

Candidate Statement – Paul Baker

I have been riding for as long as I can remember and it is an integral part of my life, as I:

- rode to school and delivering papers before/after school (as a kid, and now I ride with my own two kids),
- have commuted to work on and off for 27 years,
- raced in triathlons in my 20's,
- enjoy all 43 of the rail trails around Victoria, and
- bike packing adventures which include aspirations to do the Hunt1000, Tassie Trail, and the Grand Divide.

After being involved in a near fatal hit-and-run in my early 20's riding on St Kilda Road to work, I learnt about Bicycle Victoria the hard way (after the accident) and have been a member ever since. I lobbied my local council to create a bike lane on a main road near my house; particularly as the road was not compliant to VicRoads design guidelines, and it was rectified within days of my request.

I ride daily on a variety of bikes; commuting on eBikes, mountain biking on rail trails/MTB parks, carving up the snow/sand on Fatbikes, and I especially love riding with friends and kids. In the coming years I aspire to add a few more bikes to my collection; an eCargo bike so I can set aside my Electric Vehicle, a Gravel Bike for more adventure riding and a Penny Farthing for historic rides/races/adventures.

At the start of 2023 I set out to ride all of the Victorian Rail Trails, and along the way I was joined by cycling clubs, individuals and friend. I started the #ComeRailTrailWithMe tag to encourage more riders to not only join me, but to ride the trails less known. The feedback on my socials Paul_AT_Pedal_Effects has been overwhelming.

Safety for cycling is important for me, my previous company I was the Bicycle User Group Leader and we had rebated BN membership added as an employee benefit and I am working with my current management on our End of Trip Facilities. When we moved to the CBD in 2022 I created GoPro videos for staff travelling through the CBD, showcasing the "safer" ways to get through the city.

I have experience working with Federal/State/Local governments on environmental advocacy and environmental civil design projects. If I was elected to the board, the skills I would bring with me are: my 27 years of civil design experience, strategic planning, out of the box ideas and knowledge and abilities to implement change management.

I am most passionate about working on;

- the strategic plans for increasing safe cycle infrastructure over the next 10 to 30 years;
- creating greater community awareness of cycling and its benefits,
- improving access to current and future infrastructure;
- encouraging more schools to participate in Ride2School;
- proposing events to encourage more cycling across the states
- and work on improving legislation to protect cyclists.