

Officer: Nick Conney
Response Address: Locked Bag 72,
Sunshine Coast Mail Centre
Qld 4560
Our Reference: ECM

The Research Director
Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Queensland Parliament Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee,
Inquiry into Cycling Issues**

Please find attached a submission to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee, Inquiry into Cycling Issues from the Sunshine Coast Council.

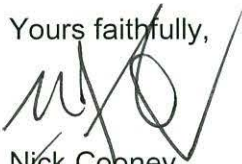
The submission is made in the context of council's examination of existing or emerging issues that are likely to have some effect or impact on local government.

Council's commitment to cycling is guided by the strategic framework set out in the Sunshine Coast Active Transport Plan 2011-2031 which was adopted by council in February 2011. The Plan sets out policies and actions in seven key priority areas: integrating cycle planning, developing networks and infrastructure, issues around safety, educating and encouraging the community, funding, partnering and reporting.

The submission to the Inquiry focusses on aspects of safety, education, encouragement and the development of specific types of infrastructure as detailed in the enclosed response.

Thank you for your time in considering this submission.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Conney
A/Manager Transportation Strategy
Regional Strategy & Planning

26 July 2013

Submission to State Inquiry into Cycling Issues

Queensland Parliament Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee, Inquiry into Cycling Issues

Name: A/Manager Transportation Strategy, Regional Strategy & Planning Organisation: Sunshine Coast Regional Council
Address: Locked Bag 72, Sunshine Coast Mail Centre, QLD 4560 Contact Details: (07) 5475 7272, email – mail@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

Context

This submission to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee, Inquiry into Cycling Issues is made in the context of council's examination of existing or emerging issues that are likely to have some effect or impact on local government.

Council's commitment to cycling is guided by the strategic framework set out in the Sunshine Coast Active Transport Plan 2011-2031 which was adopted by council in February 2011. The Plan sets out policies and actions in seven key priority areas: integrating cycle planning, developing networks and infrastructure, issues around safety, educating and encouraging the community, funding, partnering and reporting.

Council's submission to the Inquiry focusses on aspects of safety, education, encouragement and the development of specific types of infrastructure.

The Issues	Suggested Solution / Comment
Trends in bicycle injuries and fatalities involving motor vehicles	
Continuing funding of safer infrastructure for increased levels of cycling – The ongoing provision of safer infrastructure is seen as an essential component of developing a safer environment and increasing participation for cycling. Council supports a continued State commitment to the planning and delivery of cycling infrastructure both in State controlled transport corridors and through grants to local government to support higher level regional infrastructure elsewhere.	A continuing commitment is needed by the State to provide the planning, advisory and funding capacity to effectively provide the infrastructure and expertise required to meet the goals of the Queensland Cycle Strategy 2011-2021.
User hierarchy – The Sunshine Coast Active Transport Plan promotes the general transport planning and management principle where modes are considered in an order of user hierarchy that considers pedestrians first then cyclists before other modes including private vehicles. This reinforces the position that all users are important and that the vulnerability of pedestrians and cyclists requires that their needs be considered early in any design or management decision.	Adopt a clear position on user hierarchy that considers pedestrians and cyclists first so that all their safety needs are fully considered.

Evaluation of existing and any other alternative road rules	
<p>Community general knowledge of road rules and behaviour standards for cyclists - Council has developed and runs a multifaceted community education program for all road and pathway users under the banner of 'Share with Care'. The campaign includes specific details on road rules, explanations of cycle signage and markings, behaviour standards, advice on safe riding and encourages an attitude of tolerance and civility. The campaign has also specifically targeted bunch riders through the Cycling Ambassadors Program for Safety (CAPS) in an attempt to help these cyclists realize that some specific group behaviors can have negative impacts for all cyclists. It is worth noting that the community attitudes to commuter or slower recreational cyclists may be much more emphatic than to sports cyclists training at higher speeds.</p> <p>The full campaign was in part a response to previous episodes of aggressive behaviour and a general lack of understanding of the rules and responsibilities of road and pathway users.</p> <p>A recent survey of cyclists' perceptions on the Sunshine Coast reported that over 40% believed that cycling conditions have improved in the past year. Although there may be no direct evidence to link the education campaign to the significantly improved perception, education has been an area of major focus and could reasonably be expected to have been a major contributor to the improvement.</p> <p>The behaviour displayed in the interaction between cyclists and drivers is an area where there appears to be a comparative little research. For example the inability of drivers to see cyclists in intersections is often experienced; however there is little understanding of the causes of this apparent lack of recognition. The aggressive behaviour displayed by some drivers towards road cyclists is also an area that bewilders cyclists. Further research into road user behaviour by local research bodies like CARRSQ is required to understand the problem to be addressed by programs that hope to improve behaviour.</p>	<p>Education is seen as key to a safer environment for all road and pathway users. There is a critical lack of knowledge of road rules and acceptable standards of behaviour by all community members and it is recommended that education is the area where efforts should be focused to produce improvements in outcomes for all users.</p>
<p>'One-metre' rule – Part of the council 'Share with Care' campaign has been the promotion of the 'a metre matters' message in conjunction with the campaign run nationally by the Amy Gillett Foundation. This initiative is seen as a positive way to educate road users on the benefits of providing cyclists with a safe operating space, providing a simple and easily understood message.</p> <p>Education through similar campaigns and regulation are both potential options to encourage drivers to provide cyclists with a safe operating space. The effectiveness of either or both together needs to be evaluated before introducing a focused and ongoing campaign.</p>	<p>Whilst acknowledging that the 'one-metre' rule may create delays for motorists on many of our local roads in the rural and hinterland areas, a safe operating space is imperative for the increasing numbers of on-road cyclists.</p> <p>Education and regulation options need to be evaluated and the best methods employed.</p>

