

# Consultation Summary Paper

Banyule Bicycle Strategy



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# Introduction

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Throughout 2020 and 2021 Banyule City Council has been working to deliver a new municipal bicycle strategy. This strategy will guide Banyule becoming a municipality that:

- Enhances the natural environment and liveability of our places by supporting cycling as a key form of zero-emission transport.
- Implements a network of safe, convenient and accessible cycling routes with linkages to other transport modes and key destinations.
- Embraces the health, social, economic and environmental benefits of cycling.
- Encourages and promotes a cycling culture for all ages and abilities.

The development of the Banyule Bicycle Strategy has included three key phases of consultation – two supporting the exploration of issues and opportunities for cycling within the municipality and one seeking feedback after the release of the draft strategy. These are outlined below.

## **Phase One – Initial consultation: Banyule Bicycle Route Review**

In May 2018, Banyule City Council commenced preparatory work to inform the development of a new municipal bicycle strategy. This early work included a review of the existing Banyule Local Bicycle Network (LBN) involving an audit of the routes for completeness, usability and safety. It also included updated GIS mapping of all routes.

Council also conducted a preliminary community consultation via the engagement website, Shaping Banyule, promoted in the *Banyule Banner* and by the distribution of postcards. The consultation sought feedback on cycling journeys within Banyule and asked:

- What makes them special?
- What would make a positive difference to your ability to undertake these journeys?

## **Phase Two – Stakeholder workshop and BikeSpot 2020**

Work on the development of the draft strategy commenced in November 2019 and on Wednesday 5 February 2020 a stakeholder workshop was held at Council. The workshop was organized and jointly hosted by the transport consultants, Cardno and Banyule City Council, with 30 participants, including members of the Banyule Bicycle User Group (BUG), Department of Transport, Bicycle Network, Banyule Councillors, representatives of Council service units (Open Space Planning, Transport Engineering, Community Programs, Assets and City Services), members of the community and representatives of neighbouring Councils. For stakeholders that could not attend, feedback was also received via e-mail and telephone contact. Comments were sought on the positive and negative aspects of the existing bicycle network within Banyule as well as any opportunities that these groups see for improvement throughout the municipality.

From 31 March to 31 May 2020 Banyule City Council also participated in BikeSpot 2020. This project, developed by the online engagement firm, CrowdSpot, and the Amy Gillett Foundation, asked Victorians to share their perceptions of cycling safety at various locations by adding a Safe or Unsafe spot to a web-based interactive map and providing comments.

## **Phase Three - Public Exhibition of draft Banyule Bicycle Strategy**

The draft Banyule Bicycle Strategy was presented to Banyule City Council at the ordinary meeting held on 1 March 2021. Council resolved to approve the public exhibition of the draft strategy for a period of six weeks. The initial engagement period was scheduled from 24 May to 5 July 2021. This was extended to 30 July 2021 to allow for the rescheduling of activities cancelled due to restrictions associated with Victoria's fourth COVID-19 lockdown.

The public exhibition period and consultation activities were advertised via the *Banyule Banner* and via postcards and posters printed and distributed to Council Service Centres, libraries, leisure centres and bicycle retailers.

The primary purpose of phase three was to obtain community and stakeholder input on the draft Banyule Bicycle Strategy and identified issues, opportunities and recommendations.

## Feedback response summary

The table below summarises the consultation undertaken across the three phases and the associated attendee/response numbers.

Date	Type of Consultation	Attendees or Responses
<b>Phase One</b>		
<b>Mar – Aug 2018</b>	Shaping Banyule – community perspectives on cycling	125
<b>Phase Two</b>		
<b>Feb 2020</b>	Stakeholder workshop	30
	Written responses	2
<b>Mar-May 2020</b>	Bike Spot 2020	182
<b>Phase Three</b>		
<b>May – July 2021</b>	Shaping Banyule – draft Bicycle Strategy survey responses	25
	Drop-in consultation session - Greensborough	5
	Drop-in consultation session – Ivanhoe	7
	Pop-up engagement – Darebin Creek Trail	50
	Pop-up engagement – Main Yarra Trail	25
	Pop-up engagement – Rosanna Parklands	10
	Written and general responses	8

# Phase One – Initial consultation: Banyule Bicycle Route Review

A total of 125 comments were submitted by 75 contributors to the Banyule Bicycle Route Review.

Key themes emerging and sample comments from this work are summarised in the table below.

