Queensland
State of Cycling Report
2017
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Cycling in Queensland – a snapshot

Queenslanders rode their bike in a typical week.1

Queenslanders travelled 348 million kilometres by bicycle in 2015, a 46% increase compared to the kilometres cycled in 2001.2

The most common reasons Queensland adults cycle are

- Exercise and fitness
- Just for fun
- Travel to work

10,237 km of Principal Cycle Network was identified and mapped covering 48 local government areas for 98.9% of Queenslanders.

More than $211 million invested into safe cycling through the Cycling Infrastructure Program, creating 444.6 km of cycleways.

Cycling tourism and events boost the Queensland economy.

226 km of rail trails have been built.

Major cycling events bring thousands of visitors to Queensland every year.

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Introduction

The Queensland Government’s vision for cycling, as set out in the *Queensland Cycling Strategy 2017–2027*, is for more cycling, more often.

Cycling benefits everyone. It reduces traffic congestion and pollution and helps keep us active and healthy. The more people who get on their bikes to commute to work, to spend time with family and friends or to explore our beautiful state, the better off we all are.

This report provides a snapshot of the current state of cycling in Queensland, reports on cycling trends and draws from current research and monitoring of cycling-related data across the state.

Having this baseline of data will enable us to track our progress over time in embedding cycling into Queensland’s transport system, culture, communities and economy.

This *Queensland State of Cycling Report* will be updated and published every two years, along with the *Queensland Cycling Action Plan*. This will enable us to track our progress in meeting the five key objectives of the *Queensland Cycling Strategy 2017—2027* over the next 10 years:

- Objective 1: More cycling, more often in Queensland.
- Objective 2: Cycle networks that are complete, connected and integrated with other transport modes.
- Objective 3: Positive perceptions of cycling throughout Queensland.
- Objective 4: Cycling helping the Queensland economy to prosper.
- Objective 5: A strong evidence base that guides decision-making about cycling.

View online at: blog.tmr.qld.gov.au/cycling
Objective 1: More cycling, more often in Queensland

Knowing how many people are riding their bikes, why they ride, where they ride and how often they ride is important to help us understand what will grow cycling even further across our state. The more people who ride, the more benefit cycling has to our way of life, economy and environment.

How many people are riding?

Between 2001 and 2011, the number of people who cycled rose significantly across Queensland.4 There has been no significant change between 2011 and 2017. In 2017, we know that about 802,000 Queenslanders (16.6 per cent of the state’s population) rode their bike in a typical week. About twice this many people (1.7 million) had cycled in the previous year.5

Counts of cyclists have shown that cycling participation has increased where well-planned cycling infrastructure has been built (Figure 1). As a result, we expect that our objective to improve cycle networks and infrastructure will contribute to supporting a growing number of people riding over the next 10 years.

To track our progress, we will measure:

| Percentage of Queenslanders who ride a bicycle in a typical week | Baseline |
| Percentage of Queensland children who ride a bicycle in a typical week | 16.6%7 |
| Proportion of cyclists who are female | 51.5% (under 10) 38.9% (10-17 years)8 |
| Proportion of cyclists who ride for transport | 38.0%9 |

From 2011 to 2017 there was significant growth in cyclists using new infrastructure on the principal cycle network.6

Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Veloway 1, Brisbane</th>
<th>Aeroglen Drive Cycleway, Cairns</th>
<th>Gateway Bridge, Brisbane</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Cyclists using the Veloway 1 cycle highway, a 17-kilometre long cycleway providing a continuous route from Brisbane’s south-eastern suburbs to the CBD within the principal cycle network.

Photo by: Bicycle Queensland

*Preliminary results

Figure 1: Between 2011 and 2017, the number of people using new cycling infrastructure on the principal cycle network grew significantly.
Who is riding?

