



**Fraser Coast Bicycle Users Group Inc**

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **2021 - 2024**

**Post:** Secretary PO Box 7492 Urangan Qld 4655

**Email:** [bicycleusersgroup@yahoo.com.au](mailto:bicycleusersgroup@yahoo.com.au)

**Website:** <http://www.fcbug.org.au>

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Fraser Coast Bicycle Users Group Inc (the Group) has developed this Strategic Plan (the Plan) to guide the actions of the Executive Management Committee and the participation of Group members over the next three years, from 2021 to 2024, in the achievement of its Vision, Mission and Objectives.

The Strategic Plan has been developed as a continuance and evolution of the previously published 2017 to 2020 Strategic Plan Revision, recognising changes in Queensland Government Policy, local Government Planning and the overall growth and opportunity for community engagement and participation in cycling.

The major focus of the 2017 to 2020 Strategic Plan revision remains in benefitting members by ensuring:

- there are a range of rides available for members to enjoy on a regular basis
- development of a strong and vibrant organisation by increasing the number of members
- encourage and mentor new riders
- initiation of opportunities for members to interact socially
- the capability to support members who wish to further particular projects agreed by the Group.

From a Fraser Coast community perspective, recognising the Group's advocacy role in an environment where there is an increased commitment by Government to the benefits of safe cycling for the broader Queensland community through:

- promoting the enjoyment of safe cycling for health, recreation, social interactions and transport
- advocating for the improvement of safe cycling education, infrastructure and facilities.

## **ORGANISATION HISTORY**

In 2003 the then Hervey Bay City Council called a public interest meeting which was attended by 15 community members which resulted in the formation of the Hervey Bay Bicycle Users Group. One of the main aims of the Group was to be the "eyes and ears" of Council, identifying maintenance issues and areas of concern for cyclists.

These issues were detailed in monthly reports prepared by the Group's Secretary and provided to the Council. The Group also undertook the Pedestrian and Cycle Count on the Esplanade path and the Mobility Corridor on behalf of Council. Results have seen development and usage of these cycleways grow steadily.

The Group membership grew with over 50 members by 2005 with current membership at the end of the 2019/20 financial year being 154 with members paying an annual membership fee. There was a peak in membership of 220 in 2011. The age demographic for the majority of members is in the 50 to 85 years age group.

The Group membership catchment coverage has also grown to include members from the wider Fraser Coast community of Maryborough, Toogoom, Torbanlea, Howard and Hervey Bay.

Consistent with that growth, the Group has also expanded in terms of its commitment to a variety of member activities and its role in cycling advocacy for the Fraser Coast community.

The Group achieved incorporation under the Associations Incorporation Act of Queensland, 1981, and as such, its activities and Executive management is governed by compliance with the requirements of that Act. The Group holds general monthly meetings of members as well as an Annual General Meeting where the Executive Management committee is elected and business is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Act, including the endorsement of the Financial Statements for submission to the Queensland Office of Fair Trading.

The Group maintains appropriate insurance for member and Executive Management activities.

The Saturday morning signature ride for the Group has evolved to include graded rides based on the differing average speeds of riders to ensure participation and enjoyment of all riders, recognising their capabilities. Group members also participate in various daily road and off road rides arranged by individual members, albeit not "official" Group activities.

The Group arranges various social functions for members including Australia Day BBQ and Christmas parties, as well as away rides to various locations e.g. Noosa, Biggenden, Brisbane Valley Rail Trail and many others since its inception.

An important role of the Group is also to develop the skills of members with workshops such as first aid, cycle maintenance, bike fit, women in cycling programs and other activities encourage and support safe riding for members. Various Government grants, Group membership funds and sponsorship have been successfully applied over the years to those programs, which remain a key priority for the Group.

In 2008, the Group took on the long term project of supporting Council in the development of the abandoned rail corridor between Maryborough and Hervey Bay into a sustainable transport track. That work involved consultation with other cycle groups and external experienced rail trail experts that resulted in the presentation to Council in 2009 the FCBUG Concept and Feasibility Report for the development of 40 kilometres of the trail, identifying the project as the Mary to Bay Rail Trail.

