



# MEDIA STATEMENT

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26 January 2017

## Residents angry at bike grid snub

Brisbane City Council has rejected a petition signed by almost 3000 residents demanding a separated bicycle path network in city centre.

People who want to ride bicycles safely to and through Brisbane's central business district are alarmed that Brisbane City Council has rejected a plan to deliver a grid of separated bike lanes in the city's heart.

Council has ignored 2,849 residents who signed a petition last year calling for the CBD bike grid. The bi-directional bike lanes will symbolise Brisbane's move to being a modern city, with a focus on safe, accessible active transport.

Space For Cycling Brisbane and Central Business District Bicycle Users Group (CBD BUG) are concerned the plan has been rejected by a secretive council committee.

'The petition has not been discussed in council or even a report presented to council,' said Space For Cycling Brisbane spokesperson Belinda Ward. 'Considering this was the biggest e-petition they have ever received you would think that they would at least present the report to council.'

Brisbane Council is now set to go against the lead of cities around the world that have seen the benefit of safe cycling infrastructure on the streets of their main business and shopping areas. For example, Canadian cities Calgary and Edmonton have been competing to build effective -- and cost-effective -- central bicycle networks.

'We look forward to Brisbane not just catching up with other cities, but surpassing them,' said Ward. 'People on bicycles are a sign of a healthy, vibrant city. Other cities are realising this and it's time Brisbane did too.'

The CBD grid will fill key missing links in the network of bicycle lanes that has absorbed more than \$200 million of investment over the past two Brisbane city council terms. It will bring customers to local businesses, while making life safer and more convenient for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists.

The planned network of bi-directional paths would mean every part of the city centre was within two blocks of a safe bicycle route separated from motor vehicle traffic. The paths would link with the heavily-used riverside bicycle routes that pass nearby but have little or no connection with the CBD.

Many regular cycle commuters find that the last part of their ride -- the connections to and through the Brisbane CBD -- is the worst part of their ride to work.

The bike lanes would also increase use of Brisbane's CityCycle service. Other cities have experienced rapid growth in the use of similar hire bikes as they have opened safe, separated cycling routes.

The CBD grid does not have to be expensive. Calgary, a Canadian city which is similar in size to Brisbane, recently completed a bicycle path network like the CBD minimum grid for less than \$8 million. And last year (October 2016), the council in nearby Canadian rival Edmonton voted unanimously in favour of a similar network, for a similarly low price.

Media Contacts

Belinda Ward - 0434 906 364

Donald Campbell - 0402 609 723

The approach in both cities is similar -- use low-cost, easily moved barriers like planters to create a separated network quickly and inexpensively. Then tinker and improve the design. The idea of building a safe bike lanes in central Brisbane has received record-breaking public support. An e-petition calling for action on the CBD minimum grid secured 2,183 signatures by the closing date of 13 August 2016. Another 665 people signed a paper version of the petition. Petition sponsors Space For Cycling Brisbane and the CBD BUG expect that the Queensland State government will help the city build the minimum grid--as it has done with other Brisbane bicycle infrastructure--by providing funding and design support.

The minimum grid petition can be found at

<http://epetitions.brisbane.qld.gov.au/petition/view/pid/341>

- The CBD minimum grid petition is an initiative of the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle Users Group (CBD BUG - [www.cbdbug.org.au/](http://www.cbdbug.org.au/)) and of Space For Cycling Brisbane ([www.space4cyclingbne.com/](http://www.space4cyclingbne.com/)), a coalition of Bicycle User Groups and other organisations from across the city.
- For more information, please call Donald Campbell, co-convenor of Brisbane CBD BUG on 0402 609 723, or Belinda Ward of Space4Cycling Brisbane on 0434 906 364.
- We can also arrange interviews with regular cycle commuters and other people who ride bicycles in Brisbane, about the challenges of getting around Brisbane's CBD streets.

## Background

- The CBD minimum grid of proposed bike lanes forms a square that runs along:
  - the north-west side of Ann Street
  - the north-east side of Edward Street
  - the south-east side of Margaret Street, and
  - the north-east side of George Street (completing the existing 200 metre bike lane near the magistrates' court).
- It also includes a short section of protected bikeway along Herschel Street to connect with the riverside Bicentennial Bikeway to the Western Suburbs.
  - This is a map of the proposed bike lanes. Please contact Space For Cycling Brisbane or CBD BUG if you would like a digital copy.

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- The lanes would have minimal effect on motor vehicles, as
  - fewer than 80 on-street parking spaces would be removed (out of 31,000 parking spaces in the CBD)
  - only three bus stops would need to be moved
  - the paths would be designed to accommodate loading zones for businesses, as has been done in many other cities.
- Brisbane City Council has spent nearly a quarter of a billion dollars on bicycle infrastructure over the past decade, yet it has only built 200 metres of separated bikeways in the CBD. This is based on the following BCC bicycle infrastructure investment pledges:
  - \$25.9 million (actual spending) for 2004-2008
  - \$100 million for 2008-2012
  - \$120 million for 2012-2016
  - \$100 million for 2016-2020

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