



Speech by

# Hon. Rachel Nolan


MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard Thursday, 17 February 2011

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### CoastConnect

 **Hon. RG NOLAN** (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Transport) (10.14 am): While the government's focus is on reconstruction in the wake of natural disasters, in my portfolio we are also getting on with the job of planning for the future transport needs of our fast growing state. Today I am pleased to release the final report and design for the Sunshine Coast's CoastConnect. CoastConnect is a 23-kilometre green transport corridor which is set to improve sustainable transport options on the Sunshine Coast. It includes bus priority lanes, on-road cycle lanes, bus stations in key activity areas, bus stop upgrades, and bus queue bypasses so that buses can get more quickly around the lights. CoastConnect is an important part of our long-term plan to meet the transport needs of the fast growing Sunshine Coast by providing faster and more reliable public transport. CoastConnect will slash up to 13 minutes from bus travel times between Caloundra and Maroochydore and we will begin protecting the corridor so that users can enjoy the benefits sooner.

Construction of the Noosa Junction bus station is already underway and construction on the route itself is planned to begin in 2014, with final completion between Caloundra and Maroochydore scheduled for 2019 as part of the government's \$13 billion boost to green transport on the Sunshine Coast. Under CoastConnect, public transport will become more reliable—buses will have their own space in the transport network; it will be more rapid, with significant travel time savings, making the bus a more attractive option than the private car; it will be more comfortable, with new bus stations being built at Maroochydore, Kawana, Currimundi and Caloundra and improvements being made to more than 70 bus stops; and it will be more accessible, with additional stops, more accessible locations and feeder bus services to main transport routes.

Planning for CoastConnect will be consistent with the local council's planning, and we are working very closely with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, which, as members know, has a strong commitment to public transport, as part of this project. I thank the Sunshine Coast community for its valuable input into shaping this plan. Government has listened. Throughout the development of CoastConnect we have incorporated community feedback in a number of ways, including minimising impacts on Alexandra Parade and Aerodrome Road, as the member for Maroochydore sought for us to do, increasing car parks and fast-tracking the Maroochydore bus station. Over \$13 billion has been allocated to boost public transport and cycling infrastructure on the Sunshine Coast over the next 20 years as part of the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program. Copies of the documents are available now on my department's website.