Australian Government

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BRISBANE CITY

Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Story Bridge Renewal Business Case

Key Findings Report - October 2026

About this document

This report shares the key findings of the *Story Bridge Renewal Business Case*, a comprehensive body of work jointly funded by Brisbane City Council and the Australian Government.

Led by Brisbane City Council in collaboration with international bridge experts and supported by local knowledge, specialist technical analysis and extensive stakeholder engagement, the business case has established the evidence base and strategic case for renewing Queensland's most iconic bridge.

The business case confirms the need for a long-term, staged renewal program to preserve the heritage-listed Story Bridge and ensure it remains safe, reliable and fit for purpose for decades to come. It also reinforces the bridge's significance not only as a vital transport link connecting communities across Brisbane, but as a heritage icon that contributes to the city's identity, liveability and economy.

The investigations undertaken through the business case have informed a pathway to support the bridge's continued operation and legacy for future generations, helping preserve its important role in Brisbane's story and supporting its next chapter.

Imagery used in this report has been sourced from Brisbane City Council archives, The State Library of Queensland and the Brisbane Economic Development Agency (BEDA) image library.

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A message from the Lord Mayor of Brisbane

For 86 years, the Story Bridge has stood proudly over the Brisbane River.

It's a Queensland icon, one of Australia's most recognisable landmarks and an unmistakable part of Brisbane's skyline.

It has been a part of everyday life in our city for generations, from the daily commute to celebrations, milestones and some of Brisbane's biggest moments.

But the Story Bridge isn't just an icon. It's also one of Queensland's hardest-working pieces of transport infrastructure.

More than 100,000 vehicles cross the bridge every day, alongside people walking and riding, helping to keep Brisbane and South East Queensland moving.

Over 40% of people using the bridge come from outside Brisbane, underlining just how important it is beyond our city boundaries.

We've been good stewards of the Story Bridge, investing more than $90 million in its maintenance and care since 2019.

The independent Story Bridge Restoration Committee confirmed that work has kept the bridge operating safely, but it also recognised a simple reality. The Story Bridge was built with a 100-year design life and, at 86 years old, it now needs a long-term roadmap for what comes next.

This Queensland icon has plenty more chapters ahead and it deserves a sequel.

The Story Bridge Renewal Business Case provides that roadmap, setting out what is required to renew this heritage-listed Queensland icon and give it the sequel it deserves.

By 2032, the Story Bridge will be 92 years old and one of the most recognisable Queensland landmarks seen around the world.

Renewing it is about more than looking after an icon. It's about keeping people moving, supporting our economy and ensuring future generations can continue to rely on the Story Bridge for decades to come.

Adrian Schrinner
LORD MAYOR

A message from the Chair of Infrastructure

A good story needs a sequel. It's the perfect metaphor for Brisbane's Story Bridge, because for more than 8 decades, it has been the backdrop to Brisbane's story.

As our city has grown from a big country town into the modern metropolis it is today, the bridge has been there every step of the way. John Bradfield's design has stood the test of time, but the Depression era materials used to build the Story Bridge are starting to show their age, 86 years into its life.

This work represents the most comprehensive assessment of the bridge ever undertaken and was developed with the support of international bridge experts and informed by detailed engineering, economic and transport analysis. The findings are clear: renewal is the most practical, affordable and least disruptive solution to preserve the Story Bridge, maintain a critical transport connection and protect a heritage icon that means so much to our city.

