
Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy

Implementation Plan



MOUNTAIN BIKE AUSTRALIA

1. SUMMARY OF PROJECT

Mountain Bike Australia (MTBA) was successful in securing funding through the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing's, Sport and Recreation Planning Program to develop a strategy for mountain biking in Queensland. The Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy was commissioned to gain an understanding of the existing and projected demand for mountain bike trails, identify gaps, constraints and opportunities, and provide strategies to guide trail investment decisions.

The Strategy provides information to stakeholders and decision makers to understand existing supply and demand for mountain bike infrastructure, as well as gaps and opportunities. It provides a prioritisation framework to guide trail investment decisions and recommendations for participation, governance and sustainable development of trails, facilities and infrastructure.

The Strategy has been communicated to members, affiliated, key stakeholders and the general community via EDM's, direct email and is available on the MTBA website.

The Executive Summary from the Strategy is provided on the following pages.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy was commissioned to gain an understanding of the existing and projected demand for mountain bike trails, identify gaps, constraints and opportunities, and provide strategies to guide trail investment decisions.

Mountain biking is one of the fastest growing recreational and adventure tourism activities and Queensland is following this global trend.

Rapid growth in participation has led to increasing demand for quality trail networks that can meet different user needs. This presents challenges for land managers, clubs, volunteers and other stakeholders. This has led to the need for a strategic statewide approach to the development of appropriate facilities, to provide environmental, social and economic outcomes for Queensland.

Approximately 20% of mountain bikers in Australia reside in Queensland (Mountain Bike Australia, 2018). The climate and proximity of residents to beautiful natural landscapes promote an active outdoors culture and lifestyle, cherished by many Queenslanders.

Queensland is a renowned nature based tourism destination, attracting visitors to its vast natural assets, which include five of Australia's eleven World Natural Heritage areas: Scenic Rim National Parks, Fraser Island, Riversleigh Fossil Fields, the Wet Tropics, and the Great Barrier Reef.

DEMAND FOR MOUNTAIN BIKING IN QUEENSLAND

Through consultation activities and a range of data sources, an understanding of participation in mountain biking was established. A demographic profile of mountain bikers was developed, as well as an understanding of where they ride, what style and types of trails are desired, and their propensity to travel for mountain biking and events.

There is high existing demand for mountain biking facilities within and surrounding highly populated metropolitan areas and popular tourist destinations. Many regional areas have outstanding topography, terrain, existing infrastructure and services that have the potential to create demand for mountain biking and yield significant economic benefits.

TRAIL SUPPLY IN QUEENSLAND

There are a number of established mountain bike trails and facilities throughout Queensland that already provide immense benefits to local communities. In various regions, enhancement of existing trail quality, accessibility, supporting facilities and effective promotion has the potential to cater for the demand for recreational and mountain bike tourism experiences. Detailed assessment of existing sites should be undertaken as part of a strategic planning process to identify these opportunities. Recommendations for planning processes are provided within this Strategy.

An inventory of all mountain biking trails in Queensland is not stored and maintained by a designated organisation. There are a range of sources available to obtain information regarding trail locations, lengths, classifications and maps.

An understanding of the current trail supply was established drawing primarily on information from *Where to Mountain Bike in South East Queensland*, (G.Duncan & M.Roberts), complemented by research of online sources and consultation with state government, local governments, mountain bike clubs and trail care alliances.

Queensland has approximately 840km of sanctioned purpose built single track mountain bike trail. The analysis of existing trails considered tenure, quantity, classifications, styles and diversity, to help identify gaps in the supply when compared with the demand across Queensland and its regions.

GAP ANALYSIS

The gap analysis highlighted the current gaps in participation in the broader community, lack of supply and diversity of adequate trails and infrastructure, as well as lack of coordinated governance and management to consistent standards. Critical gaps were as follows:

Gaps in participation in the broader community:

- Underrepresentation of youth and females
- Lack of community programs aimed at increasing participation
- Lack of centralised participation and trail usage data reporting

Lack of trails, facilities and infrastructure that cater to the needs of all abilities:

- Lack of accessible trail information
- Undersupply of introductory trail experiences to cater for beginners and build skills and confidence
- Undersupply of black and double black classification trails that cater to the needs of riders of advanced abilities
- Lack of all mountain and gravity trail types

Lack of tourism product:

- Lack of single track trail networks that will draw visitation from intrastate, interstate and overseas
- Lack of locations that could cater for national and international mountain bike events
- Lack of visitor information and services

Lack of statewide coordination, governance and management:

- Lack of local standards guiding the planning, design, construction and management of mountain bike trails
- Lack of resourcing for trail maintenance

CONSULTATION

A staged consultation process was carried out, using a combination of online community surveys and stakeholder liaison to explore the requirements and aspirations in Queensland. An initial community survey was distributed to identify the needs and demand within the wider community. Targeted requests for information were sent to various Local and State Government bodies, as well as mountain bike clubs and trail care alliances. On site investigations were very limited due to time and budget constraints, but were undertaken where possible. A number of stakeholder meetings were held to discuss opportunities, constraints, plans and issues in further detail.

