

Submission to Yarra Council - 21 March 2017
Bike Infrastructure Funding

As a group which has made submissions re bike infrastructure to Council over many years, and particularly at budget time, YCAN is really excited about the possibility that the Victorian Government's ATV plan may assist Yarra in developing many of the policies and plans which seem to have disappeared into filing cabinets.

For YCAN the big issue is always what will Council do to reduce carbon emissions in the municipality? Transport accounts for 16% of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions, light vehicles are 10% of that. Thus reducing the number of vehicles on Yarra's roads is something Council can do, and has done – with a certain degree of success – in the past. Yarra has prided itself on being Australia's number 1 bike city, and the results of the count on March 7 certainly demonstrate that huge numbers of cyclists ride in and across Yarra daily. Some 17% of all vehicles going into Melb between 7 and 10am are bikes, many using Yarra's bike paths.

However while this great number of cyclists is excellent for the environment, it is also a cause of friction – car drivers vs cyclists, cyclists vs other cyclists, cyclists vs pedestrians etc. The infrastructure is just not good enough! The recent death of a young woman in the inner west highlights the dangers for cyclists. As a cautious, older, female cyclist, I feel unsafe on all bar bike paths/shared paths, and very quiet roads. Even on shared paths like the busy Capital City Trail I often feel out of place because of the number of faster, more confident riders, though I appreciate their need for safe cycling as well. Separated cycle paths would encourage me to ride further and more often – rather than resorting to the car as I sometimes do if I feel there is no safe bike access.

YCAN strongly urges Council to explore all possibilities with the state government (short of naked bike rides perhaps!) to achieve the maximum available funding to allow much-needed bike infrastructure to proceed, and reduce both vehicle emissions and danger to cyclists and pedestrians.

Kerry Echberg