

1 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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A lot has been said about what the North South Bypass Tunnel (NSBT) can do for Brisbane.

Facts are being unearthed that suggest the complete story is not being told.

Less Congestion on Local Roads



"...Improved network travel time and reduced traffic accidents and congestion with associated social benefits..."

(NSBT Initial Advice Statement March 2004)

Council's transport analysis predicts over 60,000 vehicles per day will use the NSBT by 2011. This was based on the assumption that other road's lanes will be 'closed' and vehicles will be 'forced' into the tunnel.

This project is being promoted on the basis of 'freed up' road space. There is no such thing. When 'new' road space is created, people generate 'new' trips (Traffic engineers call this 'induced demand').

The Lord Mayor has admitted even with the NSBT there'll still be congestion on Lutwyche Road, the Inner City Bypass, Shafston Avenue and Ipswich Road. Not to mention the congestion during construction.

In Sydney the congestion on tunnel 'feeder' roads has been significantly underestimated. Cars and trucks frequently get stuck in tunnel traffic jams – just like the Ipswich Motorway & Gateway Motorway car parks!

Livable Brisbane



"....reduced noise levels and air quality impacts over significant areas where the diversion of traffic from existing road network will occur ..."

(NSBT Initial Advice Statement March 2004)

Exhaust stacks, 5 metres wide and over 30 metres high, located at each end, will send out a constant invisible plume of vehicle emissions. Carried by the wind the ultra fine particles in these plumes are a health risk to children, asthmatic sufferers and the elderly.

In the Sydney and Melbourne tunnels, some days the air is so thick with exhaust fumes, people using open-air cars and motorbikes have been advised not to enter. This unhealthy air is then exhausted un-treated.

Public safety



"Emergency exists to safe areas will be built approximately every 120 meters along each tunnel"

(NSBT Fact Sheet 4)

Through these exit doors people will be expected to access 50 refuges in which several hundred motorists can wait for rescue.

Safety designs like this are not allowed now in new tunnels overseas. The risks are too high. In Europe there was a tunnel fire and several motorists were burnt to death while waiting in a similar type of refuge.

Better for cyclists, pedestrians and buses



"...Increased road capacity which will be converted to the advantage of buses and high occupancy vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists..."

(NSBT Initial Advice Statement March 2004)

There are no commitments to improve pedestrian and cycling links.

As queues occur on the feeder roads to the NSBT inevitably commuter buses in the priority lanes will be delayed. The Lord Mayor has already removed bus only lanes on Lutwyche Road as an election promise.

What about the cost?



" Tunnel tolls will be kept to \$2.00".

(Campbell Newman pre-election promise March 2004)

In 9 months construction costs have risen from \$900m to an estimated \$1.5b and the proposed toll has increased from \$2.00 to over \$3.30. Filtration to "World's Best Practice" will make the toll even higher.

The financial viability of the NSBT relies heavily on income from the toll. A drop in the number of vehicles using the tunnel (high toll price, higher fuel prices, alternative routes) puts its long-term viability at risk.

What services would Council then curtail or will our rates increase?

Who is benefiting from this push to build more infrastructure, build more roads, build more can do tunnels?

If it's not the road users and not local residents then who?

The congestion caused by the NSBT will bring forward the 'need' to construct more tunnels and NSBT stages 2 and 3. (See map over)

A preferred solution

We cannot build our way out of congestion. No city ever has.

The region's transport system must be improved if we are to reduce our reliance on private transport. Decisions about the future location and type of cross-river connections need to be made in a more transparent process with reports, studies and documents made available without resorting to expensive Freedom of Information requests.

The NSBT is not a 'best value for money' investment.

Proudly produced by The Rivermouth Action Group Inc "What can't be done alone We can do together" tunnel@rag.org.au Ph: 0416 478 615

The North South Bypass Tunnel is not the right solution for Brisbane
.... Let's leave a positive legacy to our children.