



**City of  
Whittlesea**



# Walking and Cycling Plan 2022-2027

## Purpose of Document

The purpose of the Walking and Cycling Plan is to improve walking and cycling conditions in the municipality, raising awareness about the opportunities for walking and cycling and increase the level of walking and cycling participation.

Whilst private transportation is the most preferred mode of transport in most of the outer suburbs, the City of Whittlesea is committed to providing a safe active travel infrastructure by planning, developing, managing and promoting footpaths, shared paths and bike lanes throughout the municipality. The Walking and Cycling Plan (2022-2027) outlines four key directions and a suite of actions aimed at improving conditions to enable more walking and cycling across the municipality.

## What is active travel?

Active travel involves walking, cycling, scooting or other active ways of getting to and from a location as an alternative to motorised transport.

### The Walking and Cycling Plan has been developed by:

- Reviewing previous Walking and Cycling Plans
- Examining current walking and cycling trends in the municipality and researching how it could be improved.
- Engaging community and stakeholders to identify problems, understand their needs and prioritize action plans based on the active travel needs of the community.
- Reviewing the work that has already been done by Council in active travel like missing links, public space activation, online maps etc. to encourage more people to walk and cycle.
- Creating an evaluation framework to monitor active travel trends in the community.

## Rationale for investing in active travel

The City of Whittlesea's Bicycle Plan (2016-2020) set out Council's commitment to provide more bicycle infrastructure and encourage more people to ride their bikes throughout our municipality. Council has been able to substantially increase investment in cycling infrastructure, including shared user paths for both cyclists and pedestrians.

This plan builds upon the work undertaken in the previous bicycle plan, while taking into consideration the following:

### Whittlesea is growing



The City of Whittlesea is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Victoria and Australia. The City's current population is approximately 242,000 people. Over the past five years, the number of residents increased by 38,796 people. By 2041, the City's Population is forecast to increase to approximately 388,417 (an increase of almost 66 per cent). This puts pressure on the existing road network, requiring the need to look at increasing active travel as a viable option for people in our community.

### State Government target



The Victorian Government's new Climate Change Strategy has set a target of 25 per cent of trips to be active travel (walking or cycling) by 2030. This is up from the current target of 18 per cent.

### Health Benefits



Transport options that provide incidental exercise offer people with busy lives a means of staying active, providing increased health benefits such as reduced risk of diseases and ill health associated with lack of physical activity. This is an important factor in our municipality where:

- ✓ 51 per cent of residents are overweight
- ✓ 35.5 per cent do less than one hour of physical activity per week



## Economic Benefits



A range of economic benefits can be realised through an increase in active travel participation, including increased public transport usage, reduced vehicle operating costs, reduced health costs, and potential for changes to land-use planning to cater for more public spaces.

## Environmental Sustainability



Walking and cycling as modes of transport have been identified as crucial to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change in Victoria's Climate Change Strategy.

## Active Travel in response to COVID-19



Covid-19 and its precautionary measures have required people to work from home, and stay local, increasing the opportunity for those who have never walked or cycled, to make it a part of their daily routine.

## 20-minute neighborhoods (Plan Melbourne)



Active travel is an integral part in delivering the 20-minute Neighbourhood plan by giving people the ability to meet most of their needs within a 20-minute walk, cycle or local public transport trip from their home.



## Policy Context

### Policy statement and principles

The City of Whittlesea is committed to adopting active travel for a wide variety of trips and ensuring the City of Whittlesea is a great place to walk and ride.

The policy principles are designed to guide and underpin the Walking and Cycling Plan:

- Walking and cycling should provide a highly efficient transport option for short and medium length trips within the municipality.
- Walking and cycling should contribute to health, economic and environmental outcomes.
- Walking and cycling infrastructure should be focused on facilities suitable for all age groups and all abilities.
- Supporting infrastructure including wayfinding signage, bicycle parking and missing links should be provided in key locations across the municipality.
- Walking and cycling networks should extend the catchment of public transport stations and interchanges.
- We will work in partnership with our community and stakeholders to achieve positive community outcomes.
- We are committed to delivering accessible information, facilities, programs and services that encourage people to build social connections and participate in community life.

## Guiding policies and strategies

### Whittlesea 2040: A Place for All:

The Whittlesea 2040 long term vision was adopted by Council in 2018 to guide all of Council's work and future partnerships with the community and others.

