

Question on Notice

No. 1287

Asked on 8 November 2022

MR N DAMETTO ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to recent Census data revealing exponential population growth in the Northern Beaches of Townsville which has exacerbated traffic congestion for daily commuters traveling to and from Townsville City—

Will the Minister do all within his power to expediate necessary improvements to Woolcock Street to ensure that transport infrastructure is upgraded in accordance with population growth?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Hinchinbrook for the question.

I refer to my response to Question on Notice 652 tabled on 24 June 2021, asking if I would direct my department to accelerate planning for the Woolcock Street intersections with North Shore Boulevard and Shaw Road to relieve congestion.

As advised at the time, \$1.16 million has been allocated in the *Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program (QTRIP) 2021–22 to 2024–25* for the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) to undertake initial planning along this section of Woolcock Street, extending from Northshore Boulevard to Ingham Road. This planning is carrying out technical investigations needed to develop upgrade options for this section, including traffic, hydraulic, geotechnical, structural and environmental studies.

It will involve thorough consideration of what can be done in the constrained area along this section of Woolcock Street. This is a complex project, which will consider how best to address safety and capacity issues, while limiting impacts on the surrounding area, given the proximity of the Bohle River, the bridges, the two open-level rail crossings, and existing and proposed residential and industrial development, schools and businesses.

In the meantime, TMR is continuing to monitor safety and capacity along this section of Woolcock Street. In the Northern District, this includes the continued delivery of several projects to cater for Townsville's growth, including the \$280 million Townsville Ring Road Stage 5 project, the \$117.4 million Townsville Northern Access Intersection Upgrade project, which is currently underway, and the recently announced \$70 million Townsville Connection Road (Stuart Drive), Bowen Road Bridge (Idalia), duplicate bridge and approaches.

The Palaszczuk Government is delivering its seventh record transport and roads infrastructure program in a row, as detailed in *QTRIP 2022–23 to 2025–26*, which outlines \$29.7 billion in investment over the next four years and is estimated to support an average of 25,200 direct jobs over the life of the program. Of this, \$1.069 billion is committed across TMR's Northern District, estimated to support an average of 940 direct jobs over the life of the program.