁴ The relevant contracts are held by South Western Roadways (13), Warrnambool Bus Lines (9), W. Christian (Terang) P/L (6) and Coles Coaches P/L (1).

⁵ 585 students/day*2 trips/day*195 student days/year.

2.2.3 Total Urban Bus Service Boardings

Using the information from sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, it is possible to provide an estimate of total annual bus boardings within Warrnambool for regular urban route and school services. This estimate includes several elements (latest year data):

urban route services = 163,000 boardings (266,000 vkms)

school bus services => country school bus trips = 488,000 boardings (502,000vkms)
=> shuttles = 273,000 (transfers of students from the 488,000;
distances are included in the school bus vehicle kilometres)
=> urban school bus services = 228,000 boardings (106,000 vkms)

Across all these services, total boardings are an estimated 1.15million a year (rounded), with about 85% of these being for school travel. These numbers include transfers, which account for about 47,000 urban route plus 273,000 country school service boardings, or about 28% of total boardings. Table 2.1 summarises this data in terms of public transport trips per capita. Total trips thus number about 830,000 from the 1,150,000 boardings.

Table 2.1: Public Transport Trips Per Capita in Warrnambool

Service Type	Trips per capita
Urban route	3.8-5.4*
Country school	13.9**
Country school shuttles	7.8**
Urban school	7.5
Total of the above	11.3 (urban only and excluding shuttles/transfers) to 34.6 (total boardings and all trips)

Note: * The lower figure is based on trips, which excludes transfers, and the higher on boardings, including transfers.

** The numbers for the school services assume 35,000 population, which makes an allowance for surrounding areas in the school bus catchment.

The far outer suburbs of Melbourne typically show about 36 public transport trips per capita (based on Victorian Activity and Travel Survey data) and the outer suburbs about 54 trips per capita, half of which are rail and half bus. The comparable numbers from Table 2.1 would be about 11.3 (urban route 3.8 + urban school 7.5

If the country school bus services are added (but not those transferring to shuttles), Warrnambool would still fall about 10 trips per capita below the numbers recorded in the far outer suburbs of Melbourne and about 30 below the number for Melbourne's outer suburbs. This reflects a high level of attachment to the private car in Warrnambool, where car access is easy, the lack of a peak hour journey to work bus service within the

Warrnambool service mix and the general shortage of public transport service levels provided.

2.2.4 V/Line Passenger Services

Warrnambool is well served by a range of V/Line passenger services, as shown by Map 2.2. The major regional services to/through Warrnambool are:

Warrnambool-Melbourne (three services daily each way, including weekends; mainly train)

Warrnambool-Casterton (daily service Monday to Thursday with a second service on Friday; a single return service M-F; bus)

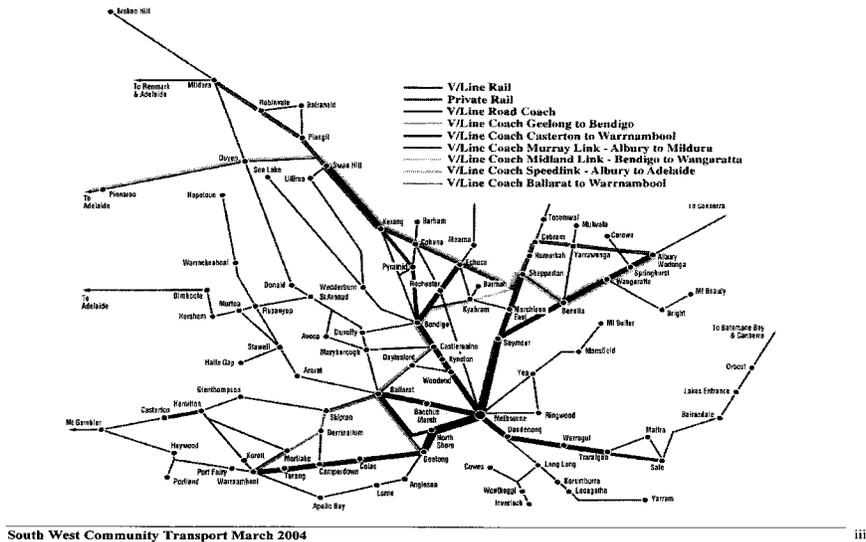
Warrnambool – Mt Gambier (one service daily, including weekends, with a second return journey on each day except Sunday; bus)

Warrnambool-Heywood (daily service except Sundays; return journey Tuesday to Friday; bus)

Warrnambool-Ballarat (daily return service except weekends; bus)

Warrnambool-Apollo Bay (Fridays, each way; connects with a service to Geelong; bus)

The regional V/Line coach services carry an estimated 50,000 passengers per annum, traveling an estimated 450,000 vehicle kilometers. The West Coast rail service carries about 300,000 passengers annually.



Map 2.2: V/Line Network

2.2.5 Smaller Town Services

Portland, about an hour's drive to the west of Warrnambool, has a population of about 11,000. It has a north and south transit run. Total combined route length is 19.5 kms. There are two 19.5kms runs on Monday, Tuesdays and Wednesdays (excluding public holidays) and four on Thursdays and Fridays (excluding public holidays). This suggests about 13,650 service kms per year, or about 1.2 kms/p.c. (assuming 11,000 population). The comparable figure for Warrnambool was 7.8kms/p.c., which was argued to be low.

Port Fairy (population about 2,540, swelling to about 10,000 at times during the summer period) has no town bus service. Three school buses already sit unused in Port Fairy during the day. While Port Fairy and Warrnambool have six daily connecting services during the week, there is a service gap in the afternoon, with no service leaving Port Fairy for Warrnambool between the 11.25am V/Line service and the 5.05pm service.

The only centre of any size within about a 45 minute traveling time band from Warrnambool that lacks any connecting public transport service to/through Warrnambool is Mortlake, a town of about 1,450 population. The very useful *South West Community Transport Directory* (SWCT 2004) indicates that the Mortlake Community Bus and Mortlake Community Transport are the only forms of public/community transport available in Mortlake, except for school buses.

The Hawkesdale corridor (Hawkesdale, Woolsthorpe, Winslow, Mailor's Flat, Woodford, Bushfield) also lacks public transport service connections to Warrnambool. Population numbers are growing in the corridor and a basic public transport service level should be considered.

Timboon (population about 1,000) has a once weekly bus service to Warrnambool.

2.3 Community Transport

2.3.1 Scope

A recent overview report on community transport (CT) in Victoria, prepared for VicHealth, comments that:

The context within which CT sits is not clear. There are numerous definitions of CT in use, different levels of awareness about who it should serve, a variety of services in operation, and a number of contributing policies that support the provision of CT services indirectly (Carlisle, 2003, p.4).

That report notes that many people define CT in terms of Health and Community Care (HACC) funding criteria, since this is the primary funding source for CT. A better reflection of the wide scope of CT is provided by Ashby et al:

Community transport makes the community accessible to people, deals with people's local needs, achieves an improved responsiveness when compared with conventional public transport, supplements public transport, provides specialized local transport services, meets community needs, provides diverse service types. It is also not for profit, supported by a variety of funding sources, primarily aimed at the transport disadvantaged, de-centralised, operated by local government in conjunction with other providers (Ashby et al, cited in Harris, 2000, p.9).

This more inclusive definition is in line with the approach of the current study.

2.3.2 Some Regional Examples

Discussions were held with a range of Community Transport (CT) service providers in the region. These discussions included some providers whose transport task was auxiliary to the main function of the agency. Some relevant examples are:

- Emmanuel College: the school has a 28 seat bus that is only used for school purposes but not for transporting children to/from school. It is not hired out. Five to six staff are able to drive the vehicle. The vehicle did almost 12,000 kms in 2003;
- Warrnambool Council: has a 20 seat community bus that has a wheelchair lift and is air conditioned. It is mainly used by the Adult Day Centre and is available for community groups at the weekend. This vehicle is typically used six days a week and does about 35,000 kms a year, a high usage rate. Day Centre drivers drive the vehicle. Council also uses the vehicle for some of its own purposes (e.g. the Youth Department);
- Red Cross: only do patient transport. The service has used volunteers' cars but now uses a Red Cross station wagon. Sometimes the vehicle is required to go to Geelong or Melbourne. The Red Cross pays for the vehicle and uses volunteer drivers and there is no charge for use. However, there is a need to plan ahead as the booking office has limited opening hours: 1.30pm to 8pm on Thursdays and every second Monday, 7.30am to 11.15 am;
- Lyndoch (retirement centre): has a vehicle with less than 12 passenger seats, for its own use. This vehicle does about 8,000 kms/year. It has a wheelchair lift and seat belts;
- Gundjitrara Health Service: have a small bus and have just purchased a second one. The vehicles are used for programs run by the Centre, such as a Wednesday recreation program, Thursday cultural activities, Friday swimming group, camps, HACC, trips, etc. A cultural group of 40-45 also sometimes uses the vehicles. Vehicle use of the initial bus is a high 30,000 kms/year;
- Karingal Inc: this group, which works with people with a disability, has a 10 seater Toyota bus with wheelchair lift, which is used during the day for programs (not for picking up/taking home participants). The vehicle is available for outside use and is hired (for a fee) about once a month. The vehicle was funded by a State Government program, Futures for Young Adults;
- Koroit and District Memorial Health Services: has a 16 seat Toyota Coaster with wheelchair access. The vehicle is mainly used by a day centre. It is hired to local

groups (e.g. Scouts, Red Cross) at weekends and late in the day, with about 2-3 hirings a month being typical. Annual use is about 6,000 kms. The vehicle collects people, takes them on outings and takes them home. Most funding has been locally sourced;

- Mortlake Community Bus: this 10 seater vehicle provides a monthly trip to Warrnambool and weekly transport for Senior Citizens. It is available for hire to community groups within Moyne Shire. Examples of the vehicle's usage pattern are: Monday =seniors; Tuesday = Abbeyfield for gentle exercises; Thursday = adult day centre; Friday = taking some seniors (5-10) shopping. Community groups such as the football club, bowling association, etc hire the vehicle at weekends. Typical usage rate is about 15,000 kms/year;
- Terang and Mortlake Health Service: this group has a Toyota Coaster which seats 16 and has three wheelchair spaces. It does about 7,000 kms/year, mainly within a 15 km radius of Terang. The vehicle used to travel further afield but other centres have now acquired their own vehicles (e.g. Camperdown, Cobden). The vehicle was HACC funded. It is driven by the gardener. The main use of the vehicle is to take people to and from the Terang Day Centre. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday it usually takes 35-40 and on Tuesday and Thursday about 25-30. Christians Bus Co. assists the Service with the accreditation requirements of the vehicle and it is inspected by RSI, the BAV's inspection company

2.3.3 Some Issues in Community Transport Provision

Carlisle (2003) summarises a range of service issues with respect to Community Transport:

- hours of operation: most services do not operate in the evenings or at weekends (similar to route bus services in Warrnambool), although private hire of vehicles is sometimes allowed at such times. Discussions with CT operators in the Warrnambool region suggest that such hiring is fairly limited, as illustrated above;
- medical appointments take priority over social contact, restricting the range of possible uses for services;
- under-utilised vehicles and transport services: lack of co-ordination within the CT sector and between this sector and conventional public transport means that vehicle utilization within the CT sector is typically relatively low. For example, a sample of vehicles operated within the CT sector in the broader Warrnambool region (some of which are outlined above) showed an average usage rate of 16,100 kms/year. However, about 70% of sampled vehicles did less than this and just over 40% did fewer than 10,000 kms/year. By way of comparison, the average usage rate of a school bus in the area is almost 26,000 kms/year and there is scope to increase this utilization rate, as well as to make use of the spare capacity available on the return journey of some school bus trips;
- investing in transport rather than vehicles: Carlisle argues that many clubs and activity centres have invested in vehicles and are then left to deal with all the operational issues (e.g. accreditation, insurance, driver training, etc). Carlisle suggests that this "money could be better invested in organizing suitable transport to

the locations needed by looking at the range of vehicles already available in the area” (p. 17);

- information provision: information on all transport options (CT plus public transport) is usually lacking, restricting use of available options. Few CT providers promote their services. The *South West Community Transport Directory* (2004) is a notable addition to the information available on CT services in Victoria’s South West;
- lack of networking across CT providers;
- starting and/or expanding a CT service;
- acknowledging real community transport need: HACC funding criteria are limiting and many transport/access needs are not covered by HACC criteria.

Some CT providers avoid the tightening regulatory restrictions by operating vehicles with less than 12 passenger seats. This is a safety concern, since accreditation requirements do not operate in this vehicle size range. Others work with their local bus operator who provides assistance in the accreditation area.

This Warrnambool study has observed most of the issues raised by Carlisle in her review, and UK experience is similar (SEC 2003). Reducing transport disadvantage in regional communities requires, *inter alia*, finding ways improving the contribution from the CT sector. This matter is considered in Chapter 4 of the report.

2.4 Taxis

Warrnambool has 19 licensed taxis, including three that are wheelchair accessible. This is about one taxi per 1600 people. The comparable number for Melbourne is one taxi per 1000 people. However, apart from about 200 new wheelchair accessible taxis, the fleet size in Melbourne has hardly altered over the last 30 years, even though Melbourne’s population has grown substantially over that time. Wodonga also has 19 taxis, in one of the fastest growing areas of the State: it has had the same number of taxis for many years, even though population has grown strongly. It is understood that there is no pressure from Warrnambool for the number of taxi licences to be increased at present, a situation that reflects experience elsewhere in Victoria.

Taxis play an important role in transport in Warrnambool and surrounds and appear to be well used. As well as the ‘one-off’ trips they provide, they are an established part of the ‘community transport’ network for some of those who are socially excluded, as illustrated later in Chapter 3.

The absence of pressure for new taxi licences in a growth area suggests over capacity and that taxis will be seeking to expand in other transport markets, such as community transport and low density public transport. The absence of a major market presence in such markets at present partly reflects fare levels that are far higher than those on route public transport services, which limits access by some transport disadvantaged groups to taxi services. It is to be expected that taxis will increasingly seek market opportunities by pursuing subsidized fare structures in these market areas.

3. Transport and Travel Surveys

3.1 Scope

This study is focusing on transport needs of those most likely to be transport disadvantaged in the Warrnambool area and seeking ways to cost-effectively improve service offerings to such people. Transport disadvantaged groups are typically summarized as follows: young people, seniors, those with a low income, young mothers with children, people with a disability and rurally isolated people. The study sought out groups in these categories with the aims of (1) gaining some insights into their travel patterns, (2) identifying their main travel needs and (3) exploring ideas about ways in which these travel needs might be better met.

The study also focused specifically on current bus users. As indicated in Section 1.1 of the report, this was both because of the BAV's particular interests but also because many bus users were expected to be transport disadvantaged. The study therefore sought to assess bus users' dependence on bus travel for social inclusion and to identify their priorities for service enhancements.

This chapter of the report outlines the findings from the various study surveys and consultations.

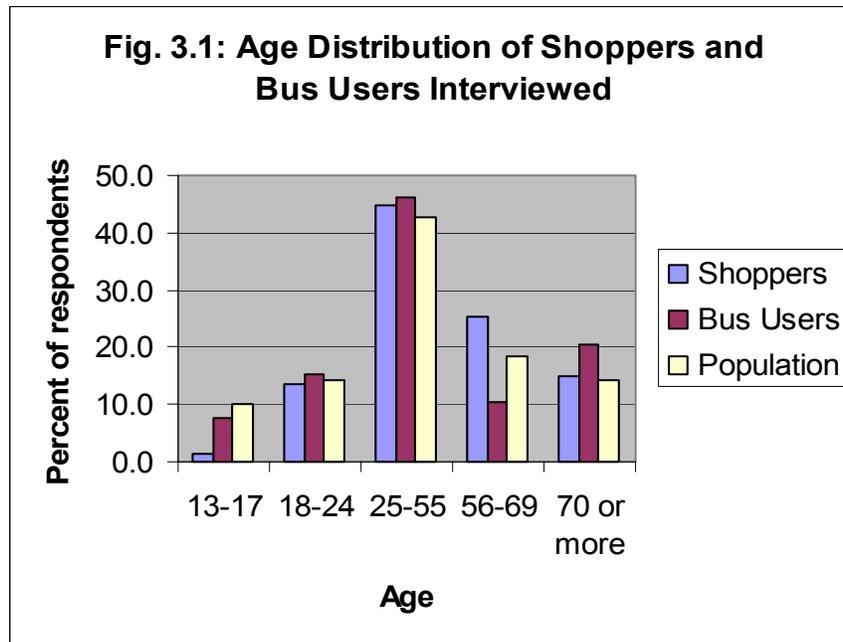
3.2 *Warrnambool Shopping and Bus Users' Survey*

3.2.1 Main Survey Findings

The study interviewed a number of people in the two major Warrnambool shopping centres and surveyed a number of bus users. Why report these together? Most people surveyed in the major shopping centres were car users, who are well served in terms of their travel requirements. In contrast, bus users tend to be transport disadvantaged. Comparing shoppers (mainly car users) and bus users should thus shed light on relative travel patterns and improvement needs of some transport advantaged and disadvantaged groups. This section of the report summarises the shopper and bus user surveys, more information being provided in Appendix A. The chapter then goes on to consider travel patterns and needs of particular transport disadvantaged groups.

Two locations were chosen for surveying shoppers: the Warrnambool central shopping precinct (36 interviewed) and Gateway Plaza (31 interviewed), some four kilometers from the central area. Thirty-nine bus users were surveyed. Of the 39 bus users, 32 were female, being a fair representation of the mix of bus users in the inter-peak period (when surveys were undertaken).