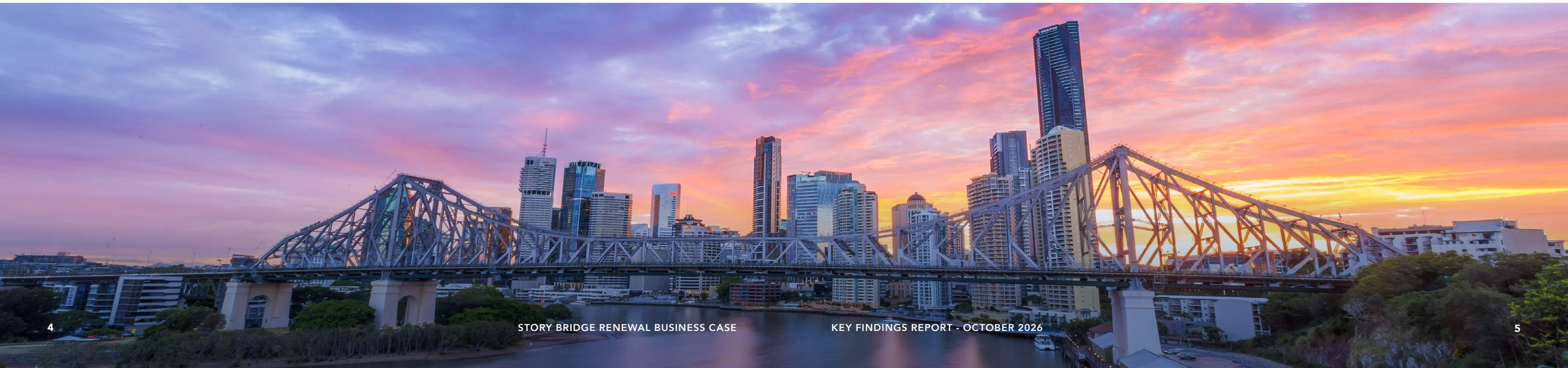
The business case also makes clear that this is a once-in-a-century responsibility. The scale and complexity of the required works are significant, with renewal proposed to be delivered through a staged program over the next two decades.

While Brisbane City Council has proudly maintained the bridge since assuming ownership in 1947, the renewal of an asset of this importance cannot be delivered by Council alone, a genuine partnership between local, state and federal governments is essential.

The Story Bridge serves people far beyond Brisbane. It supports regional and interstate travel, freight movement, economic activity and tourism, while contributing to the national transport network. Its renewal presents an opportunity for a new generation of skilled workers, apprentices and tradespeople, to renew the iconic symbol of the River City, for the residents of today, and those still to come.

Council has already committed over $90 million towards the bridge's future in the last decade and will continue to advocate strongly for the support needed to deliver this renewal. Working together, we can secure a sustainable funding pathway that protects the Story Bridge, preserves its heritage value and ensures it continues serving Queenslanders for generations to come. After all, a good story needs a sequel.

Ryan Murphy
CHAIR OF INFRASTRUCTURE



The Story Bridge is at the heart of Brisbane

Visually iconic, critical to our transport network and a keystone of Brisbane's cultural identity, for almost one hundred years the Story Bridge has supported the pulse of our daily lives, connecting generations to work, home, celebrations and each other.

Deeply embedded in the hum of our routine, even the unmistakable sound of tyres rolling over the Story Bridge – that 'ba-dum, ba-dum, ba-dum' – almost sets the rhythm of the city itself.

Recognised worldwide

First opened in 1940, the Story Bridge remains instantly recognisable amidst Brisbane's modern city skyline. Thanks to its unique design, the bridge has proven to be stronger and more enduring than other structures of its time and in 1992 the Queensland Government added it to the Queensland Heritage Register. Featured in countless postcards and advertisements, when the world pictures Brisbane, it pictures the Story Bridge.

Critical transport link

The Story Bridge provides a critical link across the Brisbane River for over 100,000 vehicles per day as well as 4,000 pedestrians and cyclists.

Locals and visitors alike rely on the bridge, with more than 42% of unique users starting their journey outside of Brisbane, including 15% travelling to or from national highways.