The key outcomes from the research and consultation processes established the need for statewide strategic planning of mountain biking facilities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK

A key aim of the Strategy was to develop a strategic prioritisation framework to guide investment decisions.

In order to determine priorities, a Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA) was developed and applied to every Local Government Area (LGA) in Queensland. LGAs were grouped and designated as Mountain Bike Regions, which were aligned with the boundaries of the Tourism and Events Queensland Tourism Regions.

The MCA was an objective assessment utilising industry benchmarks, trail supply information and data gathered through Geographic Information System (GIS), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Tourism Visitation Statistics (TVS) and input from consultation activities. The results of the MCA determined the level of priority for Queensland mountain bike regions.

QUEENSLAND PRIORITY MOUNTAIN BIKE REGIONS

In order to maximise the benefits, address critical gaps, and cater for the growing demand for mountain biking in Queensland, development of significant, diverse and unique opportunities that are supported by existing infrastructure and services should be prioritised. Following the MCA, six of Queensland's regions are considered to offer the greatest potential: The Gold Coast, Mackay, Sunshine Coast, Brisbane, Southern Queensland Country and Tropical North Queensland.

Due to the complexity and scale of potential opportunity within these regions, it is recommended that strategic regional master planning, including detailed on ground site assessments, is implemented. Regional master plans should identify appropriate parcels of land, land manager support, funding, a suitable management model and governance structure for mountain biking development in each priority region.

Additionally, there is excellent potential for the development of key mountain biking destinations in the other regions throughout the state, which would require considerably less intensive planning. These have the potential to provide a range of benefits to regional communities, and they should be planned and developed in accordance with the recommendations provided by this Strategy.

As part of the planning process, existing established trail networks throughout Queensland that already offer excellent recreational and tourism opportunities should be considered for further development and promotion to maximise benefits to the region.

TOURISM & EVENTS QUEENSLAND REGIONS

Table 1 lists the Tourism and Events Queensland Regions, and the relevant Local Governments within those regions.

Table 1 Tourism and Events Queensland Regions

Region	Local Government Areas	
Brisbane	Brisbane	Moreton Bay
	Ipswich	Redland
	Lockyer Valley	Scenic Rim
	Logan	Somerset
Fraser Coast	Fraser Coast	
Gold Coast	Gold Coast	
Mackay	Isaac	
	Mackay	
Outback Queensland	Balonne	Longreach
	Banana	Maranoa
	Barcaldine	McKinlay
	Barcoo	Mount Isa
	Blackall Tambo	Murweh
	Boulia	Paroo
	Bulloo	Quilpie
	Cloncurry	Richmond
	Diamantina	Western Downs
	Flinders	Winton
	Goondiwindi	
Southern Great Barrier Reef	Bundaberg	North Burnett
	Central Highlands	Rockhampton
	Gladstone	Woorabinda
	Livingston	Aboriginal Shire
Southern Queensland Country	Cherbourg	Southern Downs
	Aboriginal Shire	Toowoomba
	South Burnett	
Sunshine Coast	Gympie	Sunshine Coast
	Noosa	
Townsville	Burdekin	Palm Island
	Charters Towers	Aboriginal Shire
	Hinchinbrook	Townsville
Tropical North Queensland	Aurukun	Mareeba
	Burke	Mornington
	Cairns	Northern Peninsula Area
	Carpentaria	Tablelands
	Cassowary Coast	Torres
	Cook	Torres Strait Island
	Croydon	Weipa
	Douglas	Napranum,
	Etheridge	Pormpuraaw, Wujal
	Doomadgee, Hope	Wujal, Yarrabah
	Vale, Kowanyama,	Aboriginal Shires
	Lockhart River,	
	Mapoon Aboriginal	
	Shires	
Whitsundays	Whitsundays	

