



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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The Honourable Mark Bailey MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads:
GPO Box 2644
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Via email to: CBCEngagement@tmr.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister

Submission on Creating Better Connections for Queenslanders Draft Plan

This submission provides the views of the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) on the Creating Better Connections for Queenslanders Draft Plan (the "Draft Plan").

Contextual issues

- Since the 1960s Queensland's road space and road rules have been prioritised for motorists at the expense of other modes of travel.
- This prioritisation of the motor vehicle has occurred despite the futility of this approach, with the resulting induced demand arising from constructing more lanes for cars being widely known for many years.
- While motor vehicle lanes have expanded, bicycle riders, pedestrians and other active travel users have been consigned to sharing inadequate paths, and buses are now unable to meet their timetables due to being stuck in the traffic congestion caused by motorists.
- CBD BUG members want Queensland residents and visitors to have greater choices about their travel mode.
- We strongly agree with the statements in the Draft Plan regarding the changing needs, expectations and travel behaviours of the community and that these changes are occurring due to population changes and emerging new technologies.
- Global-level events such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic are also creating a need for a more financially and environmentally sustainable passenger transport system than the current motor vehicle-focused approach.
- To capitalise on these opportunities and be prepared for the future, the Queensland Government must end its prioritisation of private motor vehicle travel over other passenger transport modes.

- The recent increase in working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced public transport usage, while also leading to a surge in active travel modes. The positive aspects of these changes should be built upon so the majority of people do not revert to their habit of jumping in the car every time they leave home.

Make public transport more affordable, accessible and attractive

- We recommend the value proposition of public transport be improved. Fares seem excessive, particularly given the additional effort of using public transport instead of a car. Is it any wonder many people choose to drive when driving can be cheaper, easier, and more dependable?
- A prime example of south east Queensland's excessive fares is the go card peak period fare of \$3.37 to travel the 400 metres of the Brisbane River via a cross river ferry service, which on a \$/km basis is about the same cost as taking a taxi over this same distance.
- We recommend the frequency of public transport is increased to encourage greater use of public transport. The plan states, "75% of the population in SEQ is within 400 metres of a public transport stop". However, this overlooks the critically important aspect of service frequency - as bus stop proximity is irrelevant if services do not deliver people to their destinations by when they need to arrive. Significantly, in 2018 RMIT found that only 12% of Brisbane residences are accessible to a nearby stop with a service at least every half hour, a percentage lower than all other Australian capital cities¹.
- We recommend road space is reallocated from private motor vehicles and given to buses. There are currently delays to bus trips due to traffic congestion caused by motorists, which can be addressed through the reallocation of road space back from motorists. This would see service timeliness and reliability improvements achieved more cheaply and more quickly than installing busways that have in the past cost up to \$415 million/km - which is largely why the much talked about new busways in Brisbane's east, west and north haven't been constructed.
- Increasingly frequent outages of elevators at public transport stations across the SEQ TransLink network is another area requiring addressing, via improved elevator performance and ease of public access to outage information.

Better integration of public and active transport

- We strongly recommend the Queensland Government cease installing more carparking at bus and train stations that typically costs tens of thousands of dollars per car space. These new carparks represent poor value for money and further entrench driving, thereby worsening traffic congestion. However, we recognise car parking for people with disabilities is warranted.
- The priority should instead be encouraging people to walk, cycle, scooter or use other forms of micro-mobility for trips to public transport stops/stations. The facilities supporting this safer, more healthy travel behaviour - such as secure bicycle and scooter parking – cost a small fraction of carparks and take up far less space than car parking. Local frequent shuttle bus services should also be trialled to connect people to major public travel hubs.

¹ *Creating liveable cities in Australia - A scorecard and priority recommendations for Brisbane*
<https://cur.org.au/cms/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/brisbane-city-score-cards.pdf>

- We applaud the current trial of allowing bicycles on trains during peak travel periods and encourage the Government to continue this policy. Additional steps are needed to better integrate public and active transport with key examples being:
 - install additional secure bike/scooter parking at train and bus stations (even more important now with the increasing use of expensive e-mobility devices) with additional security staff working at these locations providing more jobs
 - improve storage areas on trains and ferries e.g. so riders do not need to hold their bicycles during a journey, and
 - ensure all streets within close proximity to transportation stations provide a high degree of amenity to people accessing it via active transport.

System performance accountability

- We strongly recommend the future publication of the Queensland Government percentage subsidy for public transport users also detail its subsidy for motorists, which should take account of all spill-over costs from people driving.
- We strongly encourage the Draft Plan include specific performance measures - as the absence of any accountability for delivering on this plan via specific performance measures is a critical omission.
- We recommend the overall performance of the Queensland passenger transport system be measured and published at least annually in terms of the proportion of all trips to work or study destinations made by public and active transport modes.
- The target for this measure should be: “30% of all trips to work and study will be made by public and active transport modes by 2030”, with investments made accordingly. This is a conservative and achievable target compared to the UK’s current aim for “half of all journeys in towns and cities to be cycled or walked by 2030”.²

Address silo mentality

- We strongly recommend all divisions of the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) work towards the same targets of increasing use of public and active transport modes and reducing dependence on private motor vehicles. Achieving these targets will not be possible while divisions within TMR continue to work at cross-purposes i.e. prioritising private motor vehicle driving over public and active transport. Key examples of divisions working against these targets include:
 - installing new transport infrastructure that does not also appropriately provide for active travel modes
 - maintaining a range of outdated road rules causing unnecessary risk, inconvenience and hinderance to pedestrians, bicycle riders and users of micro-mobility devices e.g. 1) 50km/h default speed limit in local streets and built-up areas, 2) not explicitly requiring at intersections a turning driver to give way to pedestrians, cyclists and scooter riders, and 3) prohibiting wider on-road use of wheeled recreational devices, and
 - failing to implement design improvements for heavy vehicles that have been adopted overseas to provide more safety for vulnerable road users (including motorcycle riders).

² *Gear Change - A bold vision for cycling and walking*

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Creating Better Connections for Queenslanders Draft Plan.

Yours faithfully



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Brisbane CBD BUG
8 September 2021

Cc: Bicycle Queensland
 Space4Cycling Brisbane
 Queensland Walks
 RAIL - Back On Track