<p>Compulsory wearing of helmets – There has been much debate and analysis of the benefits and disbenefits of compulsory wearing of helmets. It is noted that although there is a large volume of evidence to show that the overall community health benefits outweigh the costs of increased head traumas in crashes, any increase in head trauma caused by the absence of helmets is always at tragic personal cost, which is individually difficult to trade off against a 'greater good'.</p> <p>A suggestion which has been raised in community consultation is the option of removing compulsory helmet wearing for cyclists who remain strictly on pathways with no road crossings where potential conflicts with vehicles are eliminated. This would be particularly relevant to ocean-side or scenic routes through foreshore or environmental reserve areas.</p> <p>The benefits of applying mandatory wearing of helmets rules to different age categories could also be examined.</p> <p>Although no view is taken by Council on the issue of compulsory helmets, there are impacts on Council resulting from the requirement that should be noted:</p> <p>The requirement to wear a helmet to cycle is also seen as a significant deterrent to cycling by tourists who are significant contributors to the Sunshine Coast economy. Supporting cycle tourism is a priority for action in the Queensland Cycle Strategy. The need for a helmet increases the cost of enjoying a cycling experience and impacts negatively on promoting cycling as a positive tourist experience and the image the Sunshine Coast as a recreational destination. Most tourists are unlikely to pack helmets and this requirement reduces the likelihood of cycling as an impromptu holiday activity.</p> <p>The requirement for helmets also severely impacts on the viability and practicality of introducing any public bicycle hire scheme for beach tourism precincts.</p> <p>Council invests significant efforts and resources in travel behaviour change programs at Sunshine Coast primary schools, which includes encouraging increased cycling and improving cycle skills for children. The necessity to wear a helmet and the enforcement of this requirement by police is acknowledged as a significant deterrent to continued cycling by high school students. The traffic peak congestion period for many Sunshine Coast precincts coincides with the high level of drop-offs and pickups by vehicles. This requires higher levels of investment and resources by Council to deal with this congestion in school precincts.</p>	<p>Investigate removing compulsory helmet wearing for cyclists on pathways, which do not cross carriageways.</p>
---	--

<p>Bicycles in 'Bus Only' lanes – The use of 'Bus Only' facilities needs careful application, using bus and bike lanes by default and only using 'Bus Only' lanes where warranted where a safety audit shows that the modes cannot be safely mixed. There is an example on the Sunshine Coast of a 'Bus Only' greenlink that could be safely used by on-road bicycles but has by default been designated to exclude cyclists.</p> <p>Allowing cyclists to use appropriate bus lanes is seen as a low cost option to improve bicycle access.</p>	<p>Review the application of 'Bus Only' lanes for opportunities to allow bicycle access.</p>
<p>Separated cycleways – Council supports the continued development by Department of Transport and Main Roads of good practice guidelines, standards and specific traffic regulations to support the development of physically separated cycleways.</p> <p>Council is planning to implement the first separated cycleway on the Sunshine Coast, however there are a number of design issues to be addressed including ways of providing priority for cyclists at intersecting minor street crossings. These issues need to be resolved in order to provide the priority for cyclists required to ensure that the separated cycleways provide a minimum of delays required to encourage greater uptake in cycling that these facilities have the potential to provide.</p>	<p>Continue the development of good practice guidelines, standards and specific traffic regulations to support the development of physically separated cycleways.</p>
<p>Cyclists must dismount to cross at pedestrian crossings – The requirement for cyclists to dismount to cross at pedestrian crossings and foot crossings at signalized intersections does not fit well with the increasing move to provide separated cycleways and the need to minimize delay and dismount requirements at intersections.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the benefits of allowing cyclists to ride across pedestrian crossing and foot crossings at signalized intersection, clarification is required on the legal position and protection afforded to cyclists if the requirement to dismount is removed.</p>	<p>Remove the mandatory requirement for cyclists to dismount to cross at pedestrian crossings and foot crossings at signalized intersection.</p> <p>Clarify the legal position and protection afforded to cyclists when riding across pedestrian and foot crossings at signalized intersection.</p>
<p>Vehicle parking in bicycle lanes – It is understood that under current road rules there is no restriction on vehicles parking in bicycle lanes. This is a surprising outcome especially in wider bicycle lanes where vehicles can be physically squeezed between traffic lane edge lines and the kerb. The only solution has been to install additional yellow 'no parking' line marking and signage at additional initial and ongoing maintenance cost to Council.</p>	<p>Prohibit vehicle parking in bicycle lanes and communicate the change to the community.</p>
<p>Shared use of pathways – Any restriction on the ability to ride a bicycle on shared pathways would create severe disruption to the cycle network for the majority of bicycle riders on the Sunshine Coast</p>	<p>Continue to allow cyclists to ride on all pathways unless signed otherwise.</p>