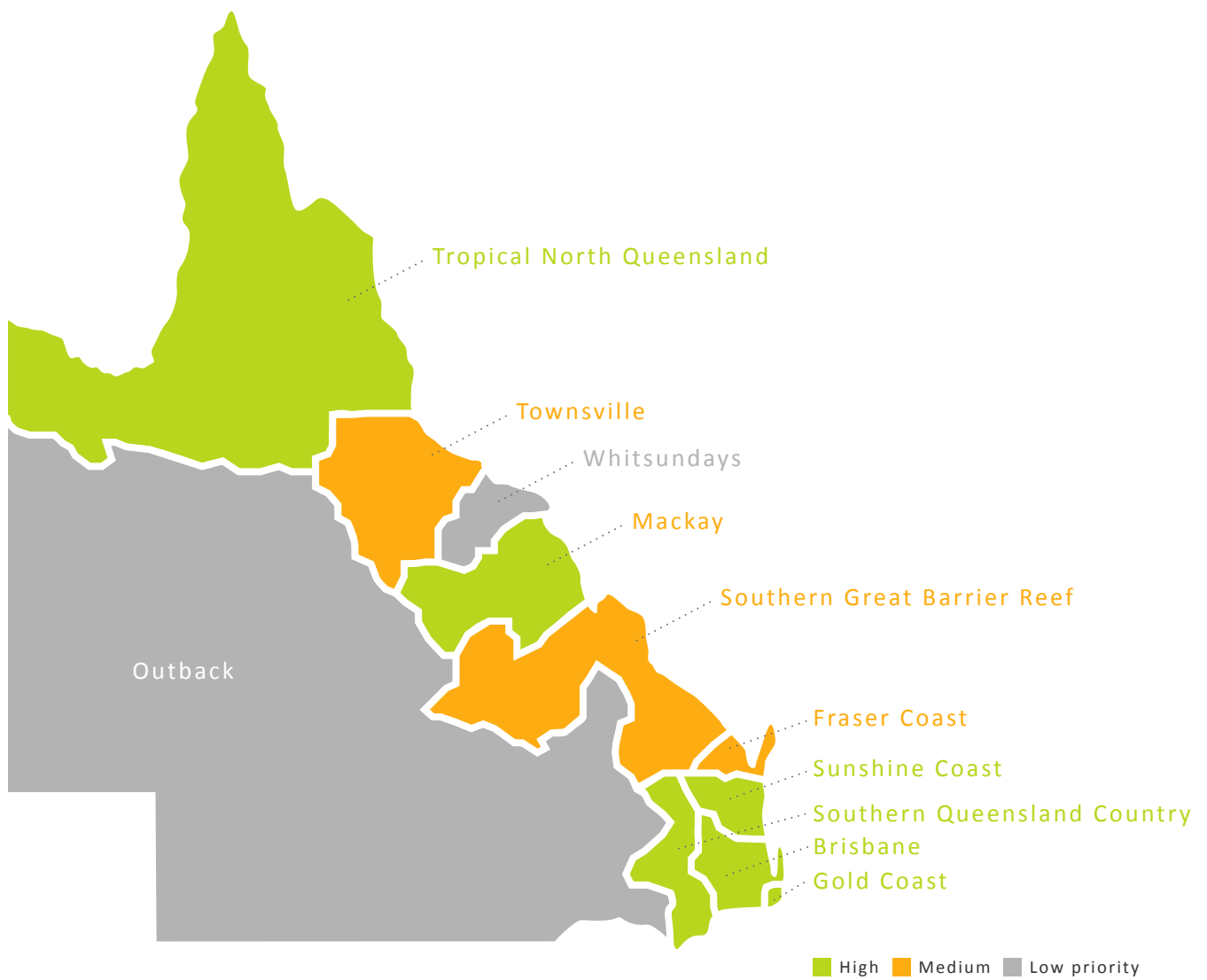


Figure 1 Overview of regional priorities

RECOMMENDATIONS BY REGION

While some regions are identified as high priority, it is recommended that a suitable level of planning commences across all regions where possible in the short term. Each of the eleven Queensland regions has the potential to provide unique and exciting experiences, which will contribute to the overall offering of the state as a diverse mountain biking destination.

To support the development and sustainability of mountain biking in Queensland, the Strategy provides recommendations to guide the development of a strategic network of mountain bike trails across all regions of the state.

Table 2 provides a summary of the level of planning that is recommended for each region. Detailed recommendations and guidance on implementation of various levels of planning for each region are provided in the Recommendations Section.

In order to establish Queensland as a mountain biking destination, the priorities should be referenced to guide investment and staging of development. These recommendations do not preclude a location from being developed, provided there is opportunity, demand, land manager and stakeholder support, funding, governance and a sustainable management model.