Whittlesea 2040 identifies four goals to help us achieve our vision.

Goal 2 guides the work in the Walking and Cycling Plan.



#### **Goal 1:** Connected community



#### **Goal 2:** Liveable neighbourhoods

- Smart, connected transport network
- Well-designed neighborhoods and vibrant town centers
- Housing for diverse needs



#### **Goal 3:** Strong local economy



#### **Goal 4:** Sustainable environment



### Integrated Transport Strategy (2014)

The Integrated Transport Strategy (2014) sets out Council's role in the provision of walking and cycling to provide appropriate infrastructure and promotion to support access to local activities and services and for recreation and to support community wellbeing.

Other related strategies that are aligned with the Walking and Cycling Plan include:

- Northern Regional Trails Strategy 2016
- Active Whittlesea Strategy 2019-2028
- Open Space Strategy 2014
- Integrated Transport Strategy 2014
- 20-Minute Neighborhoods-Plan Melbourne

## Walking and cycling in Whittlesea

Current levels of active travel participation are low in the City of Whittlesea. Walking and cycling is mostly undertaken for recreational purposes. Below is a summary of current active travel participation:

### WALKING TRENDS IN THE CITY OF WHITTLESEA

#### Walking comparison by frequency

**14.9%** of residents walk on a daily basis

**49.6%** choose not to walk



#### Walking participation by age

Young adults (**10.9%**) are walking more than middle-aged adults

Although overall rates are lower, this is consistent with both greater Melbourne and Victoria.



#### Trip Purpose

**61.8%** walk for fitness or leisure

**32.1 %** people walk to work or school

With participants selecting more than one reason to walk, it was seen that over **40%** walk to shopping areas too



### CYCLING TRENDS IN THE CITY OF WHITTLESEA

#### Cycling participation in the City of Whittlesea

**13.9%** of residents ride in a typical week

**32.5%** have done so in the past year

These figures are slightly below average for Greater Melbourne and Victoria



#### Cycling participation by gender

- Much higher rate of **males (19%)** than **females (9%)** cycling in the City of Whittlesea
- Although overall rates are lower, this is consistent with Greater Melbourne and Victoria



#### Cycling participation by age

Cycling rates drop **rapidly** with age 

**41%** of children under 10 cycle frequently (31% in Greater Melbourne)

This drops to **28%** for those aged 10-17 (Greater Melbourne increases to 35%)

Declines to **7%** for ages 18-29 and 30-49 (19% and 15% respectively for Greater Melbourne)

Only **5%** aged 50+ cycle frequently compared to 7% across Greater Melbourne





## Cycling Network

- The cycling network in the City of Whittlesea currently consists of approximately 860km of cycling infrastructure.
- This made up of approximately 524km of on-road facilities, 855km of off-road facilities and 150km of informal cycling routes (on-road).
- The development of the network is guided by three levels of networks
  - Metropolitan Trails Network
  - Strategic Cycling Corridors (Strategic Bicycle Routes)
  - Municipal Bicycle Network

### Current cycling network

**524km** of on-road facilities,  
**855km** of off-road facilities and  
**150km** of informal cycling routes  
(on-road).

## Feedback on walking and cycling

### WalkSpot 2017

- This survey highlighted the main issues people faced when walking:
  - Footpath issues such as missing links were the primary demotivator in walking.
  - Issues with the speed of traffic.
  - Lack of pedestrian crossings was of particular concern for people with children or prams.

### National Cycling Participation Survey 2018

- Key issues identified include:
  - Low rates of cycling participation, largely due to an unwillingness to cycle for transport
  - An increase in the proportion of cyclists feeling uncomfortable
  - Deterioration of cycling conditions
  - Distance, too many items to carry and preference for other transport modes

### BikeSpot 2020

- The main issue identified in this survey reiterated concerns around real and perceived lack of safety, with 106 out of 114 submissions highlighting safety concerns.

### Key issues identified through BikeSpot 2020 include:

- No bicycle lanes in some areas
- Bicycle lanes ending/unsafe bicycle lanes
- Dangerous intersections
- Narrow bicycle lanes



EXISTING CYCLING NETWORK



Strategic cycling route Trails

## Bicycle Plan (2016-2020)

The City of Whittlesea Bicycle Plan 2016-2020 (WBP) was established to support cycling in order to achieve a range of benefits including economic, environmental, health, access and mobility, and community inclusion. It detailed key directions, measures and targets, identified key objectives and listed actions for stimulating greater bicycle use within the municipality.