Tourism hotspot

Beyond serving as a backdrop for millions of photographs every year, the Story Bridge is a focal point for Brisbane, often lit up in different colours to mark major events such as Riverfire, State of Origin and New Year's Eve. It connects the Howard Smith Wharves entertainment precinct with Kangaroo Point and the riverside walk. The Story Bridge also welcomes 22,000 people every year who experience a unique view of the bridge and the city skyline as part of the Story Bridge Adventure Climb.

100,000+ vehicles use the bridge every day

Up to **4,000** active transport users per day

42.5% of bridge users come from outside of Brisbane

10 x the traffic than when it was originally built

Critical route for interstate freight and travel

Vital Queensland connection and part of State Route 15 (Bradfield Highway)

For more than 8 decades, the Story Bridge has supported generations of people across the Brisbane River, connected communities and become one of our most recognisable landmarks.

A history that spans the rise of modern Brisbane

Built during the Great Depression, the original purpose of the Story Bridge was to create a crucial cross-river connection in the inner city and provide employment during a major economic crisis.

It was commissioned by the Queensland Government in 1933 and designed by Australian engineer John Bradfield, who also designed the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Construction began in 1935 and the Story Bridge was formally opened to the public in 1940.

Today, millions of journeys later, it still connects our city, enabling the smooth flow of people, materials and commerce across the Brisbane River.

Construction facts

Construction took place between **1935** and **1940**

The original build was budgeted to cost approximately **£1.6 million**

The Story Bridge is the longest steel cantilever bridge in Australia at **1,072 metres in length**

The bridge has **12** steel spans made up of **11,800** tonnes of structural steel and **2 million** rivets

The bridge is made up of **38,000** cubic metres of concrete

Almost **400** people worked on the bridge during peak construction

95% of construction materials were made in Australia

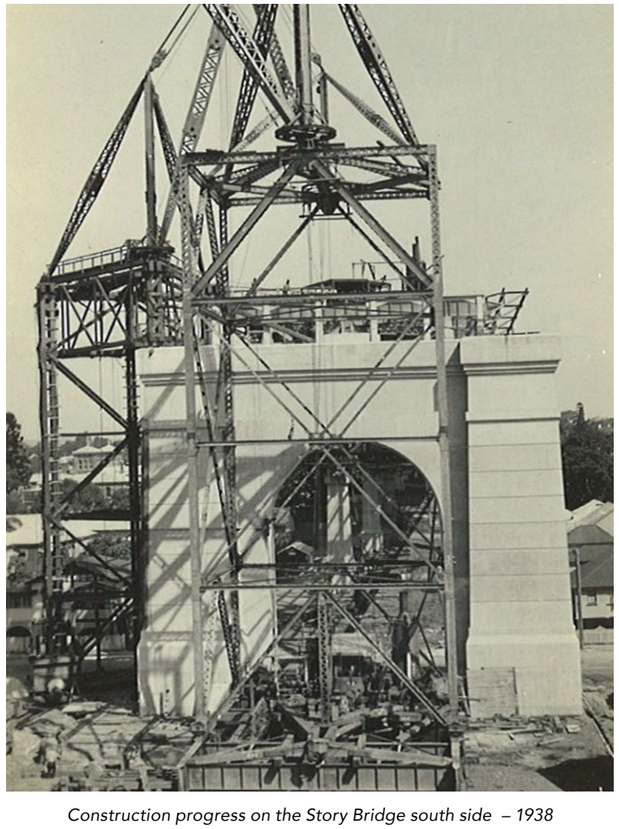
89% of the construction cost was spent within Queensland

Fit for purpose

In the 1940s, traffic looked very different in Brisbane. The bridge was designed to accommodate a 24-tonne lorry, considered a heavy load then. It carried fewer than 10,000 daily trips, including cars, motorcycles and even horse-drawn vehicles.

Today, as an integral section of the Bradfield Highway, the Story Bridge carries around 10 times more daily traffic than it did in the 1940s, including buses, trucks and large commercial vehicles weighing up to 42.5 tonnes.