Children and young people are the most likely to cycle regularly. Almost 50 per cent of children aged under 10 years, and a third of older kids and teenagers ride a bike in a typical week.\(^{11}\)

As people get older, they tend to cycle less. Significantly fewer young adults and only about four per cent of people aged over 50 years cycle in a typical week.\(^{12}\)

Cycling rates also differ by gender. About twice as many males as females ride a bike in a typical week in Queensland. This imbalance is present across the state and nation.\(^{13}\)

We know the number of females riding is a good indicator of the friendliness of our cycling environment so addressing barriers to women cycling such as perceived safety is likely to grow cycling across Queensland.

Why do people ride?

The most common reason Queenslanders ride is for health and fitness. This is particularly true for older people. In 2016, more than 90 per cent of people aged over 65 years chose to cycle because they wanted to stay fit and healthy.\(^{15}\)

Most cyclists in Queensland ride for recreation (nearly 80 per cent) and 39.1 per cent ride for transport.\(^{16}\) Research shows that to get more people cycling for transport, cycling must be viewed as safe and convenient and cycling infrastructure needs to be well connected to destinations.\(^{27}\)

Surveys along recently built cycling infrastructure in Queensland show that the majority of people using cycleways on weekdays are riding for transport.\(^{18}\) This supports the need for dedicated cycling infrastructure that helps people ride as a form of transport.
Objective 2: Cycle networks that are complete, connected and integrated with other transport modes

Research shows that people are more likely to cycle for transport or recreation when there are safe, connected and direct routes to ride on.\(^2^2\)

Planning our cycle network

We have published Principal Cycle Network Plans to provide a blueprint for a connected network of core routes across the state needed to get more people cycling, more often. The plans and accompanying priority route maps cover 48 local government areas and reflect a ‘one network’ approach to cycle network planning.

We have completed the Priority Cycle Route Improvement Program pilot, a signature project from the 2013 Parliamentary Inquiry into Cycling Issues. New draft guidelines were piloted in Cairns, Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay to help deliver longer, safer and more continuous corridors for cyclists on priority routes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To track our progress, we will measure:</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of kilometres of principal cycle network built as part of the Cycling Infrastructure Program</td>
<td>444.6 kilometres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of trips to public transport undertaken by bicycle</td>
<td>1.1%(^2^3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of public transport stations with bicycle facilities*</td>
<td>51% secure bicycle parking 52% unsecured bicycle parking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(\text{*Includes Translink Bus Stations, Busway Stations, Brisbane Ferry Terminals, CityCat Terminals, Gold Coast Light Rail and Citytrain. A station may accommodate both types of bicycle parking facilities, figures should be considered separately.}\)
Delivering cycling infrastructure

Since 2003, the Department of Transport and Main Roads’ Cycling Infrastructure Policy has helped to improve the safety, efficiency and reliability of Queensland’s transport network. It requires any new state transport project along a principal cycle route to provide appropriate cycling infrastructure such as dedicated space for bike lanes or an off-road bike path. It also makes sure cycling infrastructure is included in projects from the beginning, rather than having to retrofit facilities after a new project is built, saving time and money.

Better public transport links

Between 2009 and 2012, only 1.1 per cent of trips to public transport in South East Queensland were made by bicycle. Since that time, we have invested in more quality links and facilities between cycling infrastructure and public transport stations to make it easier for people to combine riding and public transport during their trip. This includes bicycle parking facilities, which have been installed at many public transport stations in South East Queensland, as well as at major interchanges statewide.

The Gold Coast light rail and Moreton Bay Rail Project are two examples of public transport projects that have improved access to public transport for cyclists and pedestrians.

![Image of cycling infrastructure](image-url)

51% of public transport stations in Queensland have secure bicycle parking and 52% have bicycle rails or racks.*

* Includes Translink Bus Stations, Busway Stations, Brisbane Ferry Terminals, CityCat Terminals, Gold Coast Light Rail and Citytrain. A station may accommodate both types of bicycle parking facilities, figures should be considered separately.