Young people were under-represented in the shopping survey, relative to both their presence in the shopping centres and the wider community, but much less so in the bus survey. Separate surveys of young people (later in this report) ensure that their access issues are covered. Bus users are notable in the 70 or more age group range (indicative of transport disadvantage) but are relatively low, compared to population size, in the 56-69 years age range.

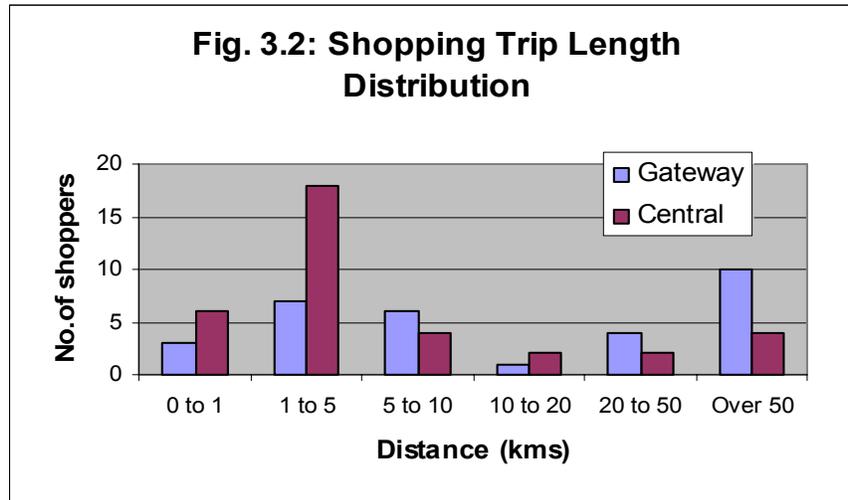


Almost half the shoppers traveled less than five kilometres to shop, suggesting that alternative modes of travel are likely to have been available. A significant number (over one in five) came from more than 50 kilometres away, some of these being tourists to Warrnambool.

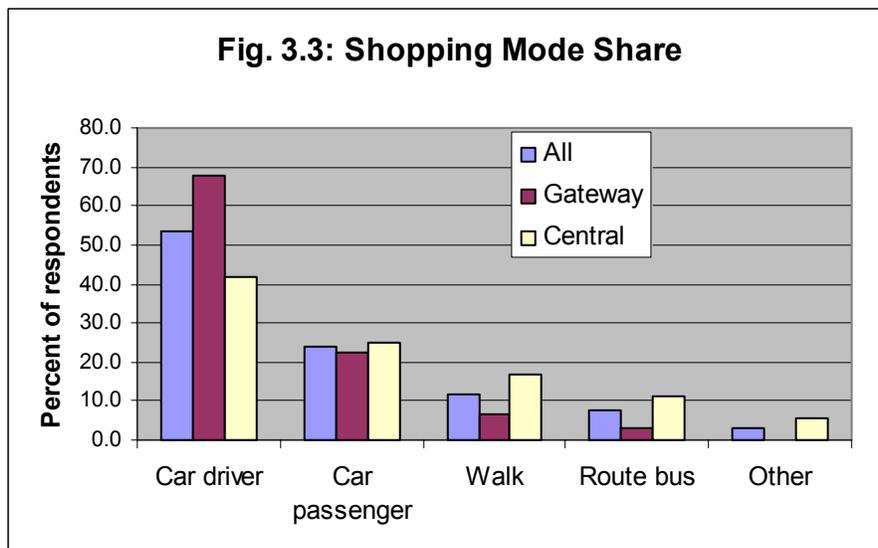
Gateway and central Warrnambool shoppers show different travel patterns (Fig. 3.2). Central Warrnambool had two-thirds of shoppers interviewed coming from within five kilometres. For Gateway, the proportion coming from within 5 kilometres was marginally less than one-third. The same proportion interviewed at Gateway came from more than 50 kms away to shop. Gateway is set up for car access and is playing a broader regional role in terms of shopping reach.

Car drivers/passengers accounted for 78% of shoppers interviewed, walkers 12%, route bus users 7% and users of other modes 3% (two people, one of whom was a multi-purpose taxi user and the other a school bus user). However, car use was relatively much higher among Gateway shoppers, accounting for 90% of mode share among interviewees, compared to 66.7% to central Warrnambool (Fig. 3.3). Walking and route bus use by shoppers accounted for only a small number of interviewed shoppers at Gateway. Car

passengers were a significant proportion of total car users to both destinations, emphasizing the social aspect of the shopping trip by car.



Walking and route bus use was much more common to the central Warrnambool shopping area, accounting for 16.7% and 11.1% of shoppers interviewed respectively. Two-thirds of shoppers interviewed in central Warrnambool traveled by car, still high but notably lower than at Gateway. Central Warrnambool had a higher proportion of older shoppers than Gateway (almost 20% aged 70 or more, compared to half this proportion at Gateway) and walking or the route bus were the means of access used by a number of these older persons.



Walking is relatively most significant for short trips, bus is important for trips in the 1-5 and to a lesser extent 1-10 kilometre ranges (reflecting the route bus network) and the car dominates longer trips. This partly reflects the lack of alternatives for such longer trips. Even so, nearly 40% of car trips were less than 5 kilometres in length.

The reasons why people chose particular modes of travel were examined in the survey (Table 3.1). For shoppers, convenience was the major reason for choice of mode (mentioned by 30/67 respondents). This result is consistent with the car being the major mode chosen.

Table 3.1: Reasons for Mode Choice

Reason	Bus Users (N=39)	Shoppers (N=67)
Fastest way	4	7
Most convenient (eg easy to handle shopping)	9	30
Cheapest	7	3
No car available	26	6
No alternative available	3	22
Always travel this way	6	9
Come with friend/s	3	0
Other reason (please specify)	12	17

“No alternative available” was mentioned by 22/67 shopper respondents. Of these, two were bus users and 20 were car users (15 drivers, five passengers). Of the 20 who were car users:

- thirteen travelled with another adult, emphasizing the social aspect of the trip/shopping activity for these car users;
- ten travelled further than 20 kilometres, making the car the only feasible choice. There were eight of the remaining 10 who lived within 10 kilometres of the shopping centre but who did not perceive public transport as a feasible option. Public transport is likely to have been available in proximity to many of these people, given the system layout, but it was not seen as a feasible alternative. Why? Five of these eight respondents mentioned convenience, speed (“fastest”) or habit (“always travel this way”) as main reasons for travel mode choice, which is a common characterization of the choice of car over bus in uncongested networks. (5/8 were interviewed at Gateway, which is more car-oriented than Warrnambool, which had 3/8).

“Other reasons” for mode choice were also important but only two particular factors stood out among the matters raised by these respondents: four who answered this way said they were picked up by a friend and three said they made their choice (walking) because it was good exercise.

The number of car users who see no alternative to this mode of travel for shopping demonstrates the strength of the car culture in Warrnambool (and elsewhere in regional Australia), with convenience the major factor underpinning this situation.

For bus users, “no car available” was mentioned by 26/39 interviewees, with four of the 12 who cited “other reasons” saying they did not have a driver’s licence and a further three (all aged over 70) saying they had “no alternative” at all. In short, nearly four out of five bus users chose bus because they could not, or chose not to, access a car. The bus is playing a vital access role for these people, emphasizing its importance in reducing transport disadvantage and associated social exclusion.

A distinct difference between those interviewed in the shopping centre survey and those interviewed on the route buses relates to whether the interviewee was traveling alone or accompanied. Some 47 out of 67 shoppers (over two-thirds) were accompanied, most by another adult (34/67), suggesting the car trip and shopping activity are both part of an opportunity for social interaction. However, two-thirds of bus users (26/39) traveled alone, about one in six traveling with another adult and another one in six traveling with pre-school aged children. The survey process indicated friendly interaction between bus passengers and bus drivers and between some passengers, suggesting that the bus is providing a means of access to social interaction as well as a direct input into the development of social capital for some passengers, even if a majority of bus users traveled alone.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of a number of transport services as they affected their lives. Shoppers rated “major roads” and then “minor roads” as most important, with average scores between “important” and “very important”, these being rated well ahead of other modes. This is to be expected with most shoppers being car users. Major roads were rated as slightly more important than minor roads. Responses on V/Line rating suggest that a number of people will use car for local travel but choose the V/Line service for longer distance travel (e.g. to Melbourne).

Bus users rate the importance of route bus services towards the “Extremely Important” level. This is consistent with the lack of alternatives perceived by a significant proportion of bus users. Bus users rate major and minor road conditions as less important (and less relevant) than car users, because they see the bus per se as their key transport mode.

Respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the quality of service provided by the various transport services indicated. Satisfaction levels with roads are in the “satisfied” direction, for both shoppers (mainly car users) and bus users. Shopper survey responses suggest that the route bus is possibly seen by a number of them as an “insurance option”, in the event that the private car is not available. The only satisfaction score that really stands out is the score given to bus services by bus users. The average rating of this mode was very high on the satisfaction scale.

needed. The relatively low response rate in terms of road improvements suggests that road conditions in the area are not of great concern to those sampled, a conclusion supported by the satisfaction scores. This is positive endorsement for the road management agencies. Most of those interviewed lived in urban Warrnambool, so this conclusion about road condition most properly applies to the urban area.

There was a large number of other road and road-related issues that were mentioned infrequently. Two respondents mentioned the need to upgrade the highway to Geelong but all other answers were only mentioned by single respondents, indicating no major concentration of concern.

A few people (including findings from discussions in other surveys as part of this study) expressed concern about pedestrian safety associated with the new roundabouts in the city centre, which need the pedestrian to predict which road the car is going to use to egress the roundabout. Crossing the main highway to reach a bus stop was also identified as a problem, particularly by elderly bus patrons.

3.3 Young People

Young people in regional areas are generally recognized as facing transport difficulties, especially if they live in remote locations. This difficulty arises, in most cases, simply because young people are too young to drive in a community where much activity is centred around car access. The limited operating hours of public transport in Warrnambool and lack of service penetration into rural areas leads to the expectation that young people group will be relatively transport disadvantaged and keen to acquire a car as soon as possible.

3.3.1 Secondary Student Surveys

To obtain insights into access issues for young people, discussions were held with four classes of secondary students. Two classes of students at the years 9, 10 or 11 levels at each of Emmanuel College and Warrnambool Secondary College (WSC) agreed to participate in group discussions about local access issues and to complete a short questionnaire about travel patterns and issues. Table 3.3 sets out questionnaire response summary data from the two schools.

Distances traveled to Emmanuel averaged over 40% further than to (WSC), probably reflecting the religious basis of Emmanuel and associated school bus transport practices, whereby students attending such schools are permitted to travel on a free school bus past the closest government school, to reach the school of their choice.

The dominance of the car for shorter travel to school stands out in Table 3.3. Two thirds of the surveyed students at WSC usually traveled to school by car and the share was half at Emmanuel. The car was used for 60% of trips to school in the 0-3 kms trip range by surveyed students at Emmanuel and by 40% at WSC. Car use drops off in the 3.1-9 kms

range at WSC, as some students join the school bus service, but increases in importance at Emmanuel. The sheer convenience of the car was the major reason cited by students for use of this mode. School bus travel dominates trips in the 10 or more kilometer length for surveyed students at both schools.

Table 3.3: Secondary School Student Questionnaire Results

Indicator	Emmanuel (N=41)	WSC (N=40)	Both Groups (N=81)
Av. Age (years)	14.7	15.4	15.0
Av. distance to school (kilometres)	11.2	7.8	9.5
Av. time to school (minutes)	22.0	17.1	19.6
Travel to school			
- car (passenger)	20	27	47
- walk	9	13	22
- school bus	16	13	29
- route bus	3	0	3
- bicycle	3	4	7
- other	2	0	2
Reason for mode choice			
- fastest	13	24	37
- most convenient	18	16	34
- cheapest	5	9	14
- no car available	1	4	5
- no alternative available	10	7	17
- other	10	12	22
Frequency of alternative ways of traveling to school (per week)	(17)	(20)	(37)
- once	6	6	12
- twice	6	7	13
- three times	1	1	2
- more than 3 times	4	6	10
Frequency of alternative ways of traveling from school (per week)	(30)	(22)	(52)
- once	15	8	23
- twice	6	8	14
- three times	3	1	4
- more than 3 times	6	5	11
Main reasons for alternative means of travel			
- sport	20	16	36
- visit friends	15	15	30
- employment	9	8	17
- other	14	9	23

Walking is common for trips up to three kilometres, accounting for about 40% of trips within this trip length range at WSC and nearly half at Emmanuel. Bicycle use was only

minor by surveyed students at both schools, as was use of the route bus service (which essentially does not begin until after the school peak).

The very significant use of the car for short trips stands out in these results. This reflects international trends for the trip to school to swing away from walking to the car. For example, Marco Viviani, consultant to the European Commission, has advised the study team that in Europe, 62% of children live within two kms of school. In 1975, only 10% of Italian school children aged 6-14 years traveled to school by car. By 2000 the proportion had increased to 40%. In the UK the comparable figure had increased from about 12% to 30%. 40% is now a typical European mode share for travel to school by car. Bicycle trips fall away dramatically at secondary school level in Europe.

The European Commission is concerned about these trends, given the association between lack of physical activity and obesity and between obesity and heart disease. Similar concerns were noted above in an Australian context. Ways of increasing the relative modal share of walking and cycling for travel to school should be encouraged.

The student survey showed that substantial numbers of students do not travel to/from school the same way every day, a pattern that will be familiar to regional residents. Some 17/41 Emmanuel students traveled in a different way to school than their usual way at least once a week and four did so more than three times a week. Split family arrangements are sometimes involved in such travel patterns. The number was even higher at WSC, with half the students traveling to school in a manner different to their usual way at least once a week and six doing so at least three times per week.

Travel home by an alternative means to the usual means is more common than travel to school by an alternative means. Almost three-quarters of Emmanuel students who were surveyed (30/41) and over half of WSC students sometimes traveled home in an alternative way to their usual way. The main reasons for this change in mode were to participate in sport, to visit friends and to go to employment, in descending order of frequency.

The trip diaries suggested that students made about 3.6 trips per day midweek (Tuesday; this equated to 1.65 return trips), 3.8 on a Saturday and 2.7 on a Sunday⁶. Students living more than 10 kilometres from school made about one-quarter fewer trips per capita than those living closer, suggesting relative transport disadvantage of regional location.

3.3.2 Other Consultations Concerning Young People's Transport

Discussions around the subject of transport for young people in the Warrnambool area took place with a range of people with a particular interest in young people⁷. There was a view expressed by the majority in these discussions that young people have considerable unmet transport needs in the area. They are seen as highly dependent on parents for

⁶ These are trip legs as distinct from round trips.

⁷ For example, the Access Officer in Port Fairy, the Moyne Shire Youth Officer, the Local Learning and Employment Network Director in Warrnambool and the School Bus Co-ordinator.

transport, particularly outside bus operating hours, and make little use of bicycles. The consultations revealed common concerns around several issues.

Young people's access to education programs

Young people are now offered an educational alternative to the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), called Vocational Education and Training (VET). This option necessitates one or two days a week away from school to attend TAFE and on-job placements taken as a block or on the basis of one or two days a week. The study team was advised that there are about 400 young people doing VET in Warrnambool and surrounds. About one-third of these young people do not have a workplace placement and many have little choice about their placement, particularly if they face transport problems. There are seen to be better opportunities in Melbourne for this course: the further away from Melbourne, the less likely young people are to attempt or complete this educational option.

Transport is viewed as a big problem for young people seeking to pursue this educational option as travel patterns tend to be individually based between school, TAFE and their work site. In addition, industries such as motor mechanics or hospitality often have early starting times. One solution has been the provision of a shuttle bus service between Warrnambool College and TAFE for VET students. This travels on a Thursday and the cost is borne by the school. Students are also dropped off at Deakin University when bus seats are available. Volunteer drivers are used to assist young people in rural areas but again there is a shortage of drivers.

Planning of VET and related programs in regional Victoria should, as a matter of course, include accessibility planning, to maximize the potential value of the programs offered to young people.

Young people's access to work

Young people often have trouble getting to work in Warrnambool. There is a particular problem for young people taking apprenticeships, as they are often too young to drive and have to work odd hours, hours that fall outside the operating hours of the route bus system. The policy on the use of school buses by apprentices who are under driving age, is unclear. This concern about transport difficulties for young people was graphically illustrated by one interviewee who advised us that Centrelink have told some young people looking for work that there is no point coming here looking for a job unless they have a driver's licence. It was also underlined by consultations with secondary school students, some of whom were frustrated about being unable to obtain a holiday job because of a lack of transport.

Despite the shortage of labour in the dairy industry, young people are moving out of the industry, even though there are few alternative options for those on farms. For those seeking employment, the timing of shift work makes options in the food processing industry difficult for those who are not car drivers. Retail and hospitality industries also

frequently operate outside the operating hours of route bus services. Access to employment or further training for young people appears to raise considerable concern in some community members and the high youth suicide rate in Warrnambool and surrounds was mentioned in this context.

One consequence of the access problem is that some young people, particularly those outside of Warrnambool, move out of home at a younger age than would otherwise occur. It also means that many young people drive as soon as they possibly can. The combination of a relative lack of driving experience, the need to drive to take part in activities and the distances involved in some regional activities contributes to road safety concerns, as mentioned in Section 2.1 above.

