



## Candidate Statement

### Neil Baird-Watson

Neil passed on his love of all things 2 wheels to his now grown up three children. Much fun, fitness and engagement was had on many Great Vics', Around The Bays, MTB trails, track velodrome workouts, club cycling events and balance bikes! They now commute the bike paths and bike lanes of Melbourne on a daily basis. Neil continues his passion for The Long Ride, returning for his 17th Great Vic in 2022 as a rider and Bicycle Network volunteer writer for the daily "The Good Oil" newsletter. The big hills like; Baw Baw, Hotham and Ventoux have always been his climbing passion and a pair of odd socks his trademark apparel.

Neil Holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from La Trobe University, a post Graduate Diploma in Business / Marketing from CIT (Monash University) and an MBA from Macquarie University.

For the past ten years, Neil has sat on the board of a charitable trust and heads the property sub committee and sits on the finance and investment sub committee.

Professionally, Neil has worked most recently as a managing consultant in the major events industry, primarily working on event design, keynote speaker and content curation for major conferences. During covid, Neil wrote a book titled "Go Gather" - How to run on-line and hybrid events.

Additionally, Neil has previously held positions as marketing manager, general manager and managing director for a range of commercial enterprises in the cycling distribution, computer and telecommunications services industries. He has also worked as a manager and consultant utilising skills in; operations, HR, finance, logistics, market research, management, sales, customer service, project management, call centres, marketing and administration, primarily in the technology sector.

Neil is keen to see Australia, fund and develop the infrastructure and culture to support cycling in all its forms, whether it be; covered solar-collecting bicycling boulevards, broad based education and engagement programmes and better health initiatives for the community. Key areas include; sustainability and diversity, cycling safety and insurance, participation and membership growth, uniform cycling protection road laws, driver and rider education, along with far reaching inclusiveness by expanding the "Network" throughout the established cycling groups and the wider community.

Imagine ..... a future where; local communities are interconnected via a myriad of protected bike cycleways, paths, tracks and lanes - where seniors park their bikes outside the local shops, where students can safely ride their bikes to school or university, where car drivers and cyclists are patient, considerate and courteous to each other, where parents ride with their kids to their local primary schools and parks on family friendly road infrastructure, where arterial bike lanes are wide, segregated and covered from the elements, where bike



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commuters can cruise to work without fear of accidents or abuse, where cycling events of all types attract broad based participation, where inactivity levels drop to world's lowest levels and where Australia is revered as a healthy collaborative and connected cycling nation.