Linking cycling to public transport: The Moreton Bay Rail Project

The 12.6 kilometre Moreton Bay Rail Project provides a safe and continuous pedestrian and cycle path, with access to six new train stations along the way.

The link is located about 23 kilometres from the Brisbane city centre, and passes through developing residential areas such as North Lakes.

The path is designed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists making local, inter-suburb, recreational and regional trips.

Bicycle parking with CCTV security coverage has been installed at the train stations along the link to encourage more people to cycle to the stations.
Feature: 10 years of the Cycling Infrastructure Program

Queensland’s Cycling Infrastructure Program (CIP), in place since 2006, is a major funding initiative to speed up the delivery of the principal cycle network, and encourage Queenslanders to cycle more. The CIP promotes and supports collaboration between the state and local governments to achieve a ‘one network’ outcome for cycling.

The Cycling Infrastructure Program invests in:

- capital works to complete the principal cycle network on the state-controlled network.
- 50/50 capital grants to local governments to complete the principal cycle network on the locally-controlled network.

The Queensland Government has invested more than $211 million into safe cycling over the past 10 years. This means many more Queenslanders now have access to safe, direct and connected cycling routes.

From 2006 to 2017, the CIP has delivered:

- 411 projects
- 444.6 kilometres of cycling infrastructure
- $211 million investment to expand and connect the cycle network.

In 2016, more than one million Queenslanders lived within one kilometre of cycling infrastructure funded under the CIP, compared with just over 6,000 in 2006 (Figure 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>6,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>46,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>129,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>306,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>521,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>690,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>741,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>850,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>920,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>970,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1,048,335</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Number of people living within one kilometre of CIP-funded infrastructure.
Objective 3: Positive perceptions of cycling throughout Queensland

Cycling is already a popular activity. More than half of Queensland households have at least one working bicycle. Improving people’s perceptions of cycling, especially among other road users, is essential to increasing the number of people who cycle.

Promoting cycling in the community

We support events and education programs that promote cycling in the community and help to create and sustain positive perceptions of cycling.

Tens of thousands of people participate in cycling events across Queensland each year. They include people who cycle regularly or for sport, as well as those who ride for social reasons or who want a new challenge.

We have run—in partnership with federal and local governments—initiatives such as the Healthy Active School Travel program, which promoted more active travel in communities. This program has helped to change the way parents, educators and students think about travelling to school by bike, with 88 per cent of parents involved in the program agreeing that it brought benefits to their community.

To track our progress, we will measure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of cyclists who are comfortable riding in their area</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of cyclists who feel conditions are improving in their area</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of drivers with a good knowledge of cycling related road rules*</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of drivers with positive perceptions of cyclists**</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Average results from four questions asked on knowledge of cycling road rules
**Average results from four questions asked on driver perceptions of cyclists

As part of Bike Week 2016, the Great Brisbane Bike Ride attracted more than 2000 participants.

Bike Week

Every year we partner with Bicycle Queensland to support Bike Week—the largest cycling festival in Queensland—celebrated in Brisbane and in regional centres across the state. It is a celebration of the joy of cycling and the associated health benefits. Bike Week events are inclusive of all ages and cycling abilities, and include a mix of education, cycling experiences and promotional activities.

Photo by Bicycle Queensland
Encouraging new riders

Our investment in bicycle education initiatives that encourage new riders, particularly women and children, to start riding or to cycle more helps to grow cycling in the community.

For example, Community Road Safety Grants support bicycle education projects that teach people practical riding skills, road rules and how to identify hazards within the environment in which they cycle. Funding is provided directly to local governments and community organisations to run these programs, which ensures they are tailored to local environments.

Safety and other barriers

About 1.53 million people are interested in riding to school or work if the conditions were right. Research shows that concerns relating to safety are often the main reason why people decide not to cycle. A 2015 survey by the University of Sydney found that too much traffic and too few bike lanes and bike paths were two of the top reasons Queenslanders would not cycle to work or school.

