



# North East Transport Connections Project

## Project Summary



### What is North East Transport Connections?

North East Transport Connections (NTEPC) is a three year project funded by the Victorian State Government's Transport Connections program (TCP). The aim of the project is to address the needs of communities and individuals who have limited access to transport by:

- Developing innovative transport and non-transport options to support access, **excluding public transport**;
- Generating more efficient use of existing transport and community resources;
- Establishing ongoing local partnerships to deliver transport and accessibility outcomes; and
- Fostering ongoing community participation and inclusion in decision-making to improve social and economic inclusion.

### Background

Transport Connections was introduced by the Victorian Government in 2003, through a partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), Department of Transport (DOT) and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). Since its inception the focus of the program has evolved:

	Year	Aim
<b>Phase 1</b>	2003 - 2006	To address the access needs of transport disadvantaged people in rural and regional Victoria.
<b>Phase 2</b>	2006 - 2010	Through local partnerships more communities will be able to develop new and coordinated approaches to transport that enable people to get around more easily.
<b>Phase 3</b>	2010 - 2013	To develop efficient responses to the needs of people with limited transport options, and to improve access to services, resources, employment and community participation opportunities.

NTEPC commenced in the northeast as one of 32 projects in Victoria who received phase two TCP funding. The effectiveness of NTEPC resulted in the project receiving a further three years of funding, under phase three, until 2013. The project covers a geographical area of 17,536 square kilometres, which includes five Local Government areas of Alpine, Indigo, Towong, Wangaratta and Wodonga.

The project auspice organisation is Community Accessibility located in Wodonga. The project employs two staff. Project direction is based on community consultation and is overseen by a project steering committee.

New funding brings new direction for the project. Previously Local Transport Action Plans were developed for individual townships, this had mixed effectiveness throughout the region. A key evolution for NTCP 2010 – 2013 is the development of one Action Plan for the project. In taking this approach it is hoped that common needs will be identified and addressed and a more strategic and holistic approach can be taken to transport issues within the project area. Another significant change is the exclusion of public transport from the program.

## Project Action Plan

Currently in draft, the Project Action Plan brings together initiatives from the previous projects Local Action Plans, project evaluation feedback, TCP3 funding guidelines and information contained in Local and State Government strategic plans. The Action Plan initiatives are divided into seven key themes; Transport Innovation, Transport Information and Dissemination, Passive and Active Transport, Technological Solutions, Community Transport, Volunteers and Advocacy. The draft plan proposes that these areas be addressed by the following initiatives:

No.	Initiative	Outcome
1.	Develop Transport Hubs	Communities enjoy access to transport options and information from a central location. A network of hubs is established throughout the project area. Tailored to local community need in location and content.  <b>Key features include:</b> visitor amenities, transport information, provision for taxi, public and community transport and links to pedestrian and cycling pathways.
2.	Further develop and support community transport network.	An extensive network of community and non-public transport options link small communities across the project area.  <b>Key features include:</b> Utilising existing transport infrastructure and assets, transport coordination and transport friends.
3.	Further develop flexible transport services	All non-public transport services utilise a model of flexible transport.  <b>Key features include:</b> Transport friends, flexible pick up and drop off locations.
4.	Support communities to develop unique transport solutions for specific needs	Communities will be empowered to develop and oversee their unique transport needs.  <b>Key features include:</b> Facilitation, grants program and seed funding. <b>Example groups:</b> youth, ageing, disadvantaged.

No.	Initiative	Outcome
5.	Update, develop, and maintain a variety of transport information systems	<p>Transport Information is provided consistently across the project area utilising a variety of medium and technologies.</p> <p><b>Key features include:</b> Transport Information Booklets, Internet service, telephone service and transport information centres, township maps including mobility, booking service, cycling and walking trials and strong links to transport hubs.</p>
6.	Develop Transport Volunteers throughout the project area.	<p>An extensive pool of highly knowledge and supportive transport volunteers exists across the project area.</p> <p><b>Key Features include:</b> Volunteer training, volunteer coordination, transport friends and transport ambassadors. Linked to existing volunteering programs.</p>
7.	Support Active and Passive Transport Solutions across the project area.	<p>Active transport is an expected way of commuting for residents in the project area. Passive transport occurs naturally.</p> <p><b>Key Features Include:</b> Support for Local Government in transport hubs, end of trip facilities, transport information, health promotion and encouragement activities.</p>

More detailed information on these initiatives can be found in the draft Project Action Plan. Copies of this document can be obtained from the Project Manager.

## How the Project will be delivered

The first step is to confirm with project stakeholders that the Action Plan correctly addresses the transport needs of communities within the project area. The Project Manager will consult with stakeholders and other identified groups with an interest in transport issues and possible solutions. Following, it is envisaged that a small group of stakeholders will take a lead role in the project by becoming part of the Project Partnership Group.

Once the Partnership Group is finalised and the Action Plan adopted and priorities identified, the project team will develop work and project plans for each key initiative in the project. Further consultation will take place with initiative specific groups as they develop.

## Why take part in NTCP

NTCP is a project designed to complement and work with existing services and plans, it is not a project that provides transport but rather works with local communities to assist in the development of solutions to meet local needs, valuing adding to existing activities. The project has very strong links to health and community services and Local Government community planning and service delivery. Sustainability of initiatives is paramount with outcomes expected have a life long after the project ceases in 2013.

**Further information:** Helen Vey, Project Manager, 02 6049 2150  
0419 404 415 or [helenvey@tpg.com.au](mailto:helenvey@tpg.com.au).