

Robert Clark. Parliament of Victoria

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Media Release

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## COALITION BACKS BOX HILL TO RINGWOOD RAIL TRAIL

A Liberal Nationals Coalition government will provide \$5 million to fund a 10km bike path to run from Box Hill to Ringwood.

The Box Hill to Ringwood Rail Trail will run for most of its length alongside the Lilydale and Belgrave railway line, and will provide a safe and convenient pathway for local trips, for longer distance commuting and for recreational cycling.

The Coalition's support for the Rail Trail was announced by the Shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation, Hugh Delahunty, who visited the rail trail route today.

Mr Delahunty said bike trail networks have been an outstanding success in many areas of Victoria and were commenced as an initiative of the former Coalition Government. Bicycling has grown into a major industry with Bicycle Victoria alone having over 40,000 members.

Also present at Mr Delahunty's announcement were Liberal candidate for Mitcham, Dee Ryall, Member for Box Hill, Robert Clark, Member for Bayswater, Heidi Victoria and Member for Warrandyte, Ryan Smith.

"I've been a keen supporter of this rail trail ever since I learned about it, and I'm delighted that a Liberal-Nationals government will make it happen," Ms Ryall said.

"It will be great not only for commuting, physical activity and recreation, but also for hundreds of kids who will be able to ride their bikes to school more easily and safely."

Member for Box Hill, Robert Clark, said that the rail trail would make good use of empty railway reserves, such as the land east of Bank Street, Box Hill, which should have been made a pathway as part of the Middleborough Road grade separation.

"Rail reserves can make great bike paths, because they don't have steep slopes and they run into or near centres where people want to go. Being able to cycle safely from Box Hill to Ringwood or anywhere in between will increase participation and be a marvellous boost for local cycling."

The Rail Trail, running from Box Hill station to Ringwood station, will form the east-west arterial route for a network of bike paths within the Cities of Whitehorse and Maroondah, including numerous north-south routes, with the potential to extend westwards towards Melbourne and eastwards to Croydon North and Belgrave.

The Rail Trail will run within 1km of 20 schools and colleges, making it easier and safer for children to ride their bikes to school. Many schools and colleges, such as St Thomas' Primary, Box Hill High School and Blackburn Lake Primary School either directly border the Rail Trail or are within a few hundred metres.

An extensive feasibility study for the Box Hill to Ringwood Rail Trail, including a full route identification and costings, has been undertaken and published by Whitehorse Cyclists Inc, but regrettably to date the trail has not been supported by the Brumby government.