Table 2 Summary of Recommendations by Region

REGION	RECOMMENDATION
High Priority	
Brisbane	Regional Master Planning to identify a trail hierarchy, suitable parcels of land and trail models, land manager support, funding, a suitable management model and governance structure for mountain biking development in the Brisbane region. The plan should build on the work completed by LGAs, QPWS and SEQ Water to date, and should identify and prioritise opportunities through implementation of a detailed Multi Criteria Analysis.
Gold Coast	Regional Master Planning to identify suitable parcels of land, land manager support, funding, a suitable management model and governance structure for mountain biking development in the Gold Coast region.
Mackay	Location Area Planning should be continued in accordance with the recommendations of the emerging <i>Mackay Regional Mountain Bike Strategy</i> . Explore potential to include the Whitsundays within Location Area Planning.
Southern Queensland Country	Regional Master Planning for the Southern Queensland Country Region. Development should be initially focused on existing mountain bike trail networks, which are either in their infancy or undergoing upgrades and rehabilitation. Developing these networks to their full potential will increase demand in the region.
Sunshine Coast	Regional Master Planning with a focus on Sunshine Coast and Noosa LGAs to identify a trail hierarchy, suitable parcels of land and trail models, land manager support, funding, a suitable management model and governance structure for mountain biking development in the Sunshine Coast Region. The plan should build on the work completed by the three LGAs to date, and should identify and prioritise opportunities through implementation of a detailed Multi Criteria Analysis.
Tropical North Queensland	The <i>Tropical North Queensland Regional Mountain Bike Strategy</i> provides direction for mountain biking development, and the recommendations should be implemented. Location Area Planning in LGAs not covered by the existing regional strategy.
Moderate Priority	
Fraser Coast	Location Area Planning for the Fraser Coast Region. Continue local development in accordance with existing Concept Plans.
Southern Great Barrier Reef	Location Area Planning to identify iconic mountain biking opportunities in Central Highlands. Continue local development in Rockhampton, North Burnett, Gladstone and Bundaberg, in accordance with existing Concept Planning. Support future initiatives in Livingstone or Woorabinda.
Townsville	Continue local planning in Townsville and support recommendations of the <i>Tropical North Queensland Regional Mountain Bike Strategy</i> as they apply to Hinchinbrook.
Low Priority	
Outback Queensland	Location Area Planning for Mount Isa to identify potential opportunities. Potential to incorporate mountain bike governance and planning for Goondiwindi as part of Regional Master Planning for Southern Queensland Country region.
Whitsundays	Location Area Planning for Whitsunday to identify potential opportunities. Explore potential to include in Location Area Planning for Townsville or Mackay.

2. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Mountain Bike Australia will work collaboratively with key stakeholders to operationalise the state-wide Strategy and identify funding sources to do so. Key stakeholders include but is not limited to, mountain bike clubs, trail care alliances, land managers, Local Government Authorities, state government departments and agencies.

A key aim of the Strategy was to develop a strategic prioritisation framework to guide investment decisions. In order to do this a Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA) was developed and applied to every Local Government Area in Queensland. Local Government Authorities (LGA) were grouped and designated as Mountain Bike Regions, which aligned with the boundaries of the Tourism and Events Queensland Tourism regions.

The MCA was an objective assessment utilising industry benchmarks, trail supply information and data gathered through Geographic Information System (GIS), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Tourism Visitation Statistics (TVS) and input from consultation activities. The results of the MCA determined the level of priority for Queensland mountain bike regions and regional level recommendations.

In addition, the Strategy contains state wide recommendations covering governance, management, participation and trail development, all of which are key to the development of sustainable mountain biking in Queensland. The state wide recommendations is where Mountain Bike Australia can take a lead role in implementing. To support this development and sustainability, the Strategy provides recommendations to guide the development of a strategic network of trails across all regions of the state, which is where the key stakeholders have a lead role in implementing.

Implementation of the recommendations in the Strategy is subject to the identification of future financial investment via external funding sources and allocation of resources. Mountain Bike Australia will monitor the state wide recommendations and in most cases take a lead role in facilitating.

Progress of the implementation plan will be monitored and reviewed on quarterly basis and reported to the MTBA Board. Updated implementation plan will be available for public review via the Mountain Bike Australia website and notifications place in appropriate EDM's. Key performance indicators will be included in organisational operational plans.

STATE WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

Key to table:

Priority allocates a timeframe to commence but not necessarily complete the recommended action.

High High priority base on availability of resources – within the next 12 to 24 months.

Medium Medium priority based on availability of resources – within 2 to 3 years.

Low Lower order priority based on availability of resources – 3 to 5 years.

Ongoing Ongoing action – initiative commenced and to be continued.