While the bridge has the capability to take modern traffic loads thanks to the strength of Bradfield's original design, the Story Bridge is reaching the end of its service life and major renewal is now needed to ensure it continues to serve Brisbane residents well into the future.

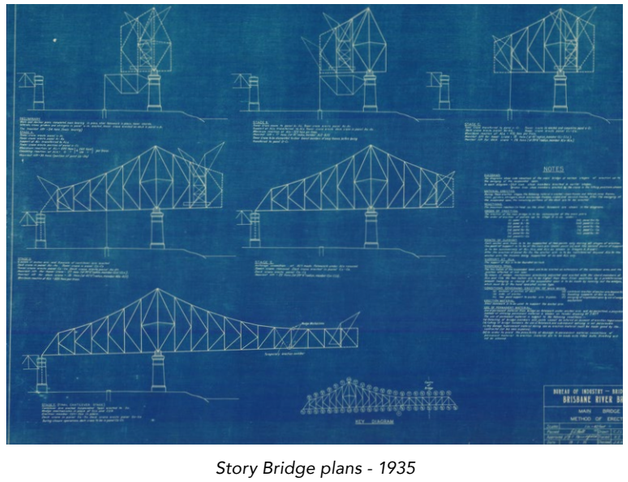


Construction progress on the Story Bridge south side – 1938

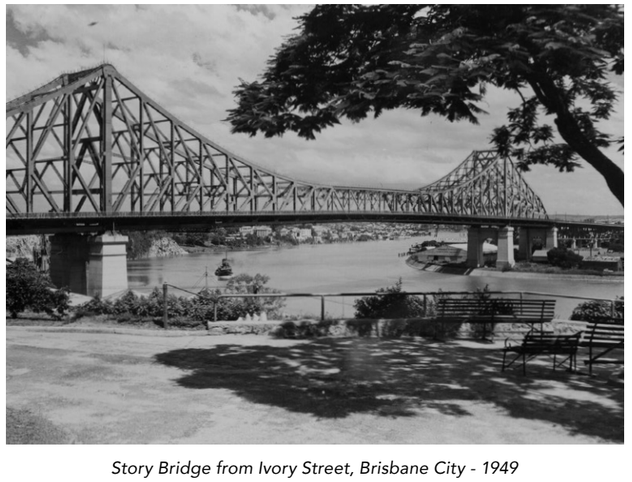
Crossing the Story Bridge - 1950's

Renewal for 100 more years

Regular maintenance and upkeep have ensured the bridge remains structurally sound, but the natural ageing process now calls for major renewal to preserve its legacy and keep Brisbane moving for generations to come.



Story Bridge plans - 1935



Story Bridge from Ivory Street, Brisbane City - 1949

A keystone of present-day Brisbane

The Story Bridge may have changed little over the last 8 decades, but the city around it has reinvented itself several times over, evolving from a modest country town into the vibrant, diverse and globally connected city we know today.

Brisbane continues to be one of Australia's fastest growing cities. More than 1.3 million people live within the Local Government Area today, which is expected to grow to over 1.7 million by 2046*. The Story Bridge continues to provide a critical gateway to the city and greater Queensland for commerce, tourism, trade and community, with more than 100,000 vehicles using it to cross the river every day.

It plays a major role in local and national festivals and events, provides a spectacular backdrop to light displays and fireworks, and draws crowds to the many entertainment and tourism spots located close by, such as Howard Smith Wharves and Kangaroo Point cliffs.

The bridge touches more than just the banks on either side of the river, holding a place in the heart of many Brisbane residents. An affection highlighted by a wide range of responses to the recent 'A good story needs a sequel' campaign, which invited the community to share what the bridge means to them.

Above all, the Story Bridge welcomes everyone to our great city and reminds us all of what can be achieved when we work together.

**Queensland's future LGA populations, 2025*

City landmark

An instantly recognisable landmark in our skyline, the bridge is often appearing in promotional materials, postcards and advertisements.

