



MARRONDAH BICYCLE NETWORK ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT

MARRONDAH BICYCLE NETWORK ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	MAROONDAH CYCLING NETWORK.....	1
2.1	Existing Cycling Infrastructure.....	1
2.2	Current Cycling Routes.....	2
2.2.1	Principal Bicycle Network (PBN).....	2
2.2.2	Strategic Cycling Corridors (SCC).....	2
2.3	Crash Statistics.....	3
3	COMMUNITY CONSULTATION	6
3.1	Your Say Marondah.....	6
3.1.1	Survey Responses.....	6
	Safe Spots.....	7
	Unsafe Spots.....	8
3.1.2	Pinpoint Map Responses.....	9
3.2	Intercept Surveys.....	9
3.3	Stakeholder Consultation.....	10
3.3.1	Maroondah Advisory Committees.....	10
4	NEXT STEPS	12

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Existing bicycle route infrastructure.....	1
Figure 2	Principal Bicycle Network.....	2
Figure 3	Strategic Cycling Corridor.....	3
Figure 4	Crash statistics map.....	4
Figure 5	Survey responses gender identification.....	6
Figure 6	Survey responses cycling ability.....	7
Figure 7	Survey responses safe spot features.....	7
Figure 8	Survey responses unsafe spot concerns.....	8
Figure 9	Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee priority spread.....	10
Figure 10	Maroondah Community Liveability and Safety Committee priority spread.....	11
Figure 11	Committee priority components.....	11

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Crash by DCA code.....	4
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1 INTRODUCTION

SALT has been engaged by Maroondah City Council to undertake a review of the Maroondah Bicycle Network and propose a new network plan to guide future improvement projects. The existing Bicycle Network Plan formed part of the Bicycle Network Strategy from 2004. This has now become outdated, respective of the evolution of legislation, guidelines and policies regarding cycling along with trends in travel behaviour such as due to the effects of COVID-19.

This initial report outlines the existing context of cycling in the Maroondah municipality and summarises the findings of community consultation, undertaken to understand the current issues and opportunities for improvement in the cycling network. This will inform the development of the updated Maroondah Bicycle Network Plan and action plan to be undertaken in the following stages.

In the preparation of this report, the following has been undertaken:

- The existing Maroondah Bicycle Network (2004) and other relevant background material has been reviewed;
- Consultation with key stakeholders has taken place;
- Various forms of community consultation have taken place;
- Consultation data has been reviewed and analysed; and
- Key existing issues and opportunities have been identified.

The following sets out SALT's findings.

2 MAROONDAH CYCLING NETWORK

2.1 EXISTING CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing cycling infrastructure includes on-road and off-road bike lanes and paths, bicycle parking and repair stations and wayfinding signage.

In general, Maroondah provides a good network of on- and off-road cycling paths across the municipality, as seen in **Figure 1**. Existing infrastructure is most focussed on the activity centres and south-western section of the municipality, with some missing connections or lack of services toward the north and northeast.

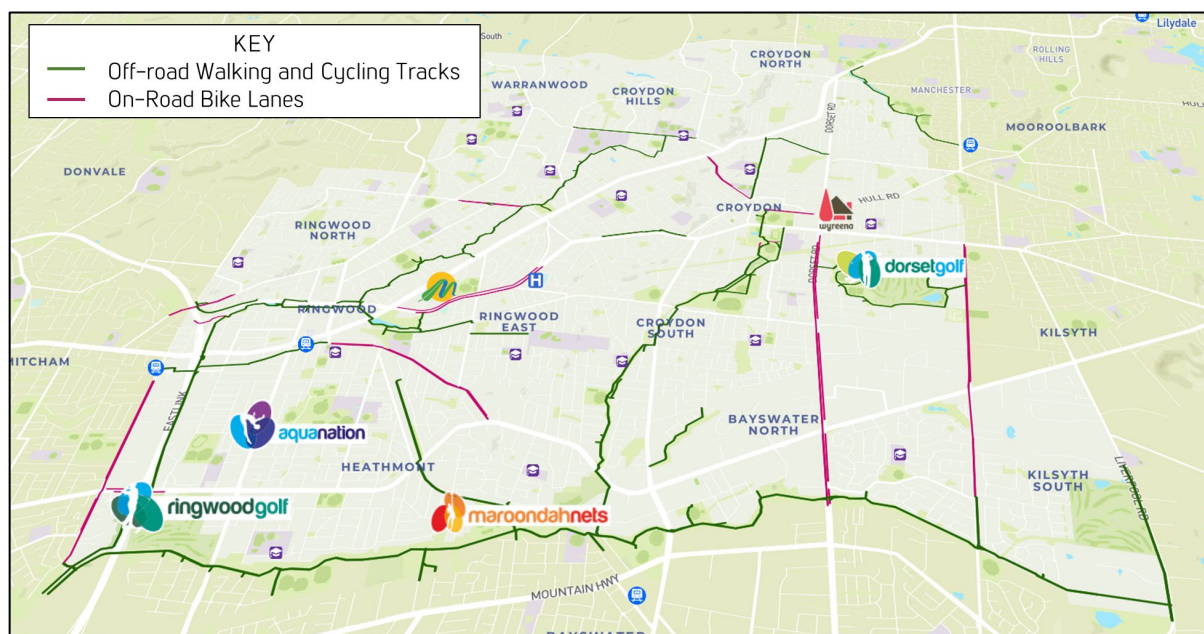


Figure 1 Existing bicycle route infrastructure

Off-road cycling infrastructure includes Eastlink Trail, Dandenong Creek Trail, Heathmont Rail Trail, Tarralla Creek Trail and Mullum Mullum Creek Trail.

On-road bike lanes are currently provided along segments of roads including Heatherdale Road, Bedford Road,

2.2 CURRENT CYCLING ROUTES

2.2.1 PRINCIPAL BICYCLE NETWORK (PBN)

The PBN is a network of existing and proposed bicycle routes that provide access to key destinations across metropolitan Melbourne. It was developed by VicRoads for the purpose of guiding investment in bicycle facilities that support cycling for transport.

The Maroondah PBN includes a majority of the arterial road network, along with off-road trails, as shown in Figure 2.

