



Candidate Survey: The Greens  
**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.

*Greens Melbourne City Councillors will fast-track the expansion of Melbourne's bicycle network, reprioritising Council's expenditure as appropriate, by building key commuter bicycle paths with neighbouring Councils, starting with the 49 routes identified in the City's bicycle strategy. We will also seek to create separated bike lanes along streets with a high incidence of dooring accidents, starting with the lengths of St Kilda Rd and Elizabeth St.*

*The City of Melbourne's BiXE rating (Bicycle Network Victoria's per-resident measure of bicycle infrastructure spend) for 2011-12 was \$12.43. Recently, current Greens Councillor Cathy Oke was able to increase the Council's bike budget commitment for 2012-13 to \$5.6 million; this is a BiXE of \$55.70 on the most recent population figures. While an improvement, this is still behind the City of Sydney which spent \$62.34 per resident in 2011 and well behind Copenhagen which as an international benchmark invests approximately A\$100 per resident each year on bicycle facilities.*

*Greens Melbourne City Councillors are supportive of a \$10million annual investment from the City of Melbourne over the next term. This would bring us in line with Copenhagen on a per resident spend basis, and is necessary in order to accelerate the construction of a integrated commuting bicycle network and in order to complete major safe cycling infrastructure projects like the separated lanes on Elizabeth St and St Kilda Rd.*

*Our commitment to cycling infrastructure is published in our Transport policy for the City of Melbourne: [www.melbournecitygreens.com/transport](http://www.melbournecitygreens.com/transport).*

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?**

*Yes, the Greens candidates for Melbourne City Council support this level of progress. We will fast-track the construction of an integrated bike commuter network, including prioritising the completion of urgent routes such as separated lanes on La Trobe, and separated lanes the full length of St Kilda Road and Elizabeth St over the next term.*

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).**

*Yes, and this position is supported by the local community.*

*In considering the proposals for separated bicycle paths for La Trobe St, Council undertook a community consultation which asked residents "What do you think are the most important improvements to La Trobe Street when all current and future activities are considered?" Both cyclists and non-cyclists overwhelmingly listed "on-street parking" as the least important consideration.*

*When asked, "What are the most important aspects of the bike lane options to consider?" again both cyclists and non-cyclists overwhelmingly considered "separating cyclists from moving cars and opening car doors" to be of most importance over "maintain lanes of traffic."*

- 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?**

*Yes. The Greens support the City of Melbourne's goal of reducing to 20% by 2020 the share of trips that are by private car either to, from, or within the municipality. This decrease allows us to reduce the capacity of the road network that is prioritised for cars.*

*We have successfully supported such a transfer over the last term of Council. In 2008 our key transport policy was closing Swanston St to cars and returning this space to bikes, trams, and pedestrians. In spite of the Lord Mayor's plans to fully-open Swanston St to cars, Cathy Oke achieved this aim and the project is now mostly complete.*

*In 2012, our transport policy includes the creation of separated bike lanes along the lengths of Elizabeth St and St Kilda Rd. As with the La Trobe St proposals, we will be supportive of plans that return to cyclists available road space that is currently reserved for motorists.*

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?**

*Yes, our transport policy for the City of Melbourne states that "Greens Melbourne City Councillors will work with VicRoads to implement a 24-hour 30km/h speed limit on all roads in the CBD" ([www.melbournecitygreens.com/transport](http://www.melbournecitygreens.com/transport)).*

*The recent change to a 40km/h speed limit for the CBD is welcome and the result of sustained advocacy by Greens Melbourne City Councillors across many terms of Council. While a significant improvement, 40km/h is still too fast for cars to be travelling in the CBD, and we will continue to advocate for a reduction in the speed limit to 30km/h. This is a position that is supported by the best available evidence on road accident reduction measures.*

4. 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?**

*No. European cities with safer cycling infrastructure, lower speed limits, and a much stronger culture of tolerant, shared use of roads, are not comparative to the current situation in Melbourne. Greens Melbourne City Councillors will support and seek to further expand and promote the Melbourne Bike Share, patronage of which has continued to grow year to year, and will continue to*

*work to improve environmental design of our roads to promote shared use and a safer cycling culture. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done before helmet exemptions should be considered.*

5. 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?**

*No. Spring St's car obsessed policies have failed Melbourne, and the Melbourne City Council should be articulating an alternative vision for a sustainable transport system that prioritises public transport and cycling. The East West tollroad will damage our parks and fill inner-city suburbs with cars and pollution. One train can take 800 cars off the road, and our plan seeks to deal with congestion by focusing on moving people not moving cars:  
[www.melbourbecitygreens.com/transport\\_vision](http://www.melbourbecitygreens.com/transport_vision).*

*A Greens Lord Mayor will seek to form a coalition with other Councils along the proposed route of the Metro and Doncaster Rail projects. This coalition will submit an alternative funding proposal to Infrastructure Australia to compete for the funds that the State Government wants to spend on the East West tollroad to be used for these rail infrastructure projects instead.*

6. 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 Greens support the cycling infrastructure projects nominated for investigation in the Melbourne Bicycle Plan. Our transport policy includes the creation of a pedestrian mall on Little Bourke Street between Spring St and Hardware Lane, with appropriate arrangements made for freight access to businesses. After implementation of this project, we would investigate the possibility and community support for extending this initiative to other Little Streets.*

## **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)