



*Candidate Survey

City of Melbourne elections 2012

This is the Melbourne Bicycle User Group (Melbourne BUG) survey for candidates in the City of Melbourne elections. We will use the answers to inform voters of candidates' bike policies and may give you a score at the end.

Please complete the survey by **9.00am Wednesday 3 October 2012** to leave us time to disseminate your answers. The survey should take about **half an hour** to complete. Those who don't meet this deadline will be recorded as not having responded. If there's anything you are not sure about, please contact us on 0412703483 and we can provide more detail.

About Melbourne BUG

Melbourne BUG is the local bicycle user group for bike riders who reside, work in, and visit the City of Melbourne (there are similar BUGs for each local council area). Melbourne BUG's vision is for a city where our mothers, grandmothers and children feel safe riding on the streets. While we love and participate in many forms of cycling, our advocacy is focused on bike riding as a mode of transport, rather than simply a sport or recreational activity. Melbourne BUG is a member of the City of Melbourne's Bicycle Reference Group and the Road Safety Action Action Group – Inner Melbourne.

Survey questions

1. **What should the budget for bike facilities be over Melbourne City Council's next term?** N.B. in the current financial year Council is spending \$5.6 million.

The Our Melbourne team would welcome a submission from Melbourne BUG that advocates for an increase in Council spending on bike facilities. Making the City a bike-friendly city should remain a top priority, so where good ideas to improve biking in our Melbourne, need financial support We would be pleased to get behind them.

2. At the end of this survey we list the improvements to the bicycle network that Melbourne BUG recommends should be achieved *in the next term of Council*. Without committing to individual decisions on particular roads, **do you support this level of progress over the term of the next Council?**

In principle, these recommendations look like exciting developments that would have our support.

3. Moving people on bicycles takes up less space than moving the same number of people in cars. Other relative advantages include less pollution, less noise and danger to other road users (including pedestrians), and reduced health costs due to people getting more exercise.

In light of this:

- a) **Do you support transfer of space from cars to bikes where necessary to achieve a road network that is safer for bikes? This could be loss of travel lanes (as in the LaTrobe St project underway this year) or loss of parking (e.g. Exhibition St underway this year).**

It is important to ensure that appropriate solutions can be achieved where there are compromises to local amenity and business needs, but we are committed to resolving these issues to ensure that a safer network for bikes can still be achieved.

- b) **Do you support this transfer of space even where there will be a decrease in the capacity of the road network for cars or a decrease in on-street parking?**

Melbourne needs to remain a vibrant accessible place for all of the community. The goal of establishing a wider bike friendly road network needs to be balanced against the rights of retailers, businesses and other people who live, work and play in our Melbourne.

4. Australia's urban speed limit is high by international standards. Chances of fatality and serious injury reduce dramatically from 50km/h to 40km/h, and they again reduce dramatically at 30 km/h. Lowering speeds not only dramatically decreases the real danger to cyclists and pedestrians, it makes the urban environment feel safer and more human, encouraging cycling and walking.

Do you support 30km/h speed limits, and the removal of through traffic, in sensitive areas such as shopping strips, near schools and other areas of high pedestrian density?

This needs to be considered in respect of the specific area that it's proposed for, but in most cases we would support any reasonable suggestion that enhances the safety of pedestrians and bikes.

5. Melbourne's bike share has languished at less than one trip per bike per day, with the main reason being the inconvenience of mandatory helmets. This is despite heavily subsidised helmets, which add to the financial loss. Brisbane's scheme is similarly underused. In comparison, other cities around the world have had enormous success and an excellent safety record despite low or zero helmet use. Dublin, for example, has poorer riding conditions than Melbourne or Brisbane and averages over 10 trips per day per bike. Other successful schemes exist in Montreal, Barcelona, Paris, London and many more. The cities of Sydney, Adelaide, Perth and Fremantle have all called for exemptions from helmet law to enable bicycle use, and bike share in particular, to flourish.