Table 1 Themes – What you told us about cycling in Banyule

Theme	Comments	Sample comment
<b>Safe cycling paths/connections</b>	45	'We would ride to school every day if we had better bike lanes and cycling facilities.'
<b>Safe cycling lanes on road</b>	23	'I want my wife and kids to be able to safely ride everywhere without fear of cars or drivers yelling 'get off the road''.
<b>Surface treatment</b>	14	'Trail upgrade needed from Plenty River through to Warringal Park (swamplands). Upgrade connection from Martins Lane to Main Yarra Trail – now gravel.'
<b>Direct and safe routes</b>	12	'A way to ride with kids from Greensborough to Diamond Creek that doesn't turn a 5km trip into a 20km trip would be useful.'
<b>Safe road crossings</b>	6	'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'
<b>Bicycle wayfinding signage</b>	5	'Better signage directing people to bike paths and to designated bike routes. More complete bike lanes on roads without breaks or interruption.'
<b>Remove steep gradients</b>	5	'Some bike paths are ridiculously technical, steep gradients and tight blind bends. Difficult for riding even for experienced cyclists.'
<b>Bike repair /rest stations</b>	3	'Have bike hubs with more bike hoops and repair stations. Also, more water fountains on bike paths.'
<b>Mountain bike trails</b>	3	'Develop cross country mountain bike trails and a decent BMX track linked to bike paths. Normalise for kids that they can have adventures.'
<b>Separate pedestrians and cyclists</b>	3	'High quality off-road routes separated from pedestrians and dog walkers. Priority at crossings with roads and well-shaded.'
<b>Bicycle parking</b>	2	'Provide more parking for bicycles in prominent locations.'
<b>Cycling map</b>	2	'Better maps of the paths with links to other councils so you can create a route all the way to the city.'
<b>Rail line trail</b>	2	'Include a bike path from Greensborough to Eltham via Montmorency with the rail duplication'
<b>Cycling festival</b>	1	'An annual festival to celebrate the joys and benefits of cycling.'
<b>Trail lighting</b>	1	'More safety lights and cameras. Riding to work in darkness is fearsome for females.'
<b>Total</b>	125	

In addition, written correspondence included the following general comments:

- When the Banyule Bicycle Strategy is renewed it needs new proposals. The proposals of the 2010- 2020 strategy 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. Eg. 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.

A copy of the full document 'What you told us about cycling in Banyule – Nov 2018' is available from Council by email request to [enquiries@banyule.vic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@banyule.vic.gov.au).

# Phase Two – Secondary consultation: stakeholder workshop and BikeSpot 2020

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## Stakeholder workshop

Phase two activities included a stakeholder workshop in February 2020. Key themes identified in workshop participants' comments and through written correspondence are listed below.

- Greater connectivity is required to get to, and between, major activity centres, connections to neighbouring councils, La Trobe University and community facilities such as parks, sports fields, schools and hospitals.
- Bicycles and pedestrians should be prioritised in activity centres making it safer and easier for people to access local facilities and services.
- On-road sharrows (share lane markings) and bike images alert drivers to the possible presence of cyclists on local roads but do not do much to calm traffic. More assertive traffic calming measures are needed i.e. speed limit reductions, speed humps, bollards, Copenhagen lanes.
- Signage for pedestrians and cyclists was highlighted regularly by stakeholders as a major issue to be addressed.
- Quality of trail surfaces vary markedly across the municipality; loose gravel is particularly difficult for cyclists.
- The absence of shade trees along key routes is a barrier to summer riding.

**'If Council is serious about their declaration of a climate emergency, a greater commitment to provide both on- and off-road cycling infrastructure is needed. As a community we easily make room for car infrastructure but expect safe cycling lanes to fit around everything else including car parking.'**

- There is a strong demand for increased bicycle parking at schools, activity centres, sporting facilities, parks and railway stations.
- Additional amenities such as drinking fountains, bicycle repair stations, e-bike charging stations, outdoor seats, toilets are necessary along key routes.
- Currently there is no straightforward way to find Information about cycling within Banyule, including trails and the Banyule Local Bicycle Network (LBN) routes. Like the way other councils promote their 'shimmy' routes this can be included on the Banyule website and on printed maps.
- Increased promotion of cycling within the municipality including skills development and road rules education, identification of beginner routes and promotion at schools is required.
- It is also important to address the gender imbalance in cycling within Banyule and to actively engage and encourage under-represented groups to participate.
- Key State government initiatives including creation of 20-minute neighbourhoods, Movement and Place mapping and Strategic Cycling Corridors should be reflected in Council's approach to improving cycling conditions within the municipality.
- There is an ongoing opportunity to advocate for cycling infrastructure to be included within major transport projects such as North East Link Projects (NELP) and the Hurstbridge Railway Line Upgrade.

## BikeSpot 2020

The BikeSpot 2020 project findings confirmed that a lack of safety or feeling unsafe is a major barrier to people riding bicycles. The project found that cyclists, of all confidence levels, find both traffic speeds and lack of separation from traffic highly stressful. 'No bicycle lanes' (18%); 'Dangerous intersection' (16%) and 'Unsafe bicycle lanes' (11%) were the top three categories of unsafe spots nominated overall. 'Traffic speed', 'Too much vehicle traffic' and 'Car dooring' were the categories that attracted the highest ratings of cyclist stress.

Within Banyule, 182 locations were nominated within the municipality, of which nine were considered safe. The top ten locations, all of them nominated as unsafe spots, are shown in Figure 1 below.

