



South Australia's

Transport Strategy SNAPSHOT

March 2025



Government of South Australia
Department for Infrastructure
and Transport

Build. Move. Connect.

South Australia's Transport Strategy

South Australia's first Transport Strategy (the Strategy) outlines our 30-year vision for the State's transport system.

It sets the overall direction for future transport planning and will guide decisions to ensure South Australia remains a great place to live and do business.



Transport is essential to daily life for every South Australian

The Strategy outlines the South Australian Government's (the government) long-term vision for our State's transport system. It will guide future planning, investment, delivery and operations within the transport system, ensuring we are well-prepared for the future.

The Strategy will support local, state and federal government decision-making and provide clear investment priorities for industry and the private sector.

To realise this vision, the Strategy contains actions that reflect transport's important role across all facets of our lives. It will be delivered in collaboration across State Government, led by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport.



The Strategy has been developed in partnership with you

We have undertaken extensive consultation across industry, government and the community to ensure your vision becomes our future.

Through this process, we have learnt about the challenges you face and the opportunities you see to improve our transport system. This has guided the development of the Strategy and has helped us identify priority actions for the next 30 years. We are committed to continuing to work with you to create a better transport future.

We incorporated your feedback into the strategy through a targeted vision, including five strategic outcomes, 13 responses, and corresponding actions.

To read the full strategy, visit dit.sa.gov.au/transport-strategy



Tarntanyangga / Victoria Square, Adelaide CBD

Overview of South Australia's transport system

Transport is the backbone of South Australia's economy and lifestyle. We use it every day to access jobs and services, support our businesses and their supply chains, and connect with friends, family and the unique destinations across our State.

Key facts about our transport system

Our transport system is made up of a variety of transport modes that work together to move people and goods across the State and to our interstate and international ports and airports. The government invests in, operates, and maintains a range of road, rail, public transport, cycleway and marine networks.



Port Adelaide Container Terminal



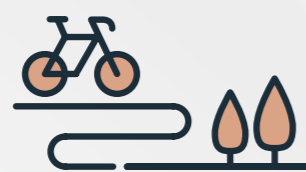
Our road network connected **1.8 million** South Australians who travelled 16.6 billion km throughout 2022 and 2023.



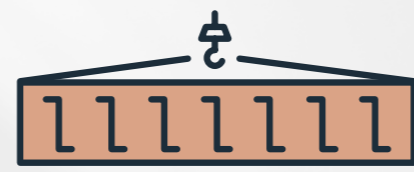
More than **64%** of South Australians drive to work.



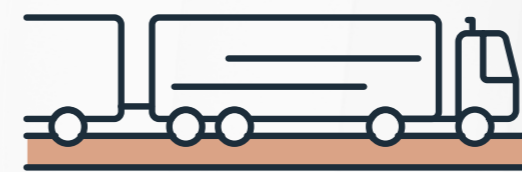
In 2024, **91** lives were lost and **841** seriously injured on South Australian roads.



Only **12.7%** of South Australians ride a bicycle in a typical week.



350,000 containers were exchanged via the Port of Adelaide during 2022 and 2023.



Our freight is mostly transported by road, making up **77%** of total freight movements in 2024.



Buses are the most used form of public transport, making up **77%** of boardings. Trains accounted for **19%**, while trams carried **4%** of passengers (2022).



South Australia has **133 km** of metropolitan train track and **17 km** of tram track.



Transport is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in South Australia, making up around **39%** of total emissions.



SA exports more than **\$17.6 billion** in freight each year, mostly by sea through our ports.



In 2024, our road network included **13,000 km** of sealed roads and **10,000 km** of unsealed roads.



Adelaide Airport is a key hub for tourism and high-value freight, handling more than **8 million** passengers each year.

The outlook for South Australia's transport system

National and global trends and drivers of change will present challenges and opportunities for the way people and goods move over the coming years.

To create a better future for all South Australians, we must have a clear plan for how we will respond to changes and disruptions that come our way. This allows us to prioritise investment where it's needed most and will have the greatest impact. Our role is to make sure the transport system supports communities and improves lives for generations to come. Getting it right is essential for our State.

There are seven key trends that will shape our transport future. These are:



A changing economy

Our economy is evolving, with new industries emerging. A well-planned transport system is needed to support sustainable growth and enable these industries to thrive.



