WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT CYCLING IN BANYULE USER PERSPECTIVES - NOV 2018

Banyule
CITY COUNCIL

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Introduction

Council currently has a Banyule Bicycle Strategy that was adopted in 2010 is reaching the end of its 10 year life. In a preparatory step in the development of a new bicycle strategy, Council engaged consultants 'Trafficworks' in April 2018 to complete an audit of the existing Banyule local bicycle network. This involved auditing the routes for usability and safety, along with producing updated GIS mapping.

Council also conducted preliminary community consultation through the Banner and the Shaping Banyule website over March to August 2018 to get a local user perspective of cycling in Banyule. The community comment is summarised in this document.

User Perspectives

There were over 120 comments submitted to Shaping Banyule and via email to provide information on local cycling experiences. These were proved by 75 contributors and are discussed in detail in the following sections. A word cloud was created from the main themes of the contributions and is displayed above. It shows an overwhelming desire for safety while cycling.

Shaping Banyule submissions

Main themes	Number of comments
Safe cycling paths/connections	45
Safe cycling lanes on road	23
Trail surface treatment	14
Direct and safe cycling routes	12
Safe road crossings	6
Bicycle wayfinding/awareness signage	5
Remove steep gradients	5
Bike repair /rest stations	3
Mountain bike trails	3
Separate pedestrians and cyclists	3
Bicycle Parking	2
Cycling Map	2
Rail line trail	2
Cycling festival	1
Trail lighting	1
Grand Total	125

The majority of the response was obtained through Shaping Banyule.

Table 1 sets out the main themes and the number of contributions obtained on each theme.

TABLE 1. SHAPING BANYULE RESPONSES

A summary of the discussion on the main points of each theme is given below. For a full listing of comments see Appendix 1.

Safe cycling paths/connections

"We would ride to school every day if we had better bike lanes and cycling facilities"

We received the most comments about safe cycling paths and connections. These included many concerns about lack of connections to schools, shops and train stations, and many regarding discontinuous cycling routes. There were also a number of comments relating to the need for a cyclist and pedestrian crossing of the Yarra River to link Banyule to Manningham.

Safe cycling lanes on road

"I want my wife and kids to be able to safely ride everywhere without fear of cars or drivers yelling "get off the road"

We received over 20 comments on the need for safety improvements of on road cycling. Many people were concerned that on- road bike lanes and markings where not adequate to keep cyclists safe. Another common concern was that cyclists have to share space with parked cars.

Trail surface treatment

"Trail upgrade needed from Plenty River through to Warringal Park (swamplands). Upgrade connection from Martins Lane to Main Yarra Trail - now gravel"

There were 14 comments regarding the surface of the trails in Banyule including the Main Yarra Trail, Darebin Creek Trail and the Plenty Road Trail. These mostly related to the surface of the trails being unsuitable for road bikes or being in bad repair.

Direct and safe cycling routes

"A way to ride with kids from Greensborough to Diamond Creek that doesn't make a 5km trip into a 20km trip would be useful"

Twelve comments related to the lack of safe direct cycling routes. These comments acknowledged the wonderful trail network in Banyule but pointed out that these were often long circuitous routes.

Other comments

"Safe connections across major roads, Copenhagen lanes down major arterials and sign posted routes on quiet backstreet connections between."

Steep gradients are an issue in Banyule and many people thought more effort should be made to find suitable alternatives for cycling routes. Other comments included desire for:

- The development and protection of mountain bike trail riding paths.
- Rest stations including repair equipment and water fountains.
- Cycling paths adjacent to the Hurstbridge Railway Line.

And the need for:

- Facilities to cross roads safely.
- Better wayfinding to make sure cyclists can be guided to where they want to go.
- Separate cyclist and pedestrian paths to make walking and cycling safe for everyone.
- More bicycle parking across the municipality especially at activity centres.

Written Correspondence

A number of emails with detailed comments were obtained at transport@banyule.vic.gov.au.

These provided detailed comment on the cycling experience especially around Rosanna, Heidelberg Heights and Heidelberg. They included reference to the matter of cyclists having to dismount to cross roads at pedestrian crossings, especially in regard to crossing Rosanna Road. They also included reference to the lack of available bicycle parking in activity centres and instances of poor connectivity between bike paths. The comments and are included in full in Appendix 2.

We also received a resident drawn map "A Cycling Mum's Guide to 3081" See Appendix 2.

Next Steps

These resident ideas and concerns about cycling facilities in Banyule will inform the development of new Banyule Bicycle Strategy. The new strategy is due to be developed in 2019/20.

