

unChain Inc

Questionnaire for Candidates in Brighton in the 2014 Victorian Election

Jane Touzeau

**1. Elwood College:** Do you and your party support funding the Master Plan for Elwood College? Yes

**2. Elwood Primary School:** Do you and your party support the construction of a pedestrian crossing for Elwood Primary School at Glenhuntly Road? Yes

**3. Flooding in Elwood:** What can be done about flooding in Elwood, especially of the Elwood canal? The Elster Creek catchment is one of the largest around Port Phillip Bay and much of what is now Elwood was previously swampland, and suffers flash flooding especially when high rainfall/high tide coincide. Melbourne Water continues to investigate opportunities to improve upstream drainage to decrease the risk. Melbourne Water is the referral authority for planning applications within the Special Building Overlay (i.e. areas that are known to flood) and in those locations higher floor levels are required.

**4. The Palais:** Do you support substantial state government funding for emergency repairs to the Palais? Yes, the Palais is an important Cultural institution for Brighton District.

**5. St Kilda Festival:** Do you support increasing the state government's contribution from \$100,000 to \$500,000? An increase is justified as this is the largest single day event in Australia, attended by approximately 10% of the population of Melbourne.

**6. St Kilda Pier:** Would you support early state funding for the replacement pier at St Kilda harbour? The pier has been identified as being close to the end of its life and should be replaced in a timely fashion.

**7. Public Transport.** Do you have a realistic plan for Melbourne's public transport and, in particular, what are the respective merits of Melbourne Metro versus Melbourne Rail Link? Public transport is very important for all cities, including Melbourne, to address congestion and pollution.

**8. Fitzroy St and Acland St Trams:** What is your position on the proposals for a tram 'super-stop' on Fitzroy St for the 16 tram and the 96 terminus on Acland St? As above, improving public transport to reduce traffic and enable locals and visitors to enjoy St Kilda is important to future popularity of the area and viability of local businesses.

**9. St Kilda Rd Bicycle Proposal:** Do you support the proposal to build Copenhagen-style bike lanes along St Kilda Rd from Carlisle St to Southbank? Yes. Safe alternative modes of active transport will help to reduce congestion and increase visitation.

**10. Fishermans Bend:** How should we ensure the appropriate development of Fishermans Bend? Do you support the early building of the Yarra Crossing bridge and the inclusion of sustainability requirements in the Structure Plan? The rhetoric around Fishermans Bend is about a world class and sustainable precinct. It would be excellent if the implementation actually reflected that.

**11. The Grand Prix:** What is your position on the Grand Prix at Albert Park and, in particular, should the Grand Prix Corporation be required to accurately record attendance numbers? The Grand Prix continues to be highly dubious in terms of expenditure from the public purse (the

opportunity cost of the total number of Grand Prix events by now would be many hospitals, schools, and improved public transport), and environmentally. It sends all the wrong messages in terms of peak oil, climate change and road safety. The inauthentic attendance numbers are used to justify the public expenditure. The Grand Prix has had a huge free kick at public expense and this should come to an end. Normal business accountability – e.g. accurate attendance numbers, should be recorded and made public.

**12. Neighbourhood Zones and Affordable Housing:** Do you support the new zoning system introduced by the state government? The new zoning appears to be a system that favours some suburbs over others and that is not a basis for good planning.

**13. Apartment Design Standards:** Do you support mandatory design standards for new apartments in Melbourne? The design of apartments has been left to “the market” and could be improved to provide a range of housing types.

**14. Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy:** Do you support the new planning strategy and the new Metropolitan Planning Authority? Melbourne started off well planned but went ‘pear shaped’ in the age of ascendance of the motor car. Unfortunately the sprawl continued long after it should have stopped. Plan Melbourne tries to make sense of this mélange, but the problems are large and complex.

**15. Other Important Issues:** Many unChain supporters will be interested in wider issues such as fracking on agricultural land, methods of funding infrastructure, aged care, men’s health etc. Are there any such issues that you are particularly interested in? I am particularly interested in fracking – the potential assault on the majority of agricultural land in Victoria, the millions of litres of fresh water required and the destruction of fresh water and groundwater by toxic chemicals threaten the famed liveability of Melbourne (and Victoria) into the future. When considered in combination with climate change (reduced rainfall, increased aridity, spread of the Central Australian Desert etc.) I agree with Doctors for the Environment Australia that approving unconventional mining (including fracking) in Victoria would be ‘grossly irresponsible’. Many people in the city are quite unaware that fracking could be imminent in Victoria. Currently there is a moratorium on mining until at least July 2015. Such a threat to our fundamental liveability should be an election issue anyway, but neither major party seems willing to raise it. It is important for people to be aware of it so that the moratorium cannot be quietly lifted after July to the detriment of future generations. Environmental engineers consider the impacts of fracking to be irreversible.