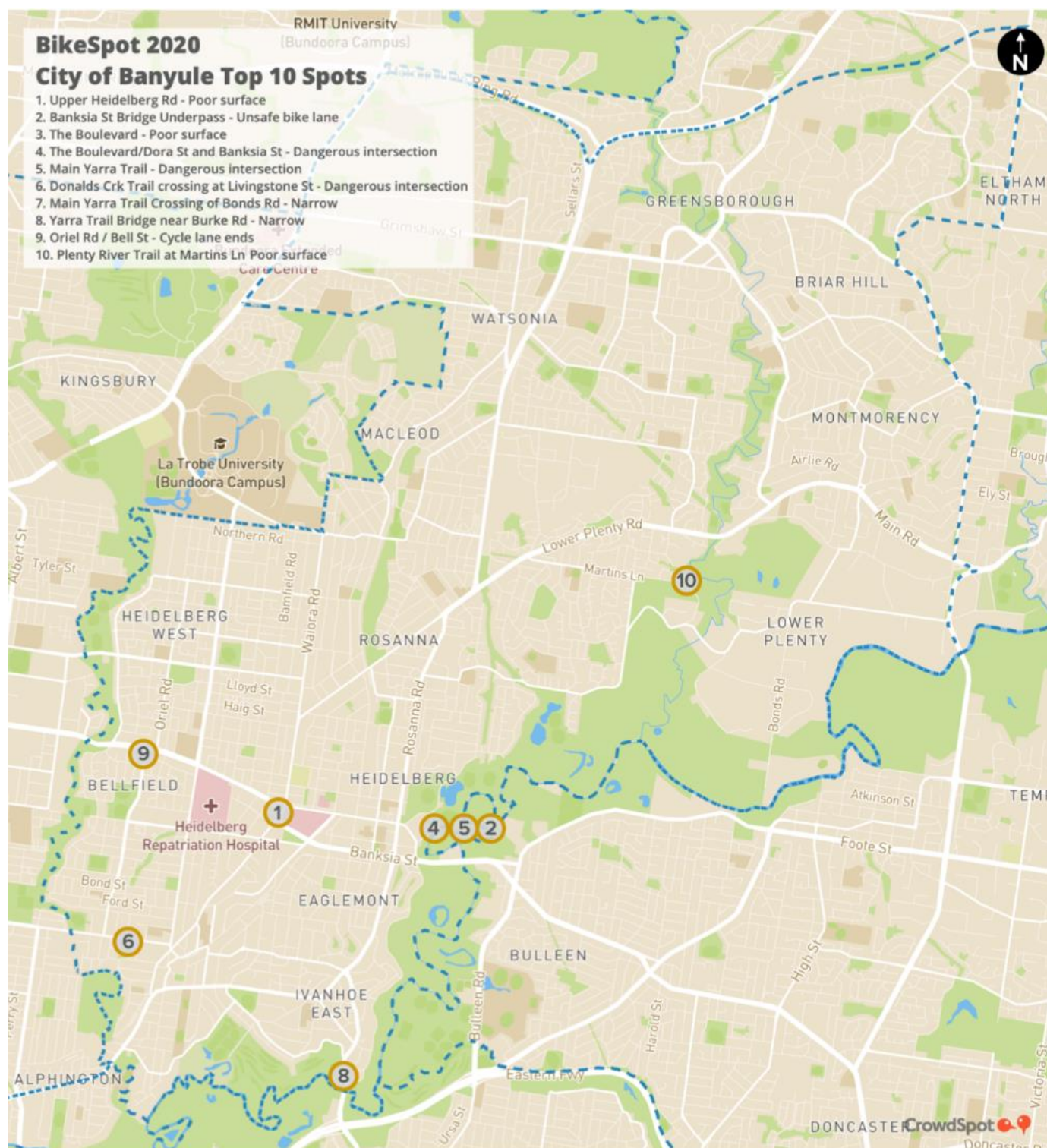


Figure 1 City of Banyule – top ten spots, BikeSpot 2020



The top three categories of unsafe spots were 'Poor surface' (18%); 'Dangerous intersection' (16%) and 'Other unsafe' (16%). That 'Poor surface' rated so highly can be attributed to the municipality's reliance on trail-based shared use paths as the main form of off-road cycling infrastructure. Key comments within this category reflected concern with gravel surfaces, gradients and tree-roots. 'Dangerous intersection', 'No bike lanes', and 'Narrow' were the key categories of unsafe spots that caused the highest levels of stress for Banyule participants.

The full list of categories with sample comments is detailed in the table below.

