

Mayoral Statement
19th July 2011

Bruce Highway

The Mayor raised concerns about the state of the Bruce Highway in Queensland north of Gympie. Just in recent weeks two lives were lost on the Bruce Highway in our region and the highway will come under increasing pressure as industrial development and the mining sector continues to rapidly grow in Central and Northern Queensland.

The Mayor reported that she has written to all the Regional Development Australia Committees north of Gympie with the suggestion that the federal government funding available through these committees be allocated to completely rebuilding our section the national highway. Council has received very positive support from the majority of RDAs, but it is difficult for some regions to relinquish other projects proposed to be funded from these federal government funds.

The Mayor tabled a report titled *"Bruce Highway Upgrade Strategy, for public consultation Connecting Queensland's Regions, July 2011"* released this month by the Queensland Government which outlines the plans for upgrading of the Bruce Highway. The public have been invited to make submissions on the document and the Mayor encouraged the community to review the report and make their views known. The Mayor commented that the highest priority issue for our region in respect of the Bruce Highway is the Calliope Crossroads. The document states that the crossroads has been identified for upgrading in the 1-4 year timeframe. The meeting considered that this intersection in it's current state would not be able to safely service current and future traffic loads for another four years. The Mayor suggested that Council make a formal submission on the report placing emphasis on the urgent need to upgrade the intersection. The Mayor suggested that the solution to improving the safety of the Bruce Highway generally is to completely rebuild it and not just lower the speed limit which seems to be a trend occurring on sections of the highway.