22 June 2009

Alexandra Douglas
Executive Officer
Parliament of Victoria – Road Safety Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Ms Douglas,

Submission for the Inquiry into Pedestrian Safety in Car Parks

I am writing with regard to your letter received 24 April 2009 regarding the Parliament of Victoria Road Safety Committee request for submissions for the inquiry into pedestrian safety in car parks.

Banyule City Council provides the following submission:

(1) The type and number of car parks -

There are approximately 40 off-street Council car parks located throughout the municipality which vary greatly in size. For example, the Henry Street carpark in Greensborough has 359 car parking spaces, while the car park which is accessed off Grace Street in Watsonia has only 13 car parking spaces.

A list of Council’s off-street car parks can be provided to the Road Safety Committee. However, details regarding the number of car parking spaces within each off-street car park are not readily available.

(2) The type and number of crashes that occur at each of these car parks -

There have not been any reported accidents within Council’s car parks in recent times. Off-street car parks are generally low speed environments so it is likely that any incidents between cars and pedestrians would be relatively minor, involving just the individuals concerned.

(3) Measures that the Council has introduced to improve safety of pedestrians within car parks -

Council has implemented various safety measures in car parks throughout the municipality where there has been a demonstrated need. These measures include zebra crossings, speed humps, surface colour differentiation, at grade crossings, traffic islands, linemarking, traffic signs (regulatory and/or warning) and convex mirrors. These safety measures have generally been implemented after Council Officers have undertaken investigations into concerns raised by motorists and/or pedestrians.
(4) Suggestions Council would like to make with the aim of improving safety at car parks -

Council Officers assess the need for safety measures in car parks on a case by case basis. If some form of traffic safety measure is warranted, then this would generally be provided as most treatments are low cost. The most common form of safety measure that Council installs in off-street car parks is slowing devices, such as speed humps. This creates a low speed environment which helps reduce the risk to pedestrians. Other safety measures such as dedicated pedestrian pathways and upgraded lighting (e.g. if a particular car park is used a lot at night) are normally taken into account during the consultation and design process for car parks. However, more emphasis may be needed in providing separate facilities for pedestrians in future car parks.

It is considered that the only improvements that could be made to pedestrian safety in Council’s car parks would be the installation of highly conspicuous wayfinding signage at entrances/exits. Wayfinding signage would aid pedestrians by enabling quick identification of key locations in the area so that they could get to their chosen destination in the quickest and safest way. Although wayfinding signage is not currently being used in Council’s car parks, it could be pursued for those car parks located in Activity Centres.

It is considered that in general, Banyule Council’s car parks are reasonably safe. Councillors and Council Officers are responsive to safety concerns and issues raised by pedestrians.

Should you have any queries regarding this matter, please contact me on the number provided.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Bellis
Acting Engineering Services Co-ordinator