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14 September 2022

Urgent upgrades needed at dangerous major roads

Roads in the City of Melton need urgent safety upgrades with new statistics released by Melton City Council showing there have been 822 crashes on four major roads over the last 10 years which have killed 17 people, seriously injured 284 people and cost the state nearly \$320 million.

The figures equate to more than one crash a week on these four roads in the City of Melton.

2021 Census data also shows that the City of Melton is the third fastest growing council area in Australia. Nearly half a million people are forecast to be living in the City of Melton by 2050, compared to 216,000 today.

“Despite this rapid growth, the City of Melton continues to miss out on major roads investment from successive governments,” City of Melton Mayor Cr Goran Kesic said.

“This chronic underinvestment is having a toll on people’s quality of life, spending more time commuting, less time with their families and putting their lives at risk every time they drive on these major roads.”

As part of its Fix Our Roads campaign, Melton City Council is calling on all major parties to commit to the immediate upgrade of these major roads and give residents more time at home with their families and more peace of mind on the road.

The cost of crashes in data:

| Road | Crashes | Deaths | Serious injuries | Cost of crashes (correlated to the number of crashes) |
|--|----------------|---------------|-------------------------|--|
| The Western Highway including interchanges (between Bulmans Road and Robinsons Road) | 438 | 10 | 136 | \$179,397,142 |
| Robinsons Road/ Westwood Drive/ Calder Park Drive corridor | 191 | 1 | 65 | \$53,009,306 |
| Melton Highway (between the Regency and Ryans Lane) | 107 | 0 | 43 | \$26,685,907 |
| Hopkins Road (Between Boundary Rd and Western Highway) | 86 | 6 | 40 | \$59,869,253 |



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|--------------|-----|----|-----|---------------|
| Total | 822 | 17 | 284 | \$318,961,608 |
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Quotes attributable to the City of Melton Mayor Cr Goran Kesic:

“Years of underinvestment by successive State and Federal governments, has led to aged, congested roads putting road users' safety at risk every day.

“There’s been nearly \$5 billion for major roads in other growing communities around Melbourne, but there’s been no major investment for Melton.

“We’ve got 50 new families moving into our city each week and 50 babies being born. This is one of the fastest growing areas in the country. We’re already at capacity and our population is going to more than double by 2050.

“Behind these shocking crash figures are real people who have lost loved ones, suffered life-changing injuries or are traumatised because they’ve narrowly avoided accidents. For many, they have no choice but to travel on these dangerous roads.

“Many of these accidents could have been prevented if these roads had been upgraded to reflect the increased traffic and needs of motorists.

“Motorists are crawling along major arterial roads, dealing with lacking or dangerous interchanges and rural standard roads just to get to work and school every day.”

Road users share their stories

Since the City of Melton launched its Fix Our Roads campaign in April, dozens of Melton locals have reached out to Council with their own horror stories of congestion, dangerous driving conditions, near-misses and tragic accidents on our roads.

Zaki Anvari said *“I’ve been living in the West for a decade and none of the highways have ever been up to standard while I’ve lived here. Our roads might have been fine in the ‘90s but they’re not fit for today. I’ve had so many near misses merging onto the Melton Highway. Every highway and freeway is busy and extremely dangerous but we have to deal with it, every day.”*



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Aurelien said *“The Eastern Suburbs have five lane freeways when we’re stuck with two lanes and angry drivers. Forty-five minutes to drive fifteen kilometres from Deer Park to Kurunjang is unacceptable. I’m angry that people’s lives are being put at risk every day.”*

Shelley Edgell said *“We roll the dice with our lives every time we get on the Calder Highway from Calder Park Drive. We need to do something before someone dies.”*

Hayley Kuypers said: *“This road is a death trap, most days during peak hour it goes from 100 kilometres to a standstill and back to 100 kilometres again for no reason. There are constant accidents. I have a newborn baby and I hate driving on it because it’s so incredibly dangerous.”*

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Melton City Council media enquiries (not for publication): Kylie Kitchen –
A/Communications Coordinator on 0427 595 552.