

Walking Strategy

Walking is embedded into many daily elements of our lives. Although it is not often given a second thought, walking is a simple and effective means to achieve wellbeing, social inclusion, environmental and economic benefits across our community. For many of us, it is simply the easiest and most time-effective way to get from place to place.

A quality walking and wheeling* environment is critical to the success of a sustainable, functional and liveable place to be. It is integral to our transport network that walking is safe, attractive, and an easy choice in Darebin.

Darebin City Council aims to promote and facilitate walking for a range of outcomes including leisure and recreation, physical activity and wellbeing, social interaction, economic gain, improved community participation in public spaces, and transport.

Not only do we need to ensure that our walking environments are safe, convenient, pleasant and accessible, we also need to encourage everyone to walk more often – particularly for short journeys – so that we can all share in the positive outcomes for our community. Importantly, there is a need to increase walking as a legitimate mode of transport as a way of managing increasing demands and activity in our growing city.

This Walking Strategy is needed for Darebin in order to directly support the visions, goals and outcomes of *Going Places: Darebin Transport Strategy 2007–2027*. It is crucial for Darebin’s overall transport network that our roads and pathways are planned and developed in a holistic and cohesive manner, ensuring that our most vulnerable road users are appropriately catered for, and no single mode of transport is unjustly prioritised over another. This Strategy will provide an evidence-based approach to kick-start the long term investment into walking in Darebin.

This Walking Strategy supports important social, environmental and economic outcomes, specifically those relating to wellbeing, social inclusion and sustainability. Delivery of this strategy will enable Council to continue towards achieving its core goals set out within the *Council Plan 2017–21* and *Climate Emergency Plan 2017–22*. It also supports the outcomes of existing Council policy such as the *Access and Inclusion Plan 2015–19*, *Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017–21* and *Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy 2011–21*, which each recognise the importance of providing a safe, attractive and accessible walking environment to all of Darebin’s diverse community.

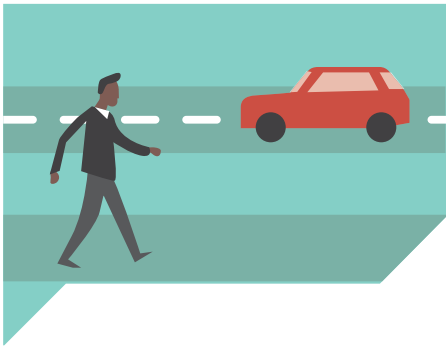
The development of the *Darebin Walking Strategy 2018–28* has been informed through an extensive process of data collection and analysis (through the ‘WalkSpot’ project), an evidence-based technical investigation (development of a Principal Pedestrian Network), and consultation with key stakeholders and the wider community.

- ✓ Walking plays a key role in Darebin’s transport system
- ✓ We need to raise the profile and benefits of walking – it is good for health, the environment and business
- ✓ It can offer a better value for money investment compared to other infrastructure when managing transport demand in a growing city
- ✓ Walking is inclusive and is the most accessible and freely available type of transport
- ✓ There is a need to invest in walking infrastructure and facilities in a strategic way



*The use of the terms **pedestrian** and **walking** throughout this strategy includes people who use a wheelchair or mobility scooter, walking frame or other mobility aid.

Our Community Travel Profile



44 % of short trips to work (less than 2km) are completed by car.

In Darebin, almost half of short trips to work (of less than 2 km) are by car, contributing to traffic congestion. Only a third of trips to work under 2km are completed on foot.¹



The population of Darebin is increasing steadily.

The population of Darebin is increasing steadily, with an increase of more than 12,000 people between 2011 and 2016.² It is forecast that the population will increase by a further 40,000 people by 2028.³



Unemployment has increased since 2011 from 3.6 % to 4.4 %.

Although the weekly median income for Darebin residents is above the State average (\$650 compared with \$645), the proportion of people earning less than \$300/week is high at more than 1 in 4.³ Access to public transport and good walking and cycling paths is especially important to these residents.



