

In and around Fitzroy Region

Local Links • August 2010

A message from the Regional Director



Welcome to the August edition of the Local Links, our locally focused newsletter that is aimed at providing communities in Central Queensland with the latest information on activities and road projects across the region.

On 6 August the Member for Rockhampton Robert Schwarten officially switched on the new set of traffic signals on the Capricorn Highway at the entrance to Gracemere.

The \$3.2 million state-funded safety project at the McLaughlin Street intersection included the installation of traffic signals, new line-marking and street lighting.

The Capricorn Highway speed limit was also reduced to 80km/h between Fairybower Road and Gracemere as part of the project following feedback from motorists and the Gracemere community in 2009.

The newly operational signals and highway speed reduction will provide immediate safety benefits to the 14,000 vehicles that travel the Capricorn Highway daily between Rockhampton and Gracemere.

Similarly, the installation of Emerald's first set of traffic signals was completed in June 2010. The \$1.1 million Safer Roads Sooner project involved strengthening the road pavement and the installation of traffic signals incorporating pedestrian crossing facilities. Rex Cowan (District Director), Councillor Peter Maguire, Mayor of Central Highlands Regional Council and members of the community joined to officially switch on the new signals which are a significant milestone for the Emerald community.

An education campaign is also continuing to be rolled out throughout the Highlands, to inform motorists how traffic signals operate and how to use them correctly.

Further to the installation of the first set of traffic signals, the department has also secured \$2 million of Safer Roads Sooner Program funding for two more sets of signals to be installed on Hospital Road. This project is expected to commence by the end of August with both sets being operational by the end of 2010, weather permitting.

In July, the Queensland Premier announced \$10 million state funding to commence the Gracemere Industrial Access Project which will provide a rail overpass to connect between the Capricorn Highway and industrial land to the south of the Blackwater rail corridor.

This project remains in the very early stages, however the department will seek community feedback on possible overpass alternatives later this year.

Terry Hill
Regional Director (Fitzroy Region)

Project Updates

Fitzroy River Floodplain and Road Planning Study

In June 2009, the federal government announced the commencement of a two-year study to identify the preferred alignment for future road and rail transport in and around Rockhampton.

The \$5 million study, led by the Department of Transport and Main Roads, will identify and evaluate options to address flood immunity, traffic capacity, freight movement and amenity of the Bruce Highway through Rockhampton. This also includes the possibility of a new Fitzroy River crossing or highway re-alignment.

Community engagement and consultation will play a significant role in completing the floodplain study. Over the next 12 months, Transport and Main Roads is committed to engaging with the Central Queensland community to consider the many possible transport corridor options. This communication process will include public submissions, displays and media opportunities, all with the intent of receiving community input in every step of the study.

The project team recently commenced the options identification stage during which a set of potential corridor alignments will be established.

These potential alignments will then be shortlisted and put to the community for comment in late 2010.

The Fitzroy River Floodplain and Road Planning Study report is expected to be published in mid 2011.



Rockhampton - Emu Park Road

In April 2010, Transport and Main Roads completed the \$18 million upgrade of Emu Park Road as part of the ongoing strategy to improve the Capricorn Coast road network and major connection roads to Rockhampton.

The project included widening and rehabilitating Emu Park Road between Keppel Sands intersection and Tanby Road to provide a smoother and safer connection for motorists travelling between Rockhampton and Emu Park.

The project also provided for intersection upgrades and bus pull-over areas. A new overtaking lane was also provided for east-bound traffic near Palm Creek.

Calliope Range Realignment Dawson Highway

The \$70 million Calliope Range Realignment is Central Queensland's largest road project for 2010-11 and will provide a new Calliope Range crossing on the Dawson Highway, between Calliope and Biloela.

Situated 50km west of Calliope, the fully state-funded project spans the boundary of Banana Shire Council and Gladstone Regional Council.

Preconstruction works that included the relocation of over 400 environmentally significant Cycad trees was successfully completed in late 2009, clearing the way for site works to commence.

In March, Civil Mining and Construction (CMC) were announced as the successful contractor joining Transport and Main Roads to construct the 5km realignment.

Approximately 15% of earthworks associated with the Calliope Range Realignment has been completed and lane/speed restrictions remain in place to ensure the safety of motorists and construction workers.

Once completed, the Calliope Range Realignment will deliver a much smoother and free-flowing Dawson Highway, ensuring a safer and more freight-efficient alignment to replace the current highway bottleneck west of Calliope.

Gracemere Industrial Access Project Capricorn Highway

In June 2010, the Premier announced \$10 million state funding to commence planning works for an overpass to provide access to industrial land south of the Capricorn Highway, outside of Gracemere.

The Gracemere-Stanwell Industrial Precinct is located adjacent to the Capricorn Highway in Central Queensland. The location of the industrial corridor, on the south-western side of Rockhampton, means the corridor is well positioned to attract industries servicing the Bowen and Surat Basin coal and gas fields. Development of the precinct will also reduce the need for heavy vehicles to travel through Rockhampton CBD to access industrial facilities north of the city.

Historically, development of the Gracemere-Stanwell Industrial Precinct has been limited due to height restrictions for vehicles crossing the Blackwater Rail Corridor to access the industrial land. There are also safety issues for heavy vehicle traffic due to insufficient storage room between the rail line and Capricorn Highway. In the past, this has led to a number of near-miss incidents between rail traffic and heavy vehicles and is a major safety concern for the community.

Transport and Main Roads has commenced initial planning and options analysis for locations to construct an overpass and new Capricorn Highway intersection between Gracemere and Kabra. The project team will seek feedback from local residents and project stakeholders as part of the planning process.

The department expects to complete the planning and design activities associated with the Gracemere Industrial Access Project by July 2011.



Comet River Road Intersection Upgrade Capricorn Highway

The Department of Transport and Main Roads 2009-2010 Roads Implementation Program includes a series of new safety improvements for Central Highlands roads.

Emerald's first set of traffic signals are now in operation.

Installation of a further two sets of traffic signals is to commence in August at the intersections of Curt Street and Harris/Egan Streets along Hospital Road.

These intersections are some of the busiest in Emerald and the new traffic lights will improve safety for motorists and pedestrians.

The signals are being delivered as part of the state government's Safer Roads Sooner Program and will be fully installed and operational by late 2010.

Community consultation continues with key stakeholders as well as the delivery of an education campaign for the general public and school-aged children.



The intersection of Ruby Street and Egerton Street in Emerald where the first set of traffic signals are now operational

Comet River Road Intersection Upgrade Capricorn Highway

The \$1 million federally funded Blackspot project at the intersection of Comet River Road and the Capricorn Highway commenced in May 2010 and is nearing completion. The project involves upgrading the intersection to improve safety for all motorists.

Blackwater-Rolleston Road Upgrade Capricorn Highway

Roadworks commenced on the Blackwater-Rolleston Road in April 2010 and completion is expected by June 2011, weather permitting.

This project, funded by local, state and federal governments involves sealing a 58 km section of the road to provide motorists with a smooth ride and improved safety.

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