

#10

COMPLETE

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Q1

Candidate Name

Jay Iwasaki

Q2

Bulleke-bek Ward

Contesting Which Merri-bek Ward?

Q3

Greens

Are you a candidate for a political party? Which Party?
Are you standing as an Independent candidate? If you
are standing as an Independent but you are also a
member of a political party, please write that party in the
Comment box.

Q4

Connections to Merri-bek Wards. Outline your connection to Merri-bek, do you live in the ward you are contesting, do you work in that ward? What are your other connections to the Merri-bek community?

I live in an apartment in Bulleke-bek ward, the ward I am running to represent, and commute most regularly to the city, Friends of the Earth in Collingwood where I'm on the board, or the University of Melbourne by tram, train, and cycle paths.

I shop locally, and try to get my groceries from local grocers and businesses as much as possible. I am involved with the arts community, and go to gallery openings regularly across Brunswick. I use cycle and walking infrastructure to get around to cafes and restaurants with my partner and our friends.

Most of my weekly life involves spending time in inner-north suburbs like Brunswick, Coburg, Northcote, and Fitzroy - all suburbs with similar issues and a high degree of connectivity.

Q5

Climate Emergency. Merri-bek Council declared a Climate Emergency in September 2018. Do you accept the research evidence from climate scientists and the UN Secretary General that:

	Answer
the earth is already too hot and we are outside the safe climate zone?	Yes
we face a climate emergency?	Yes
local cooling is required to prevent runaway warming?	Yes

Other (please specify):

As an ecologist, climate change has coloured every aspect of my research over the last 10+ years. I've seen how denial has diminished, and communities are ready to take leadership.

Q6

Governance and Triple bottom line accounting brings to account three domains that we need for a good life. They are economic, social and environmental sustainability. In the past projects have been delivered based on organisational silos often not considering other aspects outside the silo. Will you endeavour as a Councillor for Council to use triple bottom line accounting on all Council infrastructure decisions to ensure that climate emergency priorities are embedded in Council decisions? Note that triple bottom line is already encapsulated in the Local Government Act 2020 Section 9, 2b and 2c for good Council governance.

(no label) **Yes**

Q7

Transport: Upfield Rail Upgrade - Problems with parking and traffic congestion, capacity issues of public transport need solutions for upgrading the Upfield Line. According to Infrastructure Australia, the northern region Transport Corridor will reach and exceed capacity in the next decade. Do you support the Northern Councils Alliance campaign to Connect Melbourne's North for duplication and extension of the Upfield rail line to Craigieburn and Wallan for provision of a more reliable and frequent rail service catering for the growing population in Merri-bek and residents in new growth suburbs further north?

(no label) **Strongly Agree**

Q8

Transport: Mode shift - What actions will you be pushing for to facilitate a mode shift to more sustainable modes of transport in Merri-bek as part of, or beyond, Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy (PDF), including increasing safety for walking and cycling and increasing public transport advocacy?

In a dense suburb like Brunswick, there is often a perceived conflict between cars and alternative transportation. However, I don't believe this should be the case. My elderly father is disabled, and I know all too well that there will always be a need to drive for people who are not able to use other modes of transport, and by making it easier to cycle and take public transport we can actually make it easier for those who really need to drive to be able to, and to find parking. There are many ways that cities around the world have created safe and inclusive transport environments for their residents.

1. Infrastructure: First we need to keep support and incentivise people to cycle and walk by creating safe ways to get around and supporting local businesses near to where people live. Traffic calming measures and lower speed limits may seem like barriers to driving, but they actually make communities better for everyone. Tried and tested shared roads can create communities by removing the dichotomy of "drivers vs. cyclists/pedestrians."
2. Safe corridors to public spaces: An active lifestyle is pivotal to the health of our community, starting from how our kids get to school and parks. That also means easy ways to get to Sydney Road and other shopping precincts, with abundant cycle parking when we arrive. Prioritising these access ways with better infrastructure is something we can push for.
3. Sydney Road & the Upfield Line: State Greens and Greens on council have been pushing and will continue to push for increased frequencies of trains along the Upfield Line, along with accessibility improvements for Sydney Road. With Greens on council working with neighbouring councils, hopefully the state will listen to the north and we can finally finish the duplication of tracks that has been put aside for decades.

Q9

Heat Vulnerability: Large sections of Merri-bek's north are at the extreme end of the Heat Vulnerability Index, meaning residents are very susceptible to global warming extreme heat events. What will you do to address this beyond existing policies, including Merri-bek Urban Heat Island Effect Action Plan (PDF), Merri-bek Urban Forest Strategy 2017-2017 (PDF), Cooling the Upfield Corridor Action Plan 2018-2028 (PDF)?

As an ecologist, heat vulnerability to wildlife has been a key part of my research. I will support Merri-bek Council's existing strategies to reduce the urban heat island effect in our communities via tree planting and replacing concrete with natural areas. With council support, we can work on expanding programs like solar savers (assisting low income households to install solar panels and insulation) and find other novel solutions to keep the community cool.

Q10

Waste Management. Merri-bek aims to be a leading council in sustainable waste management. What will you do to help Merri-bek in educating citizens on waste streams, to achieve Merri-bek's 2030 zero waste to landfill target as part of Zero Carbon in the Planning Scheme – ESD Policy v2.0?

I am committed to Merri-bek's 2030 target of zero waste to landfill and communicating strategies to reduce waste to the public. I am also committed to changing the responsibility of managing waste to the manufacturer, rather than the consumer.

Q11

Energy Efficiency and Renewables. Merri-bek has a goal of “Efficient and 100% renewably powered energy”. How can Merri-bek “walk the talk” on renewable energy and meet the community goals set in the Zero Carbon Merri-bek – Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25 (PDF)?

I am committed to following the strategy of the Merri-bek climate emergency action plan, and if possible accelerating aspects that are feasible. I would also be keen to see the new Brunswick community battery expanded to help reduce strain on the local grid and expand solar power usage.

Q12

Supporting business and the environment What actions will you take to help the Council promote environmentally sustainable jobs in the municipality and for businesses to reduce emissions in their operations?

Continue to support the programs within Zero Carbon Merri-bek strategy that support businesses with recycling, reusing, waste minimisation and energy efficiency.

Q13

Food Security How would you build community resilience and address food security in Merri-bek beyond the existing Merri-bek Food System Strategy 2024 - 2027 (PDF)? How do you think Council could further support culturally relevant and nutritionally rich food to diverse and vulnerable communities?

I support existing strategies from Greens on council. “The Food System Strategy is only in the first year of its current iteration and so needs time to progress. This strategy really is groundbreaking for a Council and recognises the complex intersections of climate change, socio-economic status, community resilience and food security.”

Q14

Buildings, Biodiversity and Urban cooling: What would you do as a Councillor to ensure that with new building developments, Merri-bek residents have protection from overshadowing existing solar PV systems, and that Merri-bek has sufficient vegetation cover to contribute to biodiversity outcomes, urban cooling, and water sensitive urban design beyond existing policies in the Urban Forest Strategy (PDF), Merri-bek Nature Plan, and the Achieving Zero Carbon in the Planning Scheme – ESD Policy v2.0?

I support the current policies and would like to see them expanded with additional funding wherever possible.

In terms of planning: “Regarding planning, many of the controls are out of Council’s hands and are subject to the approval of the state Planning Minister. This is most evident in the Elevating ESD in the Planning Scheme Amendment that has been sitting on the Minister’s desk for many months now, resulting in multiple Councils not being able to enforce higher environmental standards in new builds.”

Q15

What are your top four priorities for the Council Plan, to be formulated for 2025-2029.

Priority 1	Collaborating to form a cross-council pollinator & biodiversity corridor
Priority 2	Ensuring development along the Upfield Line incorporates public spaces, in particular, green spaces
Priority 3	Collaborating with university researchers to fund graduate students projects examining solutions to climate change in our community
Priority 4	Committing to exploring the treaty process with traditional owners

Q16

Democracy and representation: advocacy to State Government on multi-member wards versus single member wards. The state government has imposed single-member wards on Merri-bek against the recommendation of the council, the Local Government Association of Victoria, and even the Victorian Electoral Commission. This shift in electoral structure is an imposition by the parliament, not a choice of experts.

Answer

Do you support or oppose single-member wards?	Oppose
If (re)-elected will you initiate and/or support measures to pressure the state government to return to multi-member wards?	Support

Other (please specify):

Single-member wards are a step backwards in representative democracy for the community. Despite being a member of the Greens, I strongly support the ability of independent candidates to be able to have a chance to represent their community, and I believe single-member wards make this more difficult.

Q17

Do you have any other comments on Climate Leadership and Advocacy by Council? Do you have any supplementary comments relating to the questions above, comments on other issues related to climate resilience and climate adaptation, or comments on making decisions for the whole municipality?

This was a massive amount of information to work through. Clearly a lot of thought and attention has been given to these important questions. Professionally as an ecological researcher, many of these topics have been relevant to climate change mitigation for biodiversity conservation, including in urban environments. On council, I will use my experience and expertise to integrate climate solutions wherever possible.