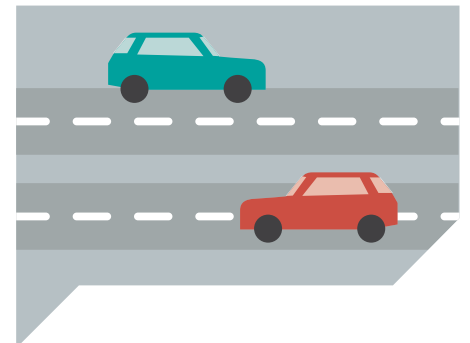
Approximately 1 in 5 Darebin residents identifies as having a permanent long-term disability.

These residents rely on the provision of good quality paths and easy access to public transport.⁴



40 % of Darebin residents were born overseas.

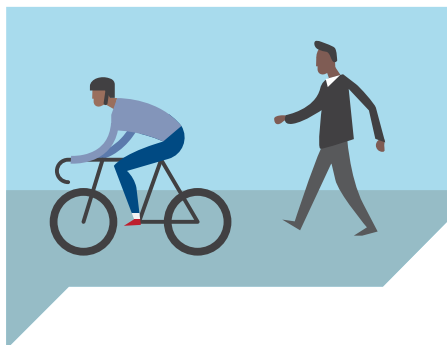
40% of Darebin residents were born overseas, so sustainable transport messages and information on walking must be presented at a level that most people can understand.²



Car ownership is increasing.

The total number of cars owned by Darebin residents has increased and the number of vehicles per dwelling has also increased. This creates pressure on traffic conditions through increased congestion and competition for parking. 59% of residents still use cars as their primary mode of transport to work, compared with 8% who walk or ride, and 24% who use public transport.²

Our Vulnerable Road Users



All road users are pedestrians at some point.

Around 3% of journeys to work by Darebin residents are taken exclusively on foot; this has remained largely unchanged over the past ten years.

However, the proportion of residents using public transport has increased by around 5% during the same period.³ This is important to note, as over 75% of those residents who travel by public transport access it by walking.⁴

Pedestrians represented around 24 percent of all fatalities and serious injury crashes on Darebin's roads over the last 5 years.⁵

In 2016, there were a total of 40 crashes involving a pedestrian, nine of which were serious and two of which were fatal.

In only 2% of crashes involving pedestrians, the person walking was uninjured. This makes those who choose walking as their preferred mode of transport one of the most vulnerable road users in relation to risk and safety.



The proportion of Australians aged over 65 years increased from 14 % in 2011 to 16 % in 2016.

The proportion of older people in Australia aged over 65 increased from 14% in 2011 to 16% in 2016. The proportion of people aged 85 and over also increased, from 2.3% in 2011 to 2.5% in 2016.² It is forecast that by 2028, a further 5,300 older people (over 65 years) will be living in Darebin.³ There is an increasing trend for older people to remain mobile until later in life, and to be healthier than previous generations,⁶ resulting in an increased demand for travel options such as good walking paths and accessible public transport.

33% of pedestrians killed on Victorian roads in 2015 were aged over 60, and 1/3 of these were on roads signposted at 60km/hr or less. This number increased to over 50% for serious injury crashes.⁵ Furthermore, older pedestrians are only at fault in approximately 12% of crashes affecting them.⁷

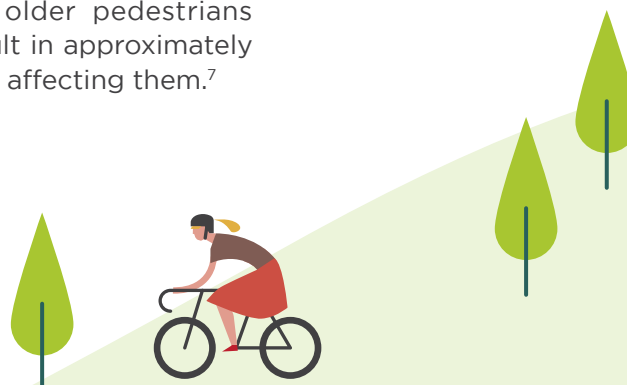


Declining levels of active transportation in children.