Appendix 1 – Shaping Banyule - Complete list of comments.

Safe cycling paths/connections to schools, stations, and shops	
1	Safe school bike routes should be made a priority.
2	Install overpasses so that cyclists are protected from general traffic.
3	As a kid or elderly person I want to be able to ride to GB plaza/shops & GB primary school without riding on the road from a 3km radius away.
4	Banyule Road/Henty Road in Viewbank is very dangerous, fix it.
5	Create walk/bike bridge end Martins Lane-Rosehill Rd for kids going to school
6	Belmont Rd & Livingstone St needs attention. Many riders reconnect with Darebin Trail via this intersection, including school kids. Unsafe!!
7	Bicycle lanes around schools to encourage cycling to school and to reinforce to kids that roads are not only for big vehicles.
8	Educate what bike symbols mean for drivers and cyclists. Functional paths to connect all main centres of business and education used daily.
9	Every child should be able to ride from their home to school safely. The current line markings aren't working and are confusing.
10	Link communities to schools with safe bike paths. Key destinations should include schools and parks. That's where families and kids ride.
11	Need safe to school bike paths. For example along Banyule Road to Banyule Primary School. Currently a nightmare.
12	Rosanna Golf Links Primary School connected by bike paths to Macleod shops & Rosanna parklands.
13	Safe cycling route from Watsonia Train Station to Primary Schools in Greensborough. Please
14	Safe cycling routes to rail stations and schools, a bike bypass at Watsonia shops for though traffic and connectivity to main trails. Pls.
15	Stop putting school kid's lives at risk sending them on inappropriate detours while you replace the bridge on the Darebin creek trail.
16	We would ride to school every day if we had better bike lanes and cycling facilities.
17	Improved links to public transport, strategically placed cycle lanes on roads and upgrades to cycle paths including a bridge safety leading to CBD.
18	Shared path connectivity needs addressing. Choice pieces of bike lane infrastructure are missing close Train Stations and other facilities
19	I'd like easier access to major areas like Greensborough Plaza, as well as more bike racks in more community locations.
20	Safe bike paths next to major roads to city& shopping centres: Lower Plenty Road/Lower &Upper Heidelberg Roads/Waiora R/Southern Rd/Bell St.
21	Safe cycle paths (<5km) to a swimming pool and indoor sports facilities. There is no safe way at a reasonable distance in Viewbank.

Safe cycling paths/connections - Yarra River crossing	
22	A cycle/pedestrian bridge that connected Banyule to Manningham, over the Yarra rather than forcing people on to Banksia St with large trucks
23	Bike/pedestrian bridge over the Yarra on trail near Banyule Football Club. This would open up a link to Heide, Birrarung Park, and Bulleen and Marcellin College.
24	Build a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the Yarra to connect Banyule to the Heidi grounds. It would beautiful and much safer than crossing

Safe cycling paths/connections - Yarra River crossing	
25	Need a bike track from the end of Banksia park to the traffic lights in Dora Street across Banksia Street alternative is ride on the wrong side road.
26	Need a bridge across to Heide from the Banyule Parklands and the Yarra trail, linking to Heidelberg to avoid current and future major roads.

Safe cycling paths/connections - General comments	
27	Install overpasses so that cyclists are protected from general traffic.
28	Banyule has a great opportunity to be a leading cycling municipality - great off-road trails, gateway to the nth hills & good commute options
29	Bike route connecting Main Yarra Trail & Plenty River Trail via Bonds Rd, Cleveland Av, Henty Rd & Seymour Rd. This route avoids steep grades in Bonds Rd
30	Bridge connecting Darebin Creek Trail near Southern Rd to bike lane on Gower St (Darebin Council) via Water Rd. Urgent as Southern Rd unsafe
31	Fix access to allow for continuation when heading south of Oriel Rd at Livingstone St.
32	Hope cycling funds weren't wasted on this review. A cycling recommendation with cyclists dismount signs and a bunch of other useless signs.
33	I doubt that anyone at Banyule has actually tried riding these routes at different times and days.
34	If you want to have a cycling culture you have to get women cycling, so ask them what they need, which routes and infrastructure.
35	Interconnected cycle ways that allow users to safely transit the area and interconnecting major cycle ways without recourse to trafficked roads
36	It would be good to have a bike path linking Montmorency to Eltham without having to cycle on road.
37	Join up with Merri creek from Darebin Trail so can cycle into docklands on dedicated paths all the way
38	More and safer paths please. A safe connection to connect to the Capital City Trail, Latrobe University and Preston from Bell St Mall.
39	More paths would mean we don’t need to ride on roads, slow traffic and cause a hazard all because it’s illegal to ride on the footpaths!
40	My vision: fosters independence and connection with nature in our children through safety, play, connectivity and adventure.
41	Put walkers and cyclists at the top of your considerations for a transport policy and infrastructure, rather than as 2nd class citizens
42	Safe route between Greenwood Drive and St Georges Rd is needed. Plenty Rd is not safe. And there are no direct parallel tracks/routes
43	Thanks for this comprehensive look at cycling in Banyule. Great ideas! I look forward to riding improved/new routes. Margot (Greensborough)
44	There needs to be a bike & pedestrian trail link between Lower Plenty and Plenty River Trail (i.e. over Plenty River). Suggest near Cleveland Wetland
45	Would like to see a safe connection between tracks on Plenty River to the Diamond Creek tracks