**Table 2 'Unsafe Spot' comments- BikeSpot**

Category	Spots	Sample comments
<b>Poor surface</b>	32 (18%)	HEIDELBERG, Banksia Street - 'Main Yarra Trail underpass. It's so steep going downhill and such a tight curve I have trouble maneuvering around even when there's no other people. Often end up hopping off the bike to walk down' (Somewhat confident rider, 25-29 yo)
		EAGLEMONT, The Boulevard - 'Could this be the worst paved road in Australia? Seriously, it has to be seen to be believed. It's hard to imagine a worse paved road surface.' (Very confident rider, 40-44 yo)
<b>Dangerous intersection</b>	28 (16%)	ROSANNA, Lower Plenty Road - 'Eastbound on Lower Plenty Road you need to stop in the right lane and wait for a break in traffic to continue onto St James. Very exposed to fast moving cars accelerating from the traffic lights. Eastbound you need to cross a lane of fast-moving traffic coming over a blind crest to get to the right turn.' (Somewhat confident rider, 55-59 yo)
		HEIDELBERG WEST, Oriel Road & Bell Street - 'Bike lane ends, no lane across intersection of Bell, lots of traffic, poor driver behaviour, unsafe road surface (dips) all make riding across the intersection to continue on Oriel feels very unsafe.' (30-34 yo rider)
<b>Other unsafe</b>	28 (16%)	GREENSBOROUGH, Para Road - 'The rail section between Greensborough and Montmorency desperately needs a bicycle and pedestrian path along the railway reserve. Cycling on alternative roads is just not safe or suitable in this area.' (Somewhat confident rider, 40-44 yo)
		GREENSBOROUGH, Plenty River Trail - 'It's a great trail, but as a female travelling on my own, I feel unsafe as that part of the trail is quite isolated from houses particularly where the trail leaves the side of the Ring Road and goes under the bridge.' (Somewhat confident rider, 55-59 yo)

<b>No bicycle lanes</b>	25 (14%)	<p>GREENSBOROUGH, The Circuit - 'There are no bike lanes on this road, and the footpath is too narrow to ride on safely at several points as the barrier between the road and path encroaches significantly. Running into the barrier at any speed would cause great injury. Going slow is difficult because of the steepness of the path. There is no other way to get to the north side of the railway line as you need the underpass.' (Somewhat confident rider, 35-39 yo)</p> <p>HEIDELBERG, The Boulevard - 'Cyclists riding North from the Yarra Flats have no safe access to the pedestrian crossing at Banksia St. A bike lane and bike traffic lights are required to allow cyclists to cross the very busy Banksia St in both directions.' (Very confident rider, 65-69 yo)</p>
<b>Narrow</b>	23 (13%)	<p>HEIDELBERG, Burgundy Street - 'Key shopping precinct, and link road between major roads and routes. Usable road below the Austin Hospital pedestrian bridge narrows drastically to single car width, just as the gradient steepens (riders speed drops) &amp; drivers accelerate uphill.' (Very confident, 35-39 yo)</p> <p>GREENSBOROUGH, Plenty River Drive - 'The path until this point is a wide shared path, at this busy section it is way too narrow.' (Very confident, 35-39 yo)</p>
<b>Cycle lane ends</b>	11 (6%)	<p>IVANHOE, Livingstone Street - 'The bike lane ends well before this intersection. If children then go onto the footpath to try and cross safely it is still unsafe, as the traffic light pole is over a metre away from the area to cross. It's very easy for a child to accidentally drop their bike over the raised gutter and fall onto the road where cars make a sharp turn.' (Very confident rider, 35-39 yo)</p> <p>WATSONIA, Devonshire Road - 'Congested roundabout with no safe cycle access. Cycle lane ends and there is no clear path for cycles to cross from this point to Watsonia station and further across Greensborough Highway.' (Interested but concerned rider, 45-49 yo)</p>
<b>Poor driver behavior</b>	9 (5%)	<p>MACLEOD, Wungun Street - 'Weekly challenge of unsafe car behaviour overtaking bike coming into roundabout - no doubt this is not particular to this street but fairly common everywhere. Bike lane ends and cars race to overtake bike within 10m of roundabout. Evasive action taken a number of times' (Somewhat confident rider, 40-44 yo)</p> <p>HEIDELBERG, Rosanna Road - 'Utes and light commercial vehicles buzz you at speed. No compliance to 1m clear space.' (Very confident rider, 55-59 yo)</p>
<b>Traffic speed</b>	7 (4%)	<p>HEIDELBERG WEST, Bell Street - 'No bike lane and very fast traffic as well as steep road. This and Burgundy Street are our only way to access the train station, and both feel like a life risk!' (Somewhat confident rider, 45-49 yo)</p>

		GREENSBOROUGH, Greenhill Road - 'Cyclists connecting the Greensborough Bypass Trail and Greenhills road must cross busy Diamond Creek Road. Traffic volumes and speed make this hazardous for cyclists.' (Very confident rider, 65-69 yo)
<b>Busy – too much vehicle traffic</b>	6 (3%)	<p>GREENSBOROUGH, Grimshaw Street - 'There is a 950m stretch of main road with no traffic lights. There are 3 bus services running along it, and NEL construction will mean it gets busier. There is no safe way to cross this busy road around McDowell Street especially in peak times. To get to parks, schools and shops from the south means hoping for a break in traffic and running across or going the long way. The footpath is unsafe to use too.' (Somewhat confident rider, 35-39 yo)</p> <p>IVANHOE, Livingstone Street, 'This is the most dangerous point on my commute home. A lot of bikes cross the Darebin Creek bridge and come up Belmont Rd, turning right into Livingstone to access the Oriel Rd bike lane. But from 4pm-6pm, this section of Livingstone is relentlessly busy with heavy traffic at 60kph in both directions.' (Very confident rider, 45-49 yo)</p>
<b>Car dooring</b>	4 (2%)	<p>HEIDELBERG, Burgundy Street - 'Be careful of car doors. Drivers do not check?' (Interested but concerned rider, 40-44 yo)</p> <p>EAST IVANHOE, Lower Heidelberg Road - 'Cars not leaving sufficient room, cars pulling out.' (Very confident rider, 65-69 yo)</p>
<b>Total</b>	173	

Quiet streets and separated infrastructure were the key elements of a positive cyclist experience within Banyule correlating with metropolitan Melbourne overall.