Limited transport for rural young people is said to be limiting their understanding about possible options for their future as they have reduced exposure to potential opportunities. The youth worker in Moyne Shire is organising day trips to increase young peoples' exposure to cultural opportunities and future work possibilities.

Some of these access difficulties for young people would be eased if the route bus service started earlier and finished later, if young people doing apprenticeships could use the school bus system and if a reduced system, or some variant, could operate during summer holiday periods.

Young people's access to entertainment

Access to entertainment is seen as a particular issue for young people living in Port Fairy, with Warrnambool being the main base for entertainment. There are reported to be problems of boredom, with some associated social issues. It was said to be difficult for young people to get to Warrnambool on a Friday and Saturday night for entertainment. There was not a great deal of awareness amongst those working with young people about the bus which travels between Port Fairy and Warrnambool on a Saturday night. This bus leaves Port Fairy at 6.45 pm, arriving at Warrnambool at 7.20pm, with a return pick-up at Warrnambool at 1am. The bus is available for all potential passengers but is mainly used by young people. In the past six months, there has been an average of 8.4 passengers to Warrnambool on this bus, and an average of 6.3 on the return 1am trip to Port Fairy.

Ability to be involved in sport was difficult for some young people because of transport difficulties, an issue mentioned by a couple of people. For example, Winslow, 20 kilometres out of Warrnambool was an area where some children were unable take part in sport because of lack of transport options.

Hawkesdale, where there is a consolidated school and the Hawkesdale/Mortlake areas in general, were seen to be another area which had transport problems for local young people. There is no bus service to Warrnambool.

3.3.3 Conclusions on Young People

Based on the student surveys and consultations undertaken in this study, key priorities for improving access opportunities for young people should include the following: (1) provide earlier route bus services and extend them into the evening hours, to provide more options for access to/from after school activities and for work travel; (2) provide route bus services on Saturday afternoon and evening, until at least 10.00pm at an hourly frequency, with a subsequent demand-responsive service operating until 2.00am; (3) improve marketing of the Saturday evening service between Port Fairy and Warrnambool; (4) develop Sustainable Travel Plans for secondary schools and tertiary institutions, aimed at increasing the modal share of walking, cycling (including bike paths to schools) and route buses for health reasons, as well as increasing the range of educational options available to young people; (5) implement driver education programs for young people; (6) increase the availability of the free school bus service for young people traveling to post-secondary education and to work; (7) provide a reduced school bus service, or variant, during the summer period to enable young people (mainly the rurally isolated) to access work and recreation; (8) improve the integration of planning for alternative secondary level educational programs to provide access options for participants.

3.4 Deakin University Students in Residence

3.4.1 The University

East of Warrnambool, on the south side of the Princes Highway, about six kilometers from central Warrnambool (bus terminal) is Deakin University's Warrnambool campus. There are about 1,000 students at the campus, about 240 in residence. There is also privately run accommodation for about 50 students adjacent to Deakin. The University hosts a University of the Third Age, which has about 40 people involved.

At present about 30% of Deakin Warrnambool students come from Melbourne but this proportion is reducing as the intake increases from elsewhere. A total of 45 international students attend Deakin at present and approximately 22 of these are live-in students. About 50% of the students in residence leave the campus for weekends.

Total Deakin student numbers increased by about 100 last year, as they have been for the past four years, and the campus is planning for continued growth. They are interested in international students and accessing students from the outlying regional area. They hope to give 30 residential scholarships to people from the region coming from lower socio-economic backgrounds. There are also plans to develop a TAFE/University course, the first two years being undertaken at TAFE and the final two at Deakin.

Because of the significance of Deakin in, and to, the Warrnambool community and the concentration of trip patterns it involves, it formed a focus of this study. Particular

attention was paid to the travel needs of students in residence, since these were known to be a source of some concern. A small number of students were surveyed and separate discussions were held with a group of students, the Residential Manager and with the Personal Assistant to the Pro-Vice Chancellor.

3.4.2 Some Transport Issues from the Study Consultations

Most student transport is car-based, students either owning a car or taking lifts with other students, often paying a small fee. There are 145 dedicated student car parking spaces associated with student residences, which are fully used. There are also 1,173 free car parks available on site for day users at Deakin. The University is interested in getting a train station at the front of the campus, as the train to/from Melbourne passes the site.

Deakin has a weekday route bus service of 10 buses a day, service span being 8.48am to 5.53pm, providing approximately an hourly service. The Deakin Student Association has an 11 seat bus, the use of which was not discussed during this study. The taxi fare between the University and central Warrnambool is about \$10 one way or \$12 to \$13 after 8.30pm.

Some community events have been held at the Deakin location for secondary schools and a festival. However, the study identified some concern about the lack of transport accessibility of the campus for these activities, for people living in Warrnambool and wishing to use public transport.

University opening hours and route bus times of operation are not ideally aligned. A gym is open until 7.30pm in the evenings and a computer laboratory is open until 10pm. Some classes are held in the evenings. The library was open early in the evening on some nights, but there was not strong demand for use. The library is open from 2.00pm to 5.00pm on a Saturday and Sunday, with no public transport available. The library is available to TAFE students but there currently little public demand for use.

The Residence Manager identified Asian women students as being the most transport disadvantaged of those in residence, as they are the least likely to ask for lifts from other students. International students more generally identified transport as a problem, tending to be less car orientated.

Some international students found public transport, particularly the V/Line train to Melbourne, to be too expensive, as they are not eligible for a student concession ticket. The cost is \$82 return and they usually have to stay in a motel when in Melbourne.

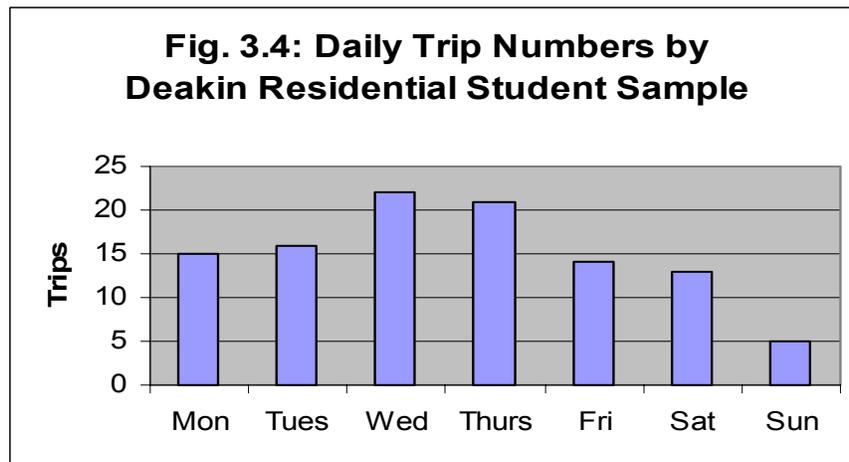
For a few students, the connection between the V/Line train service and Deakin was a problem, particularly on a Sunday. Also, the Saturday train gets in to Warrnambool just after 12 noon, when the buses stop. It was estimated that between 10 and 20 students would use a bus which connected with the train on a Sunday night to access the campus.

A couple of students had concerns about walking in winter from the bus stop to their residence from the last bus in winter.

3.4.3 Survey of Students in Residence

As noted above, the campus has about 1,000 students attending on a regular basis and 240 living on campus in residential accommodation. Thirteen students living on campus agreed to keep travel diaries for one week in May, to provide an indication of travel patterns. While this sample size is small, it does give a feel for how students move about the area and for some of their access issues.

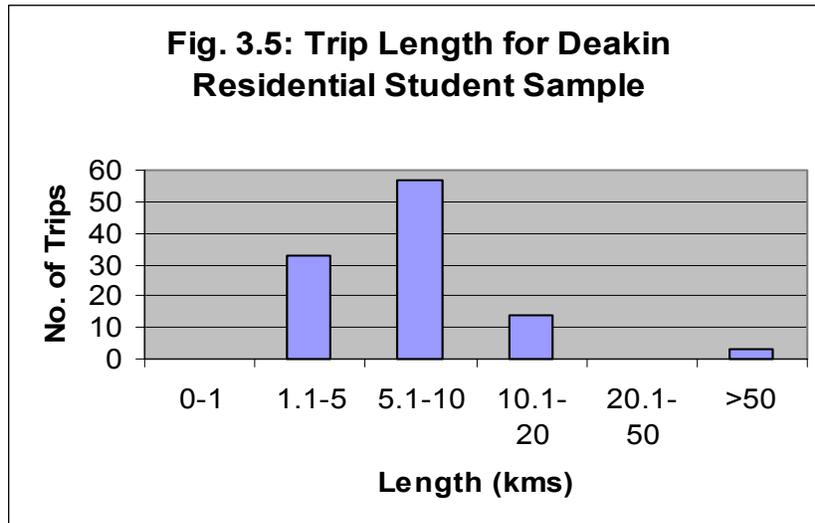
The 13 students undertook a total of 104 return trips off-campus over the course of the survey week, an average of 1.14 return trips per student per day. Figure 3.4 shows the daily trip numbers, with Wednesday and Thursday standing out as having most movements. Trips off-campus are somewhat less common early in the week and on weekends, when domestic students often return home. Wednesday is traditionally “pub” night for students and Thursday is a favoured shopping day. During survey week, Thursday was the day of the Warrnambool Cup, this event attracting large numbers of students. Just how typical the high Thursday travel numbers are is thus open to question.



Off-campus trip purposes are dominated by two trip types: recreation, which accounted for 60.8% of trips, and shopping, which represented a further 26.5%. Going to work was only a minimal reason for off-campus travel.

The private car dominated mode choice for travel by those students who were surveyed. Some 66.3% of trips were taken as a car driver and a further 21.2% as a car passenger (a high proportion). If two taxi trips are added as car trips, 89.4% of trips were made by car. Route buses accounted for 8.7% of trips and only one trip each was made by bicycle and walking.

Figure 3.5 shows trip length for the trips undertaken by students. The most common trip was in the 5-10 kms range, mainly being trips to central Warrnambool. Gateway Plaza is the main location in the 1.1-5 km trip length and there were no trips to locations within one kilometer. The longer trips (>50 kms) were trips home for the weekend.



In the absence of route or other bus services meeting the recreational travel requirements of students, which tend to be night-time oriented, use of a student's own car or sharing a ride with others is seen as the only option. Only 36% of trips were taken by students traveling alone. Ride-sharing is common, with one in two trips being taken by a group of three or more. Students frequently share the costs of a car trip. Some drivers feel obliged to be part of this communal self-help program and find the task somewhat onerous at times.

Students were asked whether they had any difficulties with trips they made during the survey week. One-quarter indicated they had some difficulty. The main difficulties noted were:

- poor frequency of public transport;
- having to rely on others;
- being expected to take others by car.

Students were also asked whether there were any trips they would have liked to make but could not make because of transport difficulties during the survey week. Over one in three indicated they had such difficulties, with later weekday buses being again suggested as a solution (especially if lifts are not available)

There was an overwhelming feeling among students that travelling was very easy if you had your own car but difficult without. For overseas students, the difficulties are

compounded by the lack of travel concessions. With Deakin continuing to pursue growth in its international student base, there are grounds for the State Government to review the travel concession situation. Overseas students bring significant economic benefits to regional areas and ostensibly minor irritants like the lack of travel concessions, once they are here, should arguably be removed⁸.

Students were asked to indicate their priorities for transport improvements in the area. The most frequent response, provided by over half the respondents, was for more frequent route buses between Warrnambool and the Deakin campus, with more evening services (7/12 respondents to this question), Wednesday night services geared to “pub” night (leaving the campus at 10.00pm and returning at 2.00am) and, to a lesser extent, Saturday services (to 10.00pm), being high priorities. Other factors mentioned were for better connections between buses to Deakin and the Melbourne-Geelong train, transport concessions for international students, improvement in traffic lights in Warrnambool (no details provided) and cheaper taxis.

No surveys were undertaken with Deakin day students in this survey but a survey undertaken by Deakin is reported below. However, if route bus frequencies were improved as proposed by residential students, it seems probable that day students would be the major beneficiaries, given their much larger numbers.

3.4.4 Deakin’s Survey

Deakin University has been concerned about the transport options for people wanting to travel to/from the university. The Division of Student Life (DSL) has very recently undertaken a survey to gauge the demand for an after hours bus service. The DSL conclusion from that survey was that there is a need to provide a regular shuttle bus service on Saturday and Sunday to various destinations between Deakin and Warrnambool. The need for an after hours service during the week was less clear.

As a result of that survey, DSL is proposing a trial service with seven runs on a Saturday afternoon/early evening and five runs on a Sunday, to fill gaps in the route bus service timetable. The proposal is for the university to meet part of the costs of the service.

3.5 Seniors

Section 2.1 pointed out how the numbers of persons aged over 60 are expected to grow quickly in Warrnambool in coming years and how the numbers with a disability are also expected to grow. The transport needs of these groups will become increasingly important in regional accessibility planning in coming years. The study sought

⁸ The findings about international students having particular transport difficulties are reflected in a marketing plan undertaken for Deakin’s Warrnambool campus (Lawrence 2003). This report found that one barrier around the desired expansion of international students was a lack of transport. This impacted on work and recreation opportunities, as well as contributing to lowering opportunities for student involvement with the Warrnambool community and increasing the risk of social exclusion.

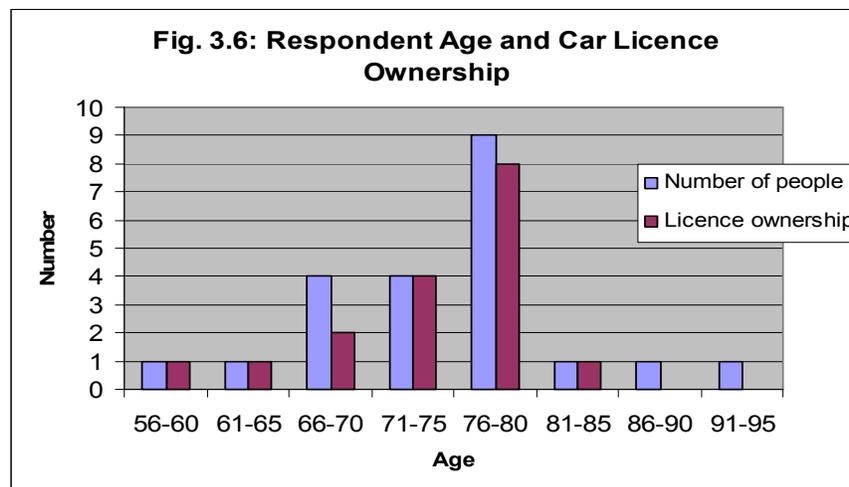
information to shed light on current needs of these groups and how they might develop in coming years.

3.5.1 Travel Questionnaire

Seventeen households of older people completed a travel questionnaire. These people were sourced from those who returned a random letter-box drop of questionnaires (ten respondents), three households from Senior Citizens at the Archie Graham Centre and four households from the independent living section of the elderly citizen’s complex, Lyndoch. As with the Deakin survey, numbers are small but sufficient to provide some insights into travel patterns and needs.

The households comprised six couples, eight single females, one single male and one mother and son (plus one respondent who did not give household information). Excluding the younger male and the one where age was not given, the average age of the 21 people covered by the survey was 79 years, with respondents ranging from 57 years to 94. The group thus tended towards the older age ranges. Only the mother and son in one household were engaged in some paid work, both working part-time. All but four of the 17 households had at least some income from a pension or benefit. Only four people included in this group did not have a driver’s licence (Fig. 3.6) and these four were all aged over 65 and living in single person households.

The average regional trip rate per person (i.e. excluding trips made outside the region, except for the outwards and inwards legs of such trips) was nine return trips per week in this survey of seniors, or 1.3 per day, which is marginally higher than the number made by Deakin residential students.



Within this total, however, there is some variability between the three sub-groups, as follows (bearing in mind the concern about very small sample sizes):

- seniors who responded to the household questionnaire (n=10) = 1.6 regional journeys per person per day, with an average of 3.6 trip legs per person per day, once activity patterns are accounted;
- Lyndoch independent living respondents (n=4) = 0.6 regional journeys per person per day, with 1.3 trip legs on average per person per day;
- Archie Graham respondents (n=8) = 0.8 regional journeys per person per day, with 1.8 trip legs per person per day.

In short, the more independent seniors had higher levels of mobility and appear to have been involved in a wider range of activities.

Considering the three groups together, 92% of trips were made around Warnambool, 4% were made to Warrnambool by someone living outside Warrnambool, 2% were made to a near region, 2% to a far region and one trip was made to Melbourne. Thus most trips were of a short distance, 35% being less than a kilometer and 52% between one and five kilometers. Only 3% of trips were over 50 kilometres.

The four households without someone with a driver’s licence tended to go out much less often than those with a car in the household. These people averaged just over three trips per person per week, which is very low, although a person with an electric scooter made six trips over the week. Those with a car in the household averaged ten return trips per person per week. This is a substantial difference in relative level of accessibility.

Table 3.4 sets out mode of travel for the trips made by the surveyed households. Some five in every six trips (84.4%) were made by one or other form of “personal” motorized transport, with walking accounting for a further 13% and buses 3%. Nearly 9% of trips were made by two people who had disabled scooters. Community buses and route buses each accounted for three trips.