A growing and changing population

South Australia's population is changing, with some regional centres growing quickly while others are shrinking.



Reaching net zero emissions

Climate change is increasing the urgency to achieve net zero emissions and strengthen our transport system to withstand more frequent extreme weather-related events.



Supporting regional connectivity

South Australia's regional areas are important to the State's economic and social fabric. Many regions face challenges related to transport connectivity.



Responding to advancing technology

Rapid advancements in technology are shaping transport systems globally and changing how people and goods move.



Safety in everything

Our communities value safety across the entire transport system. Safety has a major impact on their decisions to choose public and active transport.



A growing and ageing asset base

We have a large and growing network of transport assets that need more maintenance and management each year.



Marion Railway Station

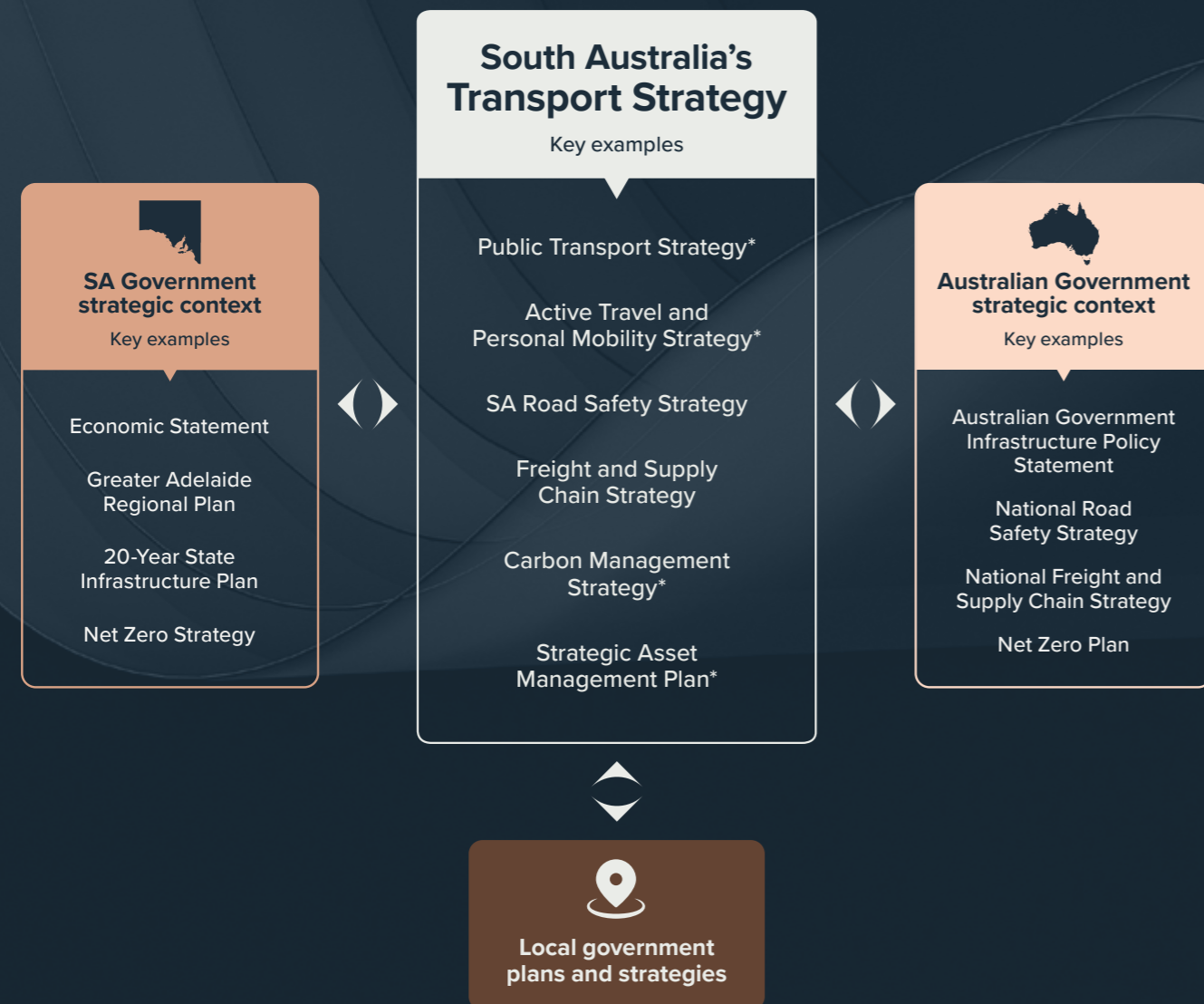
Strategic context

The Transport Strategy sits within a broader government planning ecosystem and guides the Department's suite of sub-strategies.

