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## **Submission to Future Melbourne Committee**

City of Melbourne, Melbourne Town Hall,  
13 June 2023, 5.30pm – Meeting No.57  
Agenda Item FMC 7.1: Notice of Motion - Lord Mayor Sally Capp: E-Scooters

The SRA commends the City of Melbourne for establishing ‘a Council position on the future of commercial e-scooter operations ...’ and its commissioning of a report which considers the commercial operation of e-scooters, including: e-scooters on footpaths, the parking of e-scooters and the use of technology to better manage compliance.

SRA notes the enthusiastic uptake of e-scooters during the trial period. It is apparent that this service provides an alternative transport means to younger workers, tourists and city enthusiasts. We note the concentration of a younger clientele and the variable responses to respect for pedestrians and road rules.

We have observed significant caution and ready compliance from some users in contrast with flagrant disregard for traffic lights, pedestrians and cars by some. There is a consistent presence of scooters blocking footpaths and a hesitance from pedestrians about how to avoid scooters heading towards them.

SRA is broadly in support of the motion and sees the use of e-scooters as a positive strategy in reducing city congestion. However, the proposed motion does not give sufficient specificity to the expected outcomes, nor does it address other concerns about the use of e-scooters.

### **Deploying existing e-scooter technologies**

The SRA believes that some small adjustments can be made to existing e-scooter technologies and operating procedures of commercial providers to increase pedestrian safety and street amenity.

### **e-scooters on footpaths**

The City of Melbourne should be aware that the commercial operators of e-scooters have the GPS technology and software to ensure that an e-scooter is brought to rest if it transgresses the geo-fencing. The technology is sufficient to determine the location of an e-scooter, so that it differentiates between a footpath, bike path and road within the immediate vicinity. It should be a requirement of any on-going contract that such capability is installed as it is in my locations throughout the world.

### **e-scooters where cycling is not permitted**

There are locations where signage informs cyclists of a requirement to dismount and walk their bikes. One instance is the Evan Walker Bridge, where the design of the path across the bridge means that cyclists are a potential risk to pedestrians. For the same reason, such locations should be included in the geo-fencing of e-scooters.

### **e-scooter parking locations**

It is within the current scope of the commercial operators to issue a financial penalty if an e-scooter is not returned to a designated parking station. Repeated offenses could result a ban on the user. These procedures should be actively pursued as a condition of commercial licensing.

### **Items not addressed in the motion:**

The SRA would like to see the Council include the following in the e-scooter motion.

### **Speed of e-scooters**

The pedestrian traffic along Southbank Promenade and Crown Promenade is now at 150% of pre-COVID levels, this is particularly the case at weekends. The SRA recommends that:

- The commercial operators reduce the maximum speed in these locations to that of a good walking pace, that is 5 kph.
- A curfew of e-scooters be considered for specific locations and times. For example: no e-scooters on the two promenades on the weekend. Brisbane, the ACT, Cincinnati, Detroit, St Louis, Atlanta and Memphis have some form of curfew.
- Short (10m) strips of flashing LED lighting be installed in the paving grooves at four (4) locations:
  - i) on Crown Promenade at the Clarendon St and Queensbridge St ends and
  - ii) on Southbank Promenade at the Queensbridge St and the boat sheds ends. The flashing LEDS will appear as a light moving along the strip at the specified speed, giving all riders a visual cue as to the speed limit, which pedestrians can also observe.



### **Privately-owned e-scooters**

The motion restricts itself to the commercial e-scooter operations. This ignores the recent State Government decision to allow privately owned e-scooters the same access as the commercial e-scooters.

Privately owned e-scooters have no technology to restrict their speed in controlled areas. This means that such e-scooters will be able to travel at 20 kph or more along Southbank Promenade. While against the law, there is little chance of being caught.

The City of Melbourne should be lobbying the State Government to close this loophole, either by ensuring that all e-scooters, private or otherwise, are registered and preferably require geo-fencing software to be installed.

### **Insurance and e-scooters**

There is still much uncertainty about insurance, both for the rider and for anyone hit by an e-scooter. The City of Melbourne should be seeking for this area to be clarified, potentially with the involvement of the TAC.

The Southbank Residents Association is keen to make themselves available for any future consultation or discussion on e-scooters.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Penna", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tony Penna  
President  
Southbank Residents Association