



Yarra Climate Action Now
42 Spensley St, Clifton Hill 3068
info@ycan.org.au www.ycan.org.au

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YCAN thanks Council for the opportunity for input into the Budget. We commend the Council on its continued commitment to environmental sustainability and to the reduction of its environmental footprint.

1. Active Transport/Bicycle Infrastructure

YCAN is concerned that in regards to Bicycle Infrastructure and Active Transport, there are numerous gaps between stated aims and concrete commitments. Looking at the **Draft Budget Strategic Objectives** we note that:

- Objectives 1,3,4 and 6 call for a **Healthy, Sustainable, Liveable Connected Yarra**. In particular we note:
Objective 4, A Liveable Yarra, which aims for “an environmentally sustainable” municipality, and
Objective 6, A Connected Yarra, which aims to provide for residents a “fulfilling life without need for a car”.
- However, we are concerned that of these 4 Strategic Objectives, only Number 6 has any mention of cycling infrastructure. It appear pretty obvious that all of these objectives require a cleaner Yarra, with reduced greenhouse emissions, and scope for safe and comfortable exercise in well planned, accessible and designated locations throughout not just this municipality, but connecting to the surrounding ones as well.
- Providing and upgrading facilities such as the Leisure Centres is necessary, but physical and mental health and well-being can also be achieved by giving access to safe pathways for commuting, getting kids to school, shopping etc. Encouraging people to leave their cars at home for at least some of these purposes would help Yarra achieve the above objectives.
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Strategic Objective 6 - A Connected Yarra;

- It is here that the urgency of bike infrastructure is addressed and it is terrific to see the emphasis on partnerships with VicRoads , and advocacy for public transport.
- While supporting the completion of Wellington St bike lane, it is concerning that there is no new major initiative for cycling in Yarra listed. Initiatives such as school safety, pedestrian provisions will help cyclists, but that is not their primary focus.
- High priority is given to the LATM process, often related to government Black Spot programs and funding. Design and implementation are traditionally car-focused, and must comply with government standards, which may not be best suited to local

heritage and active transport requirements. Some results are positively hazardous for cyclists, requiring them to leave bike lanes to merge with cars around outstands, before being able to return to the bike lane. As mentioned earlier, YCAN considers that Bike Infrastructure should be a priority, not an afterthought in planning road works, which are such a huge portion of the budget. It is sobering to read that Victoria's percentage of cycle funding in 2015-6 was 0.9% of the total. The UN recommends 20% should be dedicated to active transport!

2. Waste Minimisation Strategy 2018-2022

YCAN members are very pleased to see the Proudly Plastic Free Campaign has been included in the draft Waste Minimisation Strategy 2018–2022. In our petition, supported by 300 signatures, YCAN proposed that Council introduce a campaign to encourage food outlets in Yarra to stop using single-use plastics such as bags, food containers and straws. The campaign would require publicity through Council's newsletters and posters at Council buildings. Those food outlets that join the campaign would be provided with signage to indicate they are Proudly Plastic Free.

YCAN stands ready to support such a campaign, and rally community members to assist. We note that there is a suggested budget, but no actual allocation. The suggested funding is \$10,000. This is not a large sum, but the campaign has a huge potential to reduce the amount of plastic waste in the City of Yarra, and to encourage other municipalities to start their own campaigns.

YCAN's Budget Requests

1. Active Transport and Bicycle Infrastructure

YCAN appreciates Yarra's efforts, which have made Yarra a municipality with a high percentage of cycling trips, but wants to see higher aims and achievements for safe and easy active transport. For this to happen, it is essential that Yarra develops a new 4 year Bicycle Infrastructure Strategy Plan.

- For a Council which proclaims its commitment to creating a municipality where residents can live "a fulfilling life without the need for a car", this draft budget seems to be lacking in necessary funding and long term planning.
- Many of the proposals in the 2010-15 Strategy have not been delivered. While the Refresh aims to deliver some of them over the next 5 years, YCAN thinks it is essential to develop a new, thorough 4 year Bicycle Strategy, particularly with the ongoing and increasing emphasis on huge road infrastructure from both sides of State Parliament.
- The Yarra bicycle network should be an ongoing work-in-progress that needs to keep in step with population growth, if we are going to keep people out of cars.
- It should receive 20% of transport funds every year as per UN recommendations.
- There needs to be an assessment of the existing routes to see how/if they are working. And to see if there are any areas that need a bike route that don't have one, and that the existing routes link to other Yarra routes and to adjacent municipalities.
- It also needs to integrate with all traffic works rather than be treated as an add on.
- We support all the recommendations that the BAC has made.
- We understand that the completion of the Wellington street bike lane will be the focus in the next financial year. That gives Council a year to plan an excellent new/continuing strategy!

- With funding always being a big stumbling block for bike infrastructure, we encourage Council to continue to push state government for assistance, particularly regarding the trumpeted Active Transport Victoria, which seems to be somewhat inactive.
- Recruitment and retention of cyclists is an obviously desirable aim of the bike strategy. However current programs such as Ride to Work, school programs etc, need more infrastructure to be successful: safe, secure parking is woefully inadequate; line-marking has often worn off leading to confusion; too many designated bike routes have to mix it with cars reversing from angle parking; turning is dangerous without priority for cyclists.
- 30kmh speed limit trials should be initiated and quickly become permanent in local streets.

YCAN would love to see active travel become normalised as an integral part of transport planning, and would also like to see the funding broken down into clearly defined cycling and pedestrian budgets. It is difficult when studying the Draft Budget to actually ascertain bike spending when cycling and walking seem to be bundled into general road and footpath projects.,

2. Waste Minimisation Strategy

- We call on Council to provide the budget to get this campaign up and running in the 2018-19 budget cycle, rather than waiting a year to get it started

Kerry Echberg (Convenor)
on behalf of YCAN.