



Maribyrnong Council

River Ward

Candidate, River Ward – Chay Granger

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views and provide a platform for all the candidates.

The focus of my campaign in Maribyrnong River Ward is to aggressively pursue transparency and accountability measures, provide rate relief, reduce wasteful spending through independent financial auditing and reviews, reduce project waste, and maintain service levels without privatising the whole shebang.

I'll start by saying I'm a long time bike user. Some of my favourite circuits include a loop up Maribyrnong River, up Steele Cr and around Essendon airport, then back down Moonee Ponds creek. Up until recently I was a daily bike commuter from the West into the city, so I certainly have stacks of ideas about bike infrastructure and safety. It's a topic dear to my heart. I'm also a long term member of Bicycle Network Victoria and they have some great policy initiatives

<https://www.bicyclenetwork.com.au/our-campaigns/>

I'd encourage bike lovers and community minded people to join the group.

I'd like to touch on some of the general policies promoted by Bicycle Victoria and my position.

30 km/h speed limits on local roads - YES

End of trip facilities and bike parking - YES

Trials of parklets, pop-up bike lanes or other progressive measures - YES

Accessible, safe and appealing bicycle links to employment, school and local shops - YES

Raise the age of safe footpath riding - YES

In terms of safe bicycle riding routes in our municipality Ballarat Rd rates as a high safety concern, as does Williamstown Rd, and Geelong Rd. There are limited riding options currently available and they require creative and unorthodox solutions to solve these long standing problems. I'd strongly support collaborating with advocacy groups to tackle these issues, and also make strong entreaties to State Government to make project solutions cost neutral for council.

A bike commute from the West into the city usually involves two pinch points which need review. The Arden St bridge over Moonee Ponds creek takes heavy bicycle traffic and is one of the worst pieces of bike infrastructure that I'm familiar with. It's a complete shocker for rider safety. The bridge services commuters that are outside of the municipality to the West, so there is less political motivation to make changes within that council. If elected I would be looking at how to better



coordinate with other councils which service our community with their infrastructure, and create synergies with other councils to build a better network.

The other pinch point for Westie bicycle riders is the road crossing over Footscray Rd near the big wheel. The Capital City trail functions great along Moonee Ponds Creek with the multiple road underpasses, but just stops short at Footscray Rd. While not as bad as the Arden St bridge, the intersection is already at capacity, is in a dangerous location at the downslope of a bridge with large vehicle flows, and often overflowing with bicycles on the pedestrian island waiting to cross the road during peak times. The West Gate Tunnel project comes just short of solving the problem. The solution is obvious with an underpass at Footscray Rd to complete the seamless Capital City trail. I'd encourage State Government to review this oversight, and aim to get advocacy groups onboard.

During Covid restrictions there has been a fantastic and amazing explosion of public users in our green space. One of the main pedestrian and bicycle corridors in our local area runs along Maribyrnong River. We are now at the point where large sections of the river path are over loved and over crowded, with compromised safety for walkers, runners and riders. It's the kind of problem that I'm proud we have. I'd support a review of the usage, but as a regular user of the space the solution is clear to me. We need more pathway access along this overburden stretch of river, also better signage for bicycle users about the right of way for pedestrians and bicycles (ie pedestrians have right of way over bicycles, stick to the left, dogs on leads kept within the lane). Again, I'd strongly support collaborating with advocacy groups to bring solutions to the table, and also make strong entreaties to the State Government to make project solutions cost neutral for council.

Within our village retail areas we have seen the development of bike lanes and infrastructure over the last few years. Certainly our area in the West suffers from long term legacy issues with very minimal historical investment in a gamut of infrastructure. I would be happy to continue the good work that the council has been initiating with bicycle infrastructure, and also coordinating with bicycle advocacy to better craft solutions.

And finally, the hot button topic of helmets. My position on bike helmets is to keep them mandatory. Not everyone's cup of tea I know, and I'm keeping an open mind to hear the counter points. Bicycle users have a strong case to be made against bicycle registration, as opposed to car users who pay a rego and TAC premium. Bicycle users don't pay a TAC premium even though we are covered by it on the roads, so I believe the compromise for avoiding TAC fees is that we take extra safety precautions and wear helmets even when it's abundantly safe. Allowing unhelmeted bicycle riders very much weakens our case for free TAC cover. As any one who has ridden a bicycle for a few years knows, accidents can and will happen on a bicycle, with or without a helmet. The example below shows why TAC cover is important for bicycle riders -

<https://www.tac.vic.gov.au/about-the-tac/media-room/news-and-events/2018/cyclists-and-all-victorians-to-benefit-from-tac-changes>



Yarraville Ward

Candidate, Yarraville Ward - Simon Crawford

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If elected, how will you support making it easier for people to walk and ride in Maribyrnong?

I led on the development of Council's bike strategy directing the creation of 16kms of separated bike paths over the next 10 years. As Chair of the Maribyrnong Active Transport Advisory Committee, if re-elected, I will ensure it is fully funded and implemented.

When you go out on your bike, where is your favourite place to ride?

I like to ride along the Maribyrnong River, it's a beautiful ride on a Sunday afternoon with the kids. Once the defense site has been developed this path will go all the way from Brimbank to Hobsons Bay.

Are you satisfied with the progress being made with your council's bike strategy?

Our strategy is new but we are already implementing it. We have just built our second stretch of separated bike paths with many more to come. We have also lowered local street speed limits to 40kph with traffic management to ensure the speed is followed.

Please contact me if you want to know more or have ideas for how cycling can be further improved in Maribyrnong.