Table 3.4: Travel Mode Used by Surveyed Seniors

Travel Mode	Share of Trips (%)
Car driver from household	63.0
Car passenger using non-household car (non-taxi)	11.2
Scooter	8.7
Taxi	1.5
Total Personal Motorised Transport	84.4
Walk	13.1
Community bus	1.5
Route bus	1.5

Most trips were made for recreational/church/community type reasons (63.4%), with activities including visiting family members, attending a hobby group, visiting a sick

friend and arranging the flowers in the church. Some 18.7% of trips were for shopping and one in seven (14.2%) were for personal business. Other trip purposes were minimal. 28% of trips included more than one activity.

All of the households without a car consisted of single people, three living independently at Lyndoch and one elsewhere in Warrnambool. Three for whom age was known were over 80 years of age and three were on a pension. Apart from the person with the scooter, who achieved good mobility with this aid, they all had mobility and associated accessibility problems, even the two who lived in a retirement village. An examination of the travel patterns of these few people is illustrative of some of the mobility/accessibility issues involved.

Household 1: Consisted of a single 94 year old. She made six trips for the week, three on her disabled scooter and three with relatives who picked her up. She used her scooter to travel to destinations up to five kilometers away. She states she has no transport problems using her scooter as long as the weather is good, otherwise she will take a route bus.

Household 2: This household consisted of a single person aged 89 years. He made four trips for the week, using three different transport modes: taxi, voluntary transport for medical appointments and her family. He finds it easier to ring and order his shopping requirements and get things delivered than to shop personally, as he has difficulty walking. He says he is isolated and lonely and took the taxi trip to a shopping centre in order to meet people.

Household 3: This household consisted of an 82 year old who made two trips by route bus for the week. This person said they had trouble with the steps on buses as they used a walking frame and would like to see more ramps on buses.

Household 4: Age unknown. This person made only one trip out for the week, by taxi. However, she stated that she occasionally caught the bus but has trouble with this due to an arthritic condition. She stated that some elderly people living near her were very isolated and felt there should be some sort of bus service to a local retirement village. This person seemed to have significant concerns about accessibility to transport.

Twelve people responded to a question asking about the importance of various aspects of travel and their satisfaction with the aspect. The seniors believed, on average, that major roads were both relevant and very important (Table 3.5). Also of relevance to most, and very important, were V/Line services. Minor roads were seen as relevant by nearly all the seniors but only of moderate importance. Route bus services were relevant to half the respondents, who rated them as of moderate importance.

As well as being important, satisfaction was high with both major roads and V/Line services (Table 3.6). In contrast, only three out of the 12 households believed that route buses were relevant to them in terms of satisfaction rating. The only household which rated route buses as very important and expressed satisfaction with the service, was the household with the only person who used the route bus during the survey week. It is interesting to note that this person also had a disability.

Table 3.5: Mean Importance Rating of Various Transport Modes/Services

Mode	Seniors (Total=12)
Minor roads	1.4 (N=10)
Major roads	2.9 (N=12)
School bus services	1.0 (N=5)
Route bus services	1.5 (N=6)
V/Line services	3.1 (N=10)
Air services	1.1 (N=9)

Note: The figures in brackets are the number who said a particular travel aspect was relevant to them. The average importance scores for any particular mode/service relate only to those who indicated the relevance of that mode or service.

Table 3.6: Mean Satisfaction Rating of Various Transport Modes/Services

Mode	Seniors (Total=12)
Minor roads	2.0 (N=8)
Major roads	2.6 (N=10)
School bus services	1.0 (N=2)
Route bus services	1.7 (N=3)
V/Line services	3.3 (N=9)
Air services	3.0 (N=4)

Note: The figures in brackets are the number who said a particular travel aspect was relevant to them. The average importance scores for any particular mode/service relate only to those who indicated the relevance of that mode or service.

The need for familiarization with bus travel comes out very strongly in this survey. Those who travel on buses are commonly very satisfied with the service, while those who do not use the route bus service tend to hold opinions which may be based on experience from some time past. An example here is an opinion expressed by a number of non-bus users that buses do not keep to their time-tables, an opinion which, for the most part, does not reflect reality. The transport accessibility officer in Moyne Shire, in response to considerable concern about safety issues in relation to some aged people who were still driving, organized a “familiarization with buses” day for seniors at Port Fairy. She commented that the seniors were surprised at how easy it was to use the bus.

3.5.2 Other transport information

Some seniors regularly attend a Day Centre program. For example, 40 to 50 people a day attend the Day Centre at Lyndoch for rehabilitation or dementia services. They travel to and from Lyndoch by shared taxi, the cost being covered by disabled taxi cards and a very large subsidy from Lyndoch to cover the balance of the trip fee. Those attending rehabilitation largely travel a short distance, the longest distance being Allansford, while

those attending the day program for Psychogeriatric services come from a slightly wider catchment area.

In addition, programs of visiting services are available for the elderly. The agency, Karingal, offers in-home support for about 100 aged people. They assist with activities such as shopping or social outings. This is done on a brokerage basis, where the service is purchased and paid for by the State Government's aged care program. Service staff use their own cars and are paid a rate per kilometer traveled. Lyndoch also operates a visiting service for those in more isolated regions, operating with 12 case-managers.

Visiting services are an important means of providing essential services for isolated people without transport access and/or who may be physically unable to travel. However, they tend to be expensive to operate and there is a lower frequency of service than could be provided at a central location. In addition, while a visiting service provides contact with a professional, peer interaction and more casual socializing is not available, suggesting less value from the service to the user in terms of social capital.

Finally, a particular transport gap was mentioned by a couple of people, where there is a need to attend a medical specialist in Portland. There is reported difficulty in traveling Warrnambool/Portland return in one day by bus. This particular issue may be resolved by the specialist/s offering a service in Warrnambool. However, there are some more general community concerns about the frequency of services between Warrnambool and Portland. Warrnambool Bus Lines has already made a submission seeking an additional daily service to Portland, which would leave Warrnambool station at 4.10pm, filling a nine hour service gap.

3.5.3 Conclusions on Seniors

In summary, most of the seniors who were surveyed felt that they did not have much trouble getting around. The main exceptions were the three without access to a car in their household and who did not have a scooter. However, the high reliance on the private car for travel purposes raises safety concerns in a community where the numbers of aged are increasing and remain active (thus wishing to drive) at an increasingly older age. The impression was gained that, while the elderly who were unable to drive were well catered for in relation to essential services, through visiting service programs, this group of people appears to remain relatively socially excluded, lacking the mobility options to socially engage with other people.

3.6 *People with a Disability*

Chapter 2 of the report indicated that an estimated 5,550 people in Warrnambool had a disability in 2001, with this number projected to increase to 6,810 by 2010, partly associated with fast growth in the older age groups. That chapter also noted that mobility issues are a problem among people with a disability. The study included a number of people with a disability, to explore their mobility/access issues.

3.6.1 Response from the Questionnaires

Travel diaries (covering one week each) were completed by six people who attended the Archie Graham Day Centre in Warrnambool⁹. The household members had a wide age range, though tending to be in the senior years. One was in their 30s, one in their 40s, four in their 50s and three were over 80 years of age. All except one household lived less than five kilometres from the town centre (and the Archie Graham Centre). One person, the sole car owner, drove from Port Fairy to attend the Day Centre. All nine people were not in paid employment and were in receipt of a pension.

The six survey respondents made 33 return trips during the surveyed week, an average of 5.5 trips per person (0.8 return trips per person per day, the same as were made by the other seniors interviewed at the Archie Graham Centre, reported in Section 3.5.1 above). All six people took a similar number of trips. All the trips were within Warrnambool, with the exception of the one person who drove from Port Fairy. The participants averaged about half the number of return trips undertaken by those seniors who had a car in their household (from Section 3.5.1) but undertook more activities per round trip (1.3) than did those other seniors who did not have a disability (1.1 activities per round trip). Major trip purposes were recreation 52% and attending day centre 45%.

Survey participants used a range of travel modes, as shown in Table 3.7. The car was much less significant for interviewees with a disability than for any other group, with walking, route buses and, to a lesser extent, community buses, increasing in relative importance.

Most of the trips (26/33) were in the 1 to 5 kilometre range. Only one trip was less than one kilometer, two were between 5 and 10 kilometers and four trips, by the person with a car, were between 20 and 50 kilometres in length. Walking was more common for those with a disability (almost one quarter of all trips) than for other categories of people surveyed in this study (though samples sizes are small).

Table 3.7: Travel Modes Used by Survey Respondents Having a Disability

Mode	Number
Car passenger (including 2 volunteer car drivers)	12 (31%)
Walk	9 (23%)
Route bus	7 (18%)
Community bus	4 (10%)
Car driver	4 (10%)
Taxi	3 (8%)

⁹ A total of nine people lived in the households in which diaries were completed: one household had two men with a disability; a second household comprised a mother and two adult children, all of whom had a disability; one person lived at the Lyndoch retirement village; the remaining three people lived by themselves.

None of the respondents appeared to believe transport accessibility was a problem and none appeared to suffer the isolation of those seniors who did not have access to a car in their household. Indeed, those at the Archie Graham Day Centre appeared to be well off for transport availability, as they had considerable community support. Some examples of travel patterns are illustrate this support.

Participant 1: Person is over 85 years of age. This person had six trips over four days, attending the Archie Graham Centre on three days. The person used the community bus, taxis, the route bus and friends, in their car. When using the route bus, the bus driver takes the person across the road.

Participant 2: This participant is under 50 years of age. The person went out every day using the route bus service or walking. On Sundays they caught a taxi as there is no bus service. The person attends the Archie Graham Centre twice a week, visits a relative to care for her, shops and goes to Church on Sunday. The participant says that their house mate (who does not attend Archie Graham) appears to have some transport problems.

Some verbatim comments on transport issues identified by respondents were as follows:

- I don't have any transport problems as a friend says to ring her if I need a lift.
- I would use the bus if the stop was closer (84 year old)
- I would like a bus on Sunday as a taxi costs me \$9.
- No transport problems as I can get around well, but sometimes petrol is a bit expensive (car driver).
- I don't need any improvements in transport. My brother takes me if I need extra shopping; otherwise I walk down to the shops locally.
- No transport problems.

3.6.2 Information from interviews

Information was sought from some of the agencies in or close to Warrnambool which offer services to people with a disability. The discussion below illustrates the kind of issues that are of relevance for improving accessibility.

Karingal offers services for seniors and those with an intellectual and/or physical disability. Eighteen of their clients are wheelchair based, most living with carers. Karingal has one mini-bus, which is used for transporting people in wheelchairs. The Karingal Manager believes that Warrnambool caters well for this group of people who use buses or taxis. Less well served, in his view, are those living outside Warrnambool. This group is heavily reliant on taxis.

Karingal co-operates with other agencies in sharing a taxi for people living out of town who need to be picked-up, indicating that there is already a measure of co-ordination occurring between service providers. Other people use family and friends to assist with transport. At times staff use their own cars to transport clients. Karingal subsidises

people who come in from a distance (e.g. disabled taxi card holders – about \$100 month). It was indicated that transport can be a real problem for these people: program time can be reduced up to two hours a day, due to waiting for transport. There were thought to be enough maxi cabs in Warrnambool to cater for needs.

A couple of the more independent clients with a disability use the route bus service. One client uses the school bus to come to Warrnambool but there is concern that this service availability may not continue, as it is two years now since the person left the special school and age restrictions may lead to exclusion from this transport mode.

A program to familiarize Karingal staff and clients with the route bus service may increase travel options available for people with a disability in the area.

Access has a day centre which employs four staff, catering for about 14 people a day and encompassing 20 different clients in a week. The clients come from Warrnambool, Port Fairy, Grassmere and from farms. Access spends a great deal on taxis and organising transport for participants takes up a lot of staff time.

Access has two buses, a 12 seater and a seven seater which can take a wheelchair. These are funded by DHS and the service is ‘topped-up’ from other sources. The buses are largely used for outings during the day. There is a logistical problem that 18 passengers cannot fit on the two buses, so one or two people sometimes have to walk or take a taxi to an outing.

3.6.3 Conclusions about people with a disability

The study team gained the impression that there were strong support services available for those with a disability who live in or close to Warrnambool and that they are relatively well catered for in relation to transport. The contact at the Day Centre, and the associated transport, reduces their isolation. Some also appear to have friends, family, and/or carers who assist with transport. Despite this support structure, some also independently use the route buses and say they would use it more if it was available (e.g. Sunday service, closer bus stops). Indeed, it appeared that some people who used the disabled taxis service could have managed the low floor buses. However, issues such as prejudice/embarrassment may have inhibited this use – issues which are not likely to be addressed without the better integration of transport for people with and without a disability.

Those with a disability who live outside Warrnambool tend to face greater problems. Service cost is high for longer distance travel, covering the time involved and taxi fares. There is already some collaboration between services at the operational level, helping to deal with transport problems. There may be opportunities, however, to further improve service co-ordination, including a broader range of community service agencies, to enhance access options for transport disadvantaged groups. This may assist to reduce the apparent high costs of providing transport, especially to areas outside Warrnambool.

It should be noted that the surveyed group attended a Day Centre. It is possible that there are other people in the community, and especially in the more rurally isolated areas, who are not in touch with a Day Centre service and are facing greater transport problems, being more socially excluded.

3.7 Major Employers

While major employers are not likely to be considered as transport disadvantaged, some of these employ people who might be expected to fall into one or other of these groupings. Also, major employers provide examples of more concentrated trip destinations, which may provide an opportunity for cost-efficient public transport service provision. Under current bus service arrangements, where the focus is on the trip to/from school and a day route service, the journey to work by bus is not a significant public transport travel market.

3.7.1 Midfield Meats

Midfield is a major export abattoir. Five years ago, Midfield employed about 300 staff. Today there are 600 staff over two shifts and numbers are expected to grow by perhaps a quarter over the coming five years. This represents huge growth. About 90% of output is exported. There is commonly a labour shortage at Midfield. Providing greater transport opportunities for staff may assist in easing this problem.

The large morning shift runs from 6.00am (about 400 starting at this time, before the bus services commence; another 120-130 start at 6.30am) to 4.00pm and the afternoon shift (80 people) operates from 4.00pm to 1.00am. Most administration staff commence at 8.00am (about 34). The major means of travel to work, as estimated by the company, are car, walk and bike. Approximately 190 vehicles per day (+/- 10) are parked around the site, with an estimated 250 people traveling in these vehicles daily. The numbers walking is thought likely to be similar to those using cars, many walking long distances.

The company considers that an early morning bus service, arriving at about 5.45am, might attract good patronage. This would need to be accompanied by possibly two return journey times in the 4.00 to 4.30 pm period, except for Wednesdays, when there is a 1.00pm knock-off time. The company indicated a willingness to promote such an initiative and to survey staff to assess numbers of prospective users. Bus Association Victoria prepared a relevant short survey form and distributed it to the company but this task proved difficult for the company to manage.

3.7.2 Dairy Farmers

Dairy Farmers is a major milk processor located east of Allansford, producing cheese and milk powders, about half of which is exported. The company receives milk from some 600 suppliers, from locally and as far away as Ballarat and South Australia. Employment is 230, operating over two shifts. In high season, numbers reach about 330 but are down to about 40-50 in low season. In the last five years there as been a 40% to 50% growth in

production, translating to a growth of 20 to 30 staff on-site. It is interesting to note that some Deakin students come to the Factory to eat in the well-priced restaurant.

Almost all the employees drive to work, partly because of a lack of alternatives. However, the existence of a number of shift times means that prospective passenger loads are not highly concentrated, reducing the prospective efficiency of public transport servicing. The most concentrated shifts are the 8.30am start for administration staff, where service times somewhat with the peak school loads, and 5.00pm finish for the same people. Improving route service options to Alansford should help to capture part of the journey to work market at Dairy Farmers.

Dairy Farmers receives a large number of tourist visitors, especially during the summer holiday period. 2,000 people visiting during the first week in January is not uncommon. Even in July, weekly numbers are high because of the plant's location at the end of the Great Ocean Rd and groups like whale watchers visiting the area. The company sees benefits in the development of a tourist public transport map of Warrnambool region, including key destinations like Dairy Farmers, supported by a promotional campaign to encourage use of public transport by tourists. This might lead to a dedicated public transport tourist route at peak periods.

3.7.3 Hospitals

Warrnambool has two major hospitals, Warrnambool Base Hospital and St John of God. St John of God is a 70 bed hospital (50 for overnight and 20 for day-stay) that employs about 150 staff. It does not take out-patients but there are specialists' rooms on-site. The hospital typically has about two visitors per overnight bed. Most patients at St John of God Hospital are privately insured and use private transport to/from the hospital. Some patients can get taxi vouchers from Veteran Affairs for travel to and from the hospital.

The Warrnambool Transit route service does not go past the hospital but is within easy walking distance. Most of those who work at the hospital drive or walk to work. The hospital uses the Rural Ambulance Service to transport patients as needed, such as transferring people to another hospital or to home. Such usage is less than once a week.

Warrnambool Base Hospital has 155 acute beds and 34 psychiatric beds. The hospital has 600 staff, with over 300 nurses. Because most staff are on night/day shift work, most use their car for reasons of convenience and, to some extent, safety. The hospital laundry has a 7am start and administration works 8.30am to 5.00pm.

The age of patients who attend Warrnambool Base Hospital is increasing, as people are staying home longer. Patients attending outpatient and specialist services arrive by private car or taxi. Senior hospital staff expressed the belief that the elderly may not be capable of boarding a route bus. Staff had limited knowledge of the timing of the bus service or what services were available. They made the suggestion that placing the timetable in the local newspaper would be useful.

Red Cross Transport service is available for a gold coin donation for those who book the service and who live outside Warrnambool. Where people have no transport and are unable to book a taxi, the hospital will pay for the taxi.