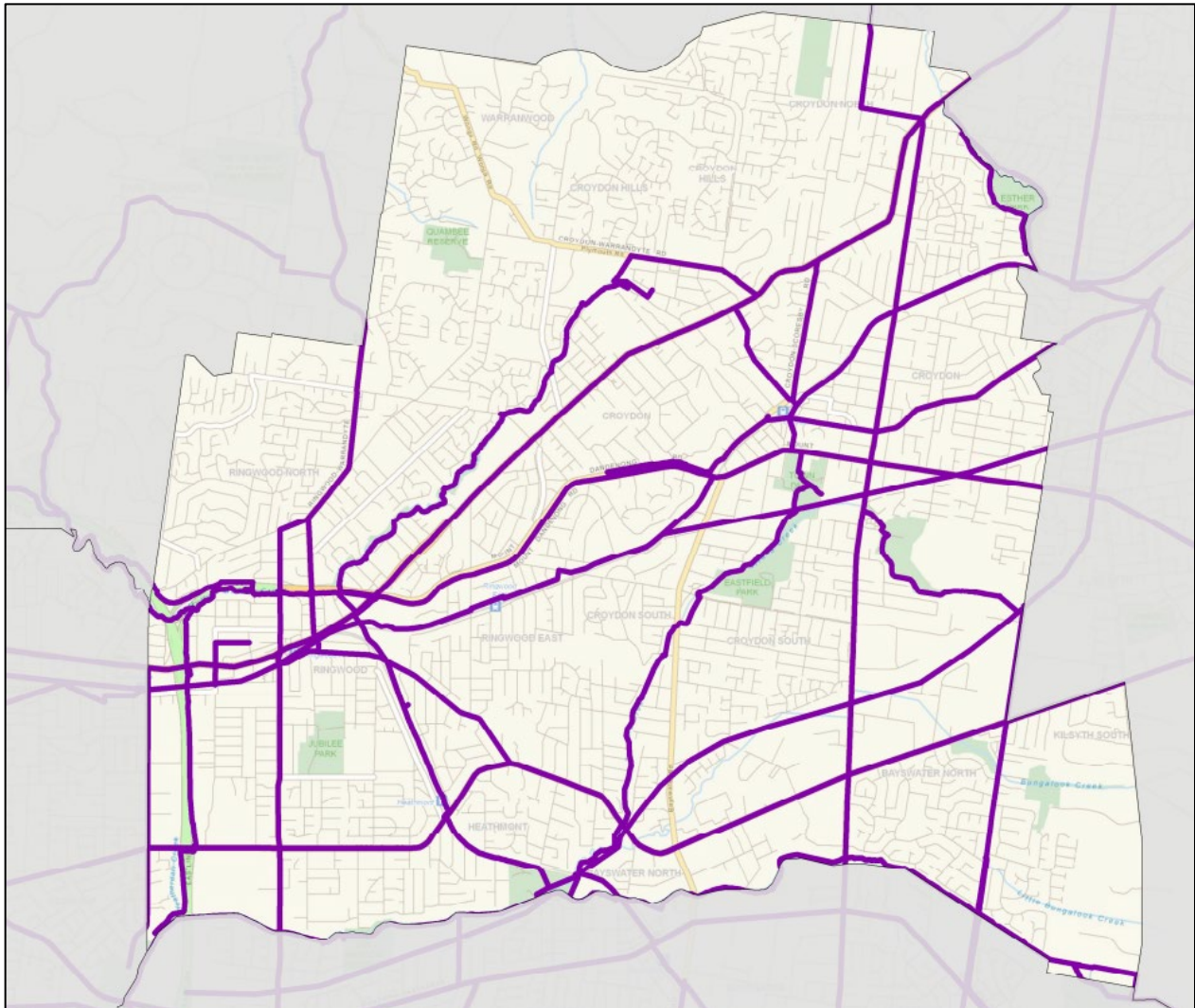


Figure 2 Principal Bicycle Network

2.2.2 STRATEGIC CYCLING CORRIDORS (SCC)

Strategic Cycling Corridors are a subset of the PBN to support the needs of commuter trips and other important transport trips such as to stations, shops or schools. The SCC network involves on- and off-road paths on municipal and state roads, designed to provide a safer and lower-stress cycling environment for transport experience.

The Movement and Place Framework has been developed to assist with designing, planning and delivery of a transport system. This framework includes classifications applicable to cycling, of which C1 and C2 make up the SCC as described below:

- C1 – Primary Routes provide a core network of Strategic Cycling Corridors that connect places of state significance including the central city, Metropolitan Activity Centres (MACs) and National Employment and Innovation Centre (NEICs) within metropolitan Melbourne.

- C2 – Main routes are Strategic Cycling Corridors that provide additional connections to state significant destinations, as well as connections to major activity centres and key railway station within metropolitan Melbourne.

Within Maroondah, the majority of the SCC comprises C2 with exception of the Eastlink Trail to Ringwood Major Activity Centre, as seen in **Figure 3**

