



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

Brisbane City Council ABN 72 002 765 795

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

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Queensland Parliamentary Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee Inquiry into Cycling Issues.

Brisbane City Council is committed through the Better Bikeways 4 Brisbane program to deliver safe, appealing paths and local streets that encourage people everywhere to make more of their trips by walking, cycling or public transport. This is supported by Council's highly successful Active School Travel program in which 134 schools have participated in since the program started in 2004 which encourages members of school communities to make schools safer and less congested by walking riding, carpooling or catching public transport to and from school.

It is Council's aim, as outlined in the *Brisbane Active Transport Strategy 2012 – 2026*, for more people to take up walking and cycling and to realise the associated health, congestion reduction, environmental and money-saving benefits for themselves and the city. By 2026, Council intends that 1 in 5 transport trips will be by walking and cycling.

Council is supportive of actions to periodically review cycling issues to identify ways of making cycling more accessible to more people.

This submission offers a response to the issues outlined on the Parliamentary website and the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) presentation made to the Committee on Tuesday 18 June 2013.

### **Road rules**

Council is generally supportive of the approach proposed by DTMR regarding potential changes to road rules to improve road access for cyclists those being:

- cyclists allowed to ride bikes across a crossing (signalised intersections and pedestrian crossings)
- bicycle lanes not needing to lead into a bicycle storage area

-2-

Council would also welcome the opportunity for Council's Transport Officers to meet with DTMR to ensure that the changes to the road rules required to facilitate these outcomes provide for the safety of all road users. In particular, allowing cyclists to ride across non-signalised crossings would need to ensure that:

- cyclists follow the same rules as pedestrians
- cyclists give way to pedestrians
- cyclists stop before entering non-signalised crossings to assist with managing cyclist speeds

#### Use of helmets for cyclists

Queensland road rules currently require all cyclists, with minor exemptions, to wear an approved helmet when cycling. This rule has attracted comments across a range of forums in recent years, with some support for the relaxation of the rule as a means of encouraging more people to take-up cycling, particularly for local trips.

Council supports the mandatory use of helmets in areas of potential conflict between cyclists and vehicles. That is: helmets should be required for all on-road cycling movements.

Council is however, supportive of the consideration for relaxation of this requirement in low risk locations, such as off-road pathways. This could include areas such as pathways in parks and along river and creek corridors where there is no interface with vehicular traffic.

Council acknowledges that the considerations of the cycle helmet rules will require further investigation and review of a wide range of issues including inter-State issues before any changes could be considered. Council offers its support to assist the Queensland Government in reviewing these matters including the introduction of potential trial programs.

#### **Potential initiatives – one metre rule**

It is understood that this proposal is to establish a road rule that requires motorists approaching a cyclist traveling in the same direction to provide a minimum passing distance of one metre between the vehicle and the cyclist. While in principle this proposal may have merit, Council would require further advice from TMR before making an informed position on this matter.

In general, Council supports the intent of the proposal to improve rider safety and to reduce the potential for vehicle and cycle conflicts.

However, there are a number of potential issues that would need to be addressed prior to implementation of this proposal, including consideration of:

- variations in safe passing distances based on vehicle speeds;
- road pavement and traffic lane widths;
- potential requirement for vehicles to move out of the traffic lane to safely overtake cyclists;  
and
- enforcement.

-3-

**Penalties and sanctions**

It is understood the Committee is considering as part of the Inquiry current penalties and sanctions, including where there are differential fine rates for cyclists compared to other road users. The introduction and enforcement of penalties and sanctions is essentially a matter of the Queensland Government.

Notwithstanding the importance of cyclists observing safety and good conduct, Council is concerned however, that increasing penalties may discourage users from taking up cycling. It is Council's aim to attract people of all ages to walk and cycle as a legitimate form of travel.

**Bicycle registration**

In regard the potential for bicycle registration, it is not clear to Council how this will assist in improving safety for cyclists. It is also not clear if the costs and work required to implement a registration system would be justified by the potential or perceived benefits of the system.

As mentioned above in relation to penalties and sanctions, Council is concerned this proposal will discourage users from cycling particularly recreational cycling where significant long term health, environmental and money-saving benefits can be realised. This approach is likely to be seen by the community as an additional cost of living and a disincentive to having a healthy lifestyle.

In principle, Council could not support this proposal as it would likely conflict with Council's intent under the *Brisbane Active Transport Strategy 2012 – 2026* to encourage walking and cycling.

If you wish to clarify or discuss any of these matters raised in this submission please contact Mr Lindsay Enright, Strategic Planning Manager, Transport Planning and Strategy on [REDACTED] or by email at [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Colin Jensen  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**