



MEDIA RELEASE

Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

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Cyclists blast Council Opposition for politicising bike hire scheme

City cyclists have rejected a suggestion the Brisbane City Council (BCC) budget for the recently commenced CityCycle public bike hire scheme should be redirected to flood repairs.

The reaction comes following the BCC Opposition's latest attack on the scheme, despite it only being progressively rolled out from 1 October 2010. With 700 bikes on the street the scheme is barely more than one-third implemented and its supporters say that to pull back its funding before it has been fully installed will guarantee its failure.

Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) spokesman Paul French said "with CityCycle's membership approaching 4,000 the scheme is already getting many more people on bikes and making cycling safer because having more cyclists on the road makes it safer for all cyclists. CityCycle's four-year \$8.2 million budget is a pittance compared to the \$1.3 billion Brisbane ratepayers are going to sink into the Legacy Way (Northern Link) tunnel over the next four years. If Council needs to make savings the obvious places to look first are the big-ticket, uneconomical projects".

A Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) review in August 2009 predicted Legacy Way would operate at an average annual deficit of \$48 million per year for the first four years i.e. from 2014-15 to 2018-19. This study predicted it would take until the 2026 financial year before the Legacy Way tunnel "generates sufficient surplus operating cash flow to fully meet principal and interest repayments".

In contrast, the CBD BUG already knows of many people directly benefiting from the scheme - including users who were not previously cyclists whose behaviour change has reduced congestion on Brisbane's roads and public transport.

"Council Opposition would contribute more value by advocating for the riverside path along the Eagle Street Pier to be re-opened, or for greater use of the CityCycle scheme. With ferry services out of action due to the flood it is a great alternative way for people to get around" Mr French stated.

He added "that the only way to interpret the sniping at a program providing so many benefits to the community for so little funding is that it is short-sighted political opportunism. Whether it's delaying ferry terminal upgrades or attacking public bike hire schemes, Council Opposition continues to demonstrate they are more interested in playing political games instead of getting on with the serious business of freeing Brisbane residents from the tyranny of traffic gridlock".

Ends.

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