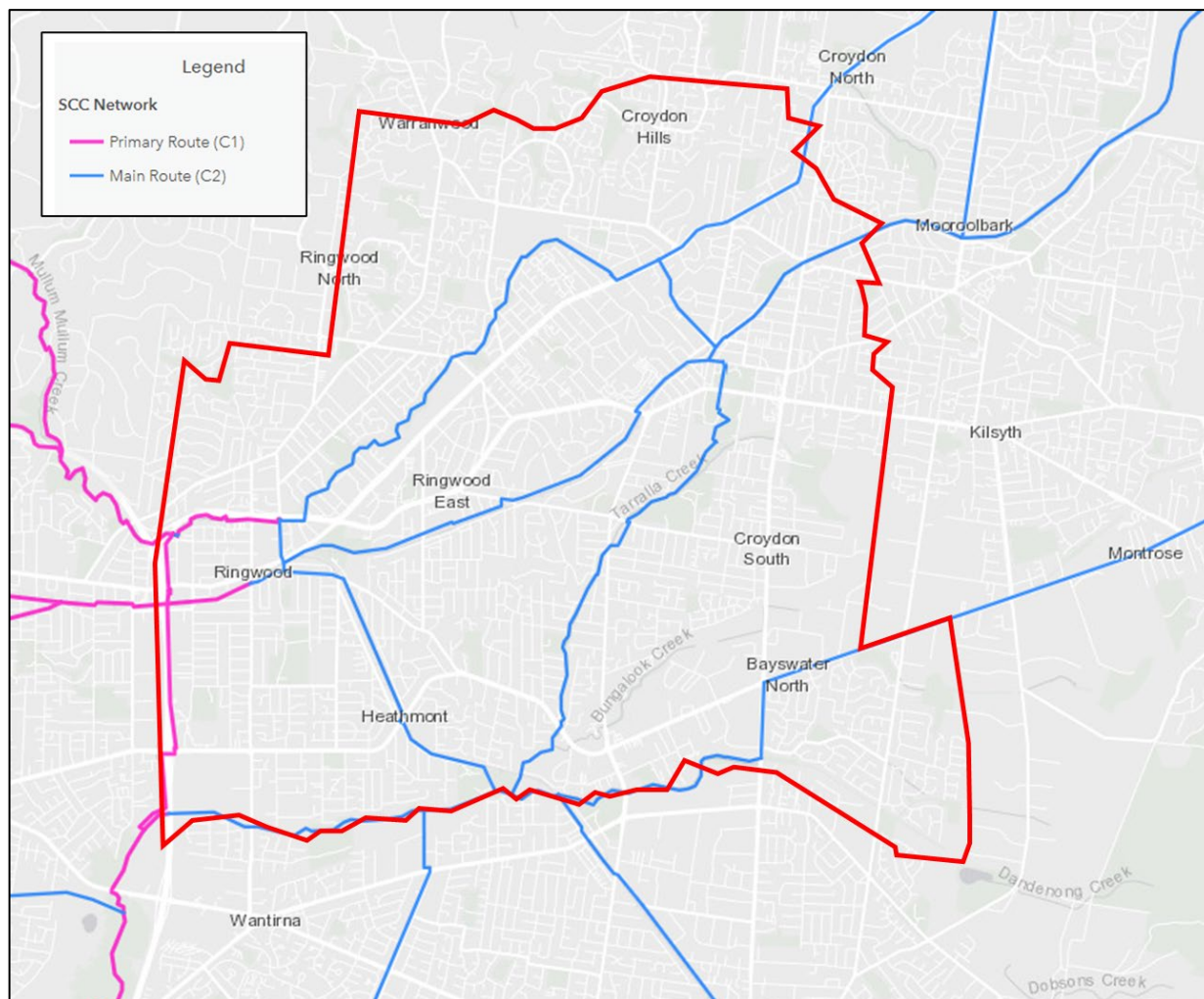


Figure 3 Strategic Cycling Corridor

2.3 CRASH STATISTICS

An assessment of the crash history across the municipality has been undertaken by analysing crash data for the past five calendar years obtained from the VicRoads Road Crash Information database. The database contains all reported casualty crashes, which include the categories of Fatal, Serious Injury and Other Injury crashes. Non-injury or property damage only crashes are not included in this database.

The categories of crash severity are defined as follows:

- Fatal Injury – one or more persons are killed in the crash, or die within 30 days from injuries sustained in the crash;
- Serious Injury – one or more persons are admitted to hospital as a result of injuries sustained in the crash; and
- Other Injury – one or more persons are given medical treatment for injuries sustained in the crash.

In this case, the data has been filtered for crashes involving a bicycle to identify 'hot spots' and locations to which particular attention may be required in the updated Bicycle Network Plan.

All recorded crashes within the municipality in the most recent 5 years of data are shown in **Figure 4**, with further information summarised in **Table 1**.

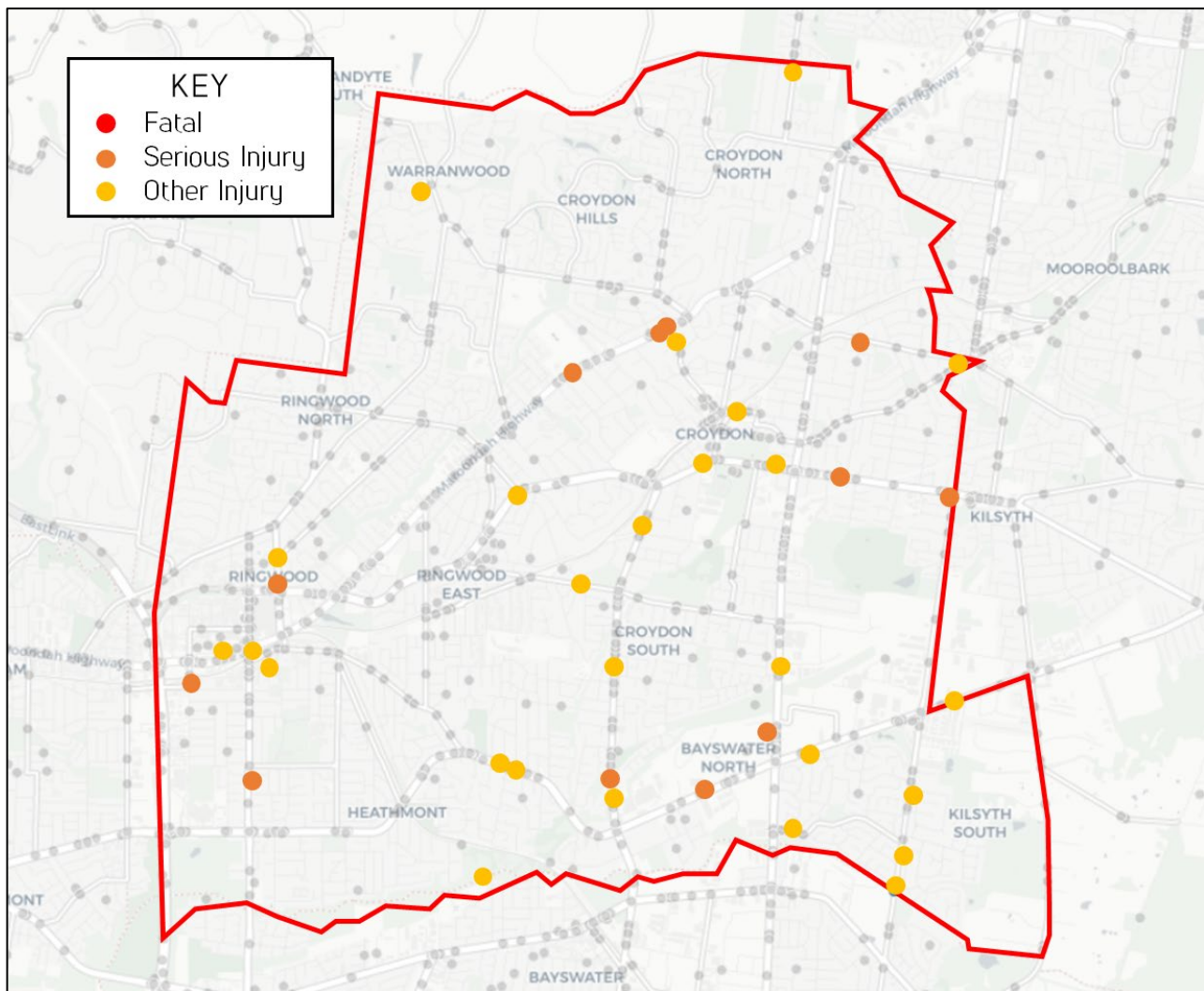


Figure 4 Crash statistics map

Table 1 Crash by DCA code

DCA Crash Type	Fatal	Serious Injury	Other Injury	Total
Right / through collision with vehicle (121)	0	1	4	5
Vehicle strikes another vehicle when emerging from driveway (147)	0	3	2	5
Rear end collision with vehicle (130)	0	1	3	4
Vehicle off footpath strikes vehicle on carriageway (148)	0	1	3	4
Left near collision with vehicle (116)	0	1	2	3
Head on collision with vehicle (120)	0	0	2	2
Left turn side swipe (137)	0	0	2	2
Pedestrian near side, pedestrian hit from the right (100)	0	1	0	1