Safe cycling lanes on road	
1	Add cycling lanes to Heidelberg Rd between Alphington and where it splits into upper and lower Heidelberg Rd.

Safe cycling lanes on road	
2	Add Sharrows to Banyule Rd at Country Lane and at other points south and west where road narrows - not just at roundabouts.
3	Bike lane markings on Waiora road pls. It's a well-used road for bikes (connecting to the Main Yarra Trail and Darebin Creek Trails) but cars buzz riders all the time - unsafe!
4	Bike lanes on Elder St and major roads, priority at traffic lights for bikes, safe for less confident riders, roads/paths cleared of debris
5	Bike lanes that don't end before intersections would be helpful.
6	Can bike roads be in wide enough streets? I.e. Haig street has both side curb car parking allowed + bikes = dangerous near cafe
7	Can you please join up existing bike lanes? There are major gaps that could easily be connected. Including: Darebin Rd and Livingston Street.
8	Get rid of traffic calming measures that create conflict points with motor vehicles and cyclists.
9	Heidelberg Rd from The Boulevard to Chandler Hwy, especially over Darebin Creek, unsafe & largely unmarked. Been involved in accident there.
10	I want my wife and kids to be able to safely ride everywhere without fear of cars or drivers yelling “get off the road”.
11	It would be good if the trails from Martins Lane/Seymour Road, Viewbank to Plymouth St Heidelberg were sealed for the safety of cyclists.
12	It would be good to have a safer east west route from Heidelberg to the Darebin Creek Trail. Perhaps bike lanes on Banksia street or Southern Road.
13	Local bike route along Boulevard East Ivanhoe. So many bumps and potholes. Very bad conditions for any bike. BCC had plans for here?
14	Look at the city of Darebin! Their on road markings and segregation is fantastic and much safer than in Banyule. Shame for our beautiful area
15	No cycle path on Heidelberg Rd from the railway bridge near Darebin station until Alphington. Very unsafe stretch of road for cyclists, please fix.
16	On-road bike lanes/space is either patchwork or completely lacking between key centres. If you’re a bike commuter you’re dicing with death!
17	Safe cycling options on main roads. More footpaths converted to shared paths
18	Signs allowing cyclists to use bike lanes ‘bicycles exempt’ on one way roads in Heidelberg West industrial estate e.g. Kylta Rd.
19	The Ivanhoe Boulevard between Bourke Road and Lower Plenty Road needs updating to include safe bicycle lanes.
20	Upper Heidelberg Road, Heidelberg Road and Banksia Street could be massive cyclist thoroughfares but don’t even have marked bike lanes! Dangerous!
21	Upper Heidelberg Rd is in terrible condition and has been for the past 15 years. The surface is so rough it is very dangerous.
22	1-metre safe passing laws would help on local roads.
23	Routes to get down Cape Street safely

Trail surface treatment	
1	A well surfaced track along the Yarra Trail past The Greenery is needed and a wide corner under the bridge without the need to dismount.
2	Main Yarra Trail: City to Bourke Rd. is all made through various municipalities, when you cross the bridge, we are in Banyule with unsafe gravel paths.
3	Better bike tracks = more cyclists on them. Priority = usage. Plenty River Trail at Partington’s Flat = potential, but low use = no upgrade.

