



## **Green Bridges Program**

Brisbane City Council

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**31 March 2021**

**Dear Lord Mayor, Cr Adrian Schinner; Chair Public and Active Transport, Cr Ryan Murphy;  
Green Bridges Project team.**

**Queensland Walks submission to Brisbane City Council: Green bridges submission to Brisbane City Council:**

- West End to St Lucia
- West End to Toowong

Queensland Walks would like to congratulate the Lord Mayor and the Chair of Public and Active Transport for committing to the Green Bridges program, and we thank Brisbane City Council for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed two green bridges connecting West End to St Lucia and Toowong.

We would also like to acknowledge Brisbane City Council for the extension of the consultation period for the two projects. We note that other major Council projects were released for community consultation in the busy November and December period, which is a time that is not ideal for the community to appreciate and fully understand a project proposal (see our [feedback regarding the North West Transport Network](#)). We support Council to provide the necessary timelines needed for community and organisations to effectively understand and respond to projects.

Queensland Walks fully endorses the investment of both bridges for walking, wheeling and riding as a way to reduce congestion in West End, St Lucia, Toowong and surrounding suburbs, and as a way to successfully encourage more people to access public and active travel options as our city continues to grow. Queensland Walks strongly supports infrastructure that encourages walking as a transport option, and contributes to better health and economic benefits to local businesses.

We would also like to acknowledge and support Bicycle Queensland's recent submission for the West End, St Lucia and Toowong bridges.

### **Recommendation 1. A green bridge for transport**

We would like to ensure that the alignment decision is made primarily on the functional importance of this bridge. Whilst the recreational benefit of a river crossing is important to local residents, we encourage council to prioritise 'function' as the decision maker for the bridge alignment in an effort to reduce traffic and as a transport demand-management strategy.

### **Recommendation 2. A direct route for people walking**

The most suitable bridge alignment will be the one that provides the most direct route for people walking to major destinations (e.g. Queensland University, Toowong Shopping Centre), that will provide a compelling alternative to private car use, and encourage more people to choose to walk. Given that people riding are able to travel longer distances more easily, we encourage Council to



preference a direct route for walking. A direct alignment will have the most beneficial outcome in an aim to reduce local traffic, and allowing more residents to select active travel as a preferred option.

### **Recommendation 3. Detailed design and cost review to inform alignment**

Whilst we fully support the investment of two green bridges we hesitate in selecting a preferred design or alignment. The decision is a complex one and would require detailed designs, estimated cost comparison, expected land resumption\* or use of green space or loss of canopy cover, and more; all of which are not currently known to our organisation. Queensland Walks therefore does not have the best information to inform our decision on a preferred alignment, however we encourage Council to investigate an alignment that will provide the most direct route to the major destinations and attractors: Queensland University, Toowong Business and Shopping Centre, library and train station, Melbourne Street, the busway, Metro and Brisbane CBD as well as a smooth transition to the Bicentennial separated pathway. A bridge that primarily serves to connect recreational pathway users will not help reduce traffic congestion as the green bridges intend.

We also encourage Council to be sensitive to important cultural sites, sensitive to existing parkland and maintaining important established trees.

### **Recommendation 4. Public transport complementing green bridge (and vice versa)**

Queensland Walks recommends that the current public transport options are evaluated, including bus and ferry routes, timetabling, and especially reviewing service after hours and the necessary strategic changes which should be considered to link public transport services to the new bridges. We encourage Council to investigate new ferry terminal locations, for example an option for West End, Montague Road terminal which would allow passengers to travel to Toowong terminal.

### **Recommendation 5. Ensure green bridges provide shade solutions and weather protection and amenities**

Queensland Walks recommends that all green bridges will provide appropriate weather protection from sun *and* rain, as well as seating and drinking fountains (at each landing).

### **Recommendation 6. Improve walkability**

Queensland Walks recommends that a walkability review of the surrounding neighbourhoods of the green bridge is conducted within a minimum of 1km, preferably up to 2 km (aiming for a 15-minute walkable neighbourhood) and local pedestrian improvements are made to ensure:

- continuous and connected footpaths that have the capacity to sustain an increase in people walking and wheeling (see [Pedestrian demand forecasting](#), TMR 2020),
- suitable and effective kerb ramps and safe and consistent raised priority crossings are delivered as part or in concurrence with the green bridge project (see [Raised priority crossings for pedestrian and cycle paths](#), TMR 2019)
- that inclusion, and transport principles committed by Brisbane City Council in the [A City for Everyone: Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019-2029](#) and [Transport Plan for Brisbane - Strategic Directions](#) are applied.

We know that if we treat the pedestrian network in isolation of this project, that the success of green bridge/s and general uptake of public and active transport use will be reduced.

We also highlight that the green bridge project is in isolation of Walkable Brisbane, a Brisbane walking strategy and a suburban walkability review which will provide Council with the focus of



continuing to encourage more people to use public and active transport as their main travel mode. Queensland Walks therefore calls on Council to commit funding for Walkable Brisbane, a walking strategy. We also know that by providing public access to the Brisbane river through river walks and through vantage points on green bridges will contribute to the value of our city opening up the river front to residents and visitors to our city.

