1.2 WALK21 INTERNATIONAL CHARTER FOR WALKING

Responsible Director: Julie Salomon

RECOMMENDATION

That Council signs the Walk21 International Charter for Walking.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement from Council to sign the ‘International Charter for Walking’ which exists to champion the development of healthy, efficient and sustainable communities where people choose to walk.

BACKGROUND

On 30 April 2013 Council adopted the Monash Walking & Cycling Strategy. The strategy confirmed Council’s commitment to a city that is walking and cycling friendly and one where residents of all ages and abilities can easily walk and cycle as their preferred form of exercise and transport. To extend Council’s position the strategy recommended that Council consider adopting the Walk21 ‘International Charter for Walking’ to guide the planning of a more walkable community.

DISCUSSION

Walk21 exists to champion the development of healthy, efficient and sustainable communities where people choose to walk. Along with the ‘International Charter for Walking’, the vision is to create a world where people choose and are able to walk as a way to travel, to be healthy and to relax. The charter brings together eight (8) key principles with actions to achieve this vision.

1) Increased inclusive mobility;
2) Well designed and managed spaces and places for people;
3) Improved integration of networks;
4) Supportive land-use and spatial planning;
5) Reduced road danger;
6) Less crime and fear of crime;
7) More supportive authorities; and
8) A culture of walking.

By signing the charter Council recognises the benefits of walking as a key indicator of healthy, efficient, socially inclusive and sustainable communities and acknowledge the universal rights of people to be able to walk safely and to enjoy high quality public spaces anywhere and at anytime. It outlines Council’s commitment to reducing the physical, social and institutional barriers that limit
walking activity and that Council will work with others to help create a culture where people choose to walk.

The charter will help guide the implementation of Council’s Health & Wellbeing Partnership Plan and Walking & Cycling Strategy. Council will interact with the charter through involvement in conferences, networking, promoting our actions and successes, at the local, state, national and international platform. In addition, the charter will ensure Council’s new walking and cycling infrastructure supports the development of a healthy and sustainable community.

**CONSULTATION**

Extensive community consultation was undertaken as part of the Council’s Walking & Cycling Strategy. 35% of walkers and 44% of cyclists indicated that they do not have access to a well connected network of pathways. Furthermore, consultation highlighted that having a well connected walking and cycling network creates a more healthy, socially inclusive and sustainable community.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications as a result of signing the charter. Any new budget initiatives for the development of walking and cycling infrastructure will be considered as part of Council’s budget process.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The charter supports the findings and principles outlined in the Monash Walking & Cycling Strategy, Health & Wellbeing Partnership Plan and Access and Equality Framework, in particular: fair distribution of economic resources; equal access to essential services, equal rights and equal opportunities for participation.

**SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The charter will provide Council with an opportunity to engage more Monash residents in civic life. It will also improve the physical, social and mental wellbeing of the diverse community of Monash.

**HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

This report is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and in particular it relates to the following right: (xi) taking part in public life.

**CONCLUSION**

Supporting the International Charter for Walking provides an opportunity for Council to confirm its commitment to walking on an international platform.
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Walk21 International Charter for Walking