Public transport is currently not significant for hospital staff, visitors or patients. More widespread marketing of services, together with operation of new services that are geared more to morning and evening work times, were thought likely to encourage an increase in use of route buses for work trips by hospital staff, within the constraints imposed by shift times.

As the regional population ages, relative car dependency will fall. This trend, together with the introduction of more ultra low floor buses, should also lead to greater use of the route bus service to/from hospitals by visitors, provided system marketing is improved. If evening services are added, with the last trip having the possibility of small route diversions to drop some users at home (e.g. older, less mobile people visiting inpatients at hospital), demand potential should grow.

3.7.4 Conclusions on Major Employers

The start and finish times of the current Warrnambool route bus services are not suited to work trips. It is no surprise, therefore, that very few work trips were by route bus at 2001 census time (see Section 2.2). However, our discussions about transport issues facing young people and review of the transport opportunities associated with major employers suggests that renewed attention should be devoted to this trip purpose. Selected services that begin before 7.00am and are targeted at major employers should be trialed, with a service to Midfield Meat being an early priority. If all route services on weekdays were to commence at 7.00am, this would better cater for the journey to work. Similarly, last bus runs timed at 7.00pm would better provide for the trip home from most workplaces.

3.8 Lower Income Groups

WAVE is a community renewal project in Warrnambool, based just east of the Racecourse. Discussions were held with a residents' committee and project facilitators, to shed light on access issues faced by people on lower incomes in Warrnambool and surrounds. The major transport issues raised in these discussions are set out below.

1. The lack of availability of route buses to and from work is a concern. The first local bus into this area starts at 8.20am and is a school bus. Some drivers will take adult passengers, others will not, so there is no certainty of travel. The service is not available during the school holidays. Some work shifts start at 7.00 am and TAFE starts at 8.00am. Young people cannot get to the early supermarket shift for work by public transport (8.00am).
2. One mother needs to accompany her son who has a disability to school, but she is not allowed on the school bus, so alternative transport has to be arranged.

3. A more frequent service to get to Allansford is seen as needed for both work opportunities and meeting primary school children. A parent spoke of how she has to leave the bus to pick up her child from school and then wait for the next bus to travel home.
4. While interviewees indicated they would not use Sunday buses regularly, they would like buses put on for special events on a Sunday (eg. buses for the Speedway, Warrnambool show, events within the grounds of Deakin University) as these Sunday events are very difficult to access. There would be a need to advertise that buses have been put on for any such events (e.g. radio, the Standard paper). Interviewees would like to be able to buy a discounted family ticket for travel to/from these events.
5. The purchasing of a student concession card comes at the time of the year when there are lots of school expenses. Interviewees would like to be able to pay for this card in installments. It is also seen as a very tortuous process to get a ticket – the process could be streamlined. Mention was made that those on Austudy cannot get a concession and the concession cannot be used for the Met in Melbourne. Interviewees also saw inequity in the way travel to school is priced: the school bus service is free if you live more than 4.8 kilometres from school but you have to pay if you live closer.
6. The two-hour bus ticket is also found to cause a problem for many people. If business/activities extend beyond two hours, another ticket is needed. With an hourly service frequency, a two-hourly ticket leaves little time to accomplish tasks and return within the time band. A visit to the doctor, for example, could involve a three hour round trip.
7. The cost of train travel is of concern to low income people. For example, one person has to take a child into Melbourne for medical treatment. While her son can get concession travel, she has to pay full price for herself and other children. She now drives in because it is cheaper. A second comment on the cost of the V/Line service was that it was expensive compared to Melbourne to Ballarat and the train was thought to be ‘filthy’.
8. One person, due to a disability, had trouble managing the bus steps.
9. Some bus drivers were perceived to have a bad attitude towards customers.
10. There are a lot of young single mothers without cars in the area. Not only do they believe that the bus service is too limited to meet their needs, they also have trouble getting on and off the bus with prams. Access to child care is also a problem for them as there is no child care service in the area. All these issues place limits on their educational and employment opportunities. The lack of access to transport also limits their recreational choices.

Based on these discussions, the study team concludes that people with lower income, as seen in people who live in the Wave Project area in Warrnambool, appear to be at

considerable risk of social exclusion. Possible options for dealing with issues raised include extending the route bus span of operating hours to bring in work trips, adding services on Saturdays, extending the ticket period of currency to three hours, bus driver training in customer relations and allowing student concession cards to be paid in installments. Provision of bus services for special events is also a possibility, however marketing would be critical.

3.9 The Indigenous Community

The Indigenous community is spread throughout Warrnambool area and there are small communities at Heywood and Hamilton. It was estimated by the Gunditjmara Health Services Manager that there are about 600 to 700 people in the community. A smaller group of 70 to 80 indigenous people is based at Framlingham and another community at Terang.

Indigenous people feel uncomfortable using route buses due to racism and reactions from other passengers. They often prefer to walk a greater distance than take public transport. Families typically share a car, with about one car per 20 people. The Indigenous Community Centre has a large bus and is presently purchasing a second one. The bus is used for programs around the Health Centre and to take people to camps and other events. Car usage and car safety is an issue for some young people. This is being addressed by a program to teach young people car driving skills. It appeared that Indigenous people were at great risk of social exclusion having multiple risk factors. They were particularly found to be transport disadvantaged, many living in rurally isolated areas, having low car ownership and often a low income.

A program run by the local bus operator and council with the local Indigenous community, to encourage greater use of the route bus service, allied with a community awareness program related to issues of racism, should be considered. It is suggested that, as with 'Seniors' week' when bus transport is free, this idea could be duplicated for the Indigenous community to encourage bus familiarization. There is a plan to organize a cultural awareness program for the police. It would be possible to add a day for bus drivers, to assist them in handle any racial prejudice that might arise. The provision of extra bus services (longer hours and extra rural services) should also assist the Indigenous community.

3.10 Rurally Isolated People

Some people living in rural areas experience social exclusion because of a shortage of transport opportunities (i.e. they experience transport disadvantage). The study team found it difficult to obtain detailed information on this issue (partly due to reasons of exclusion). Discussions were held with five people working with rurally isolated groups in either Warrnambool or Moyne municipalities. This has helped to shed some light on relevant matters. A number of concerns were raised.

1. Young people. Particular problem areas noted were young people living on dairy farms and those involved in VET courses (see Section 3.3.2 above). Lack of transport options for rural young people during school holiday times was a particular concern.
2. Transport for shopping. Shortage of public transport to Warrnambool from outlying towns was a concern. This means that some people coming into Warrnambool by bus are stuck there all day, because of a lack of options for the return trip. Rural Access Workers see a problem of lack of transport options more generally, not just for shopping, in the Shires of Moyne and Glenelg.
3. Transport for the aging population in outlying towns is a particular manifestation of transport problems faced by some older persons.
4. Young mothers. Koroit is considered to be poorly served in lots of areas, including transport, and it is reported that there are many young mothers who are isolated. More frequent bus services between Koroit and Warrnambool would be beneficial to this group and others.

A number of people/groups in the regional community are currently searching for solutions to these types of problems. Measures to address the problem of isolation are typically taking the form of the use of community buses to meet specific needs.

The Glenelg Primary Care Partnership has organised a community bus to transport young people on Friday and Saturday nights. However, this task is not without challenges: it is difficult to get volunteer drivers to work on Friday and Saturday nights; also, the transportation of a bus of exuberant young people is sometimes not a very popular activity for some volunteer drivers.

These two examples illustrate the initiative already being applied in the more isolated parts of the Warrnambool region to identifying regional accessibility needs and providing solutions in areas where significant needs are identified. The State Government's Transport Connections initiative, under which the work in Port Fairy is taking place, could provide a state-wide umbrella for such initiatives. However, this Warrnambool study has indicated that further effort should be devoted to the processes for investigating access needs in regional areas, including the more isolated parts of those areas, and for initiating solutions to the major access issues identified. Chapter 4 includes some proposals for widening the approach to regional accessibility planning.

3.9 Tourists

Warrnambool has a strong tourism sector and a number of people with whom discussions were held during the course of this study mentioned the merits of more closely integrating the tourism sector with route bus services. This is not really an issue of transport disadvantage but it provides an example of the importance of taking an integrated approach to transport needs assessment if benefits from transport

improvements are to be maximized. The findings from discussions with tourism interests are thus included in the spirit of taking an integrated approach.

The possibility was mentioned of a “Round Warrnambool” bus route which would encompass tourists and route bus users. This idea should be explored further for both Warrnambool and Port Fairy. It could be modeled, for example, on the service in Curitiba, Brazil. Here route buses do circuits that take in tourist sites (duration takes about two hours) with bus frequency every 20 minutes at each stop. Passengers can buy a designated number of stops, using the ticket to get on and off as they please, for the day. Possible destinations in the Warrnambool area might include Logan’s Beach, Cheese Factory, Hopkins Falls, Lake Pertobe, etc

Another idea being promoted is to extend the Great Ocean Road label, such that a visitor might go via the coast from Port Campbell to Warrnambool, stay overnight at Warrnambool and then go back on an inland route.

3.10 Bus Drivers

The on-board passenger surveys reported in Section 3.2 revealed how important the role of the bus driver is in delivering a reliable and enjoyable bus journey for customers. The fact that drivers frequently assist older and other passengers is seen as an essential element in such people using the service. Lyndoch staff referred to the value of the bus service when drivers could be contacted and alerted that they had to pick up a particular person to attend Lyndoch. Also, the fact that one driver saw an elderly person across the road, seemed to be a critical factor in the decision for that person to travel by bus. Although not bus users themselves, senior staff at the Warrnambool Base Hospital noted that bus drivers are very helpful in assisting people on and off the bus. Conversations with the driver were seen as especially important for some people, of varying ages, performing an important social inclusion function.

The drivers know many of their passengers well and were thought likely to have a good perspective about the types of service improvements that would be well received by these people. Fifteen bus drivers completed survey questionnaires, providing their views on a range of service improvement related matters¹⁰.

Drivers were asked to indicate what they thought were the best aspects of Warrnambool’s route bus services. The four replies that were most frequently mentioned were: the wide area coverage (most frequently mentioned), the regularity of the service (2nd most frequently mentioned), friendly and helpful drivers (=3rd most frequently mentioned) and vehicle quality (=3rd). Ways in which it was thought that route services could be improved were by: (1) introducing additional low floor vehicles, (2) providing weekend

¹⁰ All 15 drivers drove school bus services at some or other time, 9 drove route buses, 8 did V/Line work and 10 did some charter work. They thus cover a wide range of service offerings.

services, especially on Saturdays, and (3) providing later and earlier services on weekdays¹¹.

For school bus services, the best aspects of the services were seen as: (1) reliability, (2) driver quality; (3) area coverage and (4) vehicle quality. There was not nearly the same degree of agreement about ways to improve the school bus service as about ways of improving route services. No single suggestion received more than three mentions and most were only mentioned by one respondent. It could be inferred from this that school bus services are already of a high standard. The suggestion that was mentioned three times was for bus stops to be made safer, which reflects the reality that this is the place where accidents are most likely to occur involving the traveling children.

Drivers were asked about improvements they thought would be likely to encourage increased bus use by several types of people. These groups of people, and the most commonly mentioned improvements, were:

- Seniors = increase the number of low floor buses; increase service marketing geared to this group;
- Young people = provide later services and weekend services (especially Saturday);
- People with a disability = increase the numbers of low floor buses; improve service marketing;
- Mothers with young children = increase the numbers of low floor vehicles;
- Tourists = improve service marketing geared to tourists, including providing drivers with information about current events; and,
- Workers = provide earlier and later buses.

Extension of bus services into new areas is an important part of improving the sustainability of travel choices in regional areas. Drivers were asked their views on priorities in this regard. Dennington to the west and the area near Kings College and Whites Rd in the north-east were the key areas singled out. This is in line with the growth priorities of the Warrnambool Land Use Strategy. Improving services between Warrnambool and its nearby major towns was rated as the second most important need, followed by increased service to those towns around Warrnambool which presently lack service. Improving connections to the V/Line train service was rated as the least important of the four choices offered to driver respondents.

Service spans of operation, including both hours per day and days of the week, were questioned. Drivers thought that extending weekday services to about 8.00pm and providing an extended Saturday night service were the highest priorities. Earlier starts were rated next, with introduction of Sunday services rated as the lowest of these service option priorities. Responding drivers were quite receptive to the idea of allowing minor

¹¹ While having drivers self-assess themselves as one of the best aspects of the service might seem a somewhat “biased” response, it was clear to those undertaking on-board surveys that the customers generally (though not universally) regard the drivers highly for their friendliness and helpfulness.

service deviations on the last trip of the day, to drop people at home and some raised the possibility of a demand responsive service for Saturday evenings.

The major themes coming through this set of ideas are the customer appeal of low floor buses, the importance attached to improving marketing, geared to particular types of customers, the need to extend services into growing suburbs and the possibility of providing more flexible services on the last run of a night-time.

3.11 Other Households

3.11.1 Households who completed the questionnaire

Ten households who did not belong to any of the “transport disadvantaged” groups covered by this study, completed a travel survey questionnaire¹². The households comprised 23 people, ranging from eight to 60 years of age. The structure of their households is shown in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8: Household Structure of Other Households who Completed the Travel Questionnaire

Structure of household	No. of households
Husband & wife	4
Mother and one child	2
Husband, wife and one child	2
Husband, wife and two children	1
Single male	1

Five households had at least one person in full-time employment, and the other five had at least one person in part-time employment. All households had at least one person with a driver’s licence, only one eligible adult not having their licence. Six households had one car and four had two cars. Most lived six kilometers or less from the centre of Warrnambool, six of these households living two kilometers or less from this area. One household lived in Port Fairy.

All ten households completed a daily travel diary, with households averaging 2.4 return trips per day. This is equivalent to one return trip per person per day. Nearly three-quarters of these trips were taken around the Warrnambool area. A further 21% involved travel between Warrnambool and a near region. Table 3.9 shows over half the trips were five kilometers or less in length.

¹² The survey covered matters such as travel patterns, trip rates, assessment of travel options

Table 3.9: Trip Length for Trips by Other Households

Trip Distance (kms)	Number of trips this distance
Up to 1 km	18.8%
1.1 – 5	36.9%
5.1 – 10	20.6%
10.1 – 20	11.9%
20.1 – 50	5.0%
Over 50	6.9%

Mode of travel is shown in Table 3.10. Some 30 of the return trips involved more than a single travel mode during the trip. Cars dominated the mode of travel, with car driver or passenger trips accounting for 87.9% of all trips. With the inclusion of the person with the motorcycle, some 92% of trips were private vehicle based. Only 1.1% of return trips involved a route bus. Walking was also insignificant, even though 30 trips were one kilometre or less in length, as was bicycle use. In short, the use of “low impact modes” accounted for only 8% of total trips.

Table 3.10: Travel Mode for Trips by Other Households

Mode	% of trips
Car driver	69.5%
Car passenger	18.4%
Motor bike	4.2%
Bicycle	3.2%
Walk	2.1%
School bus	1.6%
Route bus	1.1%

Respondents were asked to rate the **importance** of a number of transport services. All the respondents rated major and minor roads as relevant and between important and very important. This was the only group to rate minor roads as more important than major roads. The number seeing route buses, school buses and V/Line services as relevant to them was 6 or 7 out of 10, with school bus services and V/Line services being typically rated as between important and very important to these people. Route bus services were rated as least important, which is not surprising given the low use of this mode by surveyed households.

Table 3.11: “Other Households” Mean Importance Rating of Various Transport Modes/Services*

Mode	Importance (N=10)
Minor roads	2.8 (N = 10)*
Major roads	2.5 (N = 10)
School bus services	2.4 (N = 7)
Route bus services	0.7 (N = 7)
V/Line services	2.2 (N = 6)
Air services	1.9 (N = 10)

*Note: These figures in brackets show the number indicating the transport mode was relevant to them.

Respondents were also asked to rate their **satisfaction with the quality of service** provided by the various transport services (Table 3.12). Major and minor roads received satisfactory quality ratings. V/Line and air services were rated slightly higher on satisfaction. The school bus service was rated highest in satisfaction terms by the 5/10 respondents who said this mode was relevant to them. Route bus services received the lowest satisfaction rating. The household which used the bicycle was unsatisfied, as it was felt that more bike-paths were needed.

Table 3.12: Other Households Mean Satisfaction Rating of Various Transport Modes/Services*

Mode	Satisfaction*
Minor roads	2.1 (N = 10)
Major roads	2.2 (N = 10)
School bus services	3.0 (N = 5)
Route bus services	1.9 (N = 7)
V/Line services	2.4 (N = 10)
Air services	2.4 (N = 9)

*Note: The figures in brackets show the number indicating the transport mode was relevant to them.

Four households indicated that they had travel difficulties with some trips that they had made. One person wanted traffic lights to be synchronized. In another household a child was not able to get to football training, as the only person in household with a licence was at work. Another expressed concern that there was no public transport near their house and that he/she would like it generally to be more accessible and more modern (suggesting lack of knowledge of new low floor vehicles!). The household from Port Fairy had difficulties in transport because of the long time needed to run people around.