Sharing the road

The way motorists view cyclists can have a big impact on creating a positive cycling culture. In a 2016 Department of Transport and Main Roads survey to inform the Queensland Cycling Strategy 2017—2027, respondents rated issues relating to sharing the road as the second highest area of priority after infrastructure improvements.

Rules in place to help people share the road are having an impact on people’s perceptions and behaviours. Minimum distances for cars to pass bikes were trialled in 2014, and made permanent in 2016. Since the trial, drivers reported being more aware of cyclists on the road.

Since the introduction of the minimum passing distance rules:

- 73% of cyclists and 60% of drivers observed motorists giving bicycle riders more room when overtaking than they used to.

- 60% of Australian women would like to cycle more than they currently do. To encourage them to cycle more, women would like:

  - more physically separated cycling facilities
  - more bike lanes
  - better lighting

The most important motivations for women to cycle are:

- health and fitness
- fun and enjoyment
- getting outside.
Cycling in regional areas

The rate of cycling varies across regional areas. Participation rates are high in areas that have invested in quality cycling infrastructure (Figure 4). Several regional areas have amongst the lowest participation rates in Queensland.

A sample of regions showing participation rates above the Queensland average in 2015:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Participation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Queensland average</td>
<td>22.1% +3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay</td>
<td>25.2% +7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairns</td>
<td>29.7% +1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gladstone</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Percentage of the population of selected regional areas that cycle in a typical month.46

People tend to ride more for sport and recreation in regional areas. Many local governments and communities are investing in building and improving mountain biking trails and rail corridors to encourage people to enjoy the outdoors by bike, as well as attract visitors to their regions.

In 2016, 645 people participated in the Paluma Push mountain bike event in the Paluma range near Townsville.*

Cycling thriving in the Cairns region

The city of Cairns in far north Queensland is experiencing the benefits of a cycling-friendly and more active community.

In partnership, the Queensland Government and Cairns Regional Council have delivered $22 million in cycling infrastructure since 2009.

The new paths total almost 33 kilometres. Approximately 60,000 residents will live within one kilometre of the network of cycle paths when the current set of projects is completed in 2018.

The new infrastructure has been complemented by targeted promotion of the construction of cycleways, promoting cycling in workplaces and recreational cycling events by showcasing the new infrastructure. Much of this was delivered as part of $3.3 million in matched funding through the Active Towns Pilot Program from 2012 to 2015.

In 2016, the National Cycling Participation Survey found that 22.7 per cent of residents in the Cairns region rode their bike in a typical week, which is significantly higher than the Queensland average of 16.6 per cent.39 There is also a higher proportion of females and children riding regularly in Cairns compared with the state average.

* Event data provided by Mountain Bike Australia.
Objective 4: Cycling helping the Queensland economy to prosper

We know well-planned cycling infrastructure pays itself off in health benefits and reduced traffic congestion. The full extent of the contribution of cycling to the Queensland economy is not well understood. That’s why, as part of the Queensland Cycling Strategy 2017–2027, we are investigating the range of benefits of cycling to Queensland businesses and the overall economy.

Investment in cycling infrastructure has contributed to our economy, with almost all projects showing positive benefit-cost ratios. Most economic benefits of cycling projects result from improved health of Queenslanders, reduced congestion and reduced parking and vehicle operating costs.40

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1</td>
<td>$3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1</td>
<td>$4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1</td>
<td>$5.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1</td>
<td>$7.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5: Benefit-cost ratios for selected infrastructure projects show for every dollar invested there are positive returns to the Queensland economy.40 This covers quantifiable benefits and costs following the Australian Transport Assessment and Planning Guidelines – M4 Active Travel.40

Benefits to business

Cycling supports local businesses. For example, cyclists often buy bicycle goods and services such as for bike maintenance within their community. Cyclists also regularly visit local cafés and other businesses during their rides.

