

## QUEENSLAND BUDGET 2007

# It's full steam ahead



THE State Government will spend \$107.6 million on the development of the Robina to Varsity Lakes railway line as plans are advanced to take trains to the border and establish a new transport nerve centre.

In a major windfall for the struggling Gold Coast transport system, a record \$400 million will be injected into building new roads and planning for future growth.

While a large chunk of that money will be directed towards finishing the Tugun bypass ahead of schedule, the timely cash boost will be centred on ensuring the Gold Coast can handle future transport needs.

Transport Minister Paul Lucas yesterday announced the State Government was well advanced in its \$1.2 billion plan to fix traffic woes.

"We're committing \$107.6 million to extend the Gold Coast line from Robina to Varsity Lakes," said Mr Lucas.

Last April, the State Government acquired an 8.5ha site from Delfin and has since transferred high voltage overhead lines underground, in preparation of the establishment of a new \$350 million precinct which includes the extension of the Robina railway line.

"This area will be the perfect point for Gold Coast travellers," he said. "The transit interfacing from rail to buses and taxis will be created – making this one of the crucial sites in terms

of planning for the future."

As part of the new transport hub, there will be 50,000sqm office space and 10,000sqm of retail space and zoning for between 500-1000 dwellings.

Much of the State Government's focus for Gold Coast roads has been centred on the completion of the Tugun bypass, which is expected to be finished by June, 2008.

A total of \$179.8 million of the Budget has been put towards finishing the 7km road. The Beattie Government will contribute a total of \$423 million at the end of the project. The Federal Government has pledged \$120 million.

"The Tugun project is on fire. It is still on track to be completed by mid next year," he said.

Mr Lucas said the Tugun bypass was a crucial component of Queensland's new record five-year, \$13.3 billion Statewide Roads Implementation Program (RIP).

"For the Gold Coast and surrounding areas, the RIP delivers a healthy \$1.7 billion funding injection over the next five years," he said.

More than \$6.35 million of \$12.7 million funding for bus priority will be directed towards Broadbeach and surrounding southern locations on the Gold Coast.

The Hope Island Road duplication between the Pacific Motorway at Oxenford and Lae Drive is now expected to be completed by next year with a \$27.8 million funding announce-

ment made by Treasurer and Deputy Premier Anna Bligh, who confirmed that Gold Coast projects remained ahead of schedule.

"Our concerted efforts are delivering major projects making a real difference for Queenslanders," said Ms Bligh. "During the next year cars and trucks will be driving on the Tugun bypass."

An additional \$2.93 million funding was directed towards interchange improvements between the Somerset Drive and Reedy Creek off-ramps.

Plans to widen the Pacific Motorway to six lanes between Nerang and Stewart Road were also addressed with \$3.24 million added.

A previously promised \$11.46 million was granted to complete a four-lane road between Robert Street and Stevens Street, Labrador, and \$1.23 million will be contributed to the four-lane road between Minnie Street and Queen Street, Southport.

The Beattie Government also re-affirmed a \$28.43 million commitment towards planning and design for the Gold Coast Rapid Transit System.

The Robina Transport hub will see \$13.8 million directed towards finishing the project by the end of the year.

And as part of the overall \$1.2 billion plan to build better public transport, \$70 million will be spent on new buses to service the Gold Coast.



The rail line will be extended from Robina to Varsity Lakes