

Chris Minns
Premier of NSW

Yasmin Catley
Minister for the Hunter

Tara Moriarty
Minister for Regional New South Wales
Minister for Western New South Wales

Jenny Aitchison
Member for Maitland
Minister for Regional Transport and Roads

MEDIA RELEASE

\$15 million puts Thornton rail bridge duplication back on track

Friday 1 September 2023

The NSW Government is delivering on its commitment to get Maitland moving again by investing \$15 million into the next stage of the Thornton Rail Bridge Duplication.

After 12 years of a Liberal-National Government prioritising building massive toll roads in Sydney at the expense of regional roads, the Minns Government is determined to get important infrastructure projects back on track.

This funding will kick off initial works and planning to duplicate the rail bridge at Thornton.

When delivered, the project will ease congestion and expand access to Thornton Road which offers a flood-free route for local residents during natural disasters.

Over the next 20 years, it's expected Maitland will experience an increase of nearly 7,000 residents and 3,500 jobs, making it the fastest growing regional city in NSW.

The NSW Government is focused on providing a safe and reliable road network to this fast-growing East Maitland area to keep pace with growth.

The NSW Government will begin consultation with community members and key stakeholders over some key issues including tie in points to the north and the south of the bridge, construction over an operational rail line, utility, and property impacts.

The duplication project initially started under the former Labor Government. The former Liberal-National Government gave many commitments that the project would be delivered but it never fully eventuated.

Instead, the former Government removed the cap on development north of the Bridge, allowing more homes to be built in the Thornton and Chisholm without committing more funding to regional infrastructure.

The NSW Government is determined to end the failed promises of past governments and deliver for regional NSW.

Quotes attributable to NSW Premier Chris Minns:

“The NSW Government is determined to end the previous government’s legacy of letting regional infrastructure fall behind while prioritising toll roads in Sydney.

“The NSW Government is delivering on our commitment to take the Thornton Rail Bridge duplication to the next stage and finally get the wheels turning on this much-needed project.

“Thornton and the surrounding areas are key to the Maitland region’s success. We must invest in key infrastructure projects to support a growing area of regional significance.

“Over the next 20 years it’s estimated we will see an increase of nearly 7,000 residents and 3,500 jobs, which is why we need to start work now to ensure traffic flows smoothly.

“I’m pleased to be able to be here in Thornton today, to show locals the Minns Labor government delivers on its promises.”

Quotes attributable to NSW Regional Transport & Roads Minister Jenny Aitchison:

“Today’s announcement is the culmination of the hard work we’ve done to ensure Thornton residents will enjoy smooth and safe travel in future.

“NSW Labor committed \$15 million during the election towards planning and early works for the duplication of Thornton Rail bridge.

“This is just one of the many vital road projects that the former Government failed to complete in 12 years. In fact, the Liberals and Nationals removed the cap on developments in Thornton North and Chisholm to enable them to avoid this essential work for more than a decade.”

“The precinct is so congested during peak periods and flooding that it may as well double as a bumper-to-bumper car park sometimes.

“This will be a game changer for essential workers who are constantly stuck in traffic and are spending hours in the car to get to work, education and medical appointments.

“As one of the flood-free routes connecting the northern parts of Maitland to the M1, Pacific Highway and the Hunter Expressway, the duplication of this bridge is vital for our community.

Quotes attributable to NSW Regional & Western NSW Minister Tara Moriarty:

“This announcement is the first step in delivering a crucial infrastructure project to the Thornton region to ensure the area continues to thrive as it grows into the future.

“Over the last few years, we’ve seen people flock from the cities to our regions, with this trend continuing it’s important that we invest in projects like this that support connectivity across regional and rural NSW.

“The NSW Government will continue to invest in projects just like the Thornton Rail Bridge duplication to ensure that as our regions continue to grow, they have the infrastructure they need to thrive and stay connected.”