**Table 3 'Safe Spot' comments- BikeSpot**

Category	Spots	Sample comments
<b>Off road path</b>	3 (33%)	<p>ELTHAM, Bolton Street – 'new off-road path towards Grand Boulevard has improved this tricky-to-navigate section'. (Very confident rider, 40-44 yo)</p> <p>HEIDELBERG, River Gum Walk – 'Nice mostly wide path, is a great alternative to Beverley Road and Rosanna Road.' (Very confident rider, 35-39 yo)</p>
<b>Quiet streets</b>	4 (44%)	<p>GREENSBOROUGH, Santon Street – 'Local bike route offers a safe, comfortable ride'. (Somewhat confident rider, 50-54 yo)</p> <p>IVANHOE, Abercorn Avenue - 'Nice back way to bypass Heidelberg Road across the Darebin Creek. Generally, not much traffic and if so well behaved locals.' (Very confident rider, 25-29 yo)</p>
<b>Good driver behaviour</b>	2 (22%)	WATSONIA, Watsonia Road - 'There is not a lot of fast-moving traffic and drivers are very conscious of bike riders'. (Somewhat confident rider, 15-19 yo)

	IVANHOE, Lower Heidelberg Road - Great bike lane up a slow climb, cars turning out onto LHR are generally well aware of cyclists coming up the hill, good visibility (Very confident rider, 35-39 yo).
<b>Total</b>	9

Men submitted the majority of spots within Banyule at 63%, women 29% and 8% preferred not to nominate a gender. This is representative of the overall report and cycling participation generally. Ages varied between the contributors with the greatest activity coming from 25-29 year old and 50-54 year old women and 35-44 and 50-54 year old men. Finally, the majority of spots within Banyule, in line with other regions across Victoria, were submitted by people that described themselves as 'Very confident' cyclists (54%). However, Banyule also a significant number of 'Somewhat confident' cyclist contributors as well (38%).



# Phase Three – Public Exhibition: draft Banyule Bicycle Strategy

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## Shaping Banyule

Consultation material including the draft strategy, results of phase one and two engagement activities and a survey were hosted on the Shaping Banyule website. The survey sought community feedback on the strategy's:

- Overall Direction
- Key identified themes of:
  - Network connectivity;
  - Safe and inclusive design
  - Cycling for all

In all the bicycle strategy engagement site was viewed 956 times by 511 unique visitors. Of these, 25 contributors completed the survey and left feedback. Support for the Overall Direction was strong with 22 positive comments as follows:

- Incremental steps are well chosen.
- The overall direction is great. I'm not sure, however, how some of it will be achieved, particularly safer bike lanes on roadways, as many roads are currently too narrow to service motorised vehicle traffic, particularly around the Olympic Village precinct. This is exacerbated by redevelopment causing increased street parking which is narrowing the roads even further.
- Not enough focus on the opportunities for / potential benefit of electric bikes & scooters, in particular for areas of Banyule with challenging topography.
- Could more clearly identify low-cost / pilot opportunities that are within the scope & authority of council and can be provided in the short term.
- Overall, I think the foci of this plan are good, but it could be fleshed out more.

**‘The focus on linking up the main areas with safe and dedicated riding tracks is spot on. For me to cycle more, I need to be able to get to my kid's school, and the shopping centre. Currently there are only a few bike symbols on the ground, and a lot of cars that rat-race through those same streets. The footpaths are often not wide enough to safely ride on at high foot-traffic times (school pickup) either.’**

- The need for safe, accessible and easy bike parking options is also essential. Making sure that bicycle parking has at least a few big enough spaces for cargo bikes (families may use bigger bikes if the facilities were there to make a trip to the shops easy) is important though. If there is bike parking at Greensborough Plaza, I have not seen signage to it in the 12 years I've been here. Woolworths does not have any parking that I would deem safe enough to ride to with my cargo bike either. You will need to work with businesses to enable riders.
- I am interested in seeing tangible targets and actions that are measurable and implementable. I want to understand what Council's input is to establish timelines, budgets and goals. I want to know when all the linkages will be fixed, the numbers of fix-it bike stations installed each year and when we will see bike lanes or the reduced speed limit trials/
- Very pleased to see 'missing links' are at the top of the agenda. My commute to Austin Hospital takes me on beautiful bike paths until about 1-2km away, and then through treacherous heavy traffic - a huge safety concern. I expect more people would cycle (less traffic!) if only it were safer the whole way.
- >90 pages. hard to get my head around. a couple of thoughts following my ride down the Plenty River trail from Kalparrin Gardens to the Yarra today, and last weekend and today near The Boulevard in Heidelberg:

- The Plenty River trail links a lot of sporting facilities and ovals through Greensborough-Eltham and then on to Heidelberg. On a Sunday with junior footy games on, it's almost impossible to ride past the ovals with spectators, dogs, prams. (and at Greensborough there are new light towers going up in the middle of the path!)

