

## *Greenlight Project: Walking to School Discussion Start-up notes*

A discussion designed to explore issues around making the choice *to* or *not to* Walk to School, especially in relation to crossing major roads.

Focus Group Session

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for participating in this discussion. We are interested to hear your views on signalised crossings that you may or may not use to walk to school. We want to know what is important to you about signalised crossings and walking to school.

10 mins -

The following questions are intended to prompt discussion about issues members of the school community have in relation to the school crossing.

Safety, Walking Surface, Crossing Time, Crossing Distance, Vehicle Size, Vehicle Noise, Traffic Volume, Other Pedestrians, Signal call-up.

1. *'Do you walk to school? Why? Why not?'*
2. *As an actual/potential pedestrian, how would you rate using this crossing?*
3. *As an actual/potential pedestrian, how safe do you feel at this crossing?*
4. *What do you feel would most improve this Pedestrian Crossing?*
5. *Other*

### **Some Background:**

Port Phillip funded under Walking School Bus pilot in 2002. WSB programs established in primary schools across Port Phillip. WSB programs established in LG's across Vic – 33 partic councils

Examination of factors for sustaining busses, found community expressing concerns about crossability of major (arterial) roads

We are starting to see Public health concerns expressed nationally for instance - SIGPAH draft guidelines *'Be Active Australia'* Health Sector Agenda for Action on Physical Activity – 2004 – 2008 *"Work with the Education sector.... To develop a national collaborative , cross agency approach to support physical activity in the school sector: **including active transport and walk to school initiatives**"* p 6

Congestion

Greenhouse

Community Connection

### ***Let me give you a little bit of context:***

- WSB program placed in LG to locate to it in community
- Responding to community desire
- We want to support walking as a travel mode of choice to school.

- Our experience over the 2 years tells us kids like to walk. Also parents who do walk are very positive about the activity of walking with the group of neighbourhood school people along their streets to their local school.
- Very much community glue (Tolley, Engwicht territory)
- We are interested in building Walking to School numbers through the Walking Bus and walking generally. We want to respond to community desire. Anecdotally parents are expressing concerns about joining the Walk to School .
- Concerns about safety at crossings on big roads
- Setting up WSB routes - route assessment. Reviewing the Traffic Management Works coming out of the route assessments, we realised the highest proportion of complaints from parents was 'not enough time to get across major roads'

WSB groups typically a doz kids with younger siblings and parents who might have prams or bicycles

Signal crossings - lights and their sequence or phasing to control flow of vehicles and pedestrians. 'Guide to Traffic Engineering' Part 7 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed 2003 glossary *Signal Phasing: sequential arrangement of separately controlled groups of vehicle and pedestrian movements within a signal cycle to allow all vehicle and pedestrian movements to proceed*

### **Greenlight Project:**

This project aims to provide a picture (technical picture) of WSB activity as a part of the picture of pedestrian activity. Let's remind ourselves that pedestrians are recognised as the biggest group of road users

**Greenlight Project:** Re-directing pedestrian priority at signalised crossings on major roads

### **Goals of the project are:**

1. to investigate pedestrian behaviour in the context of groups of pedestrians, such as Walking School Bus, navigating major roads at signalised intersection
2. to provide recommendations in relation to the existing crossing infrastructure and community requirements for safety, mobility and access

The project will provide:

- increased understanding of the issues to walking, particularly at signalized intersections
- options to address issues in relation to walking especially as they affect groups navigating signalized intersections at major roads and enhance attractiveness (pedestrians feeling safe, delays kept to a minimum, easy access and above all the degree to which pedestrians are 'allowed to go where they want, when they want')

- recommendations on the findings

5 mins – structure of session

- background to project and project goals
- purpose of focus group – to hear from others especially those who don't or have doubts about using the crossing, to hear about community feelings towards choosing to or not to walk to school, to
- while project is setting out to tell technical story, the complete story involves the activity of people which by definition is unpredictable and non-technical
- we want to uncover the issues and hear from a wider range of people
- ok so now it's really over to you
- <insert recorder> is here to help capture the views and issues raised. She will be recording our conversation. She might sometimes just need to interrupt briefly to clarify what has been said and check in with the speaker. Is that ok? It's really pretty informal and feel free to come in at any time with your views and issues. I will be guiding the conversation around the questions set out before (on sheet – check – has everyone got a response sheet?) I will be monitoring the conversation of the listed topics and will at times be more directive to get coverage of all topics. Feel free to bring in more topics. The list is not exhaustive and we don't know the answers. That's why we're here!
- You will not be individually identified. We may for clarity of note taking use an identifying first letter of your name and we may identify gender
- Any questions at this stage? .....
- Ok well to open things up, can I begin with a brief story – tell J's story  
.....  
.....now over to you – you ok <insert recorder>? and start anywhere you like