Declining levels of active transportation in children has been linked with a decline in independent mobility and an increased dependence on motor vehicles and parents 'chauffeur' children places.⁸

One study concluded that young people who actively travel to school were 30% more likely to use active modes of travel to other neighbourhood destinations.⁹ Road safety and the perception of safety is an important motivator for parents allowing children to use more active modes of transport.

For young adults and young women in particular, concerns around personal safety are the primary barrier to walking.¹⁰



Objective and Goals

The objective of this Walking Strategy is to set the foundation for future investment which will: **Provide the infrastructure, amenity and education to support and encourage walking as a safe and attractive mode of transport for all.**

This objective will be achieved through the following three goals.

- ✓ Upgrade the walking network and enhance connectivity across the municipality
- ✓ Improve community health, safety and equity of access by reducing barriers to walking
- ✓ Increase the community's awareness of walking opportunities and the benefits of walking

These three key goals are designed to reflect both the broader strategic context and to ensure a focus upon actions that will most effectively deliver network improvements and increased levels of walking for all purposes across Darebin. The actions can be delivered at a pace that reflects their priority and resources available at a given time, noting that fully realising the objectives set by this initial 10-year Strategy will continue well into the future.

Goal 1: Upgrade the walking network and enhance connectivity across the municipality

Providing high-quality connections to important destinations such as employment, education, recreation, retail and public transport is a key component in achieving increased participation in walking for both transport and recreation purposes. The development of the Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN) for Darebin will be used to prioritise sections of the network which are expected to cater for the highest pedestrian volumes in the future as the municipality continues to grow.

The PPN identifies those routes which will function as the most important links between origins and destinations within Darebin. The network of prioritised PPN routes can then be used to direct funding and enhancements in order to facilitate and encourage walking, particularly for short local trips, and ensure that a high-quality pedestrian network is developed ahead of significant population growth.

Improve connections to support local businesses and services. Studies conducted in Melbourne and overseas found that people walking or riding a bike make more visits to local businesses and spend more than those who drive.^{11, 12} Walking also contributes to the creation of inviting public spaces, and there is growing evidence that there are financial benefits to local businesses from making streets more pedestrian (and cycle) friendly, particularly within Activity Centres.

Providing safe and accessible routes to public transport service by walking also contributes to the success of a well-connected municipality.



Objective and Goals

Goal 2: Improve community health, safety and equity of access by reducing barriers to walking

Improve safety for people that walk by ensuring that our roads are designed in a way that minimises actual risk of harm to people who are walking, particularly for the most vulnerable members of our community including older people, children, and people with reduced mobility.

Creating better walking environments is important to **support increased physical activity**. Illnesses associated with sedentary behaviour and the lack of physical activity such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes are within the top five causes of death among adults in Darebin.

Walking can help reduce the risk of high blood pressure, stroke and high cholesterol, and can potentially also reduce obesity, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and some cancers. Physical activity is also important for improving mental health and well-being.

Improve social inclusion and interaction, equity of access, and opportunity. Darebin City Council became a signatory to the International Charter for Walking in 2008. The Charter seeks to ensure that people in communities have the right to accessible streets, squares, buildings and public transport systems regardless of their age, ability, gender, income level, language, ethnic, cultural or religious background, strengthening the freedom and autonomy of all people, and contributing to social inclusion, solidarity and democracy.

Goal 3: Increase awareness of walking opportunities and benefits of walking

Promote the benefits of walking for individuals. Walking is low impact, free, requires minimal equipment, can be undertaken at any time of day and is less risky or intensive than other more vigorous forms of exercise. From a Council-wide perspective, more people walking brings social, economic and environmental outcomes that can be enjoyed by, and have benefit to, the community as a whole.

Promote awareness of local walking opportunities, network and links. To encourage walking as a popular mode of transport, it is imperative that walking links are safe, convenient and attractive, and that signage and wayfinding guidance is clear and unambiguous.

Support environmentally sustainable transport choices. With Council's goal to be leaders in creating a sustainable city, increasing the number of people walking and shifting travel modes away from the private motor vehicle will contribute to local and wider environmental benefits such as improved air quality, reduced carbon dioxide emissions and noise levels.

Successfully achieving the goals and targets of this Strategy will be reliant not only on infrastructure and capital investment, but also delivering **education, social marketing and behaviour change** initiatives and programs that highlight and promote the benefits of walking.



Principal Pedestrian Network

Fundamental to the preparation of this Walking Strategy has been the development of a Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN) for Darebin.

The purpose of the PPN is to identify a connected network of streets and paths that support walking trips into and around key destinations within Darebin. This can be used to help prioritise a variety of infrastructure measures to improve walking conditions, but also the broader public realm.

The specific objectives for developing a PPN for Darebin were as follows:

- ✓ To identify a network of key pedestrian links across the municipality, consistent with other higher-level strategic principles.
- ✓ To provide a prioritised list of pedestrian links for improving, managing and monitoring, consistent with the broader strategic aims for transport as a whole within the municipality.
- ✓ To improve the accessibility, safety and amenity for people walking within local precincts and neighbourhoods, prioritised across the municipality.

In simple terms, the PPN highlights the pedestrian routes that are considered most critical for future activity, growth and accessibility requirements, and therefore where investment into walking should be focussed.

Ultimately, the PPN has three levels of priority, being:

Primary - These routes form the foundation of the PPN where the highest level of pedestrian activity is expected. Consequently, these routes will be a major focus for the implementation of future walking infrastructure improvements.

Secondary - These routes provide a secondary role to the primary routes and are assigned, through this Strategy, a high level of pedestrian priority. A secondary focus for future infrastructure works will be also assigned to these routes.

'Other' - This includes the remainder of the pedestrian network within Darebin which is not identified as Primary or Secondary. Although they are not assigned a significant role in the PPN, they are recognised as providing a feeder role from residential and employment origins to the Secondary and Primary routes.

An analysis of future network pedestrian demand has also been undertaken, based on the highest potential demand for a comprehensive range of destinations within Darebin. The future network demand takes into account anticipated development activity, land use and population change within Darebin and areas of growth within neighbouring municipalities.

The PPN is shown on the following page.



Principal Pedestrian Network



Principal Pedestrian Network

Applying the Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN)

A 'Level of Service' approach to implementing the PPN will assist in setting out Council's ambition for what the walking environment should look, feel and function like for a route or path located on the Primary or Secondary pedestrian network, and for other routes across Darebin. This approach does not seek to define every potential detailed design element required in implementing the pedestrian environment. Rather, it sets the minimum desired level of provision on the basis of a few key attributes, with each location to be assessed and addressed on a case-by-case basis. As such, there may be locations that require different responses.

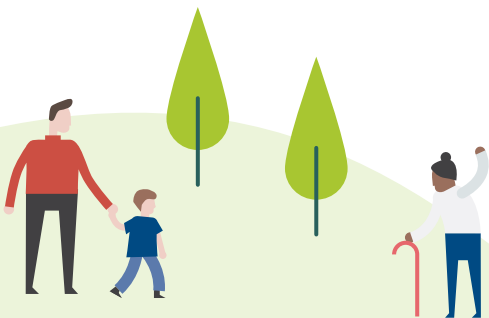
The prioritisation of works on both the Primary and Secondary PPN will be based on roads with higher traffic volumes, the anticipated future pedestrian network demand analysis, or at locations where there is an identified safety issue.

Further opportunities to upgrade the PPN will also be sought through other streetscape or development projects being led by Council, as well as works being undertaken within Darebin by parties other than Council (e.g. through private development, major land owners and stakeholders). In each case, facilities for pedestrians should be upgraded in line with the designated level of service applicable to the locations' PPN status.

Through the Walking Strategy, Council will aspire towards achieving the following outcomes where possible:

Outcomes: Primary PPN Routes

- ✓ New footpaths be constructed with a minimum width of 1.8m (greater than 2.0m desirable) along both sides of the street
- ✓ Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSI's) and pram ramps/dropped kerbs must be provided at all new or upgraded crossing points
- ✓ Safe crossing points situated no more than 400 metres apart across any road carrying more than 5,000 vehicles per day. At signalised crossing points, pedestrians are prioritised through reduced 'green man' wait times and extended green time for crossing
- ✓ Crossing facilities at side roads intersecting the PPN should be assessed and may be treated with a road safety solution that enhances the walking environment, with side roads with a carriageway width of 7.8m or greater being prioritised. Treatments that may be considered are pedestrian refuges, kerb build-outs, raised thresholds and zebra crossings
- ✓ Slip lanes and roundabouts removed or redesigned to accommodate safer pedestrian movement
- ✓ Planting of the largest tree possible every 10 metres (desirable) to provide shade and visual amenity, and prioritisation of infill planting on the Primary PPN
- ✓ At key nodes where the PPN converges, provision for pause points including seating, rubbish/recycle bins and attractive landscaping should be considered
- ✓ Prioritise road safety improvements on PPN routes to encourage lower traffic speeds, where appropriate
- ✓ Public street lighting design to a minimum standard appropriate to the street (refer to *Public Lighting Policy*), and streetscape design which encourages passive surveillance and street activation



Principal Pedestrian Network

Outcomes: Secondary PPN Routes

- ✓ New footpaths be constructed with a minimum width of 1.5m (greater than 1.8m desirable) along both sides of the street
- ✓ Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSIs) and pram ramps/dropped kerbs must be provided at all new or upgraded crossing points
- ✓ Safe crossing points situated no more than 400 metres apart across any road carrying more than 5,000 vehicles per day. At signalised crossing points, pedestrians are prioritised through reduced 'green man' wait times and extended green time for crossing
- ✓ Crossing facilities at side roads intersecting the PPN should be assessed and may be treated with a road safety solution that enhances the walking environment, with side roads with a carriageway width of 7.8m or greater being prioritised. Treatments that may be considered are pedestrian refuges, kerb build-outs, raised thresholds and zebra crossings
- ✓ Planting of the largest tree possible every 10 metres (desirable) to provide shade and visual amenity
- ✓ At key nodes where the PPN converges, provision for seating and attractive landscaping should be considered
- ✓ Prioritise road safety improvements on PPN routes to encourage lower traffic speeds, where appropriate

Outcomes: All 'Other' Routes

- ✓ New footpaths be constructed with minimum width of 1.2metres (1.5m desirable) along both sides of the street
- ✓ Well-maintained paths and street environments that minimise barriers to people of all ages and abilities to walk
- ✓ Ensure planning for new development incorporates pedestrian safety and accessibility into their design and adds to the enhanced pedestrian network across the municipality

Outcomes: Activity Centres

Streetscapes located within Darebin's Activity Centres¹⁵ and around key destinations or activity nodes will be assessed and designed separately to the Walking Strategy (e.g. through individual master plans or streetscape upgrades). For Activity Centres, the Primary PPN level of service should be achieved at a minimum, plus:

- ✓ New footpaths be constructed to achieve an absolute minimum uncluttered and uninterrupted pedestrian zone width of 1.8m, with an overall desirable footpath width of 2.8m (incorporating pedestrian, trading and kerbside zones and/or landscaping) on both sides of the street. Where footpaths are to be renewed, opportunities to meet these minimum widths should be considered
- ✓ Crossing facilities at side roads intersecting the PPN should be assessed and may be treated with a road safety solution that enhances the walking environment. Treatments that may be considered are pedestrian refuges, kerb build-outs, raised thresholds and zebra crossings
- ✓ Improvements to tram and bus infrastructure and platform stops including level access tram stops must be considered
- ✓ Incorporate well-maintained pause points, shade, seating and other facilities for pedestrians within the Activity Centre itself, as appropriate to the wider precinct
- ✓ Consider the use of different surface materials and colours for paving and other streetscape built elements to contribute to a unique sense of place within each Activity Centre and reinforce pedestrian priority
- ✓ Other streetscape elements that contribute to pedestrian amenity such as wayfinding, public art and active street interfaces should be considered provided they do not unreasonably contribute to footpath clutter

Outcomes: Schools

- ✓ Pedestrian routes and accessibility around schools will be considered as part of specific audits and safety programs



Making it Happen

Actions

The *Walking Strategy 2018-2028* is intended to define the long term service standards for walking in Darebin, and provide Council with a clear framework to start delivering significant improvements for pedestrians and walking for transport. In addition to capital delivery, the success of the Walking Strategy will be supported by a range of programs and projects delivered by Council through other strategies including road safety projects, school travel programs, travel behaviour change, community wellbeing / safety projects and ongoing advocacy / partnerships with State government agencies.