The WBP was ambitious in nature and contained a large and diverse number of infrastructure proposals and other supporting actions to encourage cycling which varied in terms of cost, scale, complexity and other aspects. The WBP (2016-2020) pointed out that there was lack of connected infrastructure and low level of safety for cyclists which limits participation. The key directions for the plan covered safety, encouragement and promotion of cycling. It focused on building and maintaining a high-quality network by offering better recreational trails, transport routes, signage, end-of-trip facilities and better maintenance of the network. The plan also ensured that the progress across each key direction was measured and monitored through investment in cycling infrastructure, participation and perception of cycling and monitoring cyclist volumes on key routes.

Over  
**\$750,000**  
invested in missing links  
between 2016-2020.

Over  
**\$5 million**  
in cycling infrastructure  
projects between  
2016-2020





## Investments in walking and cycling infrastructure

### Council investment

Council has invested over \$5 million, or approximately \$5 per resident as a five-year average, in infrastructure projects between 2016-2020, in line with the City of Whittlesea Bicycle Plan.

This includes:

- Shared user paths on the Darebin Creek Trail, Plenty Road, McDonalds Road and the Henderson's Creek Trail
- Over \$750,000 in missing links
- Bus stop improvements
- DDA upgrades

Projects such as the revitalisation of Rochdale Square, Lalor shops and Thomastown Activity Centre along High Street. These improvements have also assisted in encouraging greater levels of active travel and use of public spaces.

### External funding


Council received \$2.33 million in external funding from the State Government as a result of regional advocacy with our northern metropolitan Council neighbours that was enabled by the Northern Region Trails Strategy. This strategy is focused on identification of trail improvement projects within the Northern Region. Funding was allocated for sections of the Edgars Creek Trail, Yan Yean Pipe Track and Henderson's Road Drain Trail.

There are several road upgrades being carried out across the municipality, which will include appropriate walking and cycling infrastructure. They include State Government funded upgrades of Epping Road (Memorial Avenue to Craigieburn Road), Plenty Road Stage 2 (Bush Boulevard to Bridge Inn Road), Bridge Inn Road (east of Plenty Road), Yan Yean Road Stage 2 (Kurrag Road to Bridge Inn Road) and Childs Road. The Plenty River Trail, managed by Parks Victoria, will be built in stages from late 2022, and will connect University Hill in Bundoora to Plenty Gorge Park in Doreen.



**\$2.33 million**

received from the Victorian Government









## Key Directions

The key directions of the Walking and Cycling Plan (2022-2027) have been derived from transport planning best practice and feedback from the community. The key directions are:

**KEY DIRECTION 1: Make active travel safer**

**KEY DIRECTION 2: Encourage and promote active travel**

**KEY DIRECTION 3: Build and maintain a high-quality network**

**KEY DIRECTION 4: Monitor active travel in the future**

A list of actions have been developed to implement the Key Directions via Council's role as provider, advocate and facilitator. Council is able to undertake specific actions directly, such as those that relate to Council assets. Council also acts as a facilitator, working with external organisations to develop programs which assist the community and with developers in greenfield estates to

ensure delivery of appropriate infrastructure for new communities. Council is an advocate that seeks the best outcomes for the community on projects like arterial road upgrades so that provision is made for all road users, including walkers, cyclists and public transport users.









