



# 50,000 cite poor access

## CYCLING

By **CHRIS ROBINSON**

AS many as 50,000 commuters a day would happily leave their cars at home and pedal into work if inner-city bicycle routes were improved, says WA's biggest cycling advocacy group.

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance has pointed the finger at a lack of cycle access along high-traffic roads such as St Georges Tce as the main deterrent to city workers getting on their bikes.

BTA executive officer Heinrich Benz said congested traffic lanes and pedestrian-filled footpaths made it impossible to access inner-city offices safely by bike.

"There is a major lack of safe ways for cyclists to get to work if they are based in the CBD," he said. "It's great to get people to cycle around the river on a Saturday or Sunday, but the real benefits of cycling come when you replace commuting car trips with bicycle trips.

"There is no reason why we can't absorb the 50,000 extra drivers that could be on our roads and get them on bikes to help ease congestion.

"But it will only happen if there are routes in place for them to get to their offices,

because at the moment there's nowhere for cyclists to go once they enter the city."

BTA members last week met City of Perth staff to discuss the possibility of dedicated bike lanes along roads including St Georges Tce, Barrack St and Milligan St.

Mr Benz said it was disappointing that plans for the St Georges Tce upgrade, unveiled earlier this year, failed to include provisions for bikes.

He said many cyclists "felt threatened" when confronting peak period traffic along the terrace with no dedicated space for bicycle travel.

The BTA also called for mandatory end-of-trip facilities for new office buildings.

The push comes as the City of Perth gathers public feedback for its Cycle Plan, which will consider improving inner-city cycling facilities over the next decade.

About 900 responses have been presented to the council so far.

City of Perth chief executive officer Frank Edwards said the city would use the Cycle Plan to look at how to increase connectivity in the CBD.

"The city has some excellent

cycling routes, but it is acknowledged that more links are needed in the heart of the city," he said.


While Mr Edwards admitted pedestrians had been given priority along St Georges Tce, he said lower traffic speeds would result in a "less intimidating streetscape" for cyclists on the roads.

He said separate strategic routes for buses and cyclists would be considered as part of the Cycle Plan.

Transport Department figures from the end of 2009 show more than 15,000 cyclists were travelling in and out of the CBD along cycle paths each day, with numbers more than doubling in the past decade.

A spokesman for Transport Minister Simon O'Brien said the State Government spent over \$14 million building and upgrading cycling paths and providing grants last financial year.

People have until August 31 to comment on the City of Perth's Cycle Plan by visiting [www.perth.wa.gov.au/cycleplan](http://www.perth.wa.gov.au/cycleplan).

 [robinsonch@sundaytimes.newsltd.com.au](mailto:robinsonch@sundaytimes.newsltd.com.au)