Several households suggested some improvements to roads, such as:

- “Our roads (minor and major roads) around this district are a safety hazard”;

- dealing with fading line marking on the main road to Melbourne, near Mortlake, Darlington, Derrinallum, Lismore, Cressy and Inverleigh;
- better maintenance of sealed and gravel edges, the widening of very narrow sections, more overtaking lanes, and improvements to minor roads (as the person uses these to avoid the trucks on the major roads);
- “Road from Warrnambool to Melbourne is dangerously inadequate – forces many (including large transports) to use minor roads. Road narrow and dangerous”;
- “Need a reduction in the number of heavy vehicles (particularly milk tankers), which severely damage road edges, cause soft spots, asphalt lifts after rain”;
- “Speed limit needs to be reduced for heavy vehicles.”
- More overtaking lanes are necessary to ease congestion and allow motorists to get clear of heavy, extended trucks.”

It is noteworthy that five of these seven concerns involve trucks, suggesting that the rapid growth of heavy vehicle movement, linked to regional economic growth (e.g. dairying), may have run ahead of the capacity of the road network to cope, in terms of both road user safety perceptions and road damage. Dealing with such issues is an integral part of planning for continued regional economic growth.

Some specific improvements were suggested for public transport:

- “Local bus earlier in the morning and later at night, more often, might then use it.”
- “Train to Melbourne is old and expensive and slow. Needs to be improved.”
- Need more frequent buses. Public transport is “comfortable but needs to be more reliable and frequent. Amenities need a complete overhaul.”
- Provide a public transport concession for low income people and those on healthcare cards. Make public transport to Melbourne and back more affordable.
- Public transport should be provided in Port Fairy.

From the bus service perspective, the survey responses from these households are interesting. They indicate quite strongly that non-users of the bus service do not rate it very highly, in contrast to the results of the bus user survey. There is a need for better service marketing to communicate the service improvements that have been made in recent years (e.g. low floor vehicles, air conditioning).

The dominance of the car culture in the Warrnambool area comes through very strongly from the replies by the “other households”, emphasizing that the primary current role of public transport lies in catering for transport disadvantaged groups. Longer term, low impact travel modes (walking, cycling and public transport) need to play larger roles for all groups, not just for transport disadvantaged people, if land transport systems are to be sustainable. Market research repeatedly indicates service frequency and coverage, reliability and marketing are the three key demand drivers for public transport. In Warrnambool, frequency and coverage and marketing stand out as the areas on which to focus, since reliability is not at issue.

3.12 Some Data Overviews

The various trip survey forms completed by survey respondents enable some broad comparisons of travel patterns to be undertaken. While sample sizes preclude strong statements, the data suggests some patterns.

3.12.1 Trip Rates

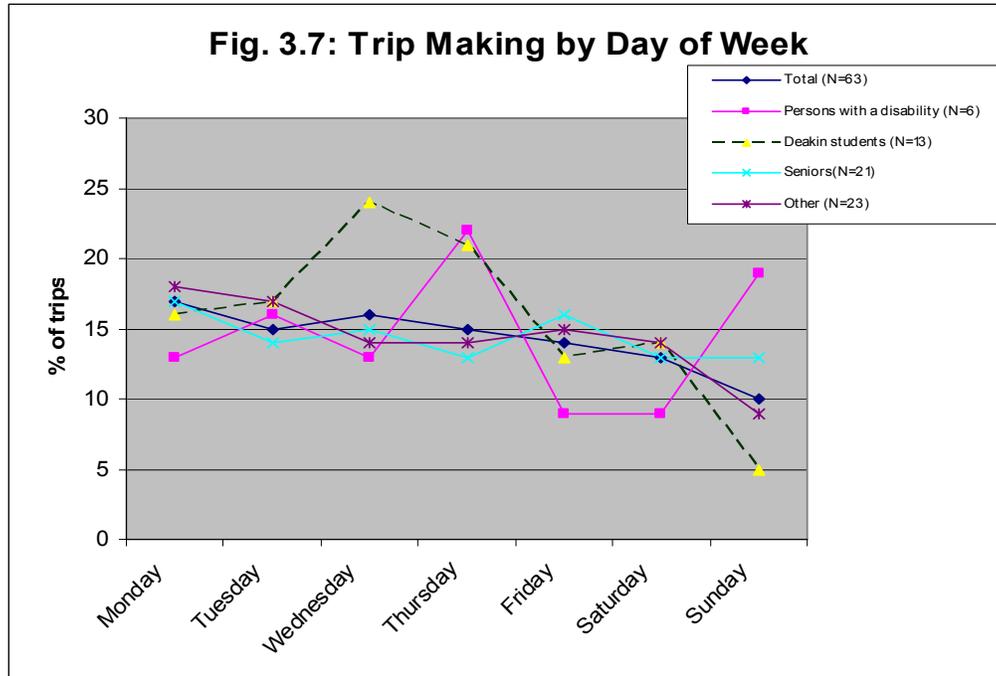
The numbers of average daily return trips undertaken by various groups of respondents differed to some extent. Seniors (23 respondents, highly car reliant) took an average of 1.3 return trips per person per day in the region but with these rates being quite different between various sub-groups: 1.6 for seniors responding to the household questionnaire; 0.6 for Archie Graham respondents without a disability and 0.6 for Lyndoch respondents. Secondary students undertook an average of 1.65 return trips per day, but with those living in regional areas making about one-quarter fewer trips. Deakin students staying in on-campus residential accommodation averaged 1.14 regional return trips per day. “Other respondents” to the household survey averaged 1.0 return trip per person per day and respondents with a disability averaged 0.8 return trips per person per day, although they seemed to undertake more activities per trip than most survey respondents (about 1.35 activities per trip). In any particular group, those without a car available tended to travel less. However, those with a disability showed how resourceful organization can ensure a wide range of activities can be undertaken, without a car.

In outer suburban Melbourne, by way of comparison, the Victorian Activity Travel Survey suggests that the average person makes 3.3 trips per day. These are one-way trips, so the comparable number of return trips would probably be 1.3 or more once linked trips are recognized (1.3 implies an average of 2.5 trip legs per round trip). This is somewhat higher than (1) the numbers found for adult groups in Warrnambool who relied on travel by modes other than the car and (2) higher than trip rates identified for rural secondary school children.

The study team is tempted to conclude that transport disadvantaged groups in Warrnambool tend to make fewer return trips per day than the typical outer suburban resident in Melbourne fewer than those in the Warrnambool region with a car available. Fewer trips is suggestive of less social inclusion. However, sample sizes are such that this can be no more than an hypothesis.

3.12.2 Trips by Day of Week

For the total of 581 person trips reported in the various surveys that were undertaken, fewer trips were undertaken on the weekend than during the week, Sunday having the lowest number of trips (Figure 3.7).



Trips are generally fairly well spread across the days of the week (about 15% of the weekly number of trips on most days) but there is tendency for a gradual reduction of trips per person from Monday to Sunday, with Sunday being well down on other days (down to about 10% of weekly trips being made on Sundays). As an exception, Deakin residential students have a peak of trip numbers on Wednesday (“pub night”)¹³. The pattern of trips for those with a disability was lowest on Friday and Saturday, rather than Sunday as for the other groups. These data suggest that, in planning improved route bus services, Sunday would be a lower priority than other days for people who are currently not users. Existing bus users, however, saw Sunday services as one of their three top priorities for service enhancements.

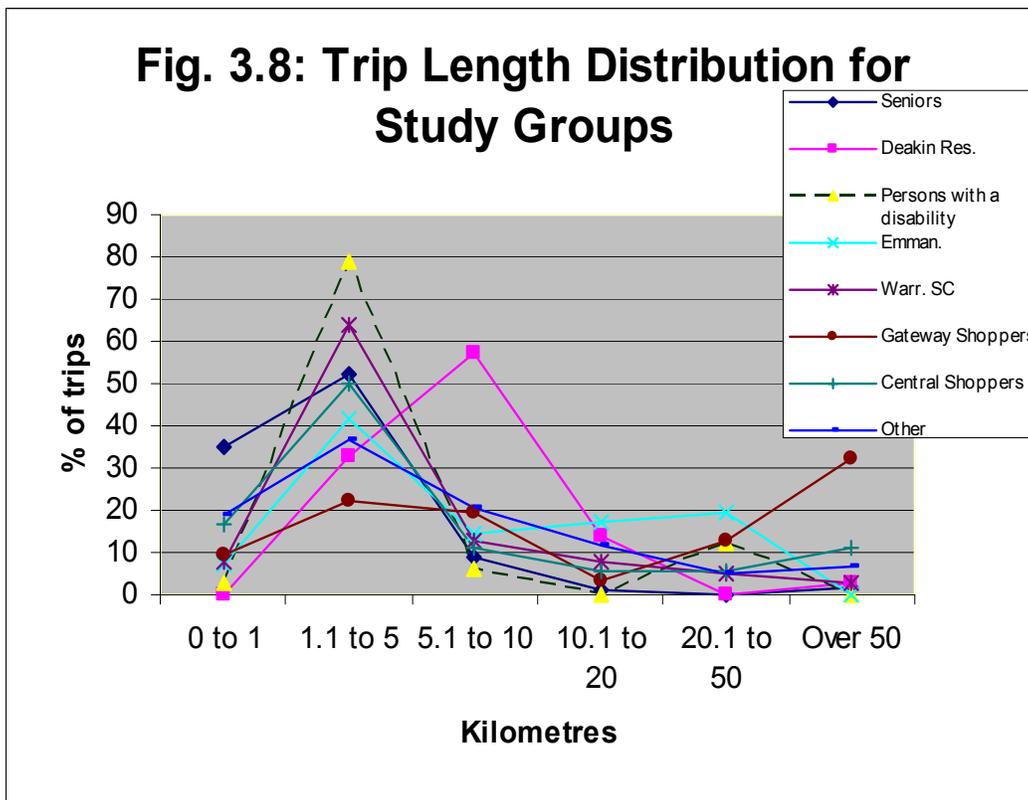
3.12.3 Trip Length

Figure 3.8 sets out data on trip length distribution for the range of sampled groups. Seniors made the most short trips, with many being walking trips. The 1.1 to 5 kilometres trip length is most common for all groups except for Deakin students in residence, with about 40% of trips being in this length range for most groups. However, for people with a disability the share is much higher, at near 80%. These people have particular access needs which are reflected in locational choices that minimize the need to travel. Their use of the car is also considerably less, reducing the scope for longer trips. Deakin residential students stand out in the 5-10 kilometre trip range because of the location of their campus relative to central Warrnambool. Emmanuel students tend to

¹³ The Thursday trips for Deakin students in the surveyed week were unusually large, due to students attending the Warrnambool Cup race meeting.

travel further to school than those at Warrnambool Secondary College. The longer trips that were made by shoppers at Gateway Plaza stand out in Figure 3.8

Trips under one kilometer in length are not a high proportion of total trips, given the way car-dependent communities tend to develop in a low density manner. However, there are a substantial number of trips under three kilometres (not shown in the Figure) which are currently made by car and which might be candidates, on some occasions, for walking, cycling or bus. Reasons such as improving the long term sustainability of personal transport systems (including health benefits) support such a shift. Improved public transport services can assist with such a change. Implementation of a TravelSmart program in Warrnambool, for example, could provide a means of focusing on shifting some of the shorter trips to walking, cycling or public transport, with associated health benefits.



4. Institutional Arrangements

4.1 Scope

Chapters 2 and 3 have reviewed current public transport services in the Warrnambool area and identified many gaps in service provision, particularly as this affects travel by groups who are transport disadvantaged. Some possible ideas for improving transport options have been identified. Chapters 4 and 5 propose a number of solutions that should improve transport options for transport disadvantaged groups in the area and for others in the community who are more fortunate with their travel options. Chapter 4 focuses on institutional arrangements and chapter 5 on more specific service delivery issues.

4.2 Accessibility Planning

Personal transport is essentially about meeting accessibility needs and fostering social inclusion. As the UK's Social Exclusion Unit (2003 p. 3) has noted:

Historically, nobody has been responsible for ensuring that people can get to key services and employment sites. As a result, services have been developed with insufficient attention to accessibility...

The SEU's answer is to implement an "accessibility planning" approach, based on the idea of giving someone ownership of accessibility problems. That someone in the UK environment is local government and the SEU approach, adopted by the Blair Government, has been to build a requirement for accessibility planning into Local Transport Plans. The requirement for these Local Transport Plans is built into national legislation in the UK. By this approach, clear responsibility is assigned for dealing with issues raised by transport disadvantage/social exclusion.

The nine studies currently being carried out in Victoria as part of the Transport Connections program are, in some ways, attempting to carry out the accessibility planning function proposed by the SEU. However, those studies are demonstration studies and lack a delivery framework for ideas developed during the course of the studies. As demonstration studies, they have focused on a bottoms-up approach to needs identification. A more strategic framework is needed to complement this essential bottoms-up work if transport outcomes are to be improved. The lack of clear ownership for accessibility planning at State or local government level in Victoria means that there is currently no such strategic framework in existence. This repeats the earlier UK experience.

BAV contact with local government in Victoria indicates a clearly emerging sense within the sector that it should be playing a role in influencing transport service provision.

However, there is no unanimity in local government about just what the most appropriate role should actually be.

BAV believes that local government should be developing towards playing the co-ordinating role in local/regional accessibility planning but that it should not have a direct role in service provision. Higher level (system-wide) co-ordination, within which local/regional accessibility planning takes place, should be undertaken at State level, because of the funding connection and need for a State-wide perspective on needs and priorities. How might this operate?

BAV believes that Regional Accessibility Planning Councils (RAPCs) should be established, based around transport/activity catchment areas. The trip distance data gathered in the present study (Chapter 3 of this report), for example, suggests Warrnambool has an activity catchment that is mainly confined within a distance band of about 50 kilometres. The local council responsible for the major activity node (e.g. Warrnambool City) should be responsible for forming a Regional Accessibility Planning Council, comprised of representatives of the CT sector, public transport operators, taxi operators, advocates for transport disadvantaged groups, DOI, DHS, the Victorian Department of Communities, local councils and the broader local community. The work of the RAPC should be supported by regional local government, which is already devoting some funding and staff time to such matters, and provided with some financial and research assistance by the State Government, which already has responsibilities in the field.

Longer term, the inclusion of some key agencies involved in service provision in areas like health care, employment, education, etc. would be worthwhile, recognizing that accessibility is usually about such activities at least as much as about transport. In the short term, however, it is a large enough task to improve co-ordination with respect to transport service provision to improve accessibility.

The role of the RAPCs should be to:

- consult widely at the regional level about accessibility and its role in facilitating social inclusion and more sustainable personal transport systems;
- identify regional priorities for improving accessibility through transport initiatives;
- work with transport service providers to improve the effectiveness of current service provision from a personal accessibility perspective;
- advise the State Government on possible improvements to current modes of regional passenger transport service delivery; and,
- submit accessibility improvement programs for State and possible Federal funding support.

In short, these Councils should be given institutional ownership of accessibility needs identification and given the institutional frameworks within which to work to effect change.

Given the role that these proposals would create for the local community in developing accessibility initiatives, it is inappropriate for the current study to venture too far in proposing solutions. However, the study has suggested that the following examples could be pursued:

- making use of the spare capacity that exists in the school bus fleet between the school peak movement times, to perform CT tasks, in some cases replacing existing CT sector vehicles that are being used for this purpose. Where such replacement is feasible, consideration should be given to selling the replaced vehicles and using the funds to support the replacement service. Such off-peak uses of school buses should be provided at marginal cost, which excludes any payment for the vehicle (a number of bus operators already make their vehicles available at marginal cost or less for CT purposes);
- making use of school buses to provide off-peak route services in smaller towns that currently lack such a service;
- making use of school buses to provide transport for particular out-of-hours CT needs, at evenings and weekends (again at marginal cost);
- allowing spare capacity on school bus trips to/from school to be used by paying customers.

These initiatives are essentially introducing a much greater degree of flexibility into public transport, to enable it to meet some of the needs that are currently being met by the CT sector or that are simply not being met. Some of the initiatives would require regulatory change. That should be undertaken in the interests of improving accessibility in a cost-effective manner.

Some access needs will remain appropriately dependent on the CT small-scale/individual level of service, such as Red Cross car transport services. However, the numbers involved in many of the CT transport tasks observed in the Warrnambool study suggest that there are a number that could effectively and efficiently be transferred to a more flexible public transport service, merging the space between CT and public transport in the interests of improved accessibility and greater social inclusion.

The proposed Regional Accessibility Planning Council focuses on the demand or needs side of accessibility planning. The corollary is the requirement for improved supply side co-ordination, which essentially requires a mechanism for ensuring that the most effective use is made of available transport resources (primarily vehicles and drivers) to meet identified needs. This study has demonstrated that some community transport vehicles, for example, are not used efficiently, performing few annual kilometers. Regional communities can gain from improving the utilization of existing transport resources, as well as from increasing the level of resources where needs exist.

Improving the efficiency with which existing regional public/community transport resources are used is a task that requires specialist skills, skills that should reside with professional public transport operators. Operators in the area to be covered by the RAPC should be invited by DOI to tender for performing the role of public/community transport

resource co-ordinator. DOI and the RAPC should jointly decide the successful operator. That operator would focus on generating greater productivity from the available school bus fleet, community transport fleet and other transport resources (e.g. taxis), subject to agreement from the operators involved. This will allow community service groups to get on with their core business, rather than running transport operations.

It is not intended that this role will be able to unilaterally amend existing Government public transport contracts, which are a matter for the operators involved and the responsible State authority (mainly DOI). Instead, its primary purpose is to propose ways of better managing regional transport resources, to improve regional accessibility.

If the overall level of public transport service and associated State funding support is to be increased to meet significant access needs identified by the RAPC, normal contracting arrangements would apply. The focus of the resource co-ordination task is on getting improved productivity from existing resources/funding, which should be a pre-condition to be met before any service increases dependent on funding increases are provided.