The value of cycling experiences

Cycling events provide a much-needed injection of funds to local economies. Cyclists and supporters attending large cycling events use local businesses and services, and often promote places to other people.

The popularity of cycling as a holiday activity has also grown in recent years, opening up a new market. Cities and regions that invest in infrastructure and in a cycling culture that encourages cyclists to visit are reaping the rewards of increased spending on accommodation, food, tourism services and cycling goods and services.

To track our progress, we will measure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baseline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of kilometres of constructed rail trails</td>
<td>226 kilometres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of attendees at major events*</td>
<td>11,220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For the three largest cycling events held in Queensland by Bicycle Queensland, Cycling Queensland and Mountain Bike Australia.

The Cycle Queensland 2016 ride

The Cycle Queensland ride is a nine-day cycling adventure that passes through regional Queensland. In 2016, the ride went from Woodford to Hervey Bay and included overnight stays in small towns and cities, including Woodford, Maleny, Kenilworth, Gympie, Rainbow Beach, Maryborough and Burrum Heads.

A total of 643 cyclists participated in the ride, and more than one-third of these travelled from interstate. In addition, a 200-strong support crew accompanied the riders. This contributed an estimated $600,000 to local economies.

Event organisers spent $100,000 in the towns visited, while local service providers, tour operators, shops, pubs, hotels, restaurants and cafés all benefited from the extra customers passing through their towns.

More than three-quarters (87 per cent) of participants said the event would influence them to return to the towns visited.43

Photo by Bicycle Queensland
Objective 5: A strong evidence base that guides decision-making about cycling

Collecting and understanding data about who is riding, why they ride, when they ride and where they ride is helping to ensure our investments in cycling infrastructure and programs are targeted and working well.

Historically, data on cycling has been underreported. The Department of Transport and Main Roads is working to address this, using methods such as:

- bicycle counters, intercept surveys and temporary surveys to collect data on how many people are using the cycle network, and when and how they are using it
- GPS monitoring applications to analyse changes in where and when cyclists ride
- cost benefit analysis tool to ensure that our investments are providing benefits to all Queenslanders
- the National Cycling Participation Survey to ensure we know how many and who is riding, and whether they are riding more
- partnering with research organisations such as the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q) at the Queensland University of Technology to investigate various technologies and other opportunities to make cycling in Queensland safer and more comfortable.

Data from **14 permanent bicycle counters** has been released as an **open data** set to the public.

**Research**

We will continue to survey and gather information on cycling participation and trends. In 2016, more than 5,300 people took part in the Department of Transport and Main Roads survey to help inform the *Queensland Cycling Strategy 2017–2027*.

Research and the collection and use of data is a priority over the next 10 years to help us measure progress towards achieving our vision of more cycling, more often.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To track our progress, we will measure:</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of monitoring points on the Principal Cycle Network*</td>
<td>18 permanent 66 temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of collected monitoring points released as open data sets**</td>
<td>14 permanent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This measure is for Department of Transport and Main Roads monitoring points.
** Open data sets are for data collected from the Department of Transport and Main Roads monitoring points.

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**Strava mapping**

We are using cycling data from Strava, a smartphone application that tracks athletic activity via GPS, to analyse de-identified information on where and when people are riding.

With more than 75,000 registered users of the app in Queensland in 2015, this data can be used in a cost-effective way where there are high volumes of cyclists to:

- demonstrate where and when cyclists ride to help plan and prioritise investment in cycling infrastructure and signage
- identify potential conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians and other road users
- analyse route choices of cyclists
- take a high-level view of the network usage.

The North Brisbane Bikeway is an example where Strava data was used in the evaluation of the project to show locations with increased/decreased activity in the vicinity of new infrastructure. It suggested that there was a significant (20–30 per cent) decrease in cyclists using busy roads in the vicinity of the bikeway.**
References


