

MEDIA RELEASE

## RDA SUNSHINE COAST WELCOMES NEW FOCUS ON REGION'S RAIL DUPLICATION PROJECT

28 March 2018

RDA Sunshine Coast has welcomed the decision of Infrastructure Australia to list the Beerburrum to Nambour Rail Upgrade as a Priority Project, bringing the \$800 million plan closer to reality.

The listing – the second highest of Infrastructure Australia's four categories of urgency – is a significant development for the rail duplication project.

Previously it had been listed as 'Priority Initiative' – a potential infrastructure solution for which a business case had not yet been completed.

Infrastructure Australia chair Julieanne Alroe said the project had been prioritised because of its potential to deliver national productivity gains.

Regional Development Australia's Sunshine Coast branch has been lobbying and working with all levels of government for the rail duplication project to go ahead.

RDA Sunshine Coast chair Carol Cashman said the upgrade was urgently needed.

"Without improvements, our region's economic growth will be impacted, and freight and passenger capacity will be severely limited. In addition, more of the transport task in this corridor would shift onto the roads, significantly increasing traffic on the Bruce Highway," she said.

The project involves duplicating 20 km of rail line from Beerburrum to Landsborough, extending existing passing loops between Landsborough and Nambour, removing level crossings, realigning routes and improving stations.

The project will nearly double the capacity for freight paths and increase the frequency and reliability of passenger services.

It would also enable future public transport improvements within the Sunshine Coast region, including a future expansion of rail services to the coastal towns.

Infrastructure Australia is confident the benefits of the project will exceed its estimated costs, and that the project will provide a net benefit to the Australian economy.

The new status of the rail duplication process was included in Infrastructure Australia's 2018 Priority List, which identified a \$55 billion pipeline of nation-shaping infrastructure investments in Australia's cities and regions.

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### Further information

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