

Going places at last!

Relief for motorists as bridge opens

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MORE than \$45 million finally built it and yesterday hundreds of people – many frustrated Maroochydhore commuters – came to see a miracle after long unanswered prayers

It took more than five Maroochy mayors, from the first vague concept, to realise yesterday's opening of the six-lane Maroochy Boulevard interchange which makes a grand new entrance statement to the Maroochydhore CBD.

Locals voted with their happy feet yesterday after Maroochy mayor Joe Natoli cut the ribbon of the bridge that was to nowhere no longer...but now at the very heart of solving a mess of traffic snarls.

From 6am this morning it was the turn of motorists to honk their horns in glee as they traversed the road linking Wises Road to the Sunshine Plaza and ending, hopefully, the tyranny of Sugar Road.

Even off-duty Maroochy lifeguards streamed across the motoring lifesaver, built with \$12.5 million contributions from developer the



ON THE ROAD TO SOMEWHERE: Coast residents turned out in their hundreds yesterday to celebrate the opening of the new bridge on Maroochy Boulevard.

PHOTO: BARRY LEDDICOAT/168093

Chardon Group and \$21 million from Main Roads.

Maroochy Council chipped in its share and offered more than its two bob's worth of advice to ensure this flowing design was one of the snazziest road connections on any coast.

Those who crossed over the Sunshine Motorway yesterday took in a lush green vista with Mount Coolum as a striking backdrop.

"This is one of the most attractive interchanges in the country," said Mr Natoli, who urged residents to be proud that this project was brought in on budget on time.

"It's going to take incredible pressure off roads like Maud Street and Sugar Road.

"When people make this their preferred choice to come straight off the motorway and into the heart of our

CBD Maroochydhore, they will realise they'll save an enormous amount of time."

Mr Natoli said this was the first council road project on the Coast to include dedicated public transit lanes.

The mayor was almost preaching to the deliriously converted. One-time critics of planning inaction could not wait to give the boulevard a test run.

Sally Fleay, who lives near-

by on the Buderim side, said she had been waiting for this day for such a "lo-o-o-n-g time."

"It's going to connect us straight to the CBD. I work at Hot FM and it is going to cut up to 10 minutes off my trip," she said.

"Sugar Road is a road I never want to go on again."

Louise and Tom McLean, who are also near neighbours to the trendy blue-

green gridlock-buster, were also chuffed that they will be spared the horrors of battling local traffic. "It's going to be great getting to the Plaza," Louise said.

Sharon Lollback walked the bridge with her daughter Ashlee.

"It will really make a difference for the people of Buderim and open up the CBD," she said. "It has been a long time coming."