

Safer School Speeds

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Abstract

The City of Wanneroo safe school speeds project aimed to prevent death and serious injury by ensuring speeds in school zones were being adhered to. The project strategically reviewed all 50 schools within the City of Wanneroo to identify areas with significant safety issues with the road environment around schools and take measures to address these issues. As a result of the review the City referred 35 school zones to WA police for enhanced enforcement, advocated for the installation of electronic school zone signage at 4 high risk sites, identified 22 children's crossing locations and installed 8 children's crossings.

Background

The City of Wanneroo is located 22 km from Perth CBD and has undergone a significant amount of redevelopment and growth in the last 10 years. The City of Wanneroo currently has 50 schools within its Local Government Area and limited resources to address the significant road safety issues that exist around each school. In addition to the 50 schools currently within the City of Wanneroo, 2 to 4 new schools are being built each year to cater for the population growth. As part of the City of Wanneroo RoadWise Working Group Strategic Action Plan a review of speeds within 40km/h school speed zones was listed as an action under the Safe Speeds cornerstone. Based on this action, a review of the 85th percentile speeds and traffic volumes for all roads that had a 40km/h school zone was conducted within the City.

Method

As part of the RoadWise Working Group Strategic Action Plan 2013/2014 a review of speeds within 40km/h school speed zones was listed as an action under the Safe Speeds cornerstone. Based on this action, a review of the 85th percentile speeds and traffic volumes for all roads within the City that had a 40km/h school zone was conducted. Careful consideration of available traffic data was required as school zones only operate from 7.30am to 9am and 2.30pm to 4pm on school days. The review identified 4 key areas that the City can address promptly to improve the safety around schools. The City reviewed the provision of 40km/h electronic school zone signage, 40km/h pavement markings, children's crossings and operating speeds of roads around the schools against the criteria outlined by Main Roads WA and WA Police. The City then worked with the schools to advocate for the installation of infrastructure, with WA Police to conduct enhanced Enforcement and with Main Roads WA to arrange the prompt installation of infrastructure.

Results

The outcomes of the project include:

- The identification and referral to WA police for targeted enforcement of 35 school zones with high operating speeds (85th percentile)
- Installation of electronic school zone signage at 4 high priority sites within the City of Wanneroo
- The identification of 22 roads that abut schools that meet the minimum vehicles warrants for the installation of a guarded children's crossing.

- The installation of 8 guarded childrens crossings and applications for a further 4 more guarded children's crossings

Conclusions

The strategic nature of the school safe speeds project enabled the City of Wanneroo to address a number of road safety issues around schools in a holistic manner providing significant safety improvements to the road environment around a number of schools.