Advocacy letter

Arterial Road Median Maintenance in Knox

The following letters have been sent to these ministers and candidates:

- Melissa Horne MP – Minister for Roads and Road Safety
- Daniela De Martino MP – State Member for Monbulk
- Dr Muhammad Shahbaz – Labor Candidate for Rowville
- Dr Merran Blair – Greens Candidate for Monbulk
- David Kitchen – Liberal Candidate for Bayswater
- Clare Fitzmaurice – Liberal Candidate for Monbulk
- Alec Ferguson – Socialists Candidate for Bayswater
- Julie Buxton – Labor Candidate for Bayswater
- Jess Kennedy – Greens Candidate for Bayswater
- Max Williams – Liberal Candidate for Rowville
- Lars Hiemstra – Socialists Candidate for Rowville
- Kayte Bleakney – One Nation Candidate for Bayswater

25 November 2025

The Hon. Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Level 22, 1 Spring Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
By email: minister.horne@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister Horne

Subject: Urgent Review of Arterial Road Median Maintenance in Knox

Knox City Council writes to express its serious concern regarding the current standard of maintenance undertaken by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) on arterial road medians within our municipality.

Council acknowledges advice from DTP that its maintenance regime consists of three scheduled grass cuts per annum, with indicative timing as follows:

- First cut: between 1 August 2025 and 31 October 2025
- Second cut: between 1 November 2025 and 24 December 2025
- Third cut: between 1 April 2026 and 30 July 2026

This level of maintenance is wholly inadequate to manage vegetation growth during peak periods. It does not control grass length throughout the summer months, fails to address significant safety and fire risks posed by overgrown vegetation, and does not maintain acceptable visual amenity across Knox.

Council strongly urges the Department to take immediate action to rectify this situation. Specifically, we request that DTP review and substantially increase the frequency of mowing activities, provide Council with a detailed and publicly accessible schedule of mowing within Knox, and establish a collaborative approach with Council and emergency services to ensure mowing activities are responsive to local conditions and risk assessments.

The current regime compromises community safety and amenity. Council considers this matter urgent and seeks your commitment to implementing a revised maintenance program without delay.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. Please contact me directly should you require further information or wish to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely



Cr Paige Kennett
Mayor

Enquiries: Cr Paige Kennett
Document ID: D25-362733

Cc Jackson Taylor MP
Daniela De Martino MP
The Hon Kim Wells MP

30 September 2026

Julie Buxton
Labor Candidate for Bayswater

By Email: julie.buxton@vic.alp.org.au

Dear Julie

Arterial Road Median Maintenance in Knox

I am writing to express Council's and the Knox community's significant concerns regarding the state of median strips on arterial roads in Knox, the current maintenance standard, and impacts from the way in which that maintenance is undertaken. I am seeking your response to these matters and your support for additional State Government funding to be allocated to ensure an appropriate standard and method of maintenance in the future.

From previous enquiries, we understand the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) currently schedules three cuts per annum of the median strips on arterial roads, generally being between 1 August and 31 October, 1 November and 24 December, and then between 1 April and 30 July.

I have previously written to the Minister for Roads and local members expressing Council's concern that this level of maintenance is wholly inadequate to manage vegetation growth during peak periods. This lack of maintenance has a number of serious implications. The grass grows to unacceptable heights, creating significant safety and fire risks, and this also impacts significantly on the visual amenity and liveability for Knox residents. These are issues which we constantly hear complaints about from our community.

A further concern is the way in which the maintenance takes place. In recent days the grass has been slashed on median strips on several arterial roads in Knox, including on Burwood Highway and Boronia Road. The long grass has been slashed but without any effective clean up or catching of the grass clippings. Instead, the cut grass is left behind and being at such long levels, this creates a major mess on the roads, much of which then finds itself into the drainage system. This then creates further drainage and maintenance issues. This arises because of the grass being so long in the first place, and then the way in which it is cut and left behind. We have also seen a significant and growing level of community concern around the way in which the maintenance is undertaken.

Council is seeking a substantial increase in the frequency of mowing within Knox and for excessive mowing waste to be appropriately cleaned and removed once the cuts are undertaken. We are also seeking DTP to work collaboratively with Council and emergency services to ensure mowing activities are responsive to local conditions and risk assessments.

I am seeking your response and commitment to join with Knox Council in advocating for these outcomes and I welcome your response regarding this matter.

Yours sincerely

Cr Paige Kennett
Mayor

Document ID: D26-280034

Responses

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Health Infrastructure
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety

PO Box 2392
Melbourne, Victoria 3001 Australia

Ref: CMIN-1-25-7832

Cr Paige Kennett
Mayor
Knox City Council
511 Burwood Highway
WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152
Eleonore.Smith@knox.vic.gov.au

Dear Mayor,

Thank you for your email of 9 December 2025 regarding vegetation maintenance concerns in Knox.

In 2025-26, the Allan Labor Government is investing $976 million in a Better Roads Blitz to fix potholes and upgrade road surfaces – this is the largest single-year investment in Victorian history. It will also allow the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to maintain vital transport infrastructure such as bridges and traffic lights, mow, slash and spray grass and weeds along roadsides, and repair or replace thousands of road signs.