The Group has continued involvement and representations to the now combined Fraser Coast Regional Council in the Mary to Bay Rail Trail project that saw 7.5 kilometres of the trail completed in 2017 and further development in 2018 of a Business Case, for the purpose of seeking additional funding for the project from a combined contribution for Council and Queensland State Government.

The Group remains both as an organisation for the social and recreational benefit of members in the enjoyment of safe cycling, as well as an advocacy vehicle for members and the community in pursuing those objectives.

The Group continues active and productive engagement with Council, State Government and other relevant cycle and community groups, as appropriate, to achieve the implementation of the objectives of its Plans.

## **MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

The Groups Management Committee consists of the following elected representatives:

- President
- Vice-President

- Treasurer
- Secretary and Club Membership Coordinator

A Ride Roster Co-ordinator is appointed on an annual basis.

Committees and working groups are formed on a needs basis and report to the Management Committee.

All Group members are encouraged to participate in the regular monthly meetings which incorporate a discussion session addressing current issues and or providing information and training.

Any Group member who may have a project proposal or new ideas for the Group should discuss the proposal in the first instance with the Group President. A more detailed project proposal, including indicative costings and possible funding sources, may then be presented for discussion and decision at a monthly meeting. If the meeting endorses the project, the proponent is supported by interested Group members in implementation. Regular reports on the project's progress are presented at the monthly meetings.

## **BACKGROUND FOR 2021 TO 2024 STRATEGIC PLAN**

Government research indicates that more than 802,000 Queenslanders ride a bike each week and 1.53 million say they are interested in riding to school or work if the conditions were right. In that research, Queenslanders expressed concern that safety is the main reason that they choose not to ride.

All levels of Government in recent years have recognised the opportunity both for community health and efficiency in supporting the development of cycling within the community. Greater emphasis has been given in all levels of Government planning processes to ensure that there is a logic, alignment and consistency between policy development, infrastructure and grants funding to realise those opportunities. The more people are cycling, the safer it becomes. Well-planned cycling infrastructure pays itself off in health benefits and reduced congestion.

The Group has a commitment to the review and preparation of a Strategic Plan on a three year continuum, recognising the changes that occur in its operating environment during that period. The 2021 to 2024 Plan addresses that environment and in the main, is a continuance of the revised 2017 to 2020 Strategic Plan, recognising the benefits that will be achieved in the long term by pursuing consistent objectives and communication with Local Government.

This document is an evolutionary document building on and including initiatives from previous Plans that will benefit the Group and the Fraser Coast Community as we seek alignment with the increasing priority being given by Government at all levels to safe cycling for Queenslanders of all ages.

While the Group is principally a recreation and social oriented organisation, there is a strong alignment between the Groups Mission Statement and the expressed Vision of the Queensland Government Cycling Strategy 2020-2027 for "**more cycling, more often**".

In that vision statement, the changes that the Queensland Government is seeking during the period 2020 to 2027 are:

- more cycling, more often in Queensland

- cycle networks that are complete, connected and integrated with other transport modes
- positive perceptions of cycling throughout Queensland
- cycling helping the Queensland economy to prosper
- a strong evidence base that guides decision making about cycling

Four key priority action areas identified in the Queensland Government Cycling Strategy are:

- educating new riders
- promoting cycling and its benefits
- supporting the choice to cycle
- offering incentives to ride

This Strategy also provides access to cycling grants for the following purposes:

- Bike riding encouragement community grants
- Cycling infrastructure grants

The most relevant Fraser Coast Regional Council document cascading the Queensland Government Cycling Strategy is their *Active Travel Strategy* that was approved by Council in 2020.

The Strategy is a broad strategy incorporating any form of non-motorised transport that involves physical activity, with the exception of those using low-powered electrical devices. It includes activities such as walking, cycling, skateboarding, pushing prams and the use of mobility devices and electricity assisted bikes and scooters.

The Active Travel Network includes footpaths, shared paths, on road cycle lanes, dedicated off-road cycle facilities and shared zones as well as sharing the use of the roadway with traffic.

