



# RAY SMITH

## FOR LORD MAYOR

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February 18, 2011

Mr Paul French  
CBD Bug  
GPO Box 2104  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Mr French,

Thank you for your letter dated 11 February 2011 regarding Brisbane City Council's CityCycle scheme, and for the opportunity for me to clarify my position.

Along with my Labor colleagues in Council, I have always supported a bike hire scheme for our city. However, I have serious concerns about the way the Lord Mayor has implemented the CityCycle scheme.

I believe the scheme has a greater focus on advertising than it does on cycling. My concern is that cycling is used to justify the proliferation of revenue-raising, distracting and sometimes dangerously-placed advertising signage.

I also believe there has not been enough done to create a safe cycling environment in the inner-city areas where the scheme operates. The Lord Mayor has already admitted that accidents between motorists and CityCycle cyclists are "inevitable", and that is huge concern for me (*Courier-Mail*, 26 August 2010). CityCycle will only be successful if there are safe, designated bikeways for cyclists to use, but the Lord Mayor made no attempt to do this in the two years leading up to CityCycle's opening on 1 October 2010.

I also have concerns about helmet use. The Lord Mayor has known since day one that helmets are compulsory for cyclists and after two years he has failed to come up with a solution to the helmet issue.

CityCycle was 12 months overdue and \$8 million over budget and throughout the scheme's implementation, there was also a concerning lack of consultation undertaken.

There is a lot of work still to be done if CityCycle is to become safe and successful and I have pledged to undertake an immediate audit of the scheme to do this, if I am elected as Lord Mayor in 2012.



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Regarding the comments recently published by the Courier Mail online, I'm sure you understand that sometimes the media can oversimplify an argument or editorialise comments. The position I have outlined above is a far cry from 'declaring war' on CityCycle and this is the position my Council colleagues and I have long-held.

The published quote from me stated, "It is clear from the figures that people aren't interested in using it and I think right now the priority is taking those funds and instead of rolling out more of the big yellow bikes, the priority is to rebuild Brisbane."

I stand by these comments because evidence (such as usage numbers) shows the first stage of the scheme is not being fully utilised yet and priority should be given to repairing flood damage in our city. I also believe Council needs to get stage one of the scheme right before they roll out more bike stations and bicycles.

With regard to the comments included in your media release on the Lord Mayor's Northern Link (now Legacy Way) toll tunnel, I must say:

Since I was endorsed as Labor's Lord Mayoral candidate, I have been vocal in my opposition to the construction of another expensive toll tunnel that no one uses, and does not solve traffic congestion.

In the aftermath of the floods, I again called on the Lord Mayor to scrap the project and redirect the \$470 million in ratepayers' funds that has been set aside for the tunnel to urgent flood recovery and long-term flood mitigation works. Northern Link will leave this Council with a huge debt of \$2.2 billion and when it opens in 2014/15, the tunnel is forecast to have an average annual operating deficit of \$56 million in each of the first five years of full operations (QTC Report, p. 6). As you are aware, this tunnel will limit Council's ability to fund basic projects and services for years to come.

You may be interested to hear that the Lord Mayor announced \$16 million in cuts to bikeway projects yesterday to fund the flood recovery (Nundah Creek, Gateway North, Oxley Creek, Perrin Creek, Kedron Brook).

These cuts would not be necessary if the Lord Mayor hadn't maxed out the Council credit card with a huge, \$2.2 billion debt for the Northern Link toll tunnel.

I understand you issued a media release 'condemning' me for my 'position' on both CityCycle and Northern Link and I am pleased to be able to set the record straight. If you are ever concerned about a position I have taken, I urge you to get in touch with me so these types of errors do not occur again.

I would certainly welcome the opportunity to meet with you and other members of CBD BUG. While we may not always agree on every policy position, I am hopeful we can work together and I look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely,



**RAY SMITH**  
**Brisbane Lord Mayoral Candidate**



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