




Speech By
Patrick Weir

MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

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ADJOURNMENT

Condamine Electorate, Olympic and Paralympic Games

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (7.14 pm): On Monday this week the independent Olympic infrastructure review ordered by the Premier was released with 30 recommendations made by the panel, 27 of which have been accepted by the Premier and the Queensland government—but what a debacle has unfolded from that point onwards.

The Toowoomba region was hopeful of a significant economic opportunity for its growing community with the announcement of the Olympic Games, especially given its close proximity to Brisbane and ongoing advocacy for a passenger rail connection to the south-east corner. It appears this excitement was premature as the investment in Toowoomba's sporting infrastructure by this government has gone missing.

The existing sporting stadiums need upgrading not just to host pre-games training or warm-up events but to host ongoing sporting, cultural and artistic events in the region. The investment mooted was to benefit the whole community into the future with the games fitting into this plan, not the other way around.

The population of Toowoomba and the surrounding communities is growing rapidly. The outlying areas of Highfields, Westbrook and Wyreema have seen large increases in the last 10 years with little to no infrastructure investment from this government. In 2014 Toowoomba had over 113,000 people and in 2022 over 178,000 people, with a prediction of over 235,000 by 2050. The infrastructure investment needs to be made now to ensure the region is keeping up with the requirements of a growing region.

Toowoomba has long been regarded as a region of equestrian excellence. The boarding schools located in Toowoomba and nearby Warwick have many students who follow equestrian pursuits. Within the Condamine electorate there are a significant number of horse breeding enterprises.

There needs to be immediate and certain investment for the Toowoomba equestrian centre at the Toowoomba showgrounds—a critical piece of the community-based sports infrastructure that will service not only Toowoomba but all of south-west Queensland. This centre would be world-class and meet the shortfall of fit-for-purpose equestrian facilities that consider the needs of both the athlete and the animal. It would have the capacity to provide a facility not only for pre-games training and warm-up events but also for game events.

There seems little point in our region being part of the council of mayors if west of the Great Divide will gain nothing from the 2032 Olympic Games. Our region has the potential to host lead-up events such as hockey, BMX, mountain biking and boxing, and actual games events such as equestrian, shooting and archery, yet it has been ignored. The government needs to invest in our region for the long-term economic, social and cultural benefits that will be brought to fruition by developing our existing infrastructure for the games with the flow-on effects that will last for generations.