Events and celebrations

The bridge is often lit up to mark various occasions, festivals and events and is a focal point during the annual Riverfire event.

Cultural identity

Included in the Queensland Heritage Register, the bridge is deeply ingrained in our city's culture and history as a symbol of Brisbane.

Keeping us connected

One of Brisbane's most important transport links and river-crossings, connecting people and places across the city.

Destination of choice

The bridge attracts visitors from across Australia and around the world, while also serving as a destination of choice for Brisbane residents. From the vibrant dining and entertainment precinct at Howard Smith Wharves to the internationally recognised Story Bridge Adventure Climb, the bridge plays a central role in the city's tourism and lifestyle offering.

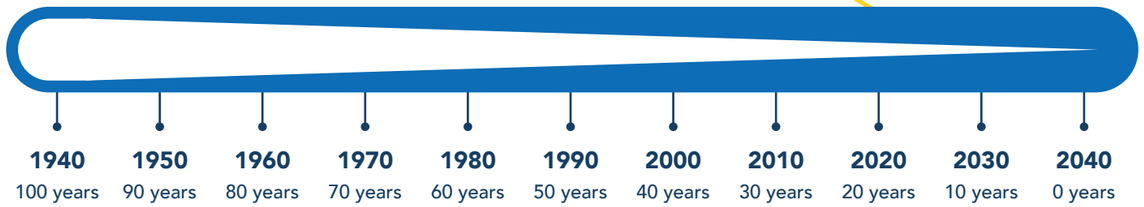
Built to last 100 years, planning for 100 more

Brisbane City Council has been solely responsible for the Story Bridge since ownership was transferred from the Queensland Government in 1947.

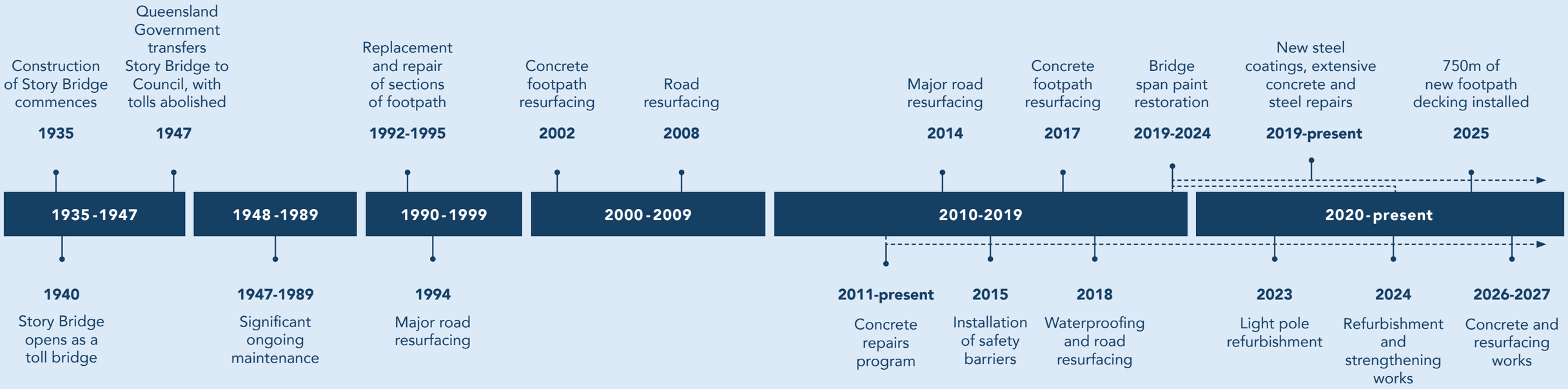
For nearly 8 decades Council has maintained, operated and funded this major infrastructure asset on behalf of the people of Brisbane.