The transport system plays a key role in achieving broader State and national objectives. The Strategy aligns with those wider priorities and will guide future government planning, as well as industry and business planning across the State.

From a South Australian perspective, the Strategy is part of a set of key long-term planning documents that define the State's aspirations and future direction. These key documents include the South Australian Economic Statement, South Australia's Net Zero Strategy 2024–2030, the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan (GARP), and Infrastructure South Australia's 20-Year State Infrastructure Strategy.

From a national perspective, the Strategy will improve partnerships and cooperation with other governments by providing a clear vision and pathway for the evolution of the State's transport system.



Augusta Highway pavement rehabilitation

What you told us

Your insights and feedback are important to guiding future investment and improvements for our transport system.

We engaged over 6,000 community members and industry stakeholders to help shape the Strategy.



Artist's impression

Who did we engage with?

- Surveyed more than **5,300** people, including groups that rarely engage with the Department, such as young people.
- Almost **40,000** page views on our Transport Strategy website.
- Met face-to-face with community members in **26** locations across the State.
- Created a virtual reality experience that allowed over **700** people to visualise the future of our transport system and provide feedback.
- Engaged **75** industry stakeholders in roundtable discussions on key topics, including CEOs, executives, and subject matter experts.
- Ran briefings with **275** stakeholders from government, industry and community groups.
- Received **101** written submissions from local government, industry and community organisations.

What did we find out?*

- Most South Australians (63%), particularly young people and metro residents, believe SA can achieve a better future for transport.
- Car ownership is high among surveyed South Australians, with 94% having access to a vehicle. Only 19% use public transport, and just 6% rely on it as their main mode of travel.
- People travel for various reasons, including shopping, work, and social connections. Most workers aged 18 to 54 travel mainly for work, while those aged 65 and over travel primarily for shopping and healthcare. People with disabilities are more likely to travel for healthcare needs.
- More than two-thirds believe that integrating transport planning with urban growth is important. Stakeholders emphasise the need to support population growth with sustainable development and effective business operations.
- Regional connectivity does not meet the needs of all residents, especially those with limited car access. Public transport usage is much lower in regional areas compared to metro areas.
- Almost three-quarters (72%) of residents are willing to accept short-term disruptions for infrastructure improvements.

- Indicators show some appetite for change:
 - 10% plan to use cars less
 - 24% wish to use public transport more
 - 44% want to walk, run, and cycle more
 - 60% of respondents aged 18 to 24 are willing to accept short-term price increases for an environmentally sustainable transport network.
- Stakeholders consider public transport a key issue, with 79% highlighting its importance. Both users and non-users agree that service frequency and travel time are critical to encouraging more people to use public transport. Direct routes and value for money are also major factors.
- When commuting to work, South Australians tend to use one mode of transport rather than combining multiple modes.
- While 90% of young adults aged 18 to 24 drive cars, they are the most likely to use multiple modes of transport.
- Safety is important to South Australians, both physical safety and feeling safe.
- Many stakeholders identified environmental sustainability as a key goal, with strong support for achieving better environmental outcomes and moving towards net zero emissions.

- Freight and transport organisations highlighted the industry's vital role in the State's economic growth and prosperity. But, they identified barriers to a more efficient network, including an over-reliance on road freight.
- Councils and organisations recognise the transport network's role in supporting economic growth, while community members believe prosperity will follow once safety and connectivity are addressed.
- Aboriginal stakeholders highlighted the vital role of transport in connecting people to communities and Country, stressing the need for solutions that meet the specific needs of their communities. They also emphasised the importance of making the transport system more environmentally sustainable, with a strong commitment to achieving better environmental outcomes.



Virtual reality experience

Strategy outline

Vision

How we see our transport future

Strategic outcomes

What we want our transport system to be

Strategic responses

What we will prioritise

Strategic actions

How we will deliver



Artist's impression






Vision

How we see our transport future

A transport system that transforms South Australia by enabling prosperity, sustainability and connectivity.