Targets & Outcomes

Specific capital delivery targets are set out adjacent, to guide and track the work towards the stated goals and objective of the Darebin Walking Strategy. A number of key outcomes have also been identified in order to track the effectiveness of the Strategy. These targets and outcomes will require investment over time, estimated at over 10 to 40 years. Council allocates budget annually and can fast-track items where appropriate funding is available, or adjust these to lower budget needs where other programs take priority. Our vision during the life of this Strategy is to continue working towards the long-term targets set out below.

Capital Delivery Targets

Action	Long-term Target
Provide pause points where Primary and Secondary PPN routes intersect	160 pause point locations on the PPN completed
Upgrade crossing facilities at streets connecting to the PPN	181 street crossings with criteria for upgrade completed
Remove or remediate slip lanes and roundabouts located on the Primary PPN to improve pedestrian priority and safety	34 roundabouts and 28 slip lanes treated on the Primary PPN
Implement new or improved safe crossing points on the PPN	40 'gaps' based on assessment criteria completed or improved
Prioritise tree planting on the PPN, utilising infill and whole street planting programs	2,500 vacant tree sites on the PPN delivered

Note: Footpath / streetscape elements on the PPN such as the provision of public lighting, footpath inspections, maintenance and renewal, road reconstructions and maintenance are considered within other Council policies and strategies.



Outcomes

Aim	Currently	Target for 2023	Target for 2028
Increase the amount of walking in Darebin by % walking and PT mode share trips to work by Darebin residents	2.3% walking 22.1% public transport	2.9% walking 28.2% public transport	3.6% walking 34.4% public transport
Zero deaths of pedestrians on Darebin's roads	1.2 pedestrian fatalities annually (5-year average)	0 pedestrian fatalities annually (5-year average)	0 pedestrian fatalities annually (5-year average)
Reduce the number of serious injuries to pedestrians by 30%	19 serious crashes involving pedestrians annually (5-year average)	<16.2 serious crashes involving pedestrians annually (5-year average)	<13.3 serious crashes involving pedestrians annually (5-year average)
Resident satisfaction with walking in their local area	Between 77.2% and 90.7% "agree" for walking statements (2017-18 2nd quarter)	Minimum 80% "agree" for walking statements	Minimum 85% "agree" for walking statements



References

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- ² Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2017) 2016 Census Community Profiles [online]. Available at: http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/LGA21890?opendocument
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- ⁴ Darebin City Council. (2014). Darebin Household Survey.
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- ⁶ O'Hern, S., Oxley, J. and Logan, D. (2015). Older adults at increased risk as pedestrians in Victoria, Australia: An examination of crash characteristics and injury outcomes. *Traffic Injury Prevention*, 16:2, pp 161-167.
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- ⁸ Villanueva, K., Giles-Corti, B., Bulsara, M., Trapp, G., Timperio, A., McCormack, G. & Van Niel, K. (2014). Does the walkability of neighbourhoods affect children's independent mobility, independent of parental, socio-cultural and individual factors?, *Children's Geographies*, 12:4, pp. 393-411.
- ⁹ Garrard, J. & Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (2009). Active transport: Children and young people. An overview of recent evidence. *Vic Health*. Available at: <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/active-transport-children>
- ¹⁰ Garrard, J. (2017). Young people and walking (Victoria Walks), pp 3, 25-26. Available at: http://victoriawalks.org.au/young_people/
- ¹¹ Lee, A. "What Is The Economic Contribution Of Cyclists Compared To Car Drivers In Inner Suburban Melbourne's Shopping Strips?" University of Melbourne, 2008.
- ¹² Clifton, K.J. et al. "Consumer Behaviour and Travel Mode Choices" Oregon Transportation Research and Education Consortium (OTREC), 2012.
- ¹³ Darebin's Activity Centres are defined in the Darebin Retail Activity Centres Strategy available at: <http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/How-council-works/Organisation-and-Performance#Council-Strategies>



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