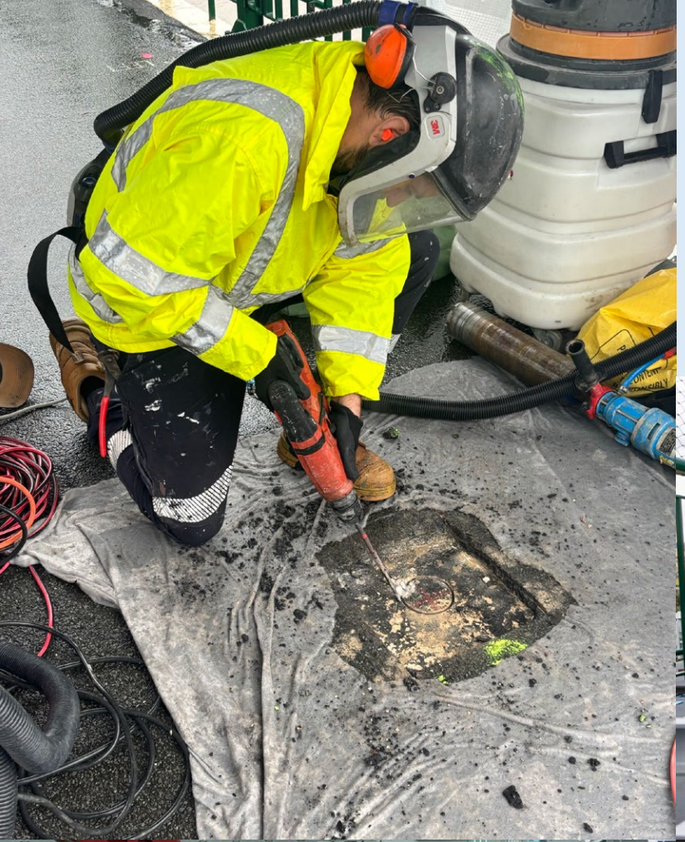
Over the last 20 years alone, we have spent more than $120 million to help prolong the bridge's life, including undertaking extensive steel and concrete repairs, stripping back worn paint, applying new protective coatings and installing new footpath overlay decking in 2025. This ongoing remedial work continues, with major waterproofing and asphalt resurfacing of the bridge's southern approach scheduled for late 2026 to early 2027.

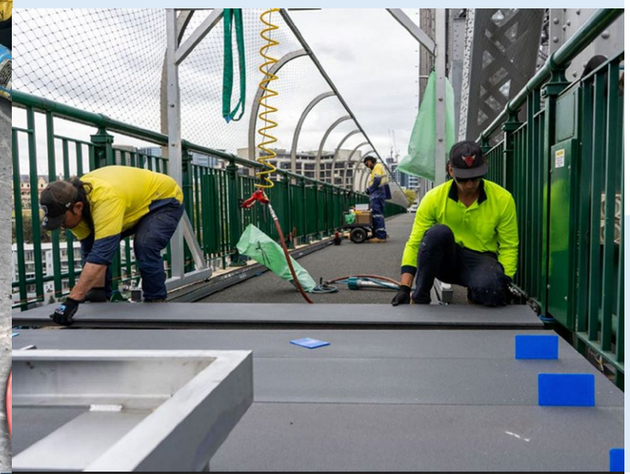
Routine maintenance of the bridge's structure currently costs around $3 million every year.



Major resurfacing works on the Story Bridge - 2014







Detailed investigations have identified that works are needed now to renew this Brisbane icon and ensure it continues serving the city for another 100 years.

Why is it critical we renew now?

The bridge was simply not designed to cater for the volume of traffic and heavy haulage vehicles it currently carries. Expert analysis shows that, without major renewal, the bridge's ability to meet current and future demands will gradually diminish over time.

Inspections have identified corrosion across parts of the bridge's structure, with renewal works required to address this age-related deterioration and ensure its long-term condition and functionality.