Strategic outcomes

What we want our transport system to be

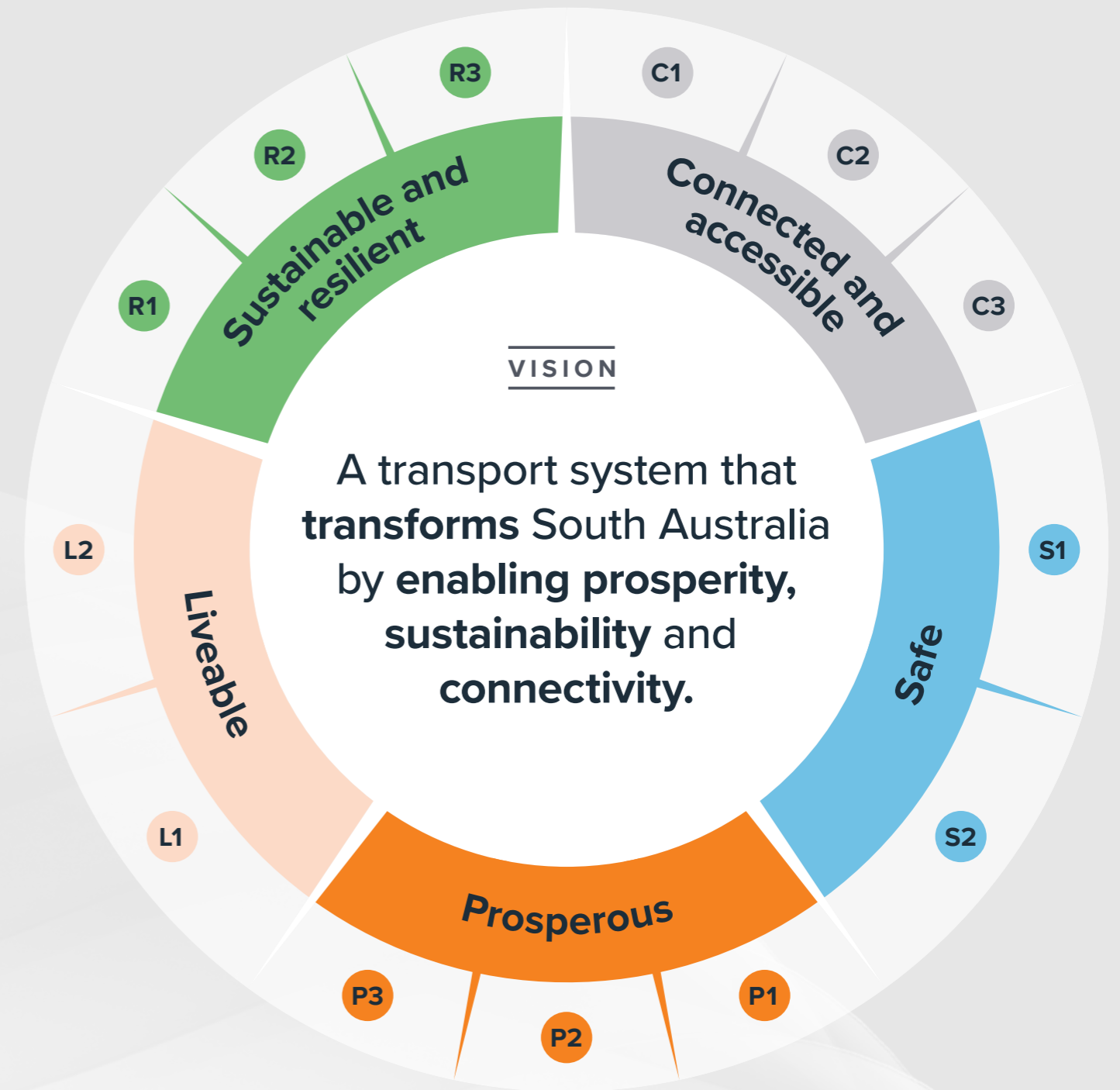
- 
Connected and accessible
 Our transport system is accessible and connects people and goods to where they need to go.
- 
Safe
 Our transport system is safe, and we feel confident and secure when we travel.
- 
Prosperous
 Our transport system supports economic growth, productivity and prosperity.
- 
Liveable
 Our transport system supports wellbeing, inclusivity and quality of life.
- 
Sustainable and resilient
 Our transport system is environmentally and financially sustainable as well as resilient.

