



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

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Councillor Ryan Murphy
Chair, Public and Active Transport Committee
Brisbane City Council
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Via email: emobility@brisbane.qld.gov.au

Dear Councillor Murphy

Submission on Brisbane City Council draft e-Mobility Strategy

The explosion in the use of e-scooters and other e-mobility devices witnessed in Brisbane recently confirms what an innumerable number of surveys have previously indicated over many years - that Brisbane residents want alternatives to being stuck in traffic congestion, which also often then negatively impacts this city's expensive and largely inadequate public transport.

Travelling around Brisbane is a daily problem for locals and visitors. During the daily peak travel periods (and often now outside these hours) Brisbane's 6,000 km of roads are overburdened due to excessive use of private motor vehicles – with the vast majority of these vehicles being private cars with only a single occupant. The unnecessary use of these mobile lounge rooms is clogging up our roads - delaying public transport, freight and other vehicles e.g. tradespeople with tools that actually need to be on the road. This is creating economic inefficiency now estimated to be costing Brisbane more than \$2 billion annually, along with harming the environment and placing people's safety at risk.

Accordingly, the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) commends Brisbane City Council (BCC) for developing its draft e-mobility strategy. As far as we can identify such a strategy is not only innovative within Australia but is also pioneering on an international basis, as very few cities anywhere have developed such a document.

While all the "Directions" articulated in this draft e-mobility strategy are supported, the rest of this submission addresses those specific elements of the document that are viewed as particularly critical for its success.

- 1. Maintain a mandatory cap on the number of shared e-scooters and e-bikes hire available within the inner city.*

We question the need for these caps as there is no limit on the number of motor vehicles, which individually take up far more space, that can enter the CBD.

The only genuine obstacle to allowing an unlimited number of these devices to be used in the CBD is the disproportionate allocation of the CBD's public space to motor vehicles, with a glaring omission from this strategy being the provision of additional space for these devices.

We recognise Council is currently taking steps towards correcting this imbalance via its CityLink project. However, beyond the currently announced stages of this project there is clearly much more that can and needs to be done to enable more widespread e-mobility use.

There is only a low risk to pedestrians from e-mobility devices being used on footpaths. Nevertheless, the elderly in particular may feel threatened by the presence of e-mobility users on the footpath.

Motorists are not expected to drive where roads and parking haven't been provided (although though they commonly do anyway), so people using e-mobility devices should not have to cope with inadequate or no infrastructure being provided.

Another space requirement for shared e-mobility users comes from their need to park these devices, especially at the end of trips terminating in very busy areas. The provision of parking space for shared dockless devices would encourage users to park in a more orderly manner at these locations.

Additionally, some locations need parking bans imposed. One such example is the southern end of the Goodwill Bridge east of Stanley Street - due to this precinct's already tight confines. It is regularly the case that for their own convenience "juicers" park multiple e-scooters at this location with little regard to the congestion they cause for bridge users.

2. Investigate alternatives to caps on shared e-scooters and e-bikes citywide

Rather than imposing numerical caps on shared e-mobility devices Council could apply a sliding scale to the fees it levies on providers that would instead via a price signal encourage providers to themselves limit the number of e-mobility devices.

Providers could be charged a dollar rate per device for the first fixed number of scooters, with the dollar rate per device increasing as the number of devices to be deployed increases (possibly in block numbers of devices for greater simplicity).

3. Extend scheme operations into areas outside of the CBD with low car-ownership and/or connections to public transport to encourage first-and-last mile travel.

This direction is strongly supported as in comparison to inner city residents, people living further out from the CBD are typically less affluent and more car-dependent because they have to travel further, and also have fewer public transport options.

Recent car parking expansions at Brisbane train stations by the Queensland Government costing upwards of \$30,000 and more per car space also point to the pressing need to facilitate people traveling to and from these public transport hubs via a different mode than private cars.

To foster provision of shared e-mobility devices in these more dispersed areas BCC could apply low or even no fees per device for these regions. This would also recognise the higher cost device of service provision and lower rate of return on investment for providers across these more geographically dispersed areas. BCC would also benefit from the resulting reduced growth in road maintenance costs in the shorter term, and the reduced perception for the need to widen roads over the longer term.

The shared e-scooters currently in use are commonly seen at locations where they have been left by users well beyond the bounds of the CBD. This should be viewed as a signal from the community for the need to expand these services.

4. *Adopt the Mobility Data Specification (MDS) to ensure all e-bike and e-scooter operators report consistent data*

Adopting a standard MDS set will enable Council to make better informed city planning decisions and should be a contractual requirement of all approved e-mobility device providers.

Academics / researchers should also be allowed access to this data - as their work is invaluable for increasing understanding of these new travel modes.

Ideally, the trip data (e.g. GPS track with start and stop times) could be made available on the data.brisbane.qld.gov.au website and updated quarterly, as CityCycle counts have been in the past.

Importantly, this data should ensure confidentiality of e-mobility users, and they should not be required to share personal information with providers.

5. *Need for timelines for delivery and quantifiable success measures of the stated "Directions"*

Transparency and accountability are key tenets of contemporary public administration.

In the absence of definitive timeframes (even if generous) and quantifiable measures of success there is little guarantee for the community that Council will act on this strategy.

For example, the growth in trips via e-mobility could be included as a target in an Active Transport strategy update.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this strategy.

Yours sincerely



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Brisbane CBD BUG
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Cc: Bicycle Queensland
Space4Cycling Brisbane
Queensland Walks