

9/8 - 10.05
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Darebin City Council

Road Safety Inquiry - Opening Statement

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our expert advice to the panel.

The foundation of Darebin's Safe Travel Strategy is the three Safe System principles of:

- Safe Speeds
- Safe Roads
- Safer Road Users

Since 2013, in Darebin, there have been 24 fatalities, including 7 pedestrians and 4 bike riders.

A key principle of the Safe System method for approaching road safety is that people will make mistakes. It happens every day on our roads and in certain conditions can result in serious or fatal collisions.

The three things critical to this inquiry are:

Number 1 - Safe Speeds: Pedestrians have a 10% chance of being killed when hit by a car at 30km/h. The probability goes steeply upwards where they would have 90% chance of being killed at 50km/h, the current default speed limit in urban areas.

- We need a quicker way of making changes to speed limits on our local roads.
- We need the ability to efficiently make appropriate changes in areas of high pedestrian activity; like near our schools and in activity centres where walking is usually the final part of the journey.

Number 2 - Safe Roads: The way we design and fund transport infrastructure must align with the Movement and Place Framework and Safe System principles. This will achieve separated, connected active travel networks that are safe for users of all abilities.

- We need a coordinated plan and funding to achieve this for people walking and riding.
- We need a proactive approach to delivering and maintaining transport as a service where the safe system principles are understood and embraced.

Number 3 - Safer Road Users: Partnering with schools and community groups are great ways to support people, especially our culturally and linguistically diverse groups, learn about road safety and sustainable travel. Darebin are proud to be working with schools, people experiencing disadvantage and new migrants to support them with active travel.

- We need ongoing funding for critical behaviour change programs like: Safe Routes to School, Bike Ed, Fit2Drive and Ready to Roll.
- We have a unique position in urban Melbourne as a connection between outer and inner suburbs and a diverse community. We would welcome the opportunity to participate in future trials or pilot projects.

I appreciate the time given to this inquiry and will finish by saying that safer vehicles are also very important. However, the areas most of us on this round table have influence over are:

- Safer Speeds
- Safer Roads
- Safer Road Users

I have an example here of how we engage with our diverse community in Darebin. This one relates to information about eBikes as part of the Electrify Darebin program. I will leave them with the clerk afterwards.