Strategic responses

What we will prioritise

Thirteen strategic responses will guide how we achieve the vision and outcomes for our transport system.

Outcome	Response	Description
Connected and accessible	C1 Delivering an integrated multimodal system	Create a transport system where various modes of transport are seamlessly connected, to provide efficient and accessible transport options for all.
	C2 Enhancing regional connectivity	Enhance regional connectivity by improving the quality of services and providing greater choice in how people travel.
	C3 Delivering a connected and efficient freight network	Develop a fit-for-purpose multimodal freight and supply chain network that provides efficient connectivity to serve an evolving freight task in South Australia.
Safe	S1 Providing a safe transport system, working towards zero lives lost	Deliver a transport system that focuses on the safe movement of people, reduces risk to users, and minimises harm from crashes.
	S2 Ensuring people are safe and confident when travelling	Prioritise personal safety and security to create an environment where all transport users feel safe, equally protected and assured.
Prosperous	P1 Improving links to economic opportunity	Improve links to places of employment and economic opportunities, including emerging industries such as tourism, technology, mining, defence, hydrogen and renewable energy.
	P2 Integrating transport with land use planning and growth trends	Plan and develop transport infrastructure in line with urban growth planning to ensure a fit-for-purpose transport system.
	P3 Improving transport productivity	Develop an integrated, efficient transport system that increases capacity, reduces disruption, and boosts productivity across the State.
Liveable	L1 Enabling local living and placemaking	Create local environments that enhance community wellbeing and quality of life through improved shared amenities and investment in healthy transport choices.
	L2 Supporting inclusive travel for all	Create a transport system that puts users first by offering easy-to-use and inclusive options that meet a variety of needs.
Sustainable and resilient	R1 Transitioning the transport system towards net zero	Adopt a comprehensive approach to decarbonisation and environmental sustainability to achieve South Australia's emission reduction targets and net zero goals.
	R2 Providing a resilient transport system that adapts to change	Strengthen the transport system's resilience against major weather events and disruptions.
	R3 Prioritising asset optimisation and value for money	Ensure value for money is a primary focus, including how we build, manage and maintain the State's transport assets.



Strategic actions

How we will deliver

The following strategic actions will be outlined in an implementation plan to drive future initiatives and investments.

	Strategic responses	Strategic actions	
Connected and accessible	C1 Delivering an integrated multimodal system	C1.1 Provide an integrated 'one network' transport system that supports improved transport choice for people.	
		C1.2 Integrate emerging transport choices.	
		C1.3 Provide transport nodes and interchanges at key locations.	
		C1.4 Use digital technology to improve connectivity and information delivery.	
	C2 Enhancing regional connectivity	C2.1 Provide more inter-regional transport options, including to and from Adelaide, that are fit for purpose.	
		C2.2 Provide more transport options within major regional centres and towns.	
	C3 Delivering a connected and efficient freight network	C3.1 Support current and future freight needs through improved infrastructure, regulation and policy.	
	Safe	S1 Providing a safe transport system, working towards zero lives lost	S1.1 Improve safety across the transport system.
			S1.2 Enhance the safety of our road networks, working towards zero lives lost.
S1.3 Minimise conflicts between freight and other transport users.			
S2 Ensuring people are safe and confident when travelling		S2.1 Promote safe behaviours.	
		S2.2 Improve public transport safety so the community feels safe and secure when travelling at any time of day or night.	
		S2.3 Safely integrate new transport technologies.	