## Action Plan List

<b>Key Direction 1: Make active transport safer</b>	<p>Council commits to walking and cycling safety as integral to all capital works projects.</p> <p>Undertake Walking Audits at locations with high pedestrian use to identify pedestrian safety and priorities, and to improve accessibility, to inform Council investment, external funding opportunities and advocacy with State Government.</p> <p>Undertake Cycling Audits to identify cycling safety issues and opportunities for enhanced connectivity to inform Council investment, external funding opportunities and advocacy with State Government.</p>
<b>Key Direction 2: Encourage and promote active travel</b>	<p>Promote local area walkability to nearby facilities and attractions like activity centres, schools and parks.</p> <p>Promote new and improved cycling infrastructure and transport connectivity to local facilities and attractions.</p> <p>Update Council's walking and cycling maps and distribute maps at appropriate events.</p> <p>Engage with schools to promote active transport related programs such as Walk to School and Ride2School.</p> <p>Provide support to the Whittlesea Bicycle User's Group and help facilitate community programs around cycling. Facilitate the formulation of a Walking Advocacy Group to represent community interests and issues around walking.</p>
<b>Key Direction 3: Build and maintain a high-quality network</b>	<p>Deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key bicycle and walking infrastructure network priorities (see table below)</li> <li>- Missing footpath links</li> <li>- Crossing points to improve local connections</li> <li>- Informal cycling routes through local roads</li> <li>- Wayfinding signage</li> </ul> <p>Collaborate with State Government agencies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Represent community interests for active transport priority and safety as part of State Government capital works projects like road widenings and public transport improvements</li> <li>- Apply for funding for shared user paths and trails, safety and connectivity improvements</li> <li>- Improve active transport priority and comfort on arterial roads through the provision of more pedestrian and cyclist crossings and appropriate design and traffic speeds in activity centres</li> </ul> <p>Maintain Council's active transport network so that it is free of debris and obstacles/ barriers and meets pavement quality standards.</p>
<b>Key Direction 4: Monitor active travel in the future</b>	<p>Monitor active travel usage, behaviour and feedback from the community via surveys and pedestrian and cyclist counts.</p>

## Current Walking and Cycling Projects

Rank	Project	Stage
1	Yan Yean Pipe Track – Childs Road to McDonalds Road	Design
2	High Street Shared Path – Keon Parade to Childs Road	Design
3	Yan Yean Pipe Track – Darebin Creek Trail to Childs Road	Construction 21/22
4	Childs Road Shared Path – High Street to Plenty Road	Feasibility/ Design
5	High Street Shared Path – Childs Road to Memorial Avenue	Feasibility
6	Kingsway Drive – Suncroft Drive to High Street	Feasibility
7	McDonalds Road Shared Path – High Street to Bush Boulevard	Design
8	Dalton Road Shared Path – Buckingham Court to Grand Parade	Feasibility
9	Edgars Creek Trail – Main Street to German Lane	Design
10	Hendersons Road Drain Trail – McDonalds Road to Findon Road	Construction 21/22
11	Main Street – Galada Tamboore Trail to High Street	Feasibility
12	Ferres Boulevard Shared Path – McDonalds Road to Findon Road	Design
13	Barry Road Shared Path – Whittlesea Public Gardens to Edgars Road	Design
14	Dalton Road Shared Path - Cooper Street to Grand Parade and a crossing to access Darebin Creek Trail	Construction
15	Dalton Road Shared Path – Parklands Drive to Wood Street	Construction
16	Yan Yean Pipe Track - Bridge Inn Road to Hazel Glen Drive	Design
17	Findon Road Shared Path – Epping Road to Glendale Avenue	Design
18	Edgars Road Shared Path – Deveny Road to Cooper Street	Design
19	Tramoo Street – Mount View Road to High Street	Feasibility
20	Paschke Crescent-Curtain Avenue to Dalton Road	Feasibility
21	Plenty Road Shared Path – Enterprise Drive to M80 Ring Road	Design
22	Alexander Avenue – Thomastown Station to Dalton Road	Feasibility
23	The Boulevard-McKimmies Road to Darebin Creek Trail	Feasibility
24	Davisson Street Shared Path – McDonalds Road to Cooper Street	Construction
25	Edgars Road-Rosedale Drive-German Lane Shared Path	Feasibility
26	High Street Shared Path – Findon Road to Park Street (eastern side)	Design
27	South Morang Pipe Track – The Lakes Boulevard to Yan Yean Pipe Track	Construction 21/22
28	Bruce's Creek Reserve Shared Path – Kinglake Views to Yea Road	Construction 21/22
29	Plenty Road Shared Path – Municipal Boundary to M80 Ring Road	Feasibility
30	Transmission Line Shared Path – Childs Road to Centenary Drive	Design

The above priority projects have been determined by the following criteria:

- **Connectivity:** to local destinations and the strategic importance of links (in accordance with the State Government's Strategic Cycling Corridors)
- **Permeability:** intersecting bicycle routes and directness of route
- **Quality:** type of facility proposed and if a crossing facility is provided