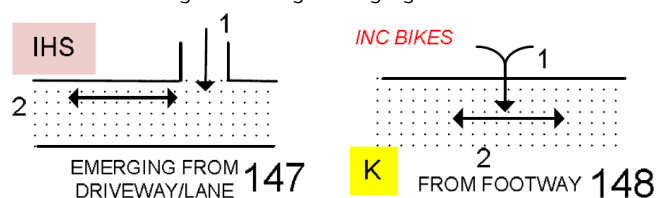
DCA Crash Type	Fatal	Serious Injury	Other Injury	Total
Pedestrian far side, pedestrian hit from left (102)	0	1	0	1
Bicycle struck pedestrian (109)	0	0	1	1
Cross intersection collision with vehicle (110)	0	0	1	1
Right far collision with vehicle (111)	0	0	1	1
Two right turning vehicles (114)	0	0	1	1
Other adjacent collision with vehicle (119)	0	1	0	1
Right turn side swipe (136)	0	0	1	1
Leaving parking collision with vehicle (142)	0	0	1	1
Overtaking out of control (151)	0	1	0	1
Bicycle strikes door or parked / stationary vehicle (163)	0	1	0	1
Other accident off straight, no collision or object struck (179)	0	0	1	1
Unknown details (199)	0	0	1	1

The crash incident data indicates generally a wide variety of classifications. Notable types that featured prominently are discussed as follows:

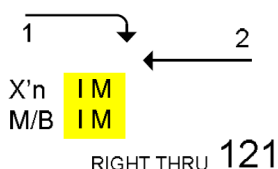
- DCA 147 & 148 – together, these represent cyclists involved in a collision on a footway with a vehicle or pedestrian/cyclist emerging from a driveway/lane or another footway. There are 9 crashes in total, making up 23.7% of all crashes involving cyclists.

Notably, 5 of these crashes involved cyclists aged 13 to 18, three (3) of which resulted in serious injury. This suggests drivers failing to give way when emerging from a driveway, or not being able to see cyclists on the footpath (for example when there are high front fences or vegetation either side of the driveway).

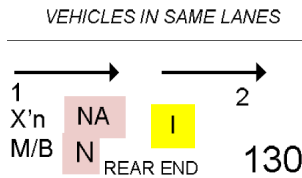
However, people of this age typically feel safer when riding on a footpath versus using the roadway, where bicycle lanes are either lacking or are not physically separated from the adjacent vehicle lane (i.e. the cyclists would feel too exposed to vehicle movements). Counter to this, riding on the footpath increases risk of being struck by emerging vehicles.



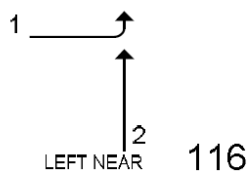
- DCA 121 – this signifies cyclists making a right turn and being struck by an oncoming vehicle, with a total of four (4) recorded crashes. This is a generally common crash type that can occur for various reasons.



- DCA 130 – this signifies a rear-end collision, which would typically occur when a cyclist is travelling within the vehicle lane. It may involve lack of attention from either the cyclist or vehicle driver. A total of four (4) crashes were recorded.



- DCA 116 – this signifies a cyclist (or vehicle) turning left onto a roadway and being struck by a cyclist or vehicle travelling in the same direction. This may typically occur as a result of inattention from either party, or obscured sight lines. A total of three (3) crashes were recorded.



3 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

3.1 YOUR SAY MAROONDAH

The Your Say Maroondah website was set up to collect the opinions and views of the Maroondah community. This involved a survey and a pinpoint map that was available between 10 July 2023 to 18 August 2023. Both forms of consultation allowed the community to identify safe and/or unsafe locations and provide reasoning as to why they held such a view. It also collected general demographic information to ensure a wide range of people were heard.

3.1.1 SURVEY RESPONSES

The survey attracted a total of 326 submissions from 322 individual contributors. Surveys were submitted from a majority of male contributors, with gender identification summarised in **Figure 5**. Respondents included a range of cycling abilities, as depicted in **Figure 6**, with 'enthused and somewhat confident' being the most popular answer.