‘It would be great to have a properly made cycle path along the Boulevard (above flood level). Impossible to ride on the dreadful state of that road. and last weekend with the Yarra flooding, we couldn't ride on the Main Yarra Trail. If you want to actually get from Banksia St to Burke Road at reasonable speed, the Main Yarra Trail with walkers and dogs etc is never a good bet.’

Of the 3 contributors that disagreed, their key areas of concern were:

- A focus on cycling for transport is unnecessary in Banyule as most cyclists are recreational riders.
- The draft strategy doesn't include adequate details of any proposed upgrades to the Plenty River Trail.
- Cyclists should be registered and required to use off-road cycle paths where they are available.

Support for the key themes was strong across the majority of participants with comments summarised in the table below.

Table 4 Comments - Phase 3 - Shaping Banyule

Category	Comments
Network connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of connectivity is a real barrier for getting safely around safely by bicycle (2 comments).</li> <li>• Council should prioritise improving network connectivity that is within its control/scope. Yes to ongoing advocacy to State but Council often has influence as to when these elements will be addressed so needs to commit resources to things that can be done now.</li> <li>• Improve cycling connection between Greensborough and Watsonia, existing routes are going to be cut in half by construction of NEL.</li> </ul> <p>‘Living in Heidelberg West there is poor connectivity to areas to the east and west of my area including Northland Shopping Centre and the Darebin Creek trail. I would like to see a safe bicycle route along Southern Road.’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include a bicycle lane along The Boulevard connecting East Ivanhoe to Heidelberg Road (2 comments)</li> <li>• Banyule's Local Bicycle Network routes need more focus – there are some good ‘shimmy’ routes like Darebin's that avoid the main roads.</li> </ul>
Safe and Inclusive design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banyule should adopt Netherlands-level bicycle infrastructure as a standard.</li> <li>• Greater emphasis on safe crossings on busy roads. For example, Upper Heidelberg Rd/Waiora Rd north of Bell Street. Also Grimshaw Street between The Circuit and Greensborough Road.</li> <li>• Advocate for a change in the hierarchy of road users to put pedestrians and cyclists ahead of cars and drivers when planning roads. Separate lanes to make riders feel safer, are essential I feel to getting the community to change our culture, and support the advocacy stated above.</li> </ul>

‘Linking neighbourhood area cycling with walking for families / children (eg. side-shimmy streets, lower speed limits & enhanced pedestrian crossings to encourage kids to walk & ride to school). Improving these suburban networks will also improve overall safety & encourage their parents to allow their children to travel by foot.’

- Bicycle parking around local activity centres is needed and something that Council could implement simply and at low cost relative to major infrastructure projects. How can I be encouraged to ride there if there is nowhere to park when I get there?
- There’s a need to engage with businesses, especially small and medium, about providing bike-riding facilities for employees (especially at big shopping centres like Greensborough Plaza, for example), so that it becomes a viable option. What if Council supported/assisted with planning, for communal bike-riding changerooms and parking, shared between multiple businesses?
- Ensure there are public toilets, rubbish bins and effective lighting available on all shared use paths and through underpasses (3 comments).
- Introduce a shoulder (bike lane) on Banyule Road, Hently Road, Cleveland Avenue, Bonds Road and Rosehill Road.
- Safe and Inclusive Cycling and Cycling for all means we need a network that is not along main roads and / or bike paths that are separated with kerbs. The recommendations are too narrow and will not facilitate cycling for all.

#### Cycling for all

- Championing this is important to ensure that all people get the opportunity to cycle safely, not only those who are very strong or risk averse.
- Banyule’s goal should be to significantly increase the number of cyclists using on-road infrastructure.
- I am an older and inexperienced female cyclist who is lacking in confidence. Bicycle workshops that are run outside of business hours (I still work) would be really appreciated and would make my road use when cycling much safer for me and other road users.

‘It’s not just about training new riders, but also about making it easy for them to continue. What about support for local bike-fixing initiatives, like at CERES? I think it’s mentioned somewhere in the report too, that fix-it stations should be installed, but it needs to be stated in this theme that putting these stations (perhaps like the one I saw at Diamond Creek’s Open Playspace) at regular intervals, so that if people get a flat tyre it’s not a huge deal to fix it up, will help support riders and reduce opportunities for them to opt out because it’s too hard.’

- Develop a fun and engaging ‘Tour of Banyule’ family event connecting all bike paths with check-in points, entertainment and rest-stops along the way.

#### Anything else to be included in this strategy?

- Improved and consistent signage is needed between municipalities including reminders to all users to behave responsibly on shared use paths (2 comments).