For such proposals to have maximum impact, there needs to be a clear sense of regional ownership of the program and the proposals need to be part of a system of such arrangements State-wide, with a clear reporting path to State Government. With the current divided governmental responsibilities in relation to regional transport and accessibility services, where DOI, DHS, DEET and DVC all get involved, among others, it is hardly surprising that there is frustration at community level, inefficient use of resources and poor targeting of available resources to needs. Transport/access issues should be the responsibility of a single state agency and DOI is the logical agency, given its core responsibilities. All State funding that is transport-related should be channeled via DOI and this is where bids from Regional Accessibility Planning Councils should be directed. If needed, a Cabinet Access Committee could be formed to allow other agencies with a strong interest in accessibility issues to be closely involved in assessing needs, policy directions and program funding.

Fig. 4.1 summarises these ideas. It shows regional transport interest groups and the wider community, together with regional/local transport providers, forming the Regional Accessibility Planning Council, under the leadership of the major regional municipality. It shows that RAPC interacting regionally with transport interest groups, transport providers and the broader community in the needs assessment process. It shows a regional transport resource co-ordinator, whose task is to co-ordinate existing transport resources to deliver more efficient service outcomes, working to and with the RAPC. That co-ordinating operator will draw on the transport resources available regionally. The link between the co-ordinator and DOI reflects the proposal that the role of co-ordinator be decided by a tender process, with funding for costs involved being part of the State Budget Transport allocation managed through DOI and the successful tenderer being accountable for performance to DOI.

The figure also shows DOI as the State channel through which the RAPC process operates. This would replace the current silo model of service delivery, where route,

school and community transport services are treated separately, not as one system for meeting access needs.

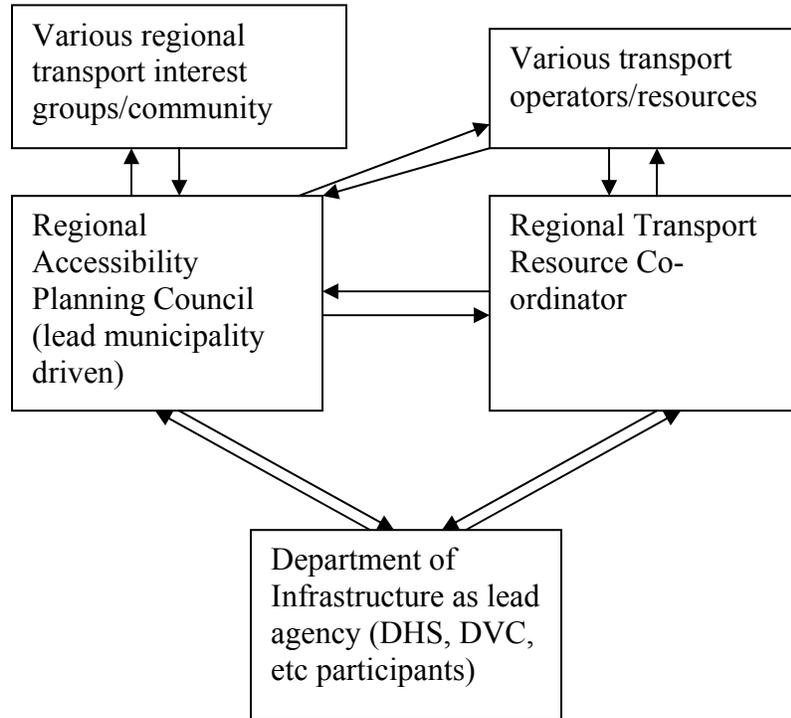


Fig. 4.1: Proposed Regional Accessibility Planning/Delivery Model

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

The study's review of current mobility levels of key transport disadvantaged groups in the broad Warrnambool region suggests four main areas for improvements:

1. public transport service frequency, span and coverage;
2. marketing of public transport services;
3. regulatory reform, to increase the flexibility with which services can be made available; and,
4. changes in the arrangements for planning of transport systems within the region and State.

Given the small sample sizes in this study, it is not possible to accurately estimate the patronage impact of specific service proposals. It is not possible, therefore, to estimate prospective user benefits in quantitative terms or, in consequence, to specify expected outcomes from implementing proposed improvements in benefit/cost terms. What can be said is that the improvements that are proposed are likely to benefit one or more transport disadvantaged groups in the community and groups that expected to benefit from specific types of improvement proposals are identified. The improvements have justification on social equity grounds, given the relatively low level of public transport service provision in the area at present.

Longer term, the arguments for improved public transport service levels in regional areas will have a broader sustainability basis. Equity arguments are essentially arguments for social sustainability and that is a fair representation of the major needs today in Warrnambool. Environmental sustainability arguments, in particular, will gain in importance over time in regional areas and reinforce the need for public transport improvements. Improving public safety is also a longer term argument to promote improved regional public transport services.

5.1 Public Transport Service Frequency and Coverage

The most frequent conclusion from surveys and consultations across the range of people included in this study has been that service quality on the Warrnambool route bus system is good as far as it goes but that hours of service operation, days of the week on which services operate and coverage into growth areas all need improvement. The most urgently needed improvements, based on responses from a number of groups of respondents (transport disadvantaged and others), are for services to operate later on weekdays, start earlier on weekdays, run later on Saturdays, run on Sundays and extend into the growth suburbs on the fringe of urban Warrnambool. Service frequencies, when services are operating, are generally considered to be adequate.

The desire for earlier and later buses, so people can use them to get to/from work, was mentioned many times, with those associated with the Wave Neighbourhood Renewal Program and people representing the interests of young people probably the strongest

advocates. While young people have many unmet transport needs, travel to work in central Warrnambool and, to a lesser extent, Gateway Plaza, was mentioned by a number of young people and by those working with young people.

The availability of buses for work travel was also mentioned by people outside the targeted “transport disadvantaged” groups. For example, some of the larger employers thought that staff would be more inclined to travel to work via the route bus service if the time-table was altered to better suit working hours.

Additional bus services in the evening/night time, to a 7.00 pm finish, would provide an opportunity to cater for many trips home from work. They would also provide an opportunity for people to travel home from after-school recreational activities, evening shopping, etc by bus, serving several trip purposes. Earlier services in the morning, commencing at 7.00am, would probably cater for a smaller range of trip types but could be particularly useful for lower income groups traveling to work and should be given a solid trial on this basis. Selected additional services beginning earlier still, aimed at the journey to work at major places of employment, such as Midfield Meat, should also be trialed. The latter services could be on a “use it or lose it” basis, with a six month trial period to persuade users that this is serious.

Given the workforce numbers involved, Warrnambool Bus Lines should approach Midfield again to assess whether they would be prepared to financially support a three month early service trial, with a view to subsequently seeking DOI funding support. Potential savings in car parking spaces and associated costs, as well as the provision of an additional attraction for potential staff, would make it worth the company’s while closely considering such a proposal.

Discussions should also be held between Transit Southwest and major employers, to seek greater alignment of shift times and transit service times, within the 7.00am to 7.00pm time band proposed as a starting point, complemented by selected services outside this time band.

The proposal for additional Saturday services is mainly aimed at meeting travel demands by young people but also by adults without access to a car, for purposes such as shopping and entertainment. The study proposes a regular service to 10.00pm complemented by a late night flexible service, similar to Melbourne’s “Night Rider”, though finishing sooner than that service.

New Sunday services are perhaps the lowest priority among the proposals for new services, due to the relatively lower Sunday trip rates. However, it is difficult to argue that a public transport service is a comprehensive service if it misses a day a week. If a car is needed for Sunday travel because there is no bus available, the chances of the car being used on other days increases. A two-hourly service is thus proposed for Sundays, finishing earlier than on other days. This may also need to be considered on a “use it or lose it” basis.

The study has also noted the low level of public transport provided in Portland and the lack of any such service in Port Fairy. The State Government should review the level of route bus service provision in towns the size of Portland, to assess the case for significant increases in service provision. On equity grounds, there seems little to justify the difference between the level of route bus service provided in Warrnambool, which this study suggests needs to be raised, and that which is available in Portland, which is only about one-seventh the current Warrnambool level.

A trial route bus /tourist service should be initiated in Port Fairy, operating between the school peaks and making use of a DOI contracted school bus operator/vehicle. This should enable the service to be provided at marginal cost. Use of a school bus for such a purpose would be contrary to the Disability Discrimination Act provisions, which require use of an accessible vehicle for route services. However, some service is better for the community than no service! An exemption from the DDA requirements should be sought to enable a trial to be initiated.

The study has observed that Mortlake is the only significant town in the region without a connecting bus service between Mortlake and Warrnambool. Mortlake is bigger than Timboon (population about 1,000), for example, which has a once a week return service to Warrnambool. That service leaves Timboon at 9.30 am and returns from Warrnambool at 1.00 pm, being mainly used by people attending doctors' appointments or doing specialty shopping. On a good day patronage is in the 6-10 range but 3-4 is more common. On grounds of equity of access, there seems to be a good case for a service from Mortlake to Warrnambool and return on at least one day a week. A government-contracted school bus serving the Mortlake area might be used for this purpose, fitting between its morning and afternoon school travel requirements, to keep costs down.

The Hawkesdale corridor was also noted as lacking public transport service to/from Warrnambool. With population numbers growing in the corridor, a trial service should be introduced, using available school bus capacity during the inter-peak period. This service could be trialled a couple of times during the week and on a Saturday.

The study has also noted the lag of route bus service provision behind residential development in growth suburbs, Dennington to the west and the area near Kings College and Whites Rd in the north-east being key areas.

In the area of Service Frequency and Coverage, this report makes the following recommendations:

1. The Warrnambool route bus service should be enhanced, to give additional weekday services for people to get to work and home, additional Saturday services and new Sunday services. Services should operate hourly from 7.00am to 7.00pm on weekdays, complemented by selected additional trial services targeting major employers, and a Night Rider service on Saturdays evening as a trial. Sunday services should also be introduced as a trial.

2. Route bus services should be extended into the growth suburbs of Dennington and the north-east.
3. A bus service from Deakin University to the city (10.00pm) and back (2.00am) should be trialed on a Wednesday night. Some University funding support should be sought for this service.
4. A combined route/tourist service should be trialed at Port Fairy, using a school bus.
5. New bus services should be introduced between Mortlake and Warrnambool and Hawkesdale and Warrnambool, using a school bus and with the service timed between the morning and afternoon peak school requirements. Services should initially operate twice a week during the daytime plus Saturday night, as a demonstration.
6. Charter bus services should be trialed for special events in Warrnambool, including at Deakin University.

5.2 Improved Service Marketing

Hand in hand with the need for improved route services in Warrnambool is a requirement that such services be better marketed. The study has identified a wide range of examples of situations where service use is likely to be increased if marketing efforts are upgraded. Current service contracts do not encourage marketing efforts. A corollary of improved service levels should be the introduction of marketing key performance indicators (KPIs) into bus operator route service contracts, such that operator remuneration is influenced by performance in marketing (e.g. timetable availability).

The study has identified a number of specific targets for marketing initiatives, as below:

7. A significant effort should be devoted to marketing buses and bus services to the Warrnambool community. This should include better information on bus stops, new time-tables, better maps (e.g. an actual road map, giving stops), distribution of maps and timetables to key locations frequented by likely bus users, such as new students at Deakin University and selective promotion of accessibility of tourism attractions in route service marketing. Marketing effort should be tailored to specific potential user groups, particularly those who are more transport disadvantaged in the short to medium term.
8. Bus driver training programs should emphasise the importance of customer service, covering matters such as:
 - how to respond to time table inquiries;
 - reasonable passenger assistance, as required with (for example) shopping and pushers;
 - creation of an atmosphere where older passengers are assured that the vehicle will not move until they are seated.
9. An education program on bus use by pre-elderly car drivers should be developed by BAV and the RACV, using Warrnambool as a trial location.
10. A program should be run by the local bus operator and council with the local Indigenous community, to encourage greater use of the route bus service, allied with a community awareness program related to issues of racism.

11. Transport concessions should be considered for carers traveling on V/Line services and for international students.
12. Student concession tickets should be able to be purchased over a period of time.
13. The existing Warrnambool two hour route bus ticket should be extended to a three hour time period.
14. Route bus operator remuneration should be influenced by performance in service marketing, as a prelude to attracting increased patronage.

5.3 Regulatory Reform

Current regulatory and/or operational practices limit the service levels that are achievable with existing regional public transport resources. The most glaring example of this is the government school bus service, where there is usually some space available that could be filled by people who are not primary or secondary school students. This would be particularly useful for people living in rural areas, where route service availability is nil or minimal and there are few other options than a car. There are examples throughout the State of such places already being used to meet access needs by people other than students. This should be encouraged. The State Government's Transport Connections study managers are keen to explore this possibility further, with BAV support. While there are a number of practical issues to be resolved, the potential benefits of being able to offer a travel option that is currently lacking in areas with little choice are compelling.

A barrier to using available seating on school bus services is the perception that children will be placed in danger from other passengers. This perception would appear to have little factual basis. The 'public space' nature of a bus would seem to provide little opportunity for a potential child abuser to gain regular and isolated access to a child for the purposes of grooming (gaining the child's confidence and trust in preparation for a later assault). Indeed, a passenger mix would seem to provide an opportunity for greater protection for children who may be vulnerable to bullying from other children – a problem which would appear to be occasionally present on school buses.

Achieving greater use of such vehicles, for purposes such as replacing community buses in some tasks, should also improve the efficiency of regional transport resource use, particularly as the community transport sector faces operating difficulties in areas such as obtaining volunteer drivers. Implementation of regional accessibility planning processes, as proposed in Chapter 4 above, should encourage this development.

Disability Discrimination (DDA) legislation provides a further potential constraint on the better utilization of existing transport resources to enhance regional accessibility. Spare capacity in the school bus fleet could be used to provide route services in some areas where they are currently lacking, at times which do not conflict with the school transport task. School buses do not need to be accessible under DDA legislation but new route bus services need to comply with this legislation. Some school buses are fitted with wheelchair lifts to meet DDA requirements but this is the exception. Location-specific exemptions from DDA requirements should be sought for the use of school buses to

provide route services in areas where there is no alternative option using an accessible vehicle.

The report makes the following recommendations in relation to regulatory reform:

15. Greater flexibility should be introduced into regulations/practices controlling the type of passengers allowed to travel on school buses (e.g. allowing other people to travel on school buses as numbers of young people decline).
16. An exemption from DDA requirements should be sought for government-contracted school buses that seek to provide a limited route service in areas where there is no such service.

5.4 System Planning

The increased interest in, and focus on, improving accessibility in regional areas has highlighted the lack of institutional ownership of accessibility. Perhaps the most significant proposal in this report is the proposal to establish Regional Accessibility Planning Councils, to implement co-ordinated approaches to needs identification and prioritization of their resolution, with associated changes in State responsibility channels. At present, identified needs tend to be treated through isolated silos, rather than in a co-ordinated way (e.g. across transport disadvantaged groups). Thus route bus planning, school bus planning and community bus planning are not co-ordinated. Program responses to these needs are ad hoc and, in consequence, have uncertain sustainability. It is suggested that, if this trend is allowed to continue, it could place the existing transport services, such as buses and taxis, at risk, even further undermining the public transport system.

Local government must be an active driver of a more co-ordinated approach to transport needs identification for transport disadvantaged groups at regional level, complemented by the development of regional transport resource co-ordinators. Such co-ordinated demand and supply side initiatives should help to improve the efficiency with which existing transport resources are used.

Local government should not try and take on the role of service deliverer. It should focus clearly on needs identification and advocacy for the region, with service provision left to those who make this their core business.

Rural isolation is probably the most difficult accessibility issue to resolve in the Warrnambool region. Dispersed trip origins and low densities of travel demands make service provision costly. The State Government's Transport Connections studies are focusing on such matters and should identify a number of creative options in this regard. The present study sees extending the role played by school buses outside the period when they are required for their primary function as a positive initiative in this regard. This will serve to extend the scope of what is termed "public transport" into areas that are currently not served or are operated by community transport. More generally, this study

concludes that the proposed Regional Accessibility Planning Council should make the access needs of rurally isolated people an early priority in its efforts.

The report also concludes that there are specific problems of access planning in the educational sector. The tertiary sector seems to place least emphasis on access issues in its planning processes but secondary schools also have issues. The main issues at secondary school level appear to be the high reliance on the private car for short trips to/from school, which must be a health concern long term. Schools and tertiary institutions should be encouraged to develop and implement Sustainable Travel Plans, to deal with these matters. Their students are the population group closest to choosing a car. The community benefits of influencing some of their travel choices to more sustainable modes will be long lasting.

The report recommends the following in relation to public transport system planning:

17. School communities, including tertiary institutes, should be encouraged to develop Sustainable Travel Plans, with the Department of Infrastructure supporting relevant demonstration studies.
18. A multi-stakeholder Warrnambool Regional Accessibility Council should be established to identify transport/accessibility needs and to facilitate partnerships to meet these needs priorities (e.g. possibility of using school buses to meet CT needs; better integration between Education Dept and VET programming regarding transport). This process should be facilitated by the Warrnambool Council and supported by the Departments of Infrastructure, Human Services and Victorian Communities. Rural isolation should be an early focus of the Council. A regional public transport provider should be engaged by DOI to perform the task of co-ordinating existing regional transport resources, working with the RAPC to improve the efficiency with which public and community transport services are provided.
19. State Government responsibilities for transport/accessibility should be centred in DOI.

