




Speech By
Hon. Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

Record of Proceedings, 22 May 2024

MOTION

Transport Infrastructure

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (5.14 pm): I move the following amendment—

I move that all words after 'notes' be omitted and the following inserted:

1. The Labor government commenced consultation on the Gympie Road bypass tunnel on 30 October 2023 to provide congestion busting solutions.
2. That there has been overwhelmingly positive support for the Miles Labor government proposal to build the Gympie Road bypass tunnel.
3. That when in charge of the transport budget, the LNP:
 - (a) cut \$1.6 billion from Queensland's transport and roads budget;
 - (b) cut \$60 million from road safety funding;
 - (c) sacked more than 2,500 Transport and Main Roads workers—20 per cent of the workforce;
 - (d) sacked 700 RoadTek road builders;
 - (e) did not progress any new infrastructure projects other than a new office at 1 William Street.
4. That the only funding allocated from the LNP for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel has been to fund billboards falsely claiming credit for the project.
5. That the Labor government has already allocated \$35 million towards the project.
6. That the Labor government delivered the Northern Transitway to bust traffic congestion along Gympie Road; and
7. That the LNP did not support the Northern Transitway.'

The Northern Transitway is a project that I have advocated for and is now providing benefits and improved connectivity for people in my electorate and across Brisbane's north side. This is a project that fits hand in glove with the proposed Gympie Road bypass tunnel. This is a project that the LNP opposed; this is a project that the LNP said they would cut. The fact is that those opposite are all about putting on a good performance and we are about taking action for the people on the north side of Brisbane.

In April last year this government moved ahead with a \$35 million investment into a detailed proposal for a Gympie Road bypass tunnel between Kedron and Carseldine. The Queensland Investment Corporation is leading the detailed proposal and is expected to report its findings to the government in mid-2024. This includes two concurrently led streams of planning for transport: one, a detailed investment proposal for a road tunnel with portals near the Airportlink at Kedron and Beams Road at Carseldine; and, two, a master plan for surface works for at-grade public and active transport along Gympie Road. Even the Brisbane City Council and Lord Mayor Schinnerer are well aware of our progress on this project and have made attempts to claim credit for our proposal with costly billboards around Brisbane in the lead-up to the election. I cannot really blame them because this is a great project.

Just last month, the Northern Transitway was completed to Rode Road, improving public transport connections along Gympie Road with a separate dedicated bus lane in each direction. This is a key project that will integrate with a future Gympie Road bypass tunnel. As I stated in February, future stages of the transitway would be delivered following positive consideration of the Gympie Road bypass tunnel.

We have already allocated \$35 million for a detailed proposal of the tunnel, which is well underway. I note that at the time of the announcement the Leader of the Opposition said he would not stand in the way of the project but accused the government of spending \$35 million on 'another study'. That was from the *Courier-Mail* on 12 June 2023. Less than a year ago the Leader of the Opposition said that we should not do a study, but now this year he has seen how popular this proposal is and he wants to see the findings of the study. They are also now demanding that we fund a project that they said we should not be spending any money on less than a year ago. When it comes to transport policy in Queensland, the LNP and the Leader of the Opposition have no vision of their own other than cuts. They want to cut transport projects and they want to cut transport jobs. The member for Chatsworth—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr MELLISH: The member for Chatsworth belled the cat earlier when he said that the Brisbane City Council, with funding from the Morrison government, wanted to put a motorway up the Trouts Road corridor. That was the LNP proposal, which my community and many other members on the north side fought against. With the argument we put there of what we wanted to do, council moved away from that and we have now come up with \$35 million for this detailed proposal already underway for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel.

I note that my opponent in Aspley is up in the gallery. I welcome her here, but I note that the LNP plan and my opponent's plan was to bulldoze the Trouts Road corridor. My community will not forget that the LNP plan was to bulldoze the Trouts Road corridor. Our plan is for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel and the Northern Transitway on the surface. It is clear that the opposition have zero plans when it comes to transport. They have zero plans for the north side of Brisbane. When it comes to transport, they just want to cut. When it comes to transport jobs, they just want to cut.