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) plan and deliver a program of works that aims to ensure the roadside is safe. This includes making sure vegetation does not block drivers' views and is in preparation for the fire season by reducing fuels along roadsides.

The timing of grass cutting differs each year, based on rainfall, temperature, spring growth and advice from other authorities.

DTP has a strategic plan to undertake three grass cuts, with two scheduled in the lead up to the Country Fire Authority (CFA) declared fire season to help mitigate bushfire risk. Grass mowing activities focus on bushfire prevention in the lead up to the fire season and on maintaining road safety by ensuring adequate sight distances during other times of the year.

If you would like to discuss this further, Alex Green, Executive Director Greater Metro can be contacted on 0428 369 886 or at Alex.Green@roads.vic.gov.au.

Thank you for sharing your concerns. Your feedback is important to the Allan Labor Government as it continues to work hard to improve road maintenance in Victoria.

Yours sincerely



Hon Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Health Infrastructure
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety
09/02/2026

Dear Mayor Kennet,

Thank you for your letter regarding Vicroads's maintenance on vegetation across the Knox City Council area.

I acknowledge Mayor Paige Kennett and Council for raising this. Our current State government needs to respond with a practical plan and specific to the local geographic area.

I support Knox City Council's call for better maintenance of our arterial road medians.

Let's be honest: grass does not grow according to a departmental calendar. Maintenance needs to respond to local conditions, visibility and fire risk—and residents deserve to know when it will happen.

For me, this comes back to a bigger question: are our public services being organised around what our community needs?

These services are funded by our elected Labor Government, which means the costs of service to the community are paid through the taxes our community pays.

Public money means public responsibility - we must start supporting the community and deliver reliable services, with clear accountability for the work being done.

The Greens believe public services should work for the public, not corporate profit. In a society as wealthy as ours, we can properly fund good-quality public services for all if we make the big banks, gambling companies and big corporations pay their fair share of tax.

As your Greens state candidate representing Bayswater, I support your call and advocate for:

- An updated, publicly available maintenance schedule from the Department of Transport with Clear reporting pathways, response times and accountability
- A full audit into any organisation assisting the current mowing maintenance crews, such as Traffic Management, to ensure they are properly abiding by Vicroads's regulations and procedures without cause for delays or other adverse consequence

We should protect native vegetation and habitat while keeping sight lines clear and managing identified hazards.

People are already carrying enough. They should not have to become experts in departmental responsibilities just to get basic maintenance addressed.

In solidarity,

Jess Kennedy

Jess Kennedy (She/Her)
State Candidate Bayswater 2026
Australian Greens Victoria

jess.kennedy@vic.greens.org.au
0422 682 302

Authorised by Jess Kennedy, Australian Greens Victoria.

I work on the lands of the Wurundjeri & Boonwurrung people of the Kulin nation. Sovereignty over their land was never ceded. I pay my respects to Elders, past and present, and commit to working towards Treaty, justice and reconciliation with First Nations people.



From: Merran Blair <merran.blair@vic.greens.org.au>
Sent: Friday, 23 October 2026 3:11 PM
To: Eleonore Smith <Eleonore.Smith@knox.vic.gov.au>
Subject: Re: Letter from the Mayor of Knox City Council

Hi Eleonore,

Thanks for getting in touch.

Current practices seem very shoddy in dealing with the grass on median strips in Knox. Please tell Cr Kennett I am happy to support a more regular and efficient process for dealing with this, as I know this also becomes a safety issue when we are talking about roads.

Kind regards,

MERRAN BLAIR (she/her)
Australian Greens Victoria
Dandenong Ranges Branch
State Candidate for Monbulk



I work on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation. Sovereignty over their land was never ceded. I pay my respects to Elders, past and present, and commit to working towards Treaty, justice and reconciliation with First Nations people.

Julie Buxton
Labor Candidate for Bayswater

Victorian Labor

1 October 2026

Mayor Paige Kennett
Knox City Council
511 Burwood Highway
Wantirna VIC 3152

Dear Paige,

Thank you for contacting me in reference to arterial road and median strip maintenance in Knox.

I was not aware that the Department of Transport and Planning's (DTP) roadside maintenance schedule for Knox is three cuts annually, and agree this is inadequate, especially around the months where growth is accelerated.

While pleased to see recent slashing on median strips on arterial roads in Knox, I was also concerned that the work appeared unfinished, with long patches of grass remaining, rubbish left on site, overhang from the median strips and lack of clippings removal.

I note that the Victorian Government has recognised that overall, road maintenance including on median strips has not been to an acceptable standard and has committed to bringing maintenance back in house and supplementing the workforce with minimum security prisoners, ending the reliance on private contractors to manage this important function.

However, this commitment and how it informs road and roadside maintenance across the network in Knox should be monitored to ensure that it leads to optimal outcomes for road users and local residents.

If elected, I can commit to working with Knox Council and emergency services to advocate for improved maintenance schedules in the City of Knox and ensure that these services are responsive to local conditions.

Thank you for advocating for the people of Knox.

Kind regards,

Julie Buxton

Let's keep delivering for Knox
julie.buxton@vic.alp.org.au
0402 867 526
juliebuxtonforbayswater
Authorised by Steve Staikos, Australian Labor Party (Victorian Branch), 438 Docklands Drive, Docklands VIC 3008.