The share bikes have a lower risk profile largely because they are heavier and slower. In London, where the share bike scheme has been in operation for two years, there has been only one serious injury for 14 million journeys, which is statistically safer than private bikes. A recent joint study between the Monash University Accident Research Centre and Alfred Hospital drew a strong link between speed and likelihood of head injury, with riders exceeding 30 km/h having five times the relative risk compared to riders doing under 20 km/h. The share bikes are slow – getting one up to 20 km/h is not easy.

Do you support an exemption from helmet laws to allow Melbourne Bike Share to function effectively?

Of course, the legislation requiring the use of helmets is State based, but we do not believe that an exemption is the answer. There is extensive evidence that helmets substantially reduce serious head injuries and save lives, and allowing some bike users to be exempt erodes the message of how important they are, so we are reluctant to agree that an exemption is the answer.

It is clear, however, that the compulsory use of bike helmets is a significant barrier to the use of what should be a very successful bike-share program so we need some lateral thought to remedy the problem.

6. Aside from the substantial misdirection of funds that could be used for sustainable transport, the proposed East-West freeway connecting the Eastern Freeway and City Link will push more cars onto city roads, making City of Melbourne streets a less pleasant place to live, walk and ride a bike in. Further, preliminary drill holes are located at Royal Parade, which is a well-used bike route, and Melbourne BUG is concerned at the possibility that there may be off ramps onto Royal Parade that will impact on the bike lane. For these reasons, Melbourne BUG believes the East-West freeway will be harmful for bike transport in the City of Melbourne.

Do you support the building of the east-west freeway connecting the Eastern Freeway and City Link?

We do not support the building of the link in its current form, however we do urge the State and Federal governments to address this issue. Congestion in the city, residents health and bicyclists safety is being compromised, due to motor vehicle movements through our Melbourne that are being made by people who are only crossing the city. It is time a fully comprehensive review is done, and one of our policies is for the City to conduct an impact statement on the East West tunnel proposal as it stands. We are concerned that the impacts on business, residents and visitors to the city have not been taken into account, in the formulation of the current plans.

7. Melbourne BUG believes the Little Streets have tremendous potential as people-friendly urban treasures and slow cycle routes, and that they are wasted as backstreets for deliveries or shortcuts for through traffic. The Council has committed to investigating possibilities for making the Little Streets more pedestrian and cyclist friendly in its 2012-16 Bicycle Plan. We would like to see the restriction of traffic to local-only traffic and deliveries (in set periods), two-way for bikes and possibly a 20km/h speed limit for all road users.

What is your vision for the Little Streets?

The Little Streets could certainly be made more pedestrian and bike friendly, and with this discussion comes enormous possibilities for bikes and pedestrians. A shared space for pedestrians and bikes, with appropriate access for local traffic and deliveries, would be a great step forward. We need to ensure that we do not adversely impact on businesses that utilise these little streets, as they are important in providing vibrancy and jobs for our Melbourne.

Melbourne BUG capital works list

Melbourne BUG's proposed works programme for the next term of Council includes:

Physically separated lanes

St Kilda Rd all the way to St Kilda Junction

Flemington Road

Royal Parade

Clarendon St north of Whiteman St, and Spencer St

Flinders Street

Albert St completed from Punt Rd to Spring St

On road lanes:

Upgrades to Footscray Rd and Dynon Rd bike lanes, including better conditions on bridges at Maribyrnong River and Moonee Ponds Creek.

Spring St or Exhibition St from Flinders to LaTrobe

Bike lanes from the corner of Spring St and Latrobe St through Carlton Gardens to Canning St, alternatively a safe link from Canning Street to Albert St.

William St permanent bike lanes

Grattan St

Connections from Brunswick St, Napier St, Smith St and Wellington St (Collingwood) through to Albert St.

Bike lanes in Wellington Parade (East Melbourne – probable loss of a travel lane both ways or some parking)