Trail surface treatment	
4	Bitumen instead of concrete please. Concrete gets very slippery in the wet, and it breaks up with big gaps between panels.
5	Can the gravel be patch with road surface? This would encourage cyclists with road bike to cycle on the trail rather than on the public road
6	Greater incentive for cyclists to use park trails where possible to avoid being on busy roadways. E.g. better park tracks
7	It is about time the Main Yarra Trail through Banyule is paved to become a safe walking and cycling route for all people and their abilities
8	Main Yarra Trail between Banyule Cattle yard and the start of the Plenty river trail gets very muddy when it rains. Paving would be great!
9	Main Yarra Trail between The Greenery and Burke Rd gets very muddy when it rains. Paving would be great!
10	More concealed foot paths with less potholes/up lifting from tree roots. Currently riding road style bicycles on these paths is impossible!
11	Paving on the Plenty River Trail between Main Yarra Trail intersection and the Bridge near Martins Ln would be great.
12	Re-align and resurface the Darebin Creek trail - one of the worst surfaces in the state in parts.
13	The section of path from northland heading southbound on the Darebin train needs the surface replaced it's a very poor uneven unsafe surface
14	Trail upgrade needed from Plenty River through Warringal Park (swamplands) Upgrade connection from Martins Lane to Yarra Trail - now gravel

Direct and safe cycling routes	
1	A way to ride with kids from Greensborough to Diamond Creek that doesn't make a 5km trip into a 20km trip would be useful.
2	Although our off-road tracks are gorgeous, commuters in the Heidelberg area are under serviced on the way to the city! Segregated tracks please.
3	Bike paths that don't meander would encourage commuters to use the paths
4	Both recreational and commuting/sport cyclists should be considered. Keep in mind that semi-fit cyclists can comfortably maintain 30kph+
5	Create direct routes instead of all those indirect ones so they are actually attractive to use as a transport option.
6	Direct and safe commuter route between Greensborough and Eltham would be sensational. Karingal Dr and Shelbourne Rd are shocking.
7	Improve commuter cycling from Montmorency to the City. It is currently horrendous.
8	It was identified in the last strategy almost 10 years ago that most people are riding to the city, Actually have a route to get there!
9	LBN 11 - Plenty River to Main Yarra Trail is a very strange route. What is this for?
10	Shimmy connecting Greensborough and Watsonia Stations via Nell St & Paterson Cres allowing both way travel. Also to Watermark via Stowe Av & Eldale Av.
11	They are indirect, incomplete, poorly marked. OK for slow pleasure rides but hopeless commuting routes. Look at what Darebin does well!
12	River paths are not direct to the city. 30km versus 17km Invest in direct routes.

Safe road crossings	
1	I follow suggested routes but end up stuck at road crossings with no lights and no way to get across. Join up the different sections.
2	As a Cyclist/Pedestrian/Kid/Bus Rider I want to be able to cross Grimshaw St outside the Greensborough police station without risking death.
3	Bike traffic lights at Dora St intersection Banksia St & improvements so cyclists ride legally both ways on Boulevard to Main Yarra Trail.
4	Fix the intersection of Bell Street and Oriel Road and make the crossing over Bell Street at the Mall, bike friendly.
5	I'd like to be able to cross Grimshaw St, outside the Greensborough Police Station, without fearing being hit by a car. (We need a crossing)
6	Safe connections across major roads, Copenhagen lanes down major arterials and sign posted routes on quiet backstreet connections between.

Bicycle wayfinding/awareness signage	
1	Banyule has good trails, however signage is lacking and often covered in graffiti tags.
2	Better signage directing people to bike paths and to designated bike routes. More complete bike lanes on roads without breaks or interruption.
3	Good signage to remind drivers to watch for cyclists.
4	Signposting of the cycle routes is not the best - only yesterday did I notice the sign in Greensborough pointing to "Watsonia 2.6km"
5	The Plenty River and Main Yarra trails are very good. However, clearer signage is required so first time users don't get lost.

Remove steep gradients	
1	Consider gradients as part of your analysis. A lack of consideration has produced some bizarre routes that no-one will ever use.
2	It seems that there is little consideration of the gradients on the local bicycle routes.
3	Relocate section of Darebin Creek Trail at Cyril Cummins Reserve near Banksia St exit to be closer to the Creek - huge hill for cargo bikes
4	Some bike paths are ridiculously technical, steep gradients and tight blind bends. Difficult for riding even for experienced cyclists
5	Upgrade the Plenty river trail just near the Yarra. Cut out the hill it is extremely steep, and then recreational and commuter cyclists will use it.

Mountain bike trails	
1	Develop cross country mountain bike trails and a decent BMX track linked to bike paths. Normalise for kids that they can have adventures.
2	Formalize, improve and increase the amount of single track along the Yarra trail for mountain biking.
3	The great MTB trails in the Heidelberg area need to be protected and formalised hundreds of rides each weekend!

