




Speech By
Michael Berkman

MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Maiwar Electorate, Transport Infrastructure

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (2.43 pm): I rise to place on record the growing concern on the west side about the transport minister's and council's plan to create more traffic by duplicating the Walter Taylor Bridge for private vehicles. At the minister's urging, the LNP council has started a prefeasibility study on this project, but it is a bad idea. It will make traffic worse, it is a waste of money and it distracts from real solutions. Yes, there is some congestion at the bridge during school times and on Saturdays, but the solution is shifting more trips onto public transport and not building wider roads. In July I obtained secret council documents under right to information laws which I now table.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents from the Brisbane City Council regarding the Chelmer to Indooroopilly River Crossing modelling [1418](#).

They show that any possible timesaving from a new bridge would be undermined by 'sudden increases in traffic ... as currently diverted trips shift back to the corridor'. A new bridge would eliminate one bottleneck but create two new ones at Coonan Street and Oxley Road. The new bridge would also run right over the top of Witton Barracks Park in Indooroopilly. This much loved green space would become a noisy, polluted dead zone—much like the underside of the Riverside Expressway. A new bridge would cost hundreds of millions of dollars but will not fix congestion. A far better use of that money would be fixing public transport to maximise the use of our excellent existing train line. The council documents show that the vast majority of trips over the existing bridge are local: between Oxley, Tennyson, Yeerongpilly, Indooroopilly and St Lucia. That is great news because short trips like that are easier to shift onto trains or buses.

To do that I have launched a campaign to re-open the Tennyson train line from Corinda to Yeerongpilly. In the 10 years since Labor closed that line thousands of new apartments have sprouted up in Indooroopilly and on the south side. Re-opening that line would mean that all of those residents near Indro or Toowong stations could quickly and easily get a train to the south side without going through the city. It would also make longer trips easier on public transport, including Ipswich to the Gold Coast or Logan to Springfield.

The reception to our plan from westsiders and southsiders alike has been terrific. There is a huge hunger out there for more public transport links between the suburbs. With Cross River Rail opening in 2025, the technical constraints that have limited services in the past could be resolved. I would love for Indro residents to be able to step on the train to catch an Olympic tennis match at Tennyson in 2032. As well as reopening the train line we could pretty cheaply fix the bus connections from Indro station to UQ and Fig Tree Pocket to make it easier for south side drivers to leave their cars at home. In conclusion, we are in a climate crisis. Traffic is worse than ever and public transport usage is stagnant. It is time for a bit of imagination and ambition, not another wasteful road project.