While ongoing maintenance keeps the bridge safe and usable today, major renewal is needed to ensure it remains fit for purpose and continues to serve the people of Brisbane for generations to come.

Maintenance

- Routine and ongoing work
- Keeps the bridge in good condition
- Slows deterioration and reduces risk
- Does not extend the bridge's service life

Renewal

- Major, transformative work
- Extends service life by 100+ years
- Improves safety and minimises closures
- Involves significant upgrades and investment

More than 8 decades ago

Built in 1940, the Story Bridge is a vital cross-river connection and a defining part of Brisbane's identity.

A busy lifeline for Brisbane

The bridge carries 100,000+ vehicles each day. Over 42% of users come from outside of Brisbane.

Built for a different era

In the 1940s, a 24-tonne lorry was considered a heavy load and there were fewer than 10,000 daily trips.

Growing demands

Today, heavier vehicles and large volumes of traffic are placing far greater demand on the structure.

Risk of ageing infrastructure

Without renewal, significant traffic restrictions would be required over the next 20 years to reduce impacts to the bridge.

Maintenance is not enough

Despite longstanding investment and maintenance, the bridge is reaching the end of its 100-year service life.

A critical decision point

The time to act is now. Renewal is the only practical option to preserve the bridge beyond 2040.

Another 100 years

Renewal will protect this valuable icon and ensure reliable movement for generations to come.

What options were explored?

In addition to full renewal, Council assessed a range of responses including lower-cost life extension measures and the construction of a replacement bridge.

Following physical on-site testing and inspections of the bridge's current condition, structural engineering analysis, constructability assessments and consideration of broader transport, heritage and city-shaping priorities, the business case concluded that full renewal is the most practical, affordable and least disruptive way to maintain this cross-river connection and preserve a true Brisbane icon.

Option	What it involved	Why it was / was not progressed	Key considerations
OPTION 1: **Reduced capacity and service restrictions and eventual closure**	Progressive restrictions starting with heavy vehicles in 2036 and cars in 2046, then eventually closed and dismantled.	✕ The closure of the bridge would create traffic gridlock across Brisbane. The bridge is estimated to cost $740 million to dismantle and the long-term economic impacts on Brisbane are estimated to exceed $6 billion in today's dollars.	• Loss of a key cross-river transport link and Brisbane icon • Major impacts on network connectivity and capacity.
OPTION 2: **Full renewal with load limits**	Major renewal of the bridge, with restrictions on heavy vehicles.	✕ A major renewal would still be needed, even to allow cars but not heavy vehicles to cross the bridge. The marginal financial saving would not outweigh the costs of having to restrict heavy vehicles on the bridge.	• Load limits do not remove the need for major works • Large financial cost for limited benefit.
OPTION 3: **Full renewal without load limits**	Major renewal of the bridge with all standard vehicle types able to continue using the bridge.	✓ This option was the most cost-effective way to allow all forms of regular traffic to continue to cross the bridge.	• Bridge remains open to all forms of regular traffic permanently • Best overall economic, social and heritage outcome.
OPTION 4: **New bridge (replacement)**	Build a replacement bridge and decommission the Story Bridge.	✕ Removing and replacing the bridge entirely is estimated to cost over $9.34 billion. Delivery of a new bridge would take at least 8 years, with the loss of this critical connection expected to have a $7 billion economic impact on the city, in today's dollars.	• Very high cost and complexity of delivery • Loss of heritage structure • Major disruptions during construction and removal of current bridge.

Our assessment approach

Options were assessed against a comprehensive set of evaluation criteria.

- Transport impacts
- Maintenance efficiency
- Environmental, safety and delivery risks
- Cultural heritage values
- Technical feasibility
- Whole-of-life cost
- Business and community impacts

Why not build a new bridge?

A new bridge built on the same alignment, retaining the existing 6-lane and active transport capacity, will need to be significantly wider to meet current technical standards. This would have major impacts on property and road layouts at both approaches.

A new bridