*In reply please quote: D12/52268 – AM216-12*

*Contact: Heidi Marfurt on 9205 5734*

23 July 2012

The Hon. Terry Mulder MLA

Minister for Transport

Level 16

121 Exhibition Street

MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Minister

**Funding for the VicRoads Bicycle Program and the Metropolitan Trail Network**

At its meeting of 26 June 2012, Council resolved to write to you about Yarra’s concerns with the failure of the State Government to allocate adequate funding to the VicRoads Bicycle Program and the Metropolitan Trail Network, and to request a meeting with you about these concerns.

Cycling as a transport mode has grown dramatically over recent years, and Council’s 2009 Bicycle Strategy reflects the importance of this transport mode by identifying strategic bicycle routes for which Council has been prepared to fund improvement and upgrade.

As more and more commuters choose to travel to the city by this mode of transport, it is important that they have high standard facilities on which to travel. Over the last few years Council has been pleased to see the efforts made by VicRoads to improve cycling facilities within Yarra. This has been considered as complementary to our own funding program, and has meant that routes such as Heidelberg Road and Langridge Street, which would not have otherwise have been improved in this time frame, are now encouraging more people to shift transport mode to cycling.

It is with considerable disappointment that Council and its Bicycle Advisory Committee noted the change in the Government’s funding approach in the state’s 2012/13 budget, effectively postponing all such on-road projects in Yarra. Priority projects should be where cyclists want to travel today, not where they might travel in the future.

VicRoads own data demonstrates that car travel into the CBD has not grown over recent years, and there is a limit to how far people are prepared to walk. This means that cycling and public transport are the modes to provide the additional trips for these workers. Failure to fund cycling (and public transport) will prevent the City from achieving its employment potential. There is little point in encouraging development if transport to those developments is constrained.

The Mayor, the Chair of the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) and members of BAC would like to meet with you at the earliest opportunity to discuss these issues. Please contact Ms Barbara Higgins of the Mayor and Councillors Office on 9205 5055 to arrange a suitable time.

I look forward to your timely response to this important issue.

Yours sincerely

**Cr Geoff Barbour**

**MAYOR**

* cc: Yarra Councillors
  + Ms Vijaya [Vaidyanath, CEO Yarra Council](http://intranet.yarra.int/mysite/Person.aspx?accountname=yarra\VaidyanV)

The Hon Richard Wynne, State Member for Richmond

Ms Jennifer Kanis State member for Melbourne

Mr Adam Bandt, Federal Member for Melbourne