most of whom do not have the ability or desire to travel on-road. Any restriction to off-road cycling would require a huge investment in cycle paths off-road to provide the same level of service provided by the existing shared pathway network.	
<p>Use of Segways on pathways – The ability of Segways to add a new dimension to recreational tourism is recognized, however changes being introduced to allow the use of Segways on shared pathways in Queensland will potentially increase the number of user conflicts and complaints resulting in an increased demand for investment in wider pathways in high traffic coastal pathway infrastructure.</p> <p>The operating envelope of a Segway is slightly wider than that required for a bicycle and is likely to lead to additional complaints from pedestrians on high volume coastal recreational pathways, which are often required to also cater for commuter cyclists due to a lack of alternative infrastructure.</p> <p>The ability to ride Segways on pedestrian crossings and foot crossings at signalized intersections without dismounting is also seen as discriminating against cyclists who are required to dismount.</p>	<p>Monitor the impact of the growth of alternative forms of mobility have on the service levels of existing pathways and cycleways to ensure the best outcome for all users.</p> <p>Clarification is also required on the legal position of Segway users when riding a motorized mobility device on crossing compared to the treatment of cyclists.</p>
<p>Roundabouts – A consistent lack of understanding and confusing diversity of treatments for cycling on the approaches to and within roundabouts is seen as potentially increasing the likelihood and severity of crashes for cyclists in these intersections. There is a need for a concerted campaign of education of how road rules apply for all users of roundabouts. The current tacit acceptance of this lack of knowledge needs to be changed if safety for cyclists at roundabouts is to improve.</p> <p>The variation in treatments applied to roundabouts by various jurisdictions and designers only increases the confusion. For example, the addition of circulating cycle lanes within roundabouts creates confusion regarding giving way to other traffic and the provision of a dedicated cycle lane at the entrance to a roundabout raise issues as to the right of cyclists to occupy general traffic lanes. Consistent standards need to be applied across the board to provide uniformity and encourage a better understanding of how road rules apply to these intersections.</p>	<p>Undertake a concerted campaign of education of how road rules apply to all users of roundabouts.</p> <p>Develop consistent standard treatment for roundabouts to reduce user confusion and increase safety.</p>
Keeping left and overtaking – Clarification is needed of the requirements on cyclists to keep left and overtaking and how this can legally result in cyclists being three abreast during passing manoeuvres and can also allow cyclists to legally pass stationary vehicles indicating left turns at intersection.	Undertake a campaign of education of how road rules apply to cyclists.
Current penalties and sanctions	
No comments offered	

Bicycle registration

Introducing a registration system for bicycles is seen as contrary to the Government's desire to reduce unnecessary regulation and would create another obstacle for increased cycling participation, which is universally recognized as having significant positive benefits for the whole community. More people riding bicycles creates less congestion on roads, more available parking spaces and lower health care costs for the balance of the community.

The cost of registering bicycles is unlikely to provide a positive cash flow and would impose a further financial cost of living on residents in tight financial times. Registration has not been proven to provide good community outcomes.

Whilst acknowledging that there may be valid reasons for suggesting registration for some types of bicycle use, overall registration is not warranted. There needs to be clear communication to the community of the reasons for not adopting bicycle registration.

Reject general bicycle registration as unnecessary additional regulation and a cost impost, which does not provide good community outcomes.

Signature:



Position:

Assistant Manager Transportation Strategy
Transportation Strategy
Regional Strategy & Planning

Date: 26 / 7 / 13