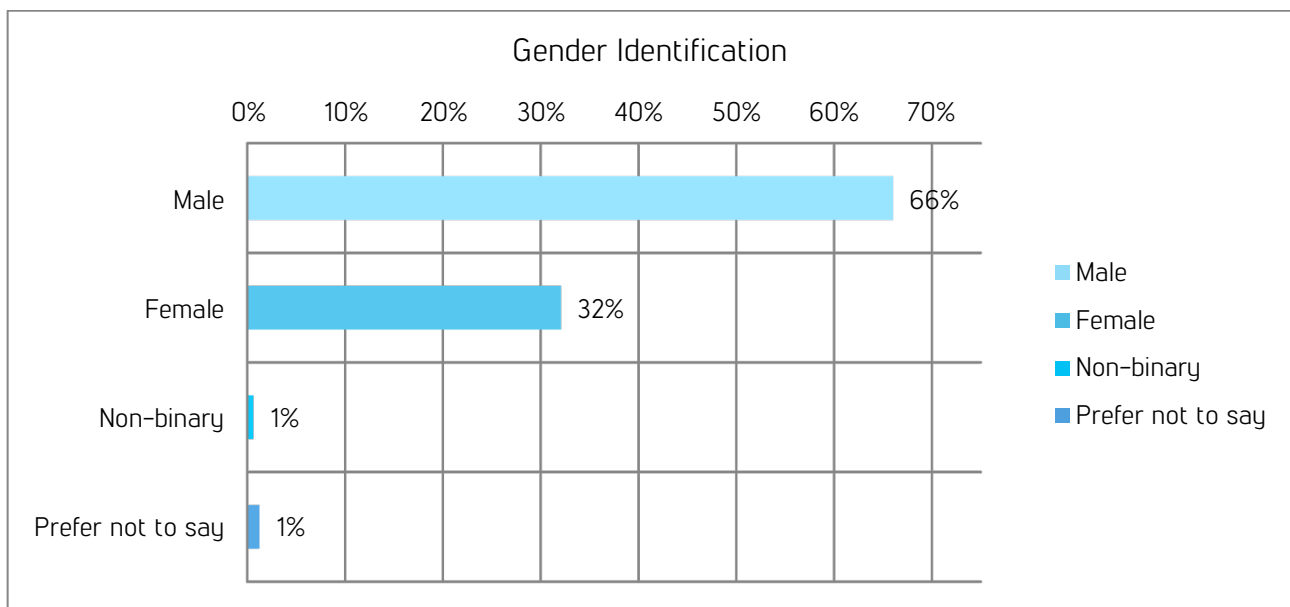


Figure 5 Survey responses gender identification

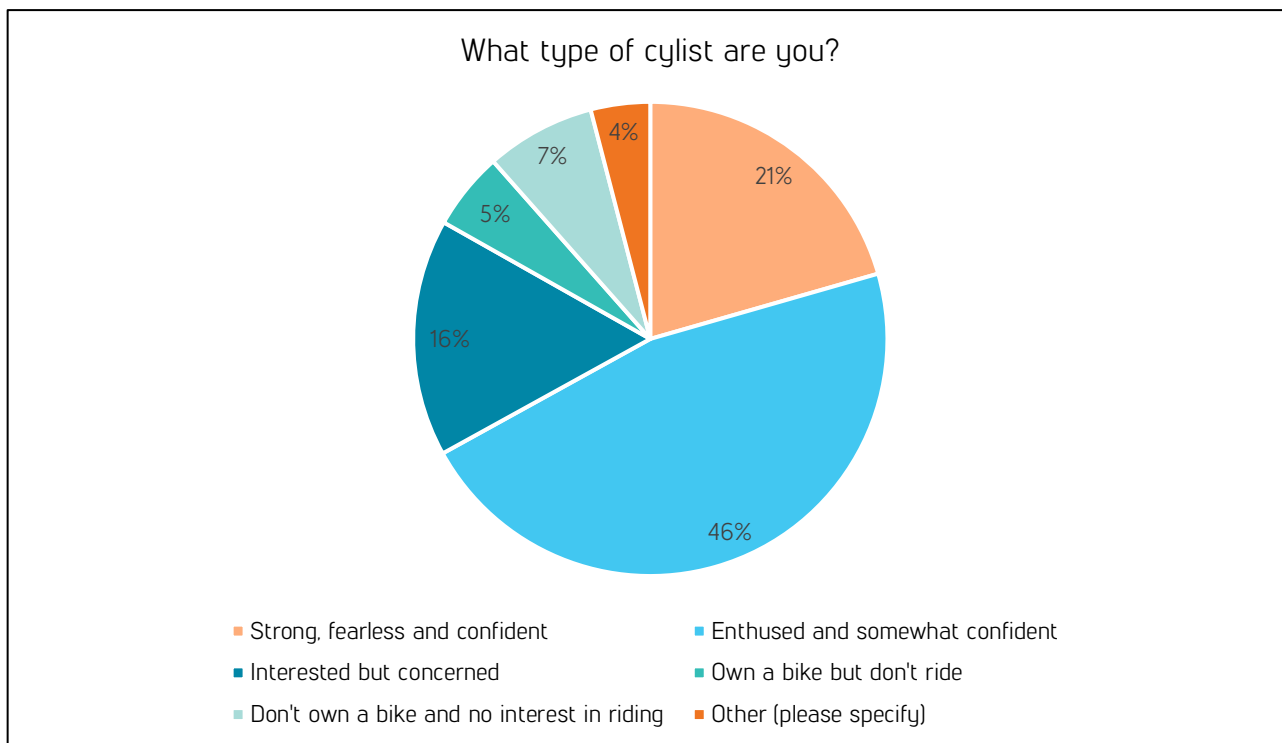


Figure 6 Survey responses cycling ability

Optimistically, the majority (62%) of survey responses identified safe cycling locations across the municipality as opposed to unsafe locations (38%).

Safe Spots

Of the responses that identified safe spots across the network, the majority were in relation to off-road shared paths, namely Mullum Mullum Creek Trail, Dandenong Creek Trail, Tarralla Creek Trail and Eastlink Trail. This is reflected in the nomination of key features that made cyclists feel safe across the bicycle network, with the most popular response being off-road paths as summarised in Figure 7.

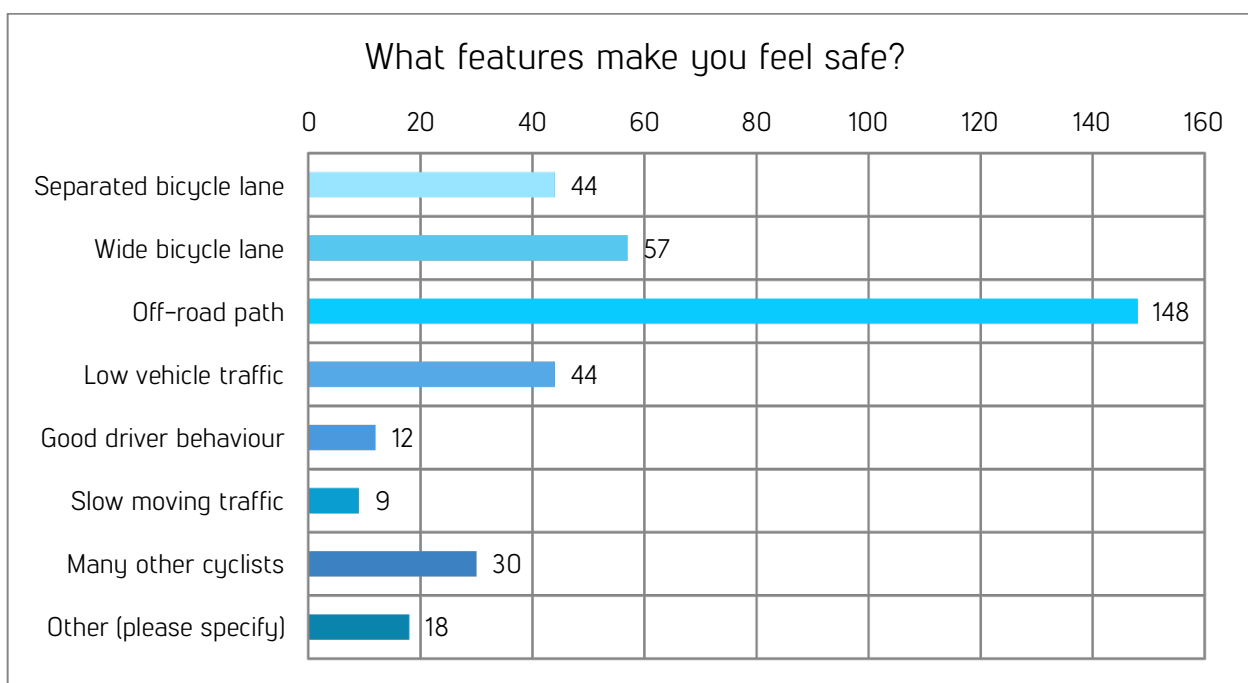


Figure 7 Survey responses safe spot features

Some respondents provided further details and reasoning for the nomination of the safe spots which included:

- Separation from vehicles;
- Other people are usually present;
- Respectful community, people are well-behaved;
- Well-maintained wide paths; and
- Good visibility.

