

# Safer journeys for planners



## A safe road system starts with good planning

Safer Journeys is New Zealand's road safety strategy to 2020, with the vision of a 'safe road system increasingly free of death and serious injury'.

At the heart of Safer Journeys is the Safe System approach, which recognises that some error and some crashes are inevitable. It states that people need to be protected from crash forces, and accommodates these principles in the design and planning of transport systems.

The responsibility of the transport and planning sectors is to take New Zealand toward the vision of a safe road system increasingly free of death and serious injury. The sectors will do this by creating a more forgiving road system that reduces the price paid for human error. No one should pay for a mistake with their life or limb.

While we can make individual roads and roadsides, speeds, vehicles and road users safer, long-term solutions will also depend on integrating the Safe System principles into urban design, and land use and transport planning on a daily basis.

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The Safe System principles are:

1. People make mistakes and some crashes are inevitable.
2. Our bodies don't withstand crash forces well.
3. System designers and system users must share responsibility for managing crash forces to a level that doesn't result in death or serious injury.
4. We need to strengthen all parts of the system: roads and roadsides, speeds, vehicles, and users.

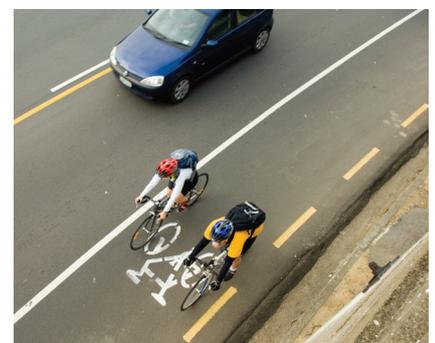
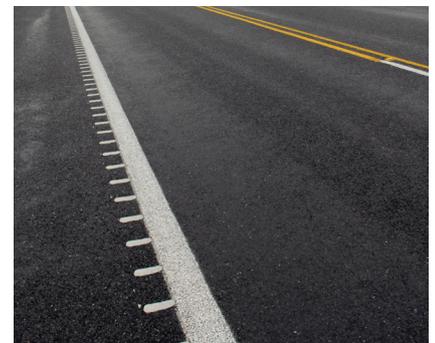
## What does it mean for planners?

**Sustainable management** is defined under the Resource Management Act 1991 as 'managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and **safety** ...'

The Safe System approach recognises planners, policy makers, engineers, educators, enforcers and utility providers as 'system designers' of our spaces. We all share responsibility for creating a more forgiving road system.

Planning has the potential to influence how the road network is used and what infrastructure safety investments are required in the future.

Examples of how planners can apply the Safe System principles are shown over the page.



# Examples of how planners can apply Safe System principles

## Strategic planning

- Promote efficient land use by providing for mixed-use communities that reduce travelling distances and the safety risks people incur when they travel to access services, facilities and social networks.
- Encourage safe and efficient networks by establishing and communicating a hierarchy of functional transport routes.
- Aim for consistent treatments within each level of the hierarchy to help users understand different kinds of road environment, what speeds are appropriate for different kinds of roads, and which modes have priority within each route. Long-term benefits include better compliance with speed limits, and more liveable communities.
- Plan for walking and cycling facilities to be separated from heavy vehicles and high-speed traffic environments wherever possible, and especially when traffic volumes are high.
- Provide for safe and secure public environments that encourage walking and the use of public transport.
- Adopt into practice the outcomes sought by NZS 4404:2010 Land development and infrastructure, including principles that are integral to self-explaining roads. Promote subdivisions and development patterns that contribute to a safe road system (for example, avoid reverse manoeuvrings onto the street, where possible).

## Operational policy and practice

- Develop Safe System objectives and policies so safe road environments are provided for pedestrians, cyclists, and light and heavy vehicles, and for an ageing and more vulnerable population.
- Encourage plan provisions requiring safety audits for medium-scale to large-scale development proposals. Ensure that the audits look at all four elements of the Safe System and think beyond the site boundaries.
- Collect development and financial contributions to fund road safety projects that mitigate adverse safety effects.
- Develop design guides for road systems that are consistent with the capabilities, limitations and expectations of the people using the spaces. Design leads to expectations around behaviour. Encourage roads to be self-explaining, especially where the road space is expected to be shared and provide room for emergency service access, and safe stopping and pull-over areas.
- Encourage the provision of underground services alongside transport routes. If poles must be used, consider their location carefully and investigate how they can be made more forgiving when a crash occurs.
- Ensure speed management and speed limit decisions reflect the function and use of spaces. Advocate for lower speed in built-up environments to encourage and improve the safety of active modes.
- Develop and include Safe System criteria in the procurement processes associated with the design and construction of new developments.

## Tips for creating safer spaces

Planting	Technology	Signage	Public spaces
<p>Ensure carriageways are not shaded where this could create ice or other hazardous conditions.</p> <p>Ensure trees do not become hazards. Choose appropriate species by considering the mature height in relation to sightlines and trunks that are flexible on impact (no greater than 100mm at full maturity) or behind a safety barrier.</p>	<p>Adapt our spaces to recognise that people are becoming more distracted (for example, devices such as music players reduce people's sensory capacity).</p> <p>Understand and plan ahead for new safety technologies and road-vehicle communication systems.</p>	<p>Have adequate directional lighting (if illumination is acceptable).</p> <p>Avoid visual clutter.</p> <p>Ensure the message is an appropriate length and the font size is adequate.</p> <p>Use frangible structural supports.</p> <p>Use static displays, where possible.</p> <p>Consider using pavement markings to create self-explaining speed environments.</p>	<p>Provide attractive and pleasant public spaces to encourage people to spend more time in these spaces (for example, using rest areas reduces driver fatigue).</p>