

Quick Guide to Footpath Trading

Remember - Keep it clear on the building line

Mount Alexander Shire Council recognises the value of using footpaths to display goods for local business. Yet Council must balance the promotional opportunity for traders, with the rights of all people to walk safely.

Footpaths are public space, and are built primarily to create access. Using footpaths for trading is a privilege offered to business when safety and amenity are not compromised.

The increasing use of scooters, plus the needs of people using strollers, walking frames and mobility aids, can all contribute to footpath congestion. However, irregular placement of goods or café furniture on the footpath can really limit access, particularly if goods are placed on both sides of the walkway.

There is plenty of scope for vibrant and creative footpath displays which attract custom, add to the streetscape, protect goods from weather, and allow a clear and safe passage for pedestrians.

Here is a simple guide to placing goods:

Good approach to footpath trading

- All pedestrians should have a clear path of travel at least 1.8 metres (six feet) out from the building line

This allows blind and vision-impaired people, and those with mobility aids, to use the building line to safely navigate footpaths.

- By freeing up the building line, traders can double their display space by using their windows.



Poor approach to footpath trading

- Goods piled against the building can present hazards to pedestrians.

Shoppers with disabilities have reported falls and other distressing experiences.

- The trader - and Council - may be vulnerable to complaints under anti-discrimination legislation for failing to provide a clear and safe passage.



Photos are for demonstration purposes only

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Good access is good business.

Providing an unobstructed path of travel along the building line is crucial to creating a more accessible business

Did you know

- Disability is common - nearly one in five people in Mount Alexander Shire have a disability. That's about 3,329 people in a population of 17,994.
- Disability can affect anyone at any time. It may be obvious, invisible or temporary.
- The incidence of disability increases with age. The number of people aged 60 years or over in Mount Alexander Shire is higher than the Victorian average (28.5% compared with 19.4%).

How to make your business more accessible

Businesses that are welcoming, are easy to get into and move around, or have staff who are aware of the needs of customers with disability quickly attract a loyal following. Good access in terms of friendly service and an uncluttered store layout also make common business sense. Some simple steps to take are:

- ✓ Ensure goods for sale on the footpath are clear of the building line.
- ✓ Make your signs large, clear and easy to read.
- ✓ Reproduce copies of marketing and promotional material in large print.
- ✓ Allow room for shoppers with mobility aids to move about safely in your store.
- ✓ Put safety markings on glass doors.
- ✓ Place hi-visibility strips on the edges of any steps.
- ✓ A small ramp to overcome an entrance step can really make a difference.
- ✓ Know where the nearest accessible parking spot is located.
- ✓ Think about providing online or home shopping, or a home-delivery service to add value

A note on anti-discrimination legislation

Under the federal *Disability Discrimination Act* it is unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities on the grounds of failing to provide access to premises to which the public is entitled to use.

A footpath is classed as "premises". Businesses which create barriers to access along the footpath may give rise to a complaint of discrimination. A local government authority is usually responsible for footpaths, and may therefore also be subject to such a complaint.

Australia is a signatory to the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This means Australia has an obligation to conform to articles which spell out rights, including the right to accessibility. This is a precondition for people with disabilities to live independently and to participate fully and equally in in society.

For more information on making your business more accessible contact Michael Uniacke, Access and Inclusion Officer, Mount Alexander Shire Council on 5471 1700.