Unsafe Spots

Of the responses that identified unsafe spots across the network, there was a fairly wide spread of reasons given, as summarised in **Figure 8**.

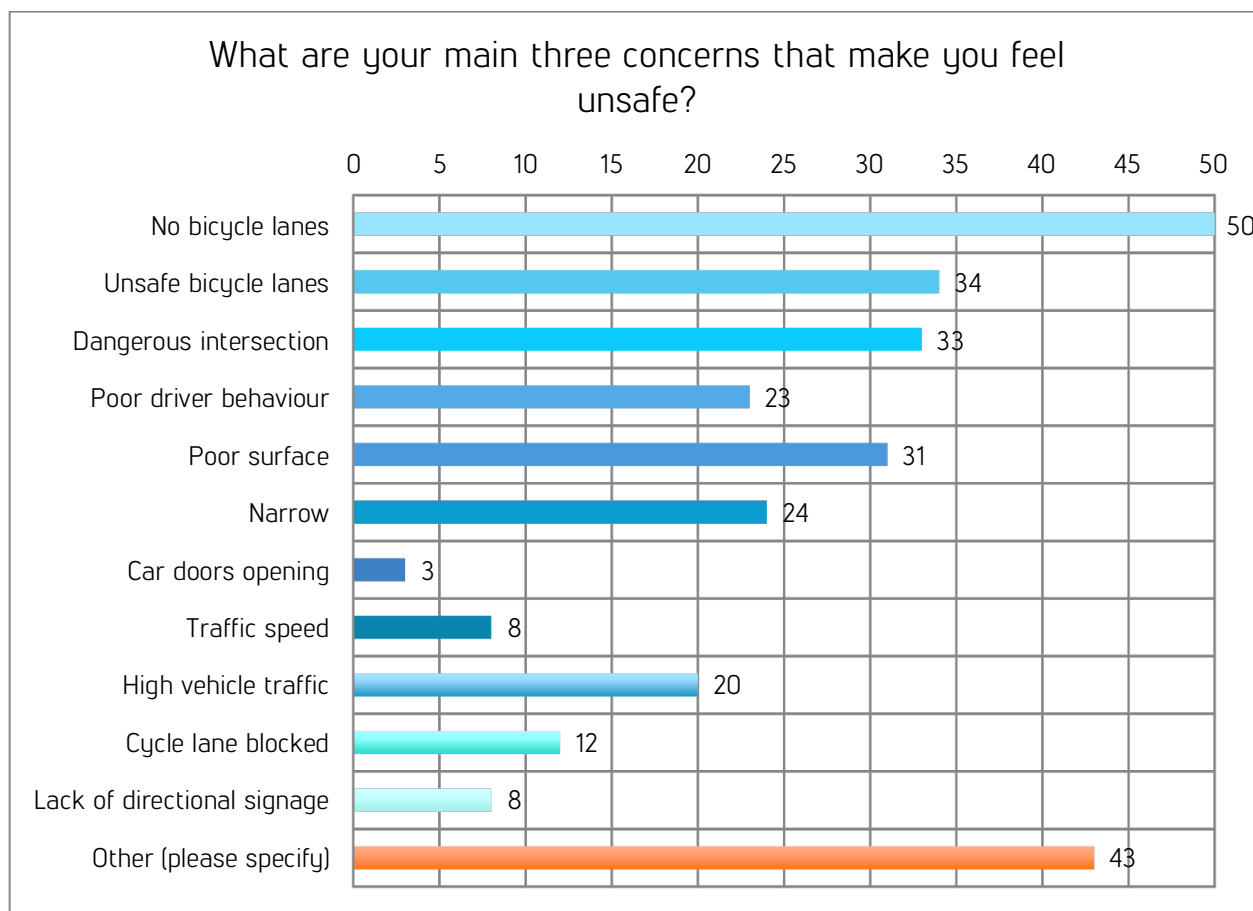


Figure 8 Survey responses unsafe spot concerns

Some respondents provided further details and reasoning for the nomination of the unsafe spots which included:

- Lack of cycling connections;
- Paths that end abruptly or lead to heavy traffic roads/intersections;
- On-road bike lanes narrow or shared with parked cars (this was particularly brought up regarding Bedford Road);
- Busy trails or too narrow to share between pedestrians and cyclists;
- Poor cyclist behaviour – traveling speedily or not using bell to warn pedestrians.
- Off-lead dogs on shared paths dangerous to cyclists;
- Lack of lighting; and
- Blind corners and pinch points.

Locations where a lack of cycling infrastructure or missing connection were noted included:

- Between Tarralla Creek Trail and Mullum Mullum Trail;
- Mount Dandenong Road;

- Maroondah Highway;
- Between Mullum Mullum Trail and Croydon; and
- Kent Avenue.

3.1.2 PINPOINT MAP RESPONSES

The survey map attracted a total of 257 pins from 33 individual contributors. Unlike the survey form, the pinpoint map identified majority unsafe spots (85%) compared to safe spots (15%).

Some of the “hot spots” where numerous responses were submitted included:

- Eastland Shopping Centre and Mullum Mullum Trail;
- Maroondah Highway;
- Mullum Mullum Trail near Yarra Valley Grammar;
- Kent Avenue, near the Croydon Central shops;
- Oban Road;
- Eastfield Road and the rail trail; and
- Canterbury Road and Heathmont Road.

Some of the reasons given for nominating the unsafe spots included:

- Lack of bike lane or connection;
- Narrow or unsafe bike lanes or trails;
- Lack of crossing or unsafe crossing opportunity;
- Off-lead dogs on shared paths dangerous to cyclists;
- Abrupt end to bike lanes, cyclists forced into high traffic roads; and
- Lack of wayfinding and signage.

3.2 INTERCEPT SURVEYS

In addition to the above online community consultation, in-person intercept surveys were undertaken across the municipality on Wednesday 26 July 2023. These were undertaken by two of SALT’s traffic engineers during the AM and PM peak periods including:

- At Ringwood Station entrance from the Rail Trail between 8:00am–10:00am;
- At Heathmont Rail Trail entry from Canterbury Road, south of Heathmont Station between 8:00am–10:00am;
- At Mullum Mullum Trail intersection with Oban Road between 3:00pm–5:00pm; and
- At Tarralla Creek Trail entry from Eastfield Road between 3:00pm–5:00pm.

The surveys involved intercepting cyclists and pedestrians to capture views and opinions on the cycling network, as well as gathering general observations of the cycling environment in these locations. A total of 40 responses were gathered by this consultation method, including a range of ages and cycling abilities.