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- Greater consideration of the opportunity provided by growth in ownership of e-bikes; including bulk-buy discount purchase opportunities (2 comments).
  - Collaborate with neighbouring Councils to deliver direct routes for commuters across municipal boundaries rather than relying on the State Government (2 comments).
  - Work with neighbouring Councils to improve crossing points between municipalities ie. address safety concerns about lack of visibility and sharp bends in the approach to the Abercorn Avenue footbridge over the Darebin Creek

**‘Need for Council to be pragmatic and focus on improving routes and connections that offer the greatest benefits ie. Improve the intersection of Livingstone, Upper Heidelberg and Waterdale Roads; improve the links through Livingstone Street and Banksia Street.’**

- Rethinking green spaces to be more inclusive of bicycles – including the area around Greensborough War Memorial Park.
  - Greater emphasis within reserves on areas to improve skills and confidence – including jumps and pump tracks.
  - Use of Strava heatmaps as an official data source to track routes and usage of recreational cyclists.
  - Improving footpaths for other wheel-based travel including scooters, wheelchairs, prams etc. - more focus on opportunities that enhance cycling AND enhance other mode options, besides driving.
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## In-person activities

Two drop-in public information sessions at the Council offices in Greensborough and Ivanhoe and pop-up engagement activities on the Darebin Creek Trail, Main Yarra Trail and in the Rosanna Parklands were held across the eight-week period. Unfortunately, two further in-person pop-up sessions on the Plenty River Trail were rescheduled and then had to be abandoned due to the sixth COVID-19 lockdown introduced by the Victorian State Government in late July 2021.

Feedback gathered from these activities highlighted general support with the key themes, objectives and recommendations of the draft Strategy. A summary of the feedback is provided below:

- Very supportive of improvements to Darebin Creek Trail (10 comments).
- Need for separated bicycle infrastructure on busy sections of key trails i.e. Main Yarra Trail (2 comments).
- Need for wider shared paths to accommodate increased use and COVID-19 distancing requirements (3 comments).
- Concern at gravel surfaces and maintenance of some sections of trail network.
- Concern that sections of Plenty River Trail are dangerous with steep gradients, narrow bridges and poorly maintained gravel surfaces (2 comments).
- Concern at proposed alignment of Main Yarra Trail in the vicinity of Banyule Flats.
- Walkers expressing concern about cyclist speed and lack of warning on approach (3 comments).
- Cyclist concern that the public are often unaware that shared paths are different from footpaths and behave inappropriately (4 comments).
- Request for more cycling skills opportunities for school-aged children including support for programs within schools (3 comments).
- Request for support for secure bike parking within schools.



- More toilets, water fountains, fix-it stations along trails (6 comments).
- Support for consistent wayfinding signage across trails (3 comments).
- Support for more wayfinding signage for on-road routes (2 comments).
- More information on on-road routes generally.
- Car dooring is a significant safety concern (4 comments).
- Poor lighting on trails reduces access for female riders in winter as it gets dark early (2 comments).
- Concern at on-road bike lanes ending abruptly before intersections (2 comments).
- Concern at poor road surfaces – Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe.
- Concern at dangerous intersections – Lower Plenty and Waiora Road, Rosanna (2 comments).
- Need for improved cycling connections between activity centres within Banyule.
- More bike parking needed at shopping centres and community facilities.
- Support for more bike parking at Ivanhoe railway station.
- Extension of Heidelberg Road ‘pop-up’ bike lanes needed.
- Cycling lanes to remove parking lanes and not traffic lanes.
- Support for collaboration with other LGAs to deliver projects of mutual benefit – including the Nillumbik Aqueduct Trail and extension to the M80 trail.

## Written feedback

Eight written responses were received during the public exhibition period from neighbouring councils and members of the community. A summary of feedback, addressing key themes, is provided in the table below.