	Strategic responses	Strategic actions
Prosperous	P1 Improving links to economic opportunity	P1.1 Ensure the transport system supports new and existing industries, tourism and future markets.
		P1.2 Improve transport options to major precincts and employment hubs.
		P1.3 Support South Australians to build a future-focused transport and logistics workforce.
	P2 Integrating transport with land use planning and growth trends	P2.1 Invest in the transport system to accommodate housing growth demands.
		P2.2 Support housing growth with public and active transport.
	P3 Improving transport productivity	P3.1 Improve the travel time and reliability of public transport routes.
		P3.2 Improve travel time and reduce variability along strategic road corridors.
		P3.3 Continue to promote initiatives that improve productivity along the freight supply chain.
	Liveable	L1 Enabling local living and placemaking
L1.2 Enable healthy transport choices that enhance wellbeing.		
L1.3 Improve amenity outcomes when delivering transport infrastructure projects.		
L2 Supporting inclusive travel for all		L2.1 Improve transport affordability for households and businesses.
		L2.2 Address transport inequality.
		L2.3 Improve wayfinding and disability access for all mobility needs.
Sustainable and resilient	R1 Transitioning the transport system towards net zero	R1.1 Transition transport fleets to sustainable alternatives.
		R1.2 Support a shift to lower-emissions transport, reducing reliance on private vehicles.
		R1.3 Use low-emission technologies and minimise emissions when delivering transport infrastructure.
	R2 Providing a resilient transport system that adapts to change	R2.1 Strengthen the transport system's resilience against major weather events and disruptions.
		R2.2 Consider climate change impacts in all key decisions that affect the transport system.
	R3 Prioritising asset optimisation and value for money	R3.1 Leverage the government's procurement to promote innovation and ensure value for money.
		R3.2 Consider non-infrastructure and innovative solutions as alternatives to capital intensive solutions.
		R3.3 Optimise the maintenance and management of the State's transport system.



Realising our vision

Implementing the Transport Strategy will have real and tangible impacts on the way South Australians move and connect.

The following examples are just some of the many opportunities for the future of our transport system.

	Current		Future	
	What we know	What we heard during consultation	If...	Then...
	School holidays feel much less congested, but it's only a 10-15% reduction in traffic volume.	24% of people want to use public transport more.	...our investment meant half of those people chose public transport.	...our roads would feel like school holidays all the time, for everyone.
	Active travel improves health.	44% of people want to walk and cycle more.	...we could provide a safe cycle network that is separate from vehicle lanes.	...we'd improve quality of life and reduce stress on our health system.
	SA has a housing crisis.	People want to see timely improvements in transport infrastructure and are willing to experience short-term disruption to get there.	...our transport investment aligned with land use planning.	...we'd unlock growth and improve how people and goods move around our State.
	SA has what the world needs.	Stakeholders told us that by improving connectivity, businesses can operate more effectively, access new markets and attract investment.	...our transport investment connected economic opportunity and improved supply chain efficiency.	...we'd see new markets open and improve SA's prosperity and competitiveness.

Prospect Road, Prospect

Key result areas

To ensure the Strategy supports our vision for the State’s transport system, we need to track what works and what doesn’t.

We will use a performance management framework that includes **key result areas (KRAs)**, which align with the Strategy’s five strategic outcomes. KRAs represent what we aim to achieve for our State’s transport system through the implementation of the Strategy. The table below summarises the KRAs aligned to each strategic outcome. Some outcomes aim to deliver on multiple KRAs.

Indicative key result area (KRA)	Strategic outcomes				
	Connected and accessible	Safe	Prosperous	Liveable	Sustainable and resilient
1. Percentage of South Australians able to access high-frequency public transport (increase)	●		○	○	○
2. Public transport mode share (increase)	●	○		○	○
3. Number of fatalities and serious injuries on the transport system (decrease)		●		○	
4. Customer perception of personal safety when using public transport (increase)		●		○	
5. Employment supported by transport projects within the South Australian economy (maintain or increase)			●		○
6. Freight capacity and reliability (increase)			●		
7. Percentage of green canopy cover on Department managed land (increase)				●	○
8. Active transport participation (increase)	○	○		●	○
9. Reliability of transport networks, measured by service disruptions and downtime (increase)	○		○	○	●
10. Net greenhouse gas emissions from the movement of people and goods (decrease)				○	●

● Primary alignment ○ Secondary alignment

Key performance indicators (KPIs) that are precise and measurable will also be used, including within different sub-strategies, to track the performance of the actions delivered over time.

Measuring our performance allows us to:

- ▶ **Track progress:** Evaluate and monitor how the Strategy achieves its outcomes over time.
- ▶ **Adapt to change:** Use insights to refine initiatives and respond to evolving community needs and emerging trends.
- ▶ **Demonstrate accountability:** Ensure transport investments and initiatives deliver value.

As we continue to advance data capture and analysis, we will gain deeper insights into transport trends, customer behaviour, and the network performance. This will allow us to refine our measures and better align them with community expectations and evolving technologies.