Separate pedestrians and cyclists	
1	"Cycling" routes? "Shared paths" with dogs, children, walkers, joggers. Many ignoring rules, etiquette. Keep left; stay vigilant & share.
2	High quality off road routes separated from pedestrians and dog walkers. Priority at crossings with roads and well shaded.
3	We need to have separate pedestrian/bicycle paths on the main tracks it gets quite dangerous mixing fast riders with young children & others

Bike repair /rest stations	
1	Have bike hubs- with more bike loops and repair station. Also more water fountains on bike paths.
2	Safe. Geared towards different skills and ages. Water stations. General tuning benches (like snowboarders have on mountains)
3	Would be good to have bins and toilets on route!

Bicycle Parking	
1	Provide more parking space for bicycles in prominent locations
2	Work with/require shopping centres (Greensborough Plaza) to provide safe bike and trailer parking close to important shop entrances.

Cycling Map	
1	Better maps of the paths with links to other councils so you can create a route all the way to the city
2	I would love a map of all the cycle trails in Banyule. Is one available? I haven't been able to get one.

Rail line trail	
1	Include a bike path from Greensborough to Eltham Via Montmorency with the Rail duplication. (no road crossings)
2	Utilise the rail line.

Cycling festival	
1	An annual festival to celebrate the joys and benefits of cycling

Trail lighting	
1	More safety lights and cameras. Riding to work in darkness is fearsome for females.

Appendix 2 – Written Correspondence – Details.

The following comments were provided to transport@banyule.vic.gov.au.

General comments

- When the Banyule Bicycle Strategy is renewed it needs new proposals. The proposals of the 2010-2020 strategy were the same as the 2009-2015 strategy and have proven to be ineffective.
- Cycling in Banyule is challenging due to major barriers both natural and manmade. Those barriers include Rosanna Rd, Bell Street, Greensborough Highway, Hurstbridge railway line, Yarra River and hills.
- Poor connectivity of bicycle routes.
- Absence of bicycle parking hoops and other facilities.
- Inconvenient and dangerous road crossings.
- Designated on-road bicycle routes are dangerous as they exist currently
- Cycling to work and shops in Banyule is not a pleasant experience.
- Need safe main road crossings for cyclists
- Cyclists shouldn't need to dismount at Pedestrian crossings of railways or roads. e.g. at Rosanna Rd/St James, Brown St/Upper Heidelberg and at Dora St/Banksia St
- Routes that form part of the Local Bicycle Network should have 40km/hr speed limits
- Utilise safer streets parallel to main arterials where possible.
- Island refuges on main roads greatly facilitate safe crossing by bicycle.

Rosanna Village – specific comments

- Lack on of safe road bicycle facilities on Hillside Road, Beetham Parade and Lower Heidelberg Road
- Dooring danger from parallel and angle parked vehicles in Beetham Parade and the in the shopping strip service lane off Lower Heidelberg Road.
- General lack of bicycle parking hoops
- Lack of cycling connection from St James Road through the intersection of Lower Plenty Road and Upper Heidelberg Road which is part of the Banyule Local Bicycle Network.

Heidelberg Heights – specific comments

- Montgomery Street and Edwin Street in Heidelberg Heights have bicycle markings (sharrows) but is not a safe route due to lack of separation from cars and buses.
- Porter Road in Heidelberg Heights is a safer cycling alternative to Waiora Rd.
- Need a safe east west bicycle crossing of Waterdale Road (in the vicinity of Altona Street)

Heidelberg – specific comments

- Need a safe bicycle crossing of Rosanna Road that doesn't require cyclist to use sections of Rosanna Road at either end (unlike St James Road crossing)
- Cape Street is not a safe bicycle route due to parked cars and lack of separation from cars and buses.
- The connecting path from Darebin Street to Main Yarra Trail is a narrow and indirect.
- The Beverly Road crossing has poor sight lines for drivers to sight cyclists or pedestrians.
- Warringal Shopping Centre is not bike friendly.

See the following page for a helpful map provided by a local resident.

"Attached I have created a map of a cycling mums guide to 3081, my local area.

Being a cycling mum means I am extra cautious when cycling around with my 3 year old on the back of my bike. This map includes roads which are an absolute no-go for me when cycling and shows better options (which would all be great candidates for a network of Copenhagen style lanes). It also includes main places we try to get to on our bike (shops and parks and train stations/bus stops). And it includes crossings with major roads that are really dangerous for both pedestrians and cyclists.

It doesn't include my favourite backstreet options, as that is a whole other story!"