

Thursday 27 August 2020

Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk
Premier and Minister for Trade
thepremier@premiers.qld.gov.au

Dear Premier,

Re: Bicycle Queensland - Priorities for 2020 State Election

The 2020 State Election, to be held in the midst of the most serious public health crisis in a century, highlights the importance of active transport and regular physical activity in improving population health.

Bicycle Queensland's priorities for the 2020 election fall into three areas:

1. Funding for the Principal Cycle Network

Cycling for transport and recreation has seen a 300% increase in popularity in Queensland cities in 2020. This means that 1.2 million Queenslanders are riding their bikes regularly. This election is an opportunity for political leaders to invest in the health of Queenslanders by increasing the pace at which the Principal Cycle Network gets built. This activity creates jobs across Queensland, in building and maintaining an increasing network of bikeways.

Bicycle Queensland acknowledges the level of commitment from the current Labor Government, and great progress made by State Government in partnership with local governments in provision for bikeways over the past two terms.

We forecast that demand for safe, connected bikeways across Queensland's cities and towns will rise dramatically over the next term. The toll road operator Transurban's report on Urban Mobility Trends reported a 71% increase in intent to cycle for transport in Brisbane post-pandemic, with the result that 15% of all trips will be by active transport. To make this possible, the Principle Cycle Network needs more investment, up to 5% of the total transport infrastructure spend across the whole state. Well planned bikeways deliver a cost-benefit ratio of 5:1. Every dollar spent returns \$5 benefit to the community.

2. Safety of vulnerable road users around heavy vehicles

There is deep and ongoing concern about the safety of vulnerable road users around heavy vehicles. All levels of government are turning to construction and infrastructure projects to kickstart the economy, therefore an increase in heavy vehicle movements across our state is expected. Three high-profile fatalities are still fresh in the collective memory of the cycling community, and we believe there is more which can be done in both physical improvements to the heavy vehicle fleet, and education of all road users around interactions with heavy vehicles.

You are encouraging Queenslanders to take to the road and holiday within our state. The following investment in heavy vehicle safety is a direct investment into saving Queensland lives.

- a. Conventional bonneted trucks typically have a massive blind spot forward of the bonnet, up to 12 metres. A bonnet mirror, fitted for \$200, can provide improved visibility for heavy vehicle drivers, which leads to safer operation. We request *that bonnet mirrors be made mandatory*

equipment for all conventional bonneted trucks, and that the State fund these mirrors for all operators on a means-tested basis (Total cost: less than \$1 million).

- b. Safety camera systems fore and aft in the cab, and wide-angle cameras mounted on left and right mirror enable review of truck operations, both in real time over the internet, but also post-incident for learning and training. We request *that the State offers 50-50 funding with heavy vehicle operators on the cost of camera systems, up to \$2,500 per vehicle (Total cost approx. \$12.5 million).*
- c. Bicycle Queensland requests that State-funded projects require all contractors to use heavy vehicles which meet these standards, with mitigation for blind spots and cameras to record all interactions. We believe this it is imperative that the State Government lead in encouraging the logistics sector to adopt the currently available safety improvements, most of which have not been installed by independent contractors.

3. Cycle tourism and rail trails

Bicycle Queensland has welcomed the State Government's increased investment in rail trails over the past term. Continued funding for rail trails will boost cycle tourism, with visitor nights increasing especially via Queenslanders seeing their own state. Building a statewide network of rail trails will provide economic regeneration for rural and regional Queensland, while also encouraging active recreation opportunities for local and visitors alike. Tourism impact studies have shown that the average daily visitor spend on rail trails is more than \$75.

Bicycle Queensland requests a policy change to the rail trails funding program so that rural and remote councils are exempt from the 50-50 funding model, and can receive up to 100% funding. Queensland's historic railway network branched out from the coast into the inland, but rural and remote councils with fewer economic resources are missing out on the rail trail boom.

The fastest growing categories in new bicycle sales are gravel/adventure bikes, and electric mountain bikes (eMTB). These styles of bikes are ideal for exploring the rail trails of Queensland, so investing in rail trails is also investing in the bicycle retail sector.

The success of the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail in restoring the economies of towns such as Esk, Toogoolawah and Blackbutt can be repeated across the state, from Gin Gin and Mt Perry, to Monto, Kalpowar and Many Peaks.

COVID-19 has changed life for all Queenslanders, and there is much to do to turn the negative economic and health impacts around. Our economic recovery must focus on proven ways to improve the health and happiness of all Queenslanders. Investing in all aspects of active transport and active living is the best way to do this.

Bicycle Queensland welcomes the opportunity to partner in the delivery of education initiatives to support safe bike riding in all its forms across the state.

Kind regards,



Rebecca Randazzo
Chief Executive
Bicycle Queensland