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Letter opposing cyclist ban in Supreme Courts precinct

From: **Brisbane CBD BUG** (convenors@cdbbug.org.au)
Sent: Tuesday, 25 August 2015 11:02:07 PM
To: attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au (attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au)
Cc: Donald Campbell (donald@cdbbug.org.au); Richard Bean (richardb@cdbbug.org.au); Aaron Ball (aaronb@cdbbug.org.au); Ben Wilson (bqmanager@bq.org.au); Andrew Demack (andrew@bq.org.au)

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The Honourable Yvette D'Ath
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
GPO Box 149
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Via email to: attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister

I refer to the report on the Channel 7 evening news of 25 August 2015 claiming that following a complaint from a Supreme Court Justice people will very shortly be banned from riding bikes through the plaza in front of the Supreme Courts precinct. This news report can viewed on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=1019436788069173&fref=nf>.

This email calls on you to urgently intercede in this matter to preclude this ban from being implemented.

As background for you, the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) is a grass roots volunteer organisation of almost 800 members, representing the interests of the large number of people riding bicycles to, from and within the Brisbane city centre. It is active in seeking policy decisions at all levels of government supporting people who want to cycle, and in particular relating to improved infrastructure, end-of-trip facilities, integration of cycling needs with other transport modes and a regulatory environment friendly towards people riding bikes. CBD BUG members meet monthly to exchange information and ideas, discuss issues of relevance and determine the direction of policies to benefit CBD cyclists.

There is a plethora of reasons why this ban should not be implemented. The following are just some of these reasons.

1. This ban would be totally contrary to the *Queensland Cycle Strategy 2011-2021*, which states "Queensland values cycling for the important contribution it makes to the development of a sustainable and effective transport system" and the "Queensland Government's cycling vision is 'more cycling more often' on safe, direct and connected routes".

2. Making people get off their bikes to walk though this precinct reduces the amenity and convenience of cycling. It would be yet another factor that puts people off riding bikes for transport – further contributing to the range of problems confronting this community such as worsening traffic congestion and the rising tide of obesity.
3. The Brisbane Central Business District is almost entirely without safe spaces that allow people to ride bikes while physically segregated from motor vehicles, with this plaza being an important off-road cyclist route connecting the Kurilpa Bridge and the Roma Street Parklands.
4. The spacious nature of this plaza area makes it inherently more conducive to being shared safely by people riding bikes and people walking, in contrast to the majority of Brisbane's so called "bikeways network", which to a significant extent comprises narrow shared paths that pedestrians and cyclists have to use in close proximity to each other.
5. This legal questions allegedly raised by a Supreme Court Justice about who will be responsible for the claims for injuries and accidents that may occur in this precinct following crashes between people riding bikes and people walking are no different to those that exist across the overwhelming majority of this state's footpaths and nearby King George Square. Therefore, this precinct is nothing peculiar from a legal perspective that requires a cyclists ban to be applied.
6. Research conducted by the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q) in the Brisbane CBD during 2013 indicates that cyclists have "few conflicts with pedestrians". (*Trends in cycling patterns and interactions with pedestrians in the city centre*. Amy Schramm and Narelle Haworth, Asia-Pacific Cycle Congress, 2013 <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/58550/1/58550Pres.pdf>).

On the basis of this above information it is clear this proposed ban is unnecessary and ill-considered. There needs to be further consultation on this matter, and at the least, a rigorous study conducted to identify if a problem exists prior to any further contemplation of a cyclist ban in this precinct.

I look forward to your response on this issue.

Yours faithfully

Paul French
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25 August 2015
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