Some of the key responses included:

- Off-road trails are good especially for leisure cycling;
- Many cyclists opt not to utilise on-road lanes due to safety concerns;
- Crossing roads can be challenging and slow with high traffic volumes and lack of crossing opportunities;
- Lack of connection including between Mullum Mullum Trail and Eastland, Croydon Shops / Kent Avenue to trails;
- Unsafe intersections including Canterbury Road and Heathmont Road;
- Lack of lighting;
- Cyclists travel quickly posing a risk to pedestrians; and
- People have dogs off-lead along the trails posing a risk to cyclists.

3.3 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

3.3.1 MAROONDAH ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee and the Liveability and Safety Advisory Committee provide advice to Council on a broad range of community matters. The Committees provide input into the development of strategy, policy, partnership activities and advocacy efforts in relation to community policy issues in Maroondah.

The Committees advise Council on the development, implementation and review of the Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021–2031, and associated action plans, social policies and related strategic documents. This strategy outlines a number of key directions relevant to cycling and the bicycle network, including:

- *Key Direction 1.2 – ‘Provide and enhance accessible active and passive open spaces, active travel infrastructure, sporting precincts and integrated recreation facilities, to increase opportunities for and participation in physical activity.’*
- *Key Direction 2.4 – ‘Work in partnership to facilitate local neighbourhood networks that are walkable and bike-friendly, and promote active travel of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.’*
- *Key Direction 2.5 – ‘Advocate and work in partnership to enable an integrated network of safe, accessible and efficient transport options, including public transport, that meet the needs of people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.’*
- *Key Direction 4.1 – ‘Promote, provide and improve community infrastructure, services and events that are accessible for all people.’*

Meetings were held with the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee on Wednesday 10 May 2023 and the Maroondah Liveability and Safety Advisory Committee on 18 April 2023 to provide an overview of the Bicycle Network Review project and seek the committee members’ engagement and initial input.

Respondents included Councillors, Victoria Police, Melbourne Water, Croydon Main Street Traders, Metro Trains, QIC Eastland, Department of Transport and Planning, Department of Health and many other groups.

Members were given the opportunity to prioritise a number of key principles on their importance for consideration in the Bicycle Network Review, giving a ranking of ‘High’, ‘Medium’ and ‘Low’ importance.

The results of this engagement are depicted in **Figure 9** and **Figure 10**.