That Strategy espoused the Vision for Active Travel approved by Council:

***“Our vision is to provide a safe, connected and innovative Active Travel Network that provides equitable accessibility on the Fraser Coast. Our Active Travel Network will embrace the unique Fraser Coast lifestyle and allow our residents and visitors to travel effortlessly between destinations as a viable alternative to car travel”.***

Note that this Strategy does not specifically recognise recreational cycling, other than in the promotion of events. Nor does it specifically address at a local level the key priority action areas identified in the Queensland Government Cycling Strategy.

The Active Travel Strategy does contain several objectives pertinent to the Group:

- “Safe : The Active Travel Network shall provide a safe means of travel for all users. Users will not be exposed to hazards and high speed road environments. People of all ages will be able to travel with peace of mind.
- Legible: The Active Travel Networks shall be both intuitive and direct, with links easy to navigate. Routes shall be located parallel to existing infrastructure that enables access to destinations including major road or rail corridors or natural landforms such as coastlines, parklands or rivers.”

The Strategy identifies several success factors with the most pertinent for the Group being ***“More on road cycling lanes on key links”***.

Specifically, on road cycling lanes will be provided on high activity corridors, where space permits. The provision of cycling lanes is typically appropriate for District links. Links identified as priority routes within the States Principal Cycle Network Plan will undergo feasibility investigations, as they may be eligible for funding. Cycling lanes will be delivered on existing District links in the Active Travel Network where large scale works are not required and the impact to the road environment is not significant.

Apart from increased Government interest and investment in safe Cycling at local and State levels, there has been the development of Bicycle User Groups throughout the State with Bicycle Queensland being the principal Groups providing advice to those Groups and advocacy.

The Fraser Coast Bicycle Users Group has a role as an active participant and advocate in achieving the Visions of the various levels of Government that will, as a consequence, benefit members and the Fraser Coast community in safe recreational cycling.

## **VISION FOR FCBUG 2021 TO 2024**

***“More Group members enjoying safe cycling more often”***

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

***“To promote enjoyment of cycling across our community, encouraging positive attitudes and a healthy and safe approach for cyclists of all ages and all abilities”***

## **OBJECTIVES**

For Members and the Fraser Coast Community:

- promoting the enjoyment of safe cycling for health, recreation, social interactions and transport
- there are a range of rides available for members to enjoy on a regular basis
- develop a strong and vibrant organisation by increasing the number of members
- initiate opportunities for members to interact socially
- the capability to support members who wish to further particular projects agreed by the Group.
- encourage and mentor new riders
- advocating for the improvement of safe cycling education, infrastructure and facilities.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

This Plan outlines strategies that might be undertaken to meet the Groups articulated objectives. The Group relies on the volunteer assistance of its members to achieve those objectives.

The Executive Management committee is responsible for the administration of the Group in accordance with the Associations Incorporations Act of Queensland 1981. However, success in achieving the objectives of the Group is, in reality, dependent on the leadership and participation of Group members in the implementation of the agreed initiatives and conceiving new initiatives for Group consideration.

Objective	Possible Strategies
<p><i>Promote the enjoyment of cycling for health, recreation, social interaction and transport</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide the contact details of relevant BUG members to cycle shops and tourist accommodation.</li> <li>• develop information brochures to be available at tourist accommodation, information centre and bike shops in the community</li> <li>• develop a “one day” event for local and “out of town” riders</li> <li>• continue to work with Fraser Coast Regional Council and State Government on initiatives including the Mary to Bay Rail Trail and cycle tourism</li> <li>• work with local schools to ensure conditions support safe cycling to school</li> <li>• prepare grant applications to access funding to support initiatives</li> <li>• work with relevant organisations to provide links from their websites to ours</li> <li>• participate in community expos and specific activities (e.g Seniors week, bike weeks)</li> <li>• work with Fraser Coast Regional Council to include club contacts and cycle paths on their website and tourist brochures</li> </ul>
<p><i>There are there are a range of rides available for members to enjoy on a regular basis</i></p> <p><i>Develop a strong and vibrant organisation by increasing the number of member cyclists</i></p> <p><i>Initiate opportunities for members to interact socially</i></p> <p><i>The capability to support members who wish to further particular projects agreed by the Group.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue to organise the regular Saturday morning coffee rides</li> <li>• foster the development of a range of cycling activities for members</li> <li>• provide opportunities for club members to share their experience and skills with other members</li> <li>• grow and maintain the BUG website to include information on ride routes and cycle touring</li> <li>• develop and deliver cycle tours for Group members</li> <li>• promote the activities of the Group through local media</li> <li>• seek Groups input into the develop a calendar of events to encourage social interaction e.g away tours, Australia Day ride and BBQ</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>actively encourage and support Group members in developing particular projects for Group consideration, including their implementation after approval.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Encourage and mentor new riders</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organise community bike rides to attract new members</li> <li>organise “come and try days” to attract new riders</li> <li>welcome new riders and ensure they are assisted to join the “best fit” riding group for their skills and interests</li> <li>allocate new members an experience club member “buddy” to assist in understanding ride rules, mentoring on rides and group introductions</li> <li>ensure that “no one left behind” maxim is applied on club rides</li> <li>develop and deliver a range of regular workshops for members including maintenance and first aid</li> </ul>
<p><i>Advocating for the improvement of safe cycling education, infrastructure and facilities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>advocate and work with local the Fraser Coast Regional Council and State Government to create awareness and participation in planning and revision of safe cycling infrastructure and facilities</li> <li>build the Group’s credibility with local media so that opportunities are available to comment on and participate in specific activities and actions</li> <li>encourage business owners and groups to consider the needs of cyclists when planning new infrastructure and facilities</li> <li>work with Fraser Coast Regional Council and State Government to develop a long term vision for safe cycling infrastructure on the Fraser Coast</li> <li>showcase ideas from other areas for inclusion in Fraser Coast Regional Council planning processes</li> <li>network with other local cycling organisations to ensure coordinated support for priorities for cycle infrastructure and facility improvement</li> <li>work with Fraser Coast Regional Council and State Government in applications for various grants to fund improvements in safe cycling infrastructure and facilities</li> <li>training and education programs that will assist cyclists and motorists understand and commit to safe road sharing</li> </ul>



## ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal Environment	<p>Our STRENGTHS in the internal environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People – BUG members committed to safe cycling and the Group</li> <li>• Good governance</li> <li>• Strong social cohesion</li> <li>• Range of regular riding opportunities</li> <li>• High level of enthusiasm</li> <li>• Member cycling knowledge and skills</li> </ul>	<p>Our WEAKNESSES in the internal environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low numbers of members interested in advocacy aspect of cycling</li> <li>• Limited number of younger members and families with children in the group</li> <li>• Poor attendance to Monthly Meetings</li> <li>• Poor conversion to membership of people who “come to try”.</li> <li>• Limited time availability of members to lead Group initiatives</li> </ul>
	Opportunities	Threats
External Environment	<p>Our OPPORTUNITIES in the external environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in membership including a younger age group</li> <li>• Strategic alliances with other organisations – particularly Local and State Government, Fraser Coast Cycle Club, Bicycle Queensland</li> <li>• Internet, promoting the Group and cycling (website and Facebook)</li> <li>• Cycle tourism</li> <li>• Improved on road separation of cyclists and motorists</li> <li>• Increased and improved safety signage on roadways</li> <li>• Funding &amp; Grant programs</li> <li>• Increased commitment by Queensland Government to safe cycling infrastructure and facilities</li> </ul>	<p>THREATS in the external environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public perception of groups of riders on busy roads (more than single file)</li> <li>• Narrow shoulders on ride routes</li> <li>• Motorist lack of knowledge of cyclist road entitlements/rules</li> <li>• Image of Group and cyclists</li> </ul>

## **MONITOR AND REVIEW OF THE PLAN**

This Plan will be available to all Group members through the website. The Plan may inform project proposals for Group endorsement.

The Management Committee will review the Plan no less frequently than annually and report to the Group's Annual General Meeting through the President's Report outcomes that have been achieved. The Plan will be reviewed and revised with whole of Group input every three years.

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