



## **\$21 M FOR AIRPORT TUNNEL PLANNING SAY PREMIER AND LORD MAYOR**

An agreement signed today by Premier Peter Beattie and Lord Mayor Campbell Newman means that work will now start on detailed planning for the proposed Airport Link tunnel.

“We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding which provides for joint funding of the Airport Link Detailed Feasibility Study,” said Mr Beattie.

“The Queensland Government is committing up to \$16 million towards the \$21 million cost of the study, and we have also committed resources to ensure that the investigation into the extension of the Northern Busway is co-ordinated with the Airport Link planning.

“Airport Link is the second major road infrastructure project proposed in Brisbane’s *TransApex* network and is listed in the Queensland Government’s *South East Queensland Regional Plan* and *South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program*.

“Most of the link will be underground and will connect the northern end of the North-South Bypass Tunnel to Sandgate Road, Gympie Road and the East-West Arterial, linking to the northern suburbs and Airport Drive.

“The signing of this agreement demonstrates how the State Government works in close partnership with the city council on major road and transport issues.

“Airport Link is an important part of the \$55 billion *South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program*.

“This is a great opportunity for unprecedented co-ordination between levels of government and between projects to improve private and public transport in the northern suburbs of Brisbane,” Mr Beattie said.

Councillor Newman said the Detailed Feasibility Study would include comprehensive transport and traffic studies, engineering assessments, an environmental impact study to assess the benefits and impacts of a preferred route, extensive community consultation and a business case.

“I am delighted to work with the Premier to progress major traffic and transport infrastructure that will serve the increasing transport needs of Brisbane and the wider Brisbane region well into the future.

“As the first major step in the Detailed Feasibility, the joint Council-State Airport Link project team will make a recommendation on a preferred route later this year and I encourage all Brisbane residents to have a say,” said Cr Newman.

Cr Newman said the proposed Airport Link would significantly reduce congestion and improve public transport opportunities if it were connected with the North-South Bypass Tunnel in the south, and Gympie Road and Sandgate Road and the East-West Arterial in the north.

“The Airport Link will save motorists a significant amount of time and money by providing a direct route from the northern suburbs to the city and, through the North-South Bypass Tunnel, to the Pacific Motorway, Ipswich Road and Shafston Avenue in the south – without traffic lights,” Cr Newman said.

“The Airport Link will also reduce surface road congestion and allow us to improve the residential amenity of streets that are now used by cars trying to avoid the increasing congestion problems on Gympie Road, Lutwyche Road and Sandgate Road.”

The North-South Bypass Tunnel is a cross-river tunnel, currently in the procurement phase, linking the Pacific Motorway and Ipswich Road at Woolloongabba and Shafston Avenue at Kangaroo Point, in the south, to the Inner City Bypass at Bowen Hills in the north.

The Northern Busway is a \$530 million plan to connect the Inner Northern Busway to Aspley via Windsor, Lutwyche, Kedron and Chermside.

## **MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

**Premier’s office:** 3224 4500

**Lord Mayor’s office:** 3403 4832

August 2, 2005.