5.5 Expected Beneficiaries and Costs of Initiatives

Table 5.1 summarises the preceding recommendations and indicates the expected incidence of benefits among transport disadvantaged groups. Existing bus users, many of whom are in one or other of the identified transport disadvantaged groups, will be significant beneficiaries of any initiatives to extend services,. As noted previously, it is not possible to quantify the expected number of beneficiaries in any particular category or the magnitude of their expected benefit, since the study did not include sufficient detail to go this far. Instead, with many of the recommendations, it is a case of “try it and see”, or “evaluation by doing”. The study has suggested where gains are likely to be most significant for particular groups but implementation and marketing are needed for outcomes. The table also summarises the expected cost of initiatives, in broad terms.

Table 5.1: Key Proposals, Their Expected Beneficiaries and Indicative Costs

Initiative	Young	Seniors	Those with a disability	Lower income	Rurally isolated	Indigenous	Approx. cost (\$K pa)
SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS							
1. Increase service frequency/span							
- Evenings to 7.00pm	High	H	Medium	H	Low	H)308*
- Mornings from 7.00am	M	L	M	H	L	H	
- Saturdays, add afternoon and Night Rider services	H	H	M	H	L	H	73
- Sundays	H	L	L	M	L	L	88
- Selected early services targeted at major employers	L	L	M	H	L	L	case specific
2. Service W’bool growth suburbs	H	L	L	H	L	L	*
3. Provide Wednesday “pub night” service for Deakin	H	L	L	L	L	L	4
4. Trial route/tourist service in Port Fairy, using a school bus	M	H	L	M	L	M	50**
5. Introduce twice weekly daytime services and Sat. night services from Mortlake and Hawkesdale to W’bool, using school buses	L	H	L	M	M	M	92**
6. Trial charter bus services to special community events at Deakin	L	M	L	M	L	L	Case specific
MARKETING INITIATIVES							
7. Implement an expanded route service marketing program in W’bool.	L	H	H	H	L	H	25
8. Provide enhanced customer service training to route bus drivers.	L	M	M	M	L	H	5
9. Provide awareness programs for seniors re route bus services.	L	H	L	L	M	L	2
10. Route bus operator plus Council to promote bus use among Indigenous community	M	M	M	M	L	H	1
11. Extend transport concessions to international students and carers (the latter on V/Line)	H	L	H	L	L	L	not costed
12. Allow student concession cards to be purchased over time.	L	M	L	H	H	H	not costed
13. Change 2 hour route ticket to 3 hrs	H	H	H	H	L	H	minimal
14. Route bus service contracts should include marketing incentives.	H	H	M	H	L	M	not applicable
REGULATORY REFORM							
15. Provide greater flexibility in use of school bus services by non-students.	M	H	L	H	H	M	not costed
16. Provide DDA exemption for use of school buses to provide route services in areas/times lacking other services.	M	H	L	H	H	H	0
SYSTEM PLANNING							
17. Encourage school communities, including tertiary institutes, to develop Sustainable Travel Plans.	H	L	M	M	H	H	30 (pilot)
18. Establish a Regional Accessibility Forum, led by W’bool Council, to identify and prioritise regional accessibility needs.	H	H	H	H	H	H	minimal
19. State Government responsibilities for transport/accessibility should be centred in DOI.	H	H	H	H	H	H	minimal

Notes: * The costs for evening and additional morning services and initiative 2 are included in the \$308,000 figure. ** These costs are indicative. The proposed new services involved should be put to tender.

In total, the costed items in Table 5.1 sum to \$678,000. This figure includes \$30,000 (as a one-off cost) for development of Sustainable Travel Plans at schools and tertiary institutions in the area and \$25,000 for a one-off major marketing campaign. The more usual annual cost of the proposed improved public transport services is thus \$623,000. The lowest priority initiative within this set is the Sunday service proposal at \$88,000.

If an annual route service marketing allowance of \$15,000 is assumed (after the initial campaign year), the more usual on-going annual costs for Warrnambool route services within these new service proposals is \$481,000. Against these new service costs should be offset savings of \$52,000 from restructuring existing Allansford temporary school services. Including these offsets and excluding the Sunday service proposal produces a cost figure of \$341,000.

\$142,000 is included for proposed new services in Port Fairy and in the regional service corridors of Mortlake and Hawkesdale to Warrnambool. These particular proposed new initiatives should be implemented on a trial basis, to ensure take-up justifies service continuation. Tendering should be used to select the service provider, given that the services are new initiatives.

The proposals would increase from six to seven the number of route buses operating within urban Warrnambool, the first such increase in fleet size for twenty years. The additional service kilometers proposed for urban Warrnambool amount to 176,767, or 141,787 if the Sunday service is excluded. These increases add 50-62% to total kilometers, depending on whether the Sunday service is in or out.

Excluding the Sunday service would mean 428,000 annual route service kilometers, or about 12.6 kilometres per capita in the areas that would be served. This is an increase of 4.8 kilometres per capita over current service levels. Adding the services as proposed will bring Warrnambool more into line with expected service levels in the outer areas of Melbourne, which is supportable on equity grounds.

The recurrent costings for service enhancements exclude additional revenue that will be generated by the service enhancements. It has been argued that the study surveys and interviews have not been extensive enough to enable a detailed estimate of additional patronage, and hence associated revenue, to be made. However, a “ballpark” figure for additional revenue is possible. If Sunday services are excluded, the increase in service kilometers is 50%. Applying a service elasticity of 0.5 to this increase implies a 25% increase in patronage. If the composition of this increase mirrored the current customer mix, revenue would increase by about 25%, or \$32,000. However, by targeting the journey to/from work, a higher increase in revenue may be achievable. The study team believe that a revenue target of over 30% increase (or about +\$40,000) should be set as an indicator of a successful program overall. This would mean a recurrent net cost of about \$300,000 for the Warrnambool route service initiatives, excluding Sunday services. With Sunday services included, the comparable figure would be \$429,000 costs less \$45,000 revenue target (based on a target of 35% revenue increase), or \$384,000.

To encourage greater patronage, a service development incentive should be considered. This would provide the bus operator with an incentive to improve service quality and community awareness of the service, to grow patronage. A simple approach to this incentive would be for any revenue increase over the 30% target (in the absence of Sunday services) to be re-invested in further service development. The DOI would retain revenue increases up to the 30% target but increases above that level would be used to enhance marketing and/or service standards.

5.6 Road Improvements

While the major focus of the study has been on identifying the travel needs of transport disadvantaged groups in the Warrnambool area and ways that improved public transport services can help to meet these needs, some information relevant to road management has also been gathered. The study has revealed very high reliance on the private car for meeting personal travel needs in the area and the existence of a very strong car culture in the region. It has shown that, in general, motorists are reasonably satisfied with the quality of the major and minor road networks on which they travel. Importance and satisfaction ratings on both major and minor roads are typically in the neutral to somewhat satisfied range. Given the high proportion of respondents who saw major and minor roads as relevant to their travel requirements, this was a better rating than for other modes.

These ratings are not such as should cause any complacency on the part of road system managers (VicRoads and councils). The main concern with roads was a concern about road maintenance. Unless road maintenance levels are sustained or even improved, satisfaction levels could decline. Unfortunately, there was no clear indication of just what sort of road maintenance improvements people would value most highly. Maintenance issues raised by survey respondents tended to be specific. The condition of the highway to Geelong was probably the most commonly raised concern.

A number of people expressed concern about the growth in heavy truck traffic in the region, in terms of associated road damage and perceptions of a less safe road environment. Such traffic growth is reflective of the underlying strength in the region's resource based industries and managing the impacts of heavy truck traffic has been a subject of debate in the region for many years. The fact that the issue is still present indicates that more work is needed on clarifying the seriousness of the problems raised.

Walking is common in central Warrnambool. A number of people felt unsafe crossing roads in the vicinity of roundabouts, because of uncertainty about which direction traffic will take. Warrnambool Council should review the performance of roundabouts in the area to ensure that pedestrian movements can be undertaken safely, especially as the population ages. If the problem is only one of perception, perhaps a public awareness campaign should inform the community accordingly.

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Appendix A: Warrnambool Shopping and Bus Users' Survey

This Appendix presents material that complements Section 3.2 of the report. It should be read in conjunction with that section.

Sample

Shoppers

Two locations were chosen for surveying shoppers: the Warrnambool central shopping precinct and Gateway Plaza, some four kilometers from the central area.

Surveys were undertaken in the time period between the school peaks (that is school starting and finishing times), since bus services are largely taken up with the school transport task during these peak periods. Surveying was done on Thursday 19th and Friday 20th February and Friday 12th March, all days having fine weather.

Some 67 shoppers were interviewed, 36 in central Warrnambool and 31 at Gateway Plaza. Within this 67, there were 41 females and 26 males. This probably underrepresents the proportion of males in the mix of shoppers, because non-response was typically more common with males than females. The non-response rate was about one in five, which is low because of the personal interview nature of the survey (which usually achieves a high response rate).

Bus users

The shopping centre sample only included five bus users (7.5% of the shoppers sampled). A separate survey of bus users was undertaken between the school peak travel periods, in which an additional 34 bus users were interviewed. Of the 39 bus users, 32 were female, being a fair representation of the mix of bus users during this time of the day (e.g. between 10.00am and 2.30 pm). Non-response in the bus survey was only two (male) users out of 41.

Trip purpose was examined in the survey. This showed that personal business, recreation and other purposes were served by trips to the central shopping precinct and Gateway Plaza. "Home" was easily the dominant trip destination after the shopping centre visit. Over half of the respondents (37/67) gave this answer. "Sport/recreation" and "other shopping/business" were the next most common destinations but with only 8 and 7 nominations each. For bus users, 29 out of 39 respondents were heading home after their bus trip to the shops. "Other shopping/business" was the second most common "next destination", with 6/39 bus users giving this answer. This is a positive response in terms of bus use because it suggests the Warrnambool network provides fair accessibility between a number of activity locations.

If those 30 out of 67 who were going from shopping to some other activity then returned home, the implied average number of trip legs per person per round trip is 2.45 for the series of activities across the whole group.

Almost one-third of bus users interviewed (12/39) spent less than half an hour at the shopping centre, typically catching the subsequent return bus. Just over one-quarter (10/39) spent between half an hour and an hour and slightly more (11/39) spent 1-2 hours. Only one in six spent longer than this, suggesting that the structure of fares, where a two hour ticket is in operation, may be influencing this pattern.

Assessment of Transport Modes

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of a number of transport services as they affected their lives¹⁴. Respondents could also indicate if they believed that a particular service was “not relevant” to them. Table A.1 sets out the average importance scores from interviewed shoppers and bus users. It shows the numbers who thought that each particular aspect was relevant to them and the average importance scores from this group.

Among the 67 shopper respondents, school bus services were seen as the least relevant mode but 43/67 still saw school buses as relevant. Bus users tended to rate road conditions as less relevant to them than shoppers, air services as essentially irrelevant (1/39 seeing relevance) and school bus services as only of moderate relevance (8/39). These responses reflect the socio-economic composition (and to a lesser extent, age) of the daytime route bus user group.

Table A.1: Mean Importance Rating of Various Transport Modes/Services

Mode	Shoppers (Total = 67)	Bus Users (Total = 39)
Minor roads	2.5 (N=62)	2.2 (N=32)
Major roads	2.8 (N=65)	2.0 (N=30)
School bus services	1.1 (N=43)	1.0 (N=8)
Route bus services	1.2 (N=63)	3.7 (N=39)
V/Line services	1.9 (N=64)	2.0 (N=32)
Air services	0.3 (N=57)	0.1 (N=1)

Note: The figures in brackets are the number who said a particular travel aspect was relevant to them. The average importance scores for any particular mode/service relate only to those who indicated the relevance of that mode or service.

Shoppers rated “major roads” and then “minor roads” as most important, with average scores between “important” and “very important”, these being rated well ahead of other modes. This is to be expected with most shoppers being car users. Major roads were rated as slightly more important than minor roads. The V/Line rating suggests that a number of people will use car for local travel but choose the V/Line service for longer distance travel (e.g. to Melbourne). The small scale of commercial passenger air services through Warrnambool is reflected in the low importance rating given to this service, even though 57/67 saw air as relevant.

¹⁴ Importance ratings were: 0 = not important; 1 = somewhat important; 2 = important; 3 = very important; 4 = extremely important.

Bus users rate the importance of bus services towards the “extremely important” level. This is consistent with the lack of alternatives perceived by a significant proportion of bus users. Bus users rate major and minor road conditions as less important (and less relevant) than car users, because they see the bus per se as their key transport mode. Road condition may enter into the bus driver’s psyche but it is not a significant factor for most bus users. Bus users rate V/Line services similarly to shoppers more generally. School bus services were rated low on the importance scale and low in relevance, probably because few respondents had children who used these services.

Respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the quality of service provided by the various transport services indicated¹⁵. The option of a means of transport being “not relevant” to me was available in the responses.

Satisfaction levels with roads are in the “satisfied” direction, for both shoppers (mainly car users) and bus users (Table A.2). Shopper satisfaction with route and school bus services was also rated at about the same level by those who saw these modes as relevant, though this was a much smaller number than the number who thought roads were relevant. Satisfaction levels were quite high with V/Line services but this mode was down on the importance scale.

The only satisfaction score that really stands out is the score given to bus services by bus users. The average rating of 3.6 is very high on the satisfaction scale.

Only five of the 67 shoppers who were surveyed used the route bus to access their shopping centre but many more (27/67) saw it as relevant to them. The average satisfaction rating it received from those who thought it was relevant was solid at 2.8, even though the average importance rating was only 1.2. This suggests that the route bus is possibly seen as an “insurance option”, in the event that the private car is not available.

The survey results suggest that the local route bus service is well regarded in the area by those who know about that service. However, the low average importance rating on the bus service indicates clearly that the service is simply not on the radar as a major option for many people, particularly those who remain wedded to their cars.

¹⁵ The rating descriptions were as follows: 0 = completely unsatisfied; 1 = somewhat unsatisfied; 2 = neither satisfied nor unsatisfied; 3 = somewhat satisfied; 4 = completely satisfied.

Table A.2: Mean Satisfaction Rating of Various Transport Modes/Services

Mode	Shoppers (Total = 67)	Bus Users (Total = 39)
Minor roads	2.4 (N=57)	3.1 (N=33)
Major roads	2.5 (N=63)	2.9 (N=32)
School bus services	2.4 (N=19)	2.6 (N=10)
Route bus services	2.8 (N=27)	3.7 (N=39)
V/Line services	2.9 (N=48)	3.0 (N=33)
Air services	1.8 (N=12)	2.5 (N=2)

Note: The figures in brackets are the number who said a particular travel aspect was relevant to them. The average satisfaction scores for any particular mode/service relate only to those who indicated the relevance of that mode or service.

Appendix B: Persons Interviewed

The study team would like to give particular thanks to the many people who agreed to be interviewed as part of this study. None of the persons interviewed is responsible for the analysis undertaken, or conclusions drawn, in this report. We also thank Bronwen Machin (Transport Connections Project Manager in the Macedon Ranges Shire/Mt Alexander Shire area), Geoff Craige (BAV) and Professor Graham Currie, Monash University, for their contributions.

The following persons were interviewed:

Gary Alexander	South West Regional Manager, Karingal
Paul Atak	Principal, Warrnambool Secondary College
Archie Graham representatives	Archie Graham Centre, Warrnambool
Helen Bacon	Director, Business Services, Lyndoch
Reg & Maureen Beattie	Regional school bus operators and President of the Red Cross
Alison Beverage	Emmanuel College Transport Officer
Brian Brawn & students	School Bus Coordinator, Emmanuel Senior College
Bus Drivers	South West Bus Lines
Jan Byron	Executive Assistant to Pro Rob Vice-Chancellor, Deakin, Warrnambool
Ian Collins	Residential Manager, Deakin University
Lisa Crispe	Youth Worker, Moyne Shire
Laurene Dietrig	Transport Officer, Shire of Moyne
Tanya Egan	Economic Development Officer, City of Warrnambool
Elderly Citizen's representatives	Archie Graham Centre, Warrnambool
Simone Flavelle	Community worker, Wave Project, Warrnambool
Chris Godfrey	OHMS & Human Resources Manager, Midfield Meats
Toni Hancock	South West Local Learning & Employment Network
Michael Hoffmann	HR Manager, Dairy Farmers
David Keillor	Services, Lyndoch
Kelly King	Wave Community Building Project
Gary Lucas	Brotherhood Of St Laurance Indigenous Project Officer, based at Community Connections
Lyndoch residential representatives	Lyndoch Centre, Warrnambool
Karen McKinnon & colleagues	South West Health Care
Donna Macik	South West Healthy Communities
Becky Maslen	South West Community Transport Development
Stephen Maze	Director of Operations, St John of God Hospital
Andrew Minack	Economic Development Manager, City of Warrnambool

Steve Nunn	Supervisor, Access Day Centre, Warrnambool
Meg Orton	Community Support Manager, Shire of Moyne
Sam Pope	Maternal and Child Health Nurse, Timboon
Jenny Reeves & colleagues	School Bus Coordinator, Warrnambool Secondary College
Residential student representatives	Deakin University
Residents of Warrnambool	
Peter Robinson	Warrnambool City Council
James Thomas	Gunditjmara Aboriginal Cooperative
Anne Waters	Community Development, City of Warrnambool
Wave Resident's Committee	Wave Project
Trevor White	Warrnambool City Council Community Bus Manager
Maree Wyse	Rural Access Project Officer, Warrnambool Council and Moyne Shire