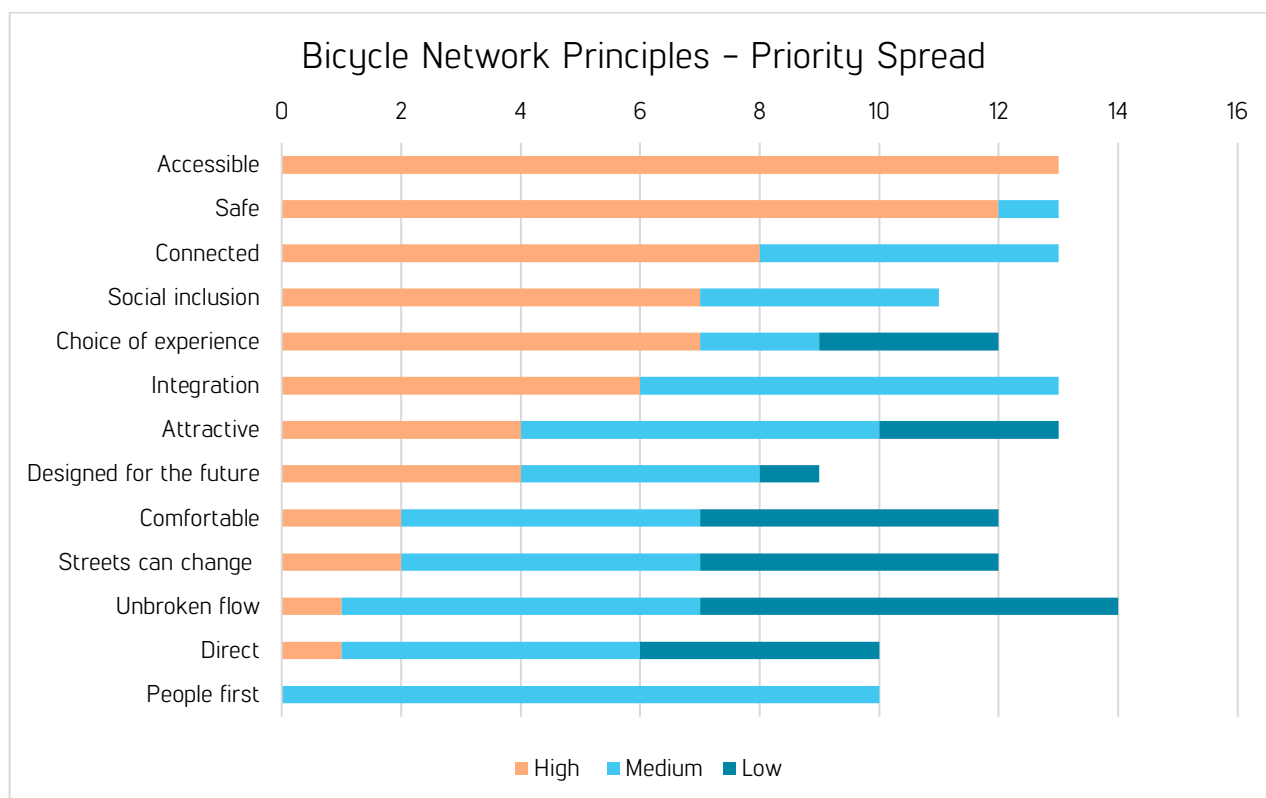


Figure 9 Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee priority spread

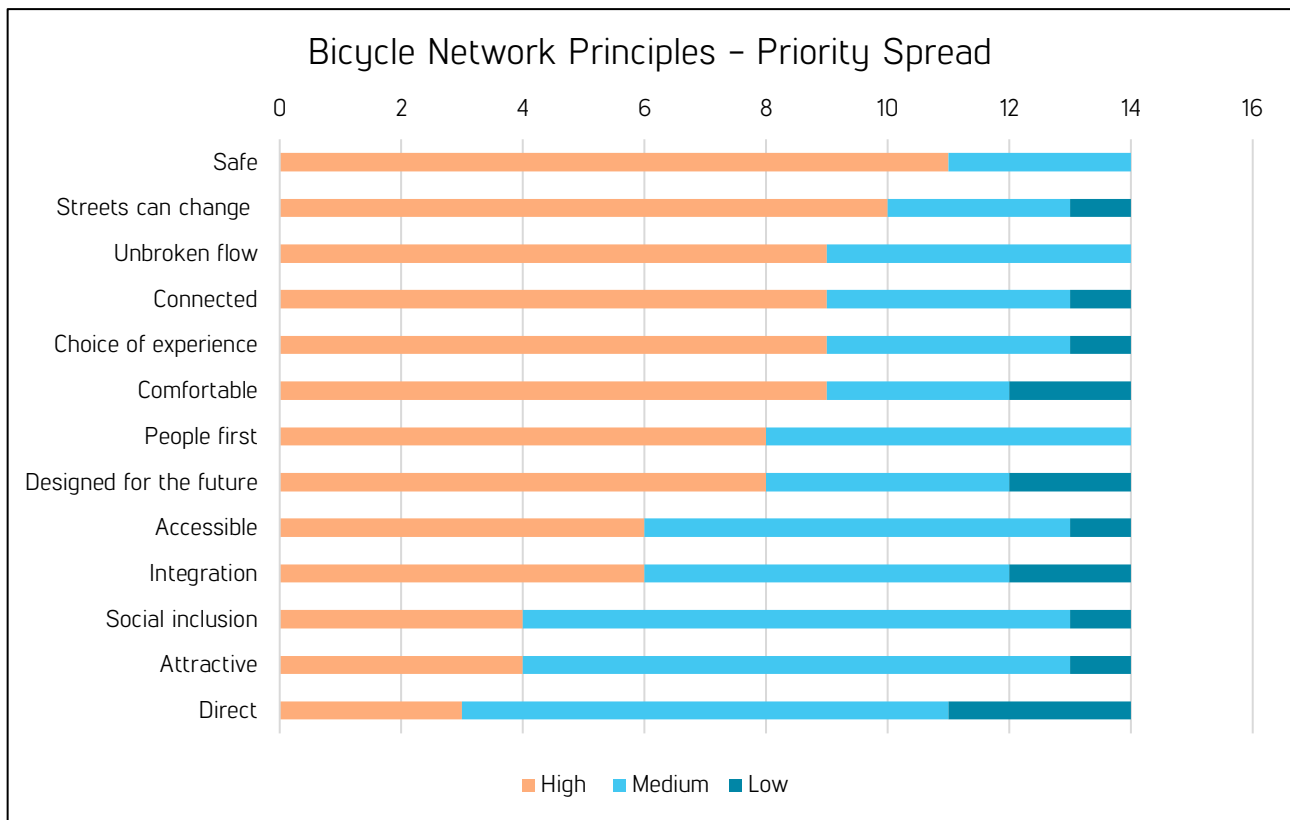


Figure 10 Maroondah Community Liveability and Safety Committee priority spread

Further, the committees casted votes on the top priority bicycle network components that they would like to be focused on when implementing improvements to the network. The results of this are presented in **Figure 11**.

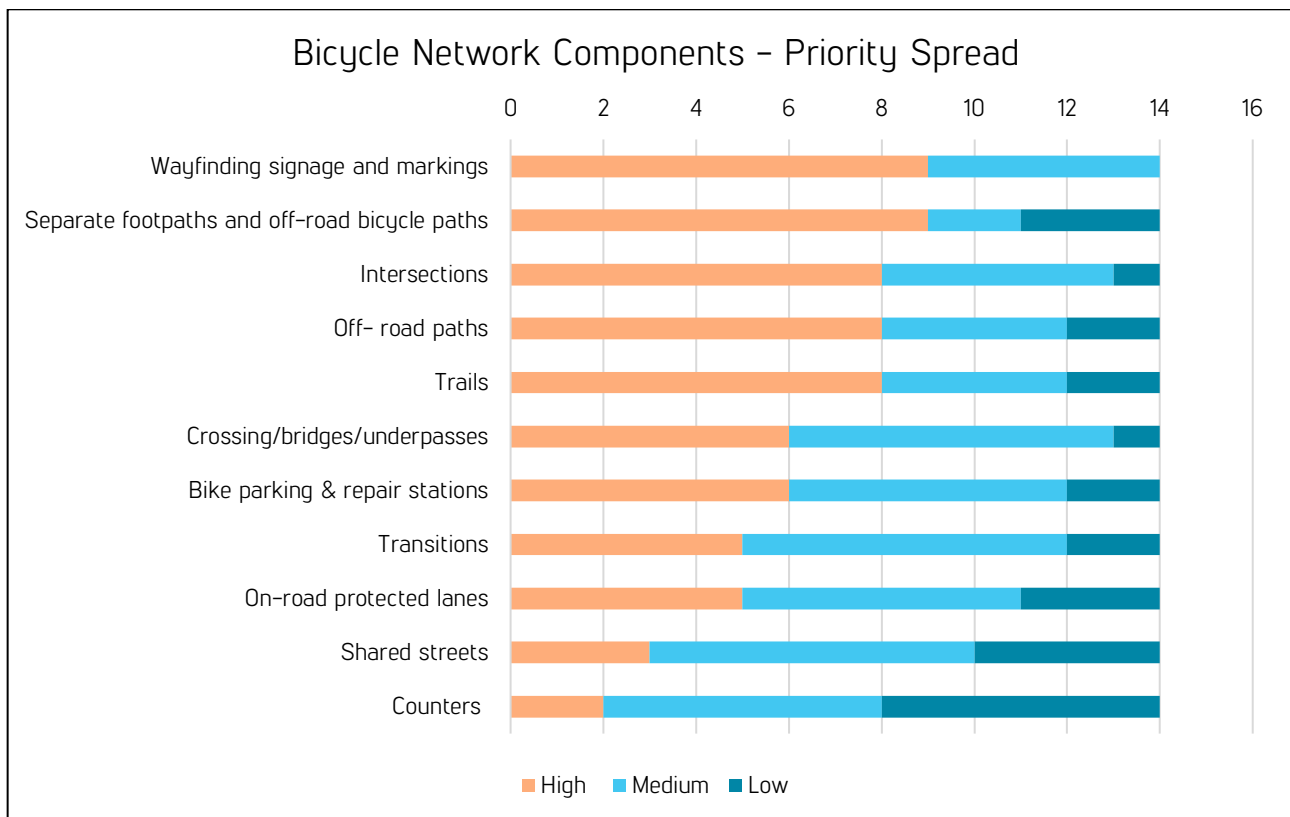


Figure 11 Committee priority components

4 NEXT STEPS

Following the preceding initial community consultation, the key issues identified will be further investigated with inspections and observations to take place at key locations across the municipality. From this, a draft Bicycle Network Plan will be developed which will include a number of projects aiming to overcome some of the main issues identified by the community. This may include new bicycle path connections, improvements to existing infrastructure and/or signage or lighting works to improve cycling amenity and safety across Maroondah.

The community will have another opportunity to contribute to the project by providing feedback on the draft Bicycle Network Plan.

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