Jeffcott Street, North Adelaide

Delivering South Australia's Transport Strategy

Practical steps to achieving our vision

South Australia's Transport Strategy is about building a transport system that keeps our State moving, thriving, and connected for generations to come. The Strategy sets clear priorities for the future, identifying the outcomes we want to achieve, the directions we'll take to get there, and the initiatives that will drive change.

Delivering the Strategy is not just about implementing projects. It is about taking thoughtful, deliberate steps to improve how we connect people, places and opportunities. Key initiatives are being delivered today, and more are in the pipeline to ensure that we have access to safer, smarter, and more sustainable ways to travel.

The Strategy will be complemented by a suite of sub-strategies that will focus on specific aspects of South Australia's transport system. The sub-strategies include:







- ▶ South Australia's Road Safety Strategy to 2031 (published)
- ▶ South Australia's Freight and Supply Chain Strategy (published)
- ▶ South Australia's Public Transport Strategy (in development)
- ▶ South Australia's Active Transport and Personal Mobility Strategy (not commenced)
- ▶ Strategic Asset Management Plan (in progress)
- ▶ The Department's Carbon Management Strategy (in progress).

To support the Strategy's delivery, a detailed implementation plan is under development and will be developed in collaboration with government and industry. The implementation plan will include:

- ▶ key initiatives already underway and those planned for the future
- ▶ the principles and frameworks that will guide decision-making and ensure consistent delivery
- ▶ a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress, ensure accountability, and adapt to changing conditions.

The sub-strategies will include specific outcomes and actions that will contribute to the Strategy's overall success, which will be measured via regular monitoring of their KPIs.

Six key principles will guide the Strategy's implementation, ensuring it's inclusive, adaptable and efficient. The six principles are:

-  Inclusivity through collaboration across communities, industry and government.
-  Adaptability to external challenges and opportunities.
-  Optimising existing infrastructure.
-  Exploring non-infrastructure solutions through a systems approach.
-  Transparency through performance reporting.
-  Ensuring effectiveness in delivering outcomes.

Staying responsive in a changing world

The implementation plan will be adaptive and responsive, allowing us to seize opportunities and tackle challenges as they emerge.

While the Strategy's five outcomes – connected and accessible, safe, prosperous, liveable, and sustainable and resilient – are enduring, we live in an ever-evolving world. Therefore, it is important to have an open and agile approach to adapt to changes effectively, ensuring that we can successfully implement the Strategy.

To ensure it remains relevant we will undertake the following:

- ▶ **Four-year renewal period:** The Strategy will be formally reviewed and updated every four years. This cycle ensures alignment with the latest policy priorities, infrastructure demands, and technological developments.
- ▶ **Annual horizon scanning:** The implementation of the Strategy will continue to leverage strategic foresight thinking. We will monitor our critical uncertainties for emerging changes and trends that trigger the need to adjust our actions so they better match our desired future state. We will monitor things like economic data, changes in population policies, and changes in consumer preferences during this process.
- ▶ **Continuous improvement:** Formal reviews, ongoing monitoring and evaluation will identify lessons learned from implementation, providing opportunities to refine objectives, initiatives, and performance metrics.

By embedding these review and update cycles, the Strategy supports a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring South Australia's transport system evolves with changing circumstances.

Ensuring success: A shared effort

Delivering the Strategy is not something we can do alone. It will require close collaboration between government, industry and the community.

We will work with stakeholders across South Australia to ensure our transport system reflects the needs of everyone who uses it – whether you are commuting to work, visiting friends, or transporting goods to market.

All South Australians have a role to play in achieving the outcomes we are seeking for our transport system, particularly our transition to net zero. We will support you to choose more sustainable modes of travel and ensure that these options are attractive, reliable and efficient.

Building South Australia's future, together

This Strategy is about more than transport – it is about supporting communities, driving economic growth, and protecting our environment. It is about making South Australia one of the most liveable, connected, and innovative places in the world.

Together, we are creating a transport system that meets today's needs and addresses tomorrow's challenges. It is a bold, ambitious plan – but one that is grounded in action and accountability. We are not just planning for the future, we are building it now.

Disclaimer

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Front cover: Level crossing removal, Torrens Road, Ovingham

More information

 dit.sa.gov.au

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