




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Thuringowa Electorate, Roads

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.39 pm): Following on from the last couple of speakers, I too want to talk about roads and what a proud Labor government does to deliver roads in Thuringowa. I am glad that the Minister for Main Roads is in the House at the moment. He is the best main roads minister we have ever had and I will tell members why. In 2015-16, the Hervey Range Road upgrade: we did that. In 2018, Riverway Drive Stage 1: we did that with funding of \$43 million, decreasing congestion and making the road safer. In 2019 I also got funding commitments—the state moved first—of \$40 million for the Townsville Ring Road Stage 5, which has now been completed. It is finished. That was a \$280 million build that created 440 local jobs in our city. That is why we have a 2.7 per cent unemployment rate. It is finished and the punters love it. It is a separated arterial road so there is a decreased risk of road traffic accidents. As a former paramedic—

Mr Healy: Were you?

Mr HARPER: Yes, I was—I attended a number of accidents on that strip when the road was single lanes. It was quite dangerous. That was a great investment in road safety that includes the Beck Drive upgrade. That is welcomed by the Carlyle Gardens crew, as I like to refer to them. Carlyle Gardens is a retirement village of 500 people. They have been kept informed along the way. I thank Georgiou, TMR locally and Steve Mallows, the regional director. They have worked hard to engage with all stakeholders, to finish that job and to improve connection along Beck Drive. There are additional ramps. What did those ramps bring? More investment from private developers! There are 1,500 homes to be built on Beck Drive, which means more jobs for tradies in our city. This is a great investment by the Labor government.

I will continue to deliver roads well into the future with a commitment for Riverway Drive Stage 2—thank you, Minister—worth \$20 million. Early works are to start soon. Ergon is doing some utility work and getting that out of the way. The project has been delayed by the Townsville City Council water pipe. We have helped them put in a new pipeline on the other side of the river to connect the Ross River Dam to the Douglas Water Treatment Plant. Once that pipe is moved, we will be able to get digging on Riverway Drive Stage 2. I am looking forward to that and so are the thousands of people who use the road—25,000 cars a day. That will be stage 2.

And who knows what the future holds. I have just had a meeting with the Treasurer. In future budgets, what do I want? What might I deliver? Could there be—indeed—a Riverway Drive stage 3? You will have to wait see, Thuringowa. Wait until after October next year and I will tell you all about it. We are investing in roads in Thuringowa.