Acronyms:

LGA Local Government Authority

LM Land Managers

MTBA Mountain Bike Australia

SR Sport and Recreation (Department of Housing and Public Works)

TEQ Tourism Events Qld and its Regional Tourism Organisations

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS					
REF	STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDATIONS	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDERS	PRIORITY
1.1	GOVERNANCE	Establish guidelines for the establishment of regional mountain bike working groups in each region to progress the recommendations of the Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy at a regional level.	MTBA	SR, LGA'S, LM	High
1.2	STANDARDS/ GUIDELINES	Adopt the National Mountain Bike Management Guidelines as the guiding document for all mountain bike trail development and management in Queensland. Implement best practice design, construction and maintenance in accordance with the Guidelines to minimise environmental impacts and showcase that mountain bike trails can be achieved sustainably.	MTBA	LM, LGA'S, CLUBS, SR	High
1.3	MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE	Identify appropriate maintenance standards and ensure a sustainable funding model is established for planned mountain bike facilities.	LM, LGA'S, CLUBS	MTBA, SR	Ongoing
1.4	EVENTS	Identify facilities that can cater for a variety of events, and ensure new facilities are planned with consideration to event requirements and permanent infrastructure.	MTBA	LM, CLUBS	Ongoing

PARTICIPATION RECOMMENDATIONS					
REF	STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDATIONS	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDERS	PRIORITY
2.1	PARTICIPATION DATA	Record and analyse trail usage data and market visitation for all existing and new mountain bike facilities. Establish a central reporting system to provide information for the industry.	LM, MTBA	CLUBS, LGA'S, SR	Medium
2.2	PARTICIPATION RATES	Identify and address barriers in beginner participation.	MTBA	LM, LGA'S, CLUBS	Ongoing
2.3	FEMALE PARTICIPATION	Provide introductory experiences to build skills and confidence on beginner trails to enable progression of female riders. Identify and address other barriers to increase female participation.	MTBA, CLUBS	LGA'S, SR	High
2.4	YOUTH PARTICIPATION	Build on success of existing skills programs, improve access and remove barriers for youth and families, including provision of more beginner (green classification) trails and skills parks in appropriate locations.	LM, LGA'S, CLUBS	MTBA, SR	High
2.5	DEMAND	Provide purpose-built trails in strategic locations, to service areas with high recreational demand and visitation, with a focus on addressing significant gaps in the market and alleviating pressure on existing facilities.	LM, LGA'S	CLUBS, MTBA, SR	Ongoing
2.6	PROFILE	Increase the profile of mountain biking through advocacy to state and federal government bodies, to gain support and funding for mountain biking facilities.	MTBA	LM, LGA'S, CLUBS	Ongoing
2.7	ACCESS	Increase the profile of mountain biking through advocacy to land managers. Educate land managers on mountain biking, supply, demand, diversity of types of users and trails.	MTBA,	CLUBS, LGA'S	Ongoing
2.8	TOURISM	Identify strategic locations to develop international mountain biking destinations and product suitable for marketing and promotion to target markets.	LGA'S	TEQ, CLUBS, LM	Low

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS					
REF	STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDATIONS	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDERS	PRIORITY
3.1	TRAIL INFORMATION	Adopt the emerging National Mountain Bike Management Guidelines to inform mountain bike trail types and classifications, to ensure information is accessible to users and expectations are met.	MTBA	LM, LGA'S, CLUBS	High
3.2	TRAIL STYLES	Increase the variety of purpose built mountain bike trails to ensure a suitable mix of trail styles is provided and caters for the relevant markets.	LM, CLUBS	LGA'S, MTBA, SR	Ongoing
3.3	TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS	Improve diversity of classifications to achieve a suitable mix of all classifications of trail, with a focus on identifying opportunities to create black and double black classification trails for more advanced riders, as well as introductory green classification trails to encourage participation of youth and beginner women.	LM, CLUBS	LGA'S, MTBA	Ongoing
3.4	TRAIL QUANTITY	Increase trail quantities in high demand locations, and ensure trail networks are supported by appropriate infrastructure required for the relevant level of significance.	LM, LGA'S	CLUBS, MTBA, SR	High
3.5	DEVELOPMENT OF TRAIL DESTINATIONS	Identify strategic locations across all regions to develop (or upgrade existing) purpose built facilities and mountain biking tourism destinations, ensuring appropriate supporting infrastructure and facilities exist or can be developed.	LM, LGA'S, CLUBS	MTBA, SR	High
3.6	NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL EVENTS	Identify existing and potential locations capable of hosting national and international mountain biking event facilities within proximity to good amenities and infrastructure. Where appropriate, upgrade supporting infrastructure at strategic locations to enable hosting of national and international events.	MTBA LGA's, LM	LGA's, TEQ, LM, SR SR, TEQ	Medium