## Current Advocacy Priorities

Rank	Project	Stage
1	Mernda to Whittlesea Shared Trail	Feasibility
2	Cooper Street Shared Path - Edgars Road to Merri Creek	Design



Walking and Cycling Projects

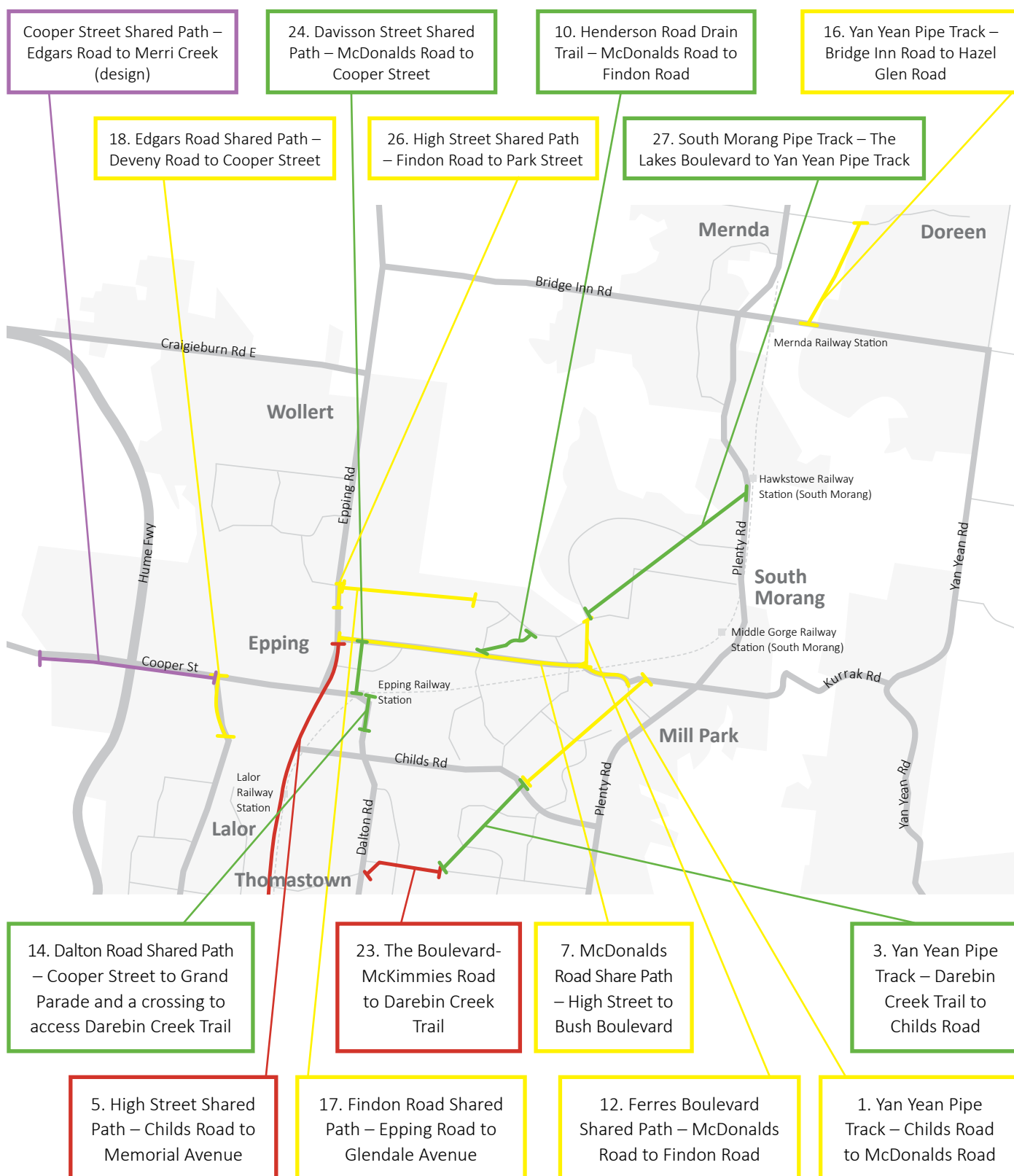
NORTHERN PRIORITY PROJECTS



Project details/stages

Design Stage Under Construction Advocacy Project