**Table 5 Comments - Phase 3 - Written feedback**

Theme	Comments
<b>Darebin Creek Trail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The recent upgrade of the Darebin Creek Trail is a good example of how an old and sub-standard trail can be improved benefitting many users. (3 comments)</li> <li>• Consistent signage along the full length of the trail is an example of cooperation between multiple Councils to provide uniform and useful wayfinding signage that should be copied across other trails.</li> <li>• A crossing of the Darebin Creek is necessary in the vicinity of Southern Road to facilitate access to Northland SC.</li> <li>• Feeder link to the trail is necessary north of Bell Street to facilitate safe access south to Thornbury High School for students living within Banyule.</li> <li>• A crossing of the Darebin Creek south of Heidelberg Road is needed to allow Ivanhoe residents to access the Darebin Creek Trail and Alphington.</li> <li>• A trail extension is necessary on eastern side of Darebin Creek between Livingstone Street and Banksia Street.</li> </ul>
<b>E-Bikes</b>	E-bikes can be useful mobility tools for older people.
<b>Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider working with Yarra Plenty Regional Libraries to promote bicycle-themed events.</li> <li>• Darebin CC runs a program of regular activities promoted by an e-newsletter that also keeps the community updated on cycling news and events. This is an ongoing program embedded within the culture of the municipality and includes a monthly bicycle check event and low cost/subsidised bike skills workshops.</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would like to see pop-up bike lanes on Heidelberg Road extended into Banyule. Also see this type of trial occur at other locations within Banyule.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended use of bicycle hoops with crossbar as these provide added stability for bicycles.</li> <li>• Other LGAs (ie Boroondara) have bicycle repair stations located at leisure centres and libraries. They also include maps on their website showing locations of these and bike parking.</li> <li>• Bike Counters - would highly recommend a trail counter be installed within Banyule sections of all key trails – Main Yarra, Darebin Creek and Plenty River.</li> </ul>
<b>Main Yarra Trail – bridge crossings</b>	<p>In 2019 Manningham CC endorsed the 'Yarra River Corridor Concept Plan' which outlines the municipal vision for the future use of passive and organised recreational open space along the river corridor from the Eastern Freeway in Bulleen to Finns Reserve in Templestowe Lower.</p> <p>The concept plan identifies three proposed SUP bridge crossings over the Yarra River at Birrarung, Bulleen and Banksia Parks which will significantly enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between Banyule and Manningham. These three crossings feature in the draft Banyule Bicycle Strategy however since the draft's development a commitment has been secured via the NELP to deliver the Banksia Park crossing.</p> <p>It is recommended that Banyule and Manningham jointly prioritise advocacy seeking a commitment to deliver the remaining Birrarung and Bulleen Park bridges. (2 comments)</p>
<b>Maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trail maintenance is a significant consideration for Council and Government agencies but is underfunded and under resourced by all. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ The Main Yarra Trail is in very poor condition and the Banksia Street underpass is one of the worst hazards anywhere in Melbourne. The upgrade of this trail, apart from the Banyule concrete sections, needs to be prioritised.</li> <li>◦ The Plenty River Trail (joint responsibility with Parks Victoria) is also in very poor condition in many sections between the Main Yarra Trail and Greensborough Bypass. The sections from Lower Plenty Rd to just south of Palara Crt and north of Willinda Park to Whatmough Park are in the worst condition.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The gravel section from the Main Yarra Trail to Martins Lane (maintained by Parks Victoria) is in a poor state. Contains sections that are difficult and dangerous because of very steep inclines, deep ruts and accumulations of loose gravel. Needs to be replaced with a new and level connection and is well maintained (2 comments).</li> </ul>
<b>Regional connections</b>	<p>Once better connections between Banyule and Manningham Trails are built (3 bridges across the Yarra) consistent wayfinding signs, maps, etc should be implemented and would be great for the Northern Region and Eastern Region Councils to work together on this.</p>
<b>Schools</b>	<p>Specific programs supporting active transport to schools have been successful in other LGAs. These include the Octopus Schools program (Darebin) and school holiday activities including workshops helping older children to transition from riding on the footpath to riding on the road.</p>
<b>Shared use paths (SUPs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is ongoing concern at conflict on shared use paths attributed to a lack of awareness or concern for others. This has intensified during the COVID-19 lockdowns with usage of these spaces increasing markedly.</li> <li>• Shared use paths are unsuitable for cycling with increases in foot traffic. Would like to see dedicated and safe (separated) on-road bicycle lanes introduced in preference to SUPs.</li> </ul>



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**Trail requests**

- There is a need for a new trail from Bonds Rd across the Plenty River and joining Plenty River trail at Martins Lane utilising the Melbourne Water pipe track. This would be a useful and safe link for residents in Lower Plenty to access the full trail network.
  - Prioritise an off-road connection between M80 trail and Plenty River trail.
  - Collaborate with Nillumbik Shire Council on the development and extension of the Aqueduct trail from the Diamond Creek Trail to the M80 Ring Road trail via Pipeline Track in Plenty Gorge Park.
  - Pave a section of The Boulevard from Banksia Street to Bourke Road to create a separate dedicated bicycle route, leaving the balance of the road in its current poor state of repair. The Boulevard is wider than the Main Yarra Trail along this stretch and can accommodate both modes, creating a direct and safe route for commuter cyclists without increasing car use of this space.
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# Conclusion

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The Banyule Bicycle Strategy has been developed to guide Banyule becoming a municipality that:

- Enhances the natural environment and liveability of our places by supporting cycling as a key form of zero-emission transport.
- Implements a network of safe, convenient and accessible cycling routes with linkages to other transport modes and key destinations.
- Embraces the health, social, economic and environmental benefits of cycling.
- Encourages and promotes a cycling culture for all ages and abilities.

The community was invited to provide feedback on the draft Banyule Bicycle Strategy through both online and face-to-face methods. During this time approximately 470 pieces of individual feedback were received. These responses have been analysed and it has been found that there is a consistency in the overall feedback.

There has been positive support for the draft Bicycle Strategy with overall support for the direction and key themes of the Strategy. Positive feedback was obtained in relation to the Improvements recently completed on the Darebin Creek trail and extent of the recreational shared use path network within the municipality.

However, the community agrees that there is significant work to be done to achieve a safe and comfortable cycling environment for all, including beginners, women and those that consider themselves 'interested but concerned' cyclists. Most contentious issues revolve around the maintenance of the trail network and the provision of safe and continuous on-road bicycle infrastructure and safe crossing points.

Other issues raised by community members include the need for improved wayfinding and information provision, increased bicycle parking and amenities and support for cycling education and events.

This feedback will inform the development of the final Banyule Bicycle Strategy and action plan.