



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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The Right Honourable Graham Quirk
Lord Mayor of Brisbane
GPO Box 2287
BRISBANE QLD 4001
Via email to: lord.mayor@brisbane.qld.gov.au

Dear Lord Mayor

I refer to Brisbane City Council's Brisbane Metro Draft Design Report (DDR).

The CBD BUG continues to be a strong supporter of enhanced public transport services and infrastructure as key to reducing Brisbane's over-dependence on private motor vehicle travel.

Accordingly, we commend Brisbane City Council for undertaking this project - as it represents a dramatic shift from a narrowly focused and car-centric approach to urban transport.

In particular, it has been quite clear for some years that the Victoria Bridge needs to be transformed into a "green" bridge, though converting it to sole use by public and active transport modes. The CBD BUG has previously publicly called for this change.

Notwithstanding this background, CBD BUG is extremely disappointed with the current draft design. It removes not just the current narrow on-road "cycle lanes" but also cyclists' ability to ride across the Victoria Bridge via the general carriageway. This DDR consigns cyclists to the impractical and unsafe alternative of sharing a crowded and narrow footpath on the upstream side of the bridge with thousands of pedestrians.

The unacceptability of the draft design is highlighted on page 21 of the DDR Chapter 6 *Traffic and Transport Assessment*, where it states this footpath already "does not meet the Austroads minimum clear width requirements for either a cycle only path, shared path or separated two-way pedestrian" path.

Removing a current river crossing link for cyclists does not encourage more people to cycle for transport. The effective loss of this river crossing would be a far greater financial equivalent of Council's entire current four-year Better Bikeways for Brisbane programme.

It appears that part of BCC's justification for this is that there are "only" 800 cyclists crossing this bridge every weekday. This figure is due to the current hostile environment for cyclists at both ends of the Victoria Bridge, despite it being the most direct route between West End and the CBD. The current design will make the Victoria Bridge completely unattractive to people riding bicycles.

We acknowledge that the "Goodwill and Kurilpa bridges both provide high quality, purpose built and designed pedestrian and cycle facilities which connect the primary cycle routes of Brisbane's bicycle network overlay across the Brisbane River". However, we contend the Kurilpa Bridge is poorly connected to the cycle network at the city end, hence the low numbers

of cyclists. The Goodwill Bridge is regularly crowded with pedestrians during peak periods and should not have to carry this additional cyclist traffic. The more circuitous route required to access the Goodwill Bridge would not encourage more people to ride bikes.

The precincts at both ends of the Victoria Bridge are already hostile to people riding bikes and people walking. The current Brisbane Metro DDR will result in making it even more hostile. We are pleased to note the retention of the current signalised pedestrian crossing at North Quay. We are concerned that delays to Metro travel times could lead to reducing walking crossing times in the future.

We have major concerns about the Adelaide Street tunnel portal. The movement of people walking and cycling within the Brisbane CBD, especially mid-block crossings, is already heavily restricted by a large number of under-ground and above-ground car park portals. Figure 6.20 of the DDR Chapter 6 Traffic and Transport Assessment indicates that the roadway from North Quay/Victoria Bridge to George Street, (more than 200 metres), will make it difficult for people walking and cycling to comfortably cross these streets.

Adelaide Street is one of the principal cyclist routes within the CBD. Figure 6.20 indicates cyclists riding on-road along Adelaide Street to or from the Bicentennial Bikeway will have a more circuitous route because of the Metro project. We are also concerned that the number of bus movements along Adelaide Street will not reduce significantly, and the cycling environment here will remain hostile.

In terms of the broader impacts across the CBD Figures 6.21 and 6.22 show changes to the level of service for people driving motor vehicles at a number of CBD intersections. Given that most of these intersections have significant numbers of people walking, changes to their level of service should also be considered and reported.

Figure 6.27 shows the relocated access ramp between the Bicentennial Bikeway and North Quay will continue to include a 180° turn that offers a very poor level of service.

CBD pedestrian and cycle impacts arising from Construction include "temporary closure of the pedestrian/cycle ramp to the Bicentennial Bikeway along the river for approximately six months. Cyclists will be redirected to the Turbot Street ramp. The impact of this temporary change is relatively minor as it will require cyclists to ride north or south along George Street instead of directly onto or off Adelaide Street, if their destination is within this area". We would point out that George St is one-way, and therefore it is unclear how riding south along this thoroughfare with its crowded footpaths will provide access to Adelaide St. Additionally, there is no indication of how George St is to be accessed via the Turbot St ramp.

At the Cultural Centre end of the Victoria Bridge there are some pleasing aspects, such as the substantial reduction in motor vehicle traffic on Melbourne Street between Merivale Street and Victoria Bridge, and the removal of pedestrian barriers. However, we are very disappointed that the opportunity has not been taken to provide segregated space for cyclists along Melbourne Street and Grey Street.

We find it odd, given Council's propensity for tunnelling solutions for motorists, that this Brisbane Metro DDR plans that public transport vehicles should first travel underground, then cross a bridge and then on Adelaide St head underground again.

It would seem far more appropriate that Brisbane Metro vehicles remain underground between the City and the South Bank Cultural precinct. Even if the Victoria Bridge is to be used by Brisbane Metro vehicles crossing the river, we wonder why the current tunnel portal leading to the Myer centre Bus station is not being used?

On the basis of the Brisbane Metro DDR's failures to provide positively for cyclists and pedestrians and the resulting deterioration in cyclist amenity and safety we reject Council's proposition that this design is an improvement for cyclists. Accordingly, we call on BCC to undertake a comprehensive review of the Metro project's DDR to appropriately address these defects.

In view of these design failures we are also calling on the Queensland Government to allow people to continue to ride in general carriageway lanes of Victoria Bridge, and to not facilitate the transition of Queensland Government-owned land to the Brisbane City Council for the metro project - until the plans are suitably amended to appropriately meet the needs of people riding bicycles

Yours sincerely

Paul French
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG
24 May 2018

Cc: The Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities
The Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier of Queensland