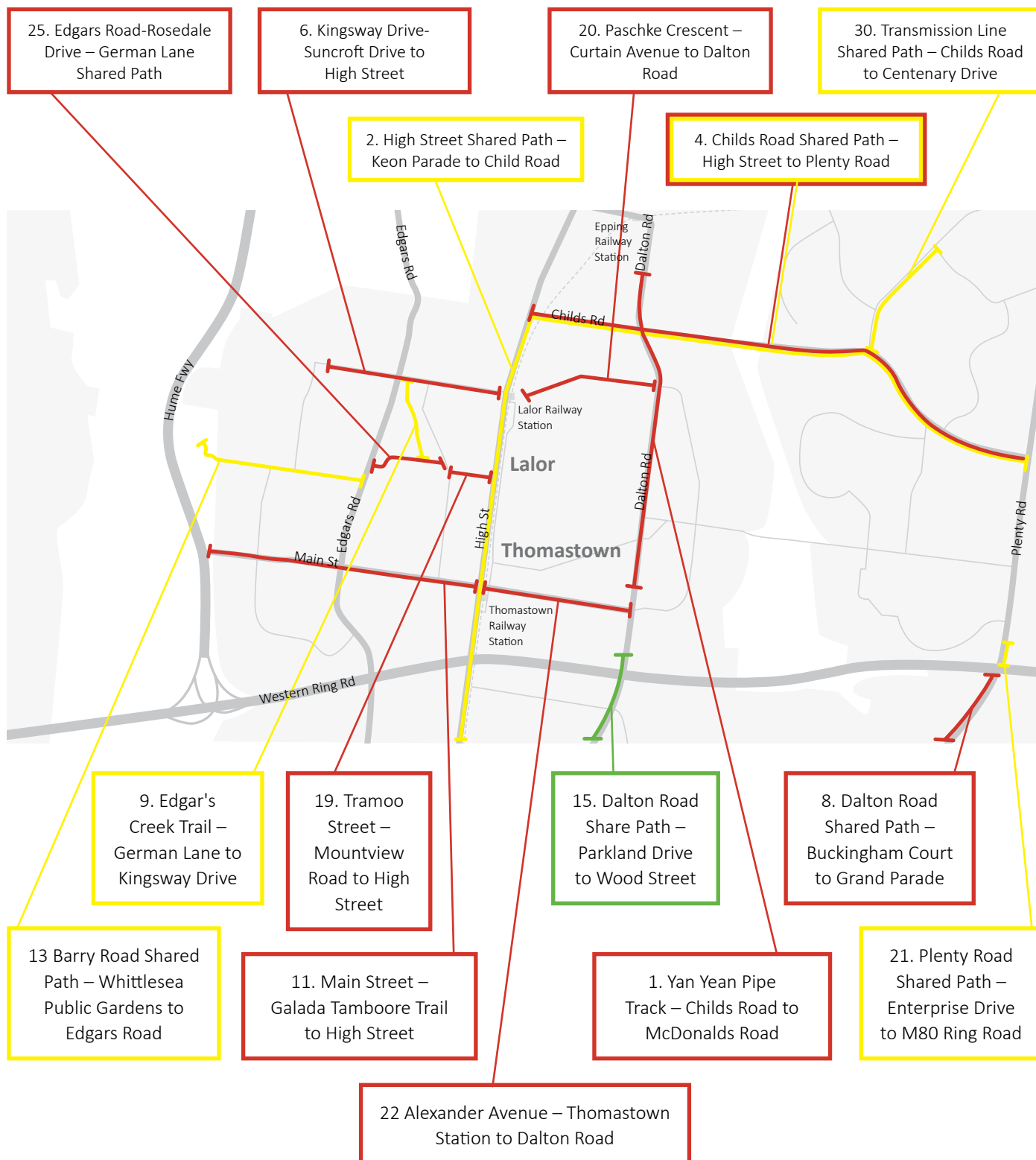
## CENTRAL PRIORITY PROJECTS



### Project details/stages

— Feasibility Stage 
 — Design Stage 
 — Under Construction 
 — Advocacy Project

## SOUTHERN PRIORITY PROJECTS



### Project details/stages

— Feasibility Stage — Design Stage — Under Construction











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