

**Report to Council**

**Agenda item 7.1**

**Proposed travel by Councillor Cathy Oke, Influentials Program cycling study tour, Netherlands, September 2014**

**26 August 2014**

**Presenter:** Councillor Cathy Oke

**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for Councillor Cathy Oke to travel to the Netherlands to participate in the Influentials Program study tour on cycling between 8 and 12 September 2014.
2. The Cycling Promotion Fund, an initiative of Bicycle Industries Australia, in partnership with the Netherlands Government, is supporting the delegation. Councillor Cathy Oke has been invited to participate in the study tour by the Consulate-General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The study tour will consist of a delegation of representations from state and local government, motorists' associations, bicycle user associations and industry bodies. The tour will be visiting several Dutch cities with a key focus on approaches to investment, planning and development of infrastructure for cycling and walking transport methods in understanding world's best practice in cycling and active transport integration.

**Key issues**

3. Melbourne is undergoing significant growth and with it the demand for safe, economical and reliable transport increases. The City of Melbourne's Transport Strategy aims to facilitate a shift to more environmentally friendly transport modes and to increase efficiency in freight logistics. The strategy supports public transport, walking and cycling as the dominant modes of transport in inner Melbourne.
4. The City of Melbourne's active transport strategies include the building of our bike network and the exploration of options to enhance the pedestrian network, investigation into the transformation of streets into 'spaces' and ensuring the network is connected, safe and easy to access. Changing priorities to the network, including greater priority for active transport, will see a change in the last kilometre freight delivery network within the central city. With growing congestion and population demands, innovative changes will be required to service the deliveries to the central city.
5. The Netherlands is recognised for cycling infrastructure and an ingrained bike culture. The cultural attitudes have been instrumental in transforming the way communities have embraced integrated transport networks with shifting priorities. The tour will provide a firsthand look at Dutch bicycle culture, safety initiatives, policy and regulations that have resulted in some of the highest participation rates in active travel and some of the lowest road trauma rates for cycling and pedestrians globally. The sharing of innovative solutions in optimal use of all transport modes is of strategic importance to our own policy development, specifically the new Bike Plan 2016 and Walking Plan 2014–17.
6. On completion of the study tour Councillor Oke will report back through the Future Melbourne Committee, Bike Forum, City of Melbourne Cycling City e-newsletter, the YarraBug 3CR Yarra Bike Radio program, to interested internal stakeholders and the Bike Futures Conference on the benefits and outcomes of the tour.
7. Whilst in Amsterdam, Councillor Oke proposes to meet with an alderman of the City of Amsterdam and present a letter of condolence from the Lord Mayor to the Mayor of Amsterdam in relation to the lives lost and those impacted by the tragic incident with flight MH17.
8. Councillor Oke's participation in the study tour will be partially funded by the Netherlands Government which will fund all accommodation costs and a major portion of meals and incidentals. The cost to Council is estimated at \$6185 which comprises an airfare of \$5685 and up to \$500 for other incidentals not covered by the Netherlands Government.

**Recommendation**

9. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
  - 9.1. Approves participation by Councillor Cathy Oke in the Influentials Program study tour on cycling in the Netherlands for the period 8 to 12 September 2014 at an approximate cost of \$6185.
  - 9.2. Notes that Councillor Oke will prepare a report to the Future Melbourne Committee or Council within 60 days of return from travel.

**Attachments:**

1. Supporting Attachment

**SUPPORTING ATTACHMENT**

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**Finance**

1. The Netherlands Government will fund all accommodation costs and a major portion of meals and incidentals. The Council will fund an airfare of \$5685 and up to \$500 for other incidentals not covered by the Netherlands Government.
2. The estimated cost to Council of \$6185 will be met from the existing budget allocation.

**Conflict of interest**

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

**Relation to Council policy**

4. The Manager Governance Services has confirmed that the travel proposal accords with the requirements of the travel guidelines outlined in the Councillor Expenses and Resources Guidelines.
5. The Council's Transport Strategy sets a goal that provides that Melbourne will be a cycling city, with its entire road network safe and attractive for cyclists of all ages, and cycling will increase by 400 per cent to account for 12 per cent of all trips to and around the city by 2030.

**Environmental sustainability**

6. The focus of the study tour sits within the City of Melbourne's position on active transport established in the Melbourne transport strategy. The strategy aims to facilitate a shift to more environmentally friendly transport modes.
7. The carbon emission resulting from air travel will be offset with the purchase of credits.