

## HEALTHY AUCKLAND TOGETHER – POSITION STATEMENT

# SPEED LIMITS IN TĀMAKI MAKAUURAU

### Our vision

**Healthy Auckland Together's vision is of a Tāmaki Makaurau where all people can travel safely within the city, free from harm.**

However, Tāmaki Makaurau's roads have unsafe speeds and are dangerous to use. This is causing unnecessary and inequitable loss of life and serious injuries with children, pedestrians and cyclists disproportionately represented. Many of us do not feel safe walking or cycling and this is a significant barrier for being physically active. Likewise, the crown has Te Tiriti obligations to provide a transport system that fulfils the aspirations of Māori.

#### **We support a safe transport system for everyone through:**

1. Permanent speed limits of 30km/h in areas around all schools and early learning services, to protect our tamariki who are our most vulnerable road users
2. Permanent speed limits of 30km/h around marae and in local streets and town centres to protect vulnerable road users in high use areas
3. Permanent speed limits of 60km/h on rural roads to prevent crashes in the highest risk areas
4. A comprehensive Safe System approach for cycling and walking routes that includes:
  - improved safety features protecting vulnerable road users
  - increased enforcement of speed limits
  - a Te Tiriti approach to equity in safety

### Unsafe speeds in Tāmaki Makaurau

Road safety measures play a huge role in our daily lives, influencing how we travel, how active we are, and how our children play. Using the roads is an everyday occurrence for all of us as pedestrians, drivers, cyclists, passengers or micro mobility users (e.g. scooters and roller-skates).

However, the current transport system causes significant harm through road traffic injuries. Police records show between 2017 and 2021 there were 249 deaths and 2,938 serious injuries (i.e. injuries that require overnight hospitalisation or longer) due to crashes on our roads (Waka Kotahi, 2023). This is considered an under report of the total amount of deaths and serious injuries (DSI), with the actual figure estimated to be around 13 times higher (Viastrada, 2021).

#### **Road crashes in Tāmaki Makaurau between 2017 and 2021 caused:**

**249**  
deaths

**2,938**  
serious injuries

In addition to the tragic loss of life and harm this causes, these crashes also have major costs to society.

It is estimated deaths and serious injuries will cost the New Zealand health system \$1.2 Billion (2011 NZD) over the lifetime of those alive in 2011 (Randel et al., 2022). In addition, the social cost of crashes is estimated to be \$12.5 million for each death and \$660,100 for each serious crash (Ministry of Transport, 2023).

The harm we see on our roads is also inequitable, with larger proportions of young and older peoples and active transport users (which includes cyclists and people walking) experiencing deaths or serious injuries compared to others:

- Children (0-14) are the most vulnerable road users despite not being able to drive. They make up 6% of DSI between 2017 and 2021.
- Active transport users represent up to 36% of DSI. Tāmaki Makaurau ranks second for pedestrian fatality rate on a global list of 26 other comparable cities (International transport Forum, 2017).

Inappropriate speed (which includes people driving within legal speed limits), is a large factor in the amount of crashes, and the severity of the harm vehicles create:

- An estimated 71% of all road traffic crash injuries within New Zealand are attributable to unsafe speed.
- Higher speeds have an exponential effect on the risk of death from a crash (Job and Brodie, 2022). Every 1% increase in average speed results in an 11% increase in pedestrian deaths and 3.5% increase in serious injuries.
- A collision at 60km/h or above with a vulnerable road user has an approximately 100% chance of death; a 50km/h collision has an 80% chance of death; a 30km/h collision has a 10% chance of death.

**Chances of survival for a vulnerable road user in a collision with a car going:**

60km/h	50km/h	30km/h
0%	20%	90%



When kids are going to school, or when I go to school there's lots and lots of speeding cars and things, just going past.

The traffic is absolutely crazy and we have an intersection just outside our school so it's pretty hard for us when we are going past that intersection.

The cars go really fast around the roundabout even though it's a school zone, and ... the real problem for fast speeds is the fact that parents want to get their kids to school fast."

**Nic, 10**

## Active transport

Unsafe speeds and poor road safety is also a contributing factor to our low rate of active transport use.

Many children and parents cite a lack of road safety as a barrier to their children walking or cycling to school within Auckland (Ikeda et al., 2019). Surveys also show that 52% of respondents do not feel safe cycling because of the way people drive, and 75% would cycle if roads were safer (Auckland Transport, 2018, NZTA, 2016).

## Benefits of safe speeds

Speed limits that are safe and appropriate for the location will benefit the communities and people of Tāmaki Makaurau through improved safety and will lead to:

- a reduction in death and serious injury on our roads
- an increase in active transport use, as people feel safer to move around
- associated co-benefits from reduced vehicle emissions

Speed management has been tried, tested and shown to work in many comparable cities across the world; 30 km/h speed limits are already used in appropriate locations (such as outside schools) in many cities like ours to improve road safety. Evidence shows they are an effective way to reduce accidents and injuries, traffic speed, and improve perceptions of safety (Cairns, et al. 2015, International Traffic Safety Data and Analysis Group, 2018).







We've already seen the impact it can have in Auckland too, following initial speed management changes introduced in 2020. After safe speed limits were implemented on some roads in our city, it resulted in a 30% reduction in deaths while the rest of roads in Tāmaki Makaurau had a 9% increase (Abley, 2022).

Urban and school speed limits of 30km/h, when compared to 50km/h, decrease the likelihood of a crash occurring, and the risk of death or serious injury when the crashes do occur:

- A 30 km/h speed limit gives more time for drivers to notice, react and stop to dangers on the road, and significantly reduces the number of crashes and the level of injury from crashes (Cairns, et al. 2015).
- At 30km/h, 90% of unprotected road users will survive if hit by a vehicle.
- Zones of 30km/h have reduced the injuries and deaths in children by 50–70% (Grundy, et al., 2009).
- Permanent 30km/h zones around schools are 21 times more effective at reducing death and serious injuries than variable speed limits that only run for certain periods of the day (Mandic, et al., 2023).

Safe speeds also allow children and adults the freedom to confidently and safely walk, cycle or scooter as their main way to get around. Safe speeds decrease the actual and perceived safety risks of cycling and walking to school and to work. Research of preferred bicycle route choices in Auckland show parents and children favour routes with 30km/h traffic speed limits, and research within Auckland found that safe speed zones were one of the top three interventions to get children cycling to school (Ghekiere, 2015, Mackie 2010).

The evidence is clear, when traffic speed is reduced more children and adults cycle and walk (Fraser and Lock, 2011).

Safe speeds also help create cleaner air and a healthy atmosphere. Safe speed limits decrease harmful emissions from motor vehicles by reducing the amount of NO<sub>2</sub> that is being released into Tāmaki Makaurau's air (Emission Impossible & EMM Consulting, 2023).

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**Healthy Auckland Together is a coalition of 25 organisations working to make Tāmaki Makaurau a healthier place to call home.**

**We want to enhance the places we live, learn and work so they better support physical activity and balanced, healthy diets.**

**Our partnership includes local government, mana whenua, health agencies, NGOs, academics, community representatives and consumer interest groups.**

**Our focus is on the whole system; our transport and roads, our neighbourhoods, our food supply and shops, our early learning services and schools, and our workplaces.**