### **Recommendation 7. Safety review of road networks**

We recommend that speed reduction reviews and a review on providing safer and inclusive road crossings such as raised priority crossings (e.g. Dornoch Terrace, Montague Road) are urgently investigated. A recent site-visit by Queensland Walks recognised the risks to school students trying to cross Dornoch Terrace as one example. The green bridges will not resolve major safety issues in the road and pedestrian network.

We refer to previous advice provided to the Green Bridges program that also applies to this project:

**Construction phase.** Is it vital that direct and accessible connections be provided during construction, including clear and well-placed walking-specific directional signage so that people walking will be able to find their way to their destinations easily and safely.

**Separation of pathway users.** We recommend that the separation of walking from cycling / e-mobility devices on this bridge will be essential, allowing for faster commuters on bikes and e-mobility devices to be separated from people walking, wheeling (wheelchairs or mobility devices) and running.

**Pathway widths.** We encourage wider walking paths, allowing for functional walking, social walking and runners to comfortably pass within a separated pathway.

**Amenities.** Queensland Walks supports viewing and resting opportunities on the bridges. We would like to note that people will desire to view the river from both sides of the bridge, and urge the design to provide ways of ensuring safety and separation of differing speeds and vulnerability when using and enjoying the bridge.

**Wayfinding.** Queensland Walks notes the importance of providing quality walking-specific wayfinding signage both generally and especially to new projects. We suggest and support the inclusion of wayfinding in these projects. Please see [Pedestrian Wayfinding Guidelines \(TMR, 2021\)](#).

**Shading.** The new model code for walkable neighbourhoods notes that shade trees should be placed approximately 15m apart to provide walk-friendly footpaths. Along with our colleagues at the Heart Foundation and QUT's [Cool and Covered Program](#) we would like to see Brisbane as the national leader of a cooler CBD, inner city and suburbs. To achieve this, it is imperative that shading is budgeted for and incorporated in all Green Bridge Program designs and to the broader network connections to these bridges. The Cool and Covered Program are investigating recommendations to achieve a cooler inner-city including greening and shading, and new-generation paint and paving products. Cool and Covered Program researchers are mapping local temperatures over a twelve-month period to continue to build a picture of temperature, hotspots, and mitigation technologies. We recommend that Council connects with these leading researchers to explore the findings. We do not wish to see future projects requiring retrofitting in future years, and we encourage all future projects to have allocated budgets for shading.

**Connections.** It is vital that walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure connects seamlessly to provide a useful network. This is why Queensland Walks supports providing quality and improved connections to existing and future high quality paths.

**Accessibility and Inclusion.** Queensland Walks is confident that the project designs will reflect DDA compliance, and the consultation team will draw valuable information from vulnerable pathway users through seniors and disabilities organisations so as to check the functionality of the proposed bridge, and connected paths and crossings.

**Naming of paths.** We encourage Brisbane City Council to be mindful when naming paths and shared pathway connections to accommodate all pathway users. As a shared or even separated path, we do not recommend the use of the name 'bikeway' unless it is exclusively for bicycles.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on these leading projects. Queensland Walks continues to work with the Active Transport Advisory Committee, and we will continue to liaise with Council on making Brisbane the leading walk-focused council in Australia.

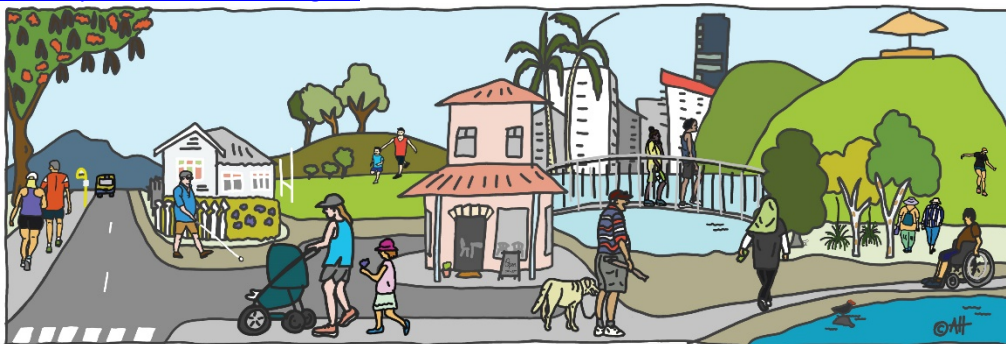
Once again, we congratulate the Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner's vision, Cr Ryan Murphy and dedicated council staff for investing in green bridges, and we look forward to consistent investment in the walkability of the whole of Brisbane – the inner city and the suburbs.

Yours in health and walking,



Anna Campbell  
Executive Officer  
Queensland Walks

[www.queenslandwalks.org.au](http://www.queenslandwalks.org.au)



\* For example, some residents in the West End community are concerned that the Boundary Street option may require the resumption of 3 or 4 houses. We are reluctant to make a firm opinion on alignment, as it is unclear if resumption will be required. While we have empathy for residents who could well be impacted, the transport, environment and economic benefits for a river crossing could outweigh these resumptions for the betterment of all neighbourhoods. We would be more inclined to support a bridge connecting Highgate Hill and West End to the University of Queensland, St Lucia, rather than a bridge connecting parkland. As such, we would encourage further dialogue and involvement in a more informed process such as a project reference group with appropriate stakeholder representation.