

BOROONDARA

Bicycle Users Group

The Hon Josh Frydenberg
Member for Kooyong
12 October 2011

Dear Mr Frydenberg

Cycling Infrastructure Needed in Boroondara

On behalf of the Boroondara Bicycle Users Group (BBUG) I would like to thank you for the community forum which you organised recently but which unfortunately none of our members was able to attend.

We also congratulate you on your speech to the Parliament applauding Cadel Evans for his win in the Tour de France. Like you we are very gratified by his achievement.

Cycling is a wonderful sport, but it is also a very practical form of transport. Inducing people to use bikes more and cars less can make an important contribution to the solution of many of our modern day problems: climate change, rising oil prices, traffic congestion and obesity just to name the most obvious. The key to encouraging more people to ride more often is improved cycling infrastructure.

The Warrigal Rd underpass in Ashburton which was opened recently is a wonderful testament to what can be achieved in this regard when state and federal MPs from both sides of politics work together with local councils.

I would like to alert you to some other opportunities for major improvements to cycling infrastructure in the City of Boroondara, much of which you represent in the Federal Parliament.

Firstly, Boroondara Council, at the suggestion of BBUG, have been in communication with VicRoads to explore the possibility of re-routing the Yarra Trail where it runs between Kew Golf Club and the Eastern Freeway (Melway 45 G2). At present the path rises steeply to cross Belford Rd. Were it to run alongside the freeway here, at freeway level, and pass under Belford Rd this would solve a number of problems. It would eliminate a very steep and off-putting climb in both directions, and three potentially dangerous road crossings. It would also solve the problem of inexperienced cyclists speeding down into Willsmere Park and endangering themselves and other path users. VicRoads have already conducted a feasibility study looking at two possible options for an underpass at Belford Rd, but it seems that they do not currently have the funds to proceed further.

You are probably already aware of the project to link the Darebin Creek Trail to the Yarra Trail via Willsmere Park. Planning for this is already well advanced but the State Government has not as yet committed to funding the last and most expensive stage, from Sparks Reserve in Ivanhoe to Willsmere Park in Kew.

Another problem section of the Yarra Trail is the section between the Chandler Hwy and the Pipe Bridge further downstream. At the Chandler Hwy cyclists have the options of dismounting and hauling their bikes up or down several flights of stairs to pass under the road or crossing it at grade either without lights, which though dangerous is the popular choice, or travelling some distance from the trail and waiting for two separate light changes. The solution to this problem is an underpass under the Chandler Hwy at a higher level than the existing one. The path on the downstream side of the Chandler Hwy is also in need of re-routing to eliminate the dangerously steep link to the Pipe Bridge. Boroondara Council and Parks Victoria have clear ideas of what needs to be done here, but funding is the missing ingredient.

Moving further south there is a real need for an east-west cycle route through the centre of Boroondara. Many cyclists are risking death or serious injury riding on busy roads such as Burwood Rd as there is no real alternative for them. Such a route could use the railway easement for at least some sections. Like the others detailed above this will be a relatively expensive project.

For more details of these issues including maps refer to the BBUG web site at <http://boroondarabug.org/wiki/Campaigns>

All of these projects will require support, including funding, from either the state or federal government or possibly both. We urge you to use any opportunity available to you to press the federal government to provide funding to assist with these projects.

Yours sincerely

Julia Blunden, on behalf of the Boroondara Bicycle Users Group

Cc The Hon Andrew McKintosh, MLA Kew

The Hon Ted Baillieu, MLA Hawthorn

The Hon Robert Clark, MLA Burwood

Jim Hondrakis, Coordinator Transport Management, City of Boroondara