

Question on Notice

No. 1297

Asked on 31 October 2006

MR ELMES asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (MR LUCAS) -

QUESTION:

With reference to the then Labour Member for Noosa, Cate Molloy who issued a media release on 1 June 2005 in which she stated: "*I have again met with Transport and Main Roads Minister Paul Lucas and impressed upon him the urgency with which the community wanted something done and he agreed in principle to fast track the Tewantin by-pass project*" and as Noosa Council predicts that the Tewantin area would be gridlocked by 2007 –

What stage has the planning process reached and when will work commence on the Tewantin by-pass?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Noosa for the question.

The Beattie Government is investing an unprecedented amount into Sunshine Coast Roads.

This financial year, funding for roads will total around \$190 million for roadworks in Caloundra City, and Maroochy and Noosa Shires. This compares with around \$50 million a decade ago under the Borbidge Government.

Overall the Beattie Government is committed to fast-tracking road upgrades on the Sunshine Coast, where feasible, such as delivering the construction of the new Maroochy River Bridge 12 months early as part of a \$104 million project to upgrade the Sunshine Motorway to four lanes between Maroochydoore Road and Pacific Paradise, and integrating it with the \$85 million Pacific Paradise interchange project.

Other projects which have been accelerated include the \$86 million Maroochydoore Road upgrade from the Bruce Highway to Pike Street, and the \$80 million four laning of Caloundra Road from the Bruce Highway to Pierce Avenue. The government is also undertaking a major upgrade of the Sunshine Motorway (\$59 million), including new interchanges at Sippy Downs and Maroochy Boulevard.

Since 1998, the State Government has paid a total of \$66 million to Noosa Shire Council under the NDA. The funding was used by council to construct Walter Hay Drive and Eenie Creek Road Stages 1 and 2. Outside the NDA, the government has earmarked a further \$1 million as a contribution to council's construction of Eenie Creek Road Stage 3. These new roads have taken through traffic out of the tourist area of Noosa Heads and Sunshine Beach and the industrial area of Noosaville.

These major contributions to council are in addition to funding which has been invested by the Department Main Roads on behalf of the State Government on state-controlled roads in Noosa over the past 2 years. Examples include \$3.6 million to resurface and widen a 3.6km section of the Eumundi - Noosa Road and \$6.3 million to resurface and widen a 4.5km section of the Boreen Point - Tewantin Road. This resurfacing and widening work has improved safety and reduced maintenance requirements.

In the Noosa area, the State Government has allocated on average \$31.4 million over the last 2 years (2004-05 and 2005-06) on state roads funding, compared to \$7.7 million per annum under the coalition government during 1996-97 and 1997-98.

The Noosa Demaining Agreement (NDA) between the State of Queensland, acting through the Department of Main Roads, and Noosa Shire Council was signed on 20 April 2000. Clause 2.9 of the NDA states that:

"The Integrated Regional Transport Plan includes the investigation of strategic road opportunities including a Tewantin Bypass. Given that these investigations establish a need for a Tewantin Bypass connecting the Cooroy – Noosa Road to the Eumundi – Noosa Road, then, subject to the Act, Main Roads will plan, design and construct it."

However under the agreement, Main Roads has no obligation to fund a Tewantin Bypass or a specific timeframe to construct it.

The proposed bypass will be located in the corridor for Beckmans Road, which is not a state controlled road. Noosa Shire Council considers that the bypass would improve safety and reduce congestion by separating local traffic from through traffic. Council has engaged GHD Consultants to undertake an investigation of the bypass. I have been advised that council is finalising the planning and cost estimate and will forward them to Main Roads for review.

Council has advised that the current traffic volume on Beckmans Road is an average of 13,000 vehicles per day.

Main Roads has made a commitment to work with council to agree on an estimated cost for the proposed bypass and to look for opportunities to secure the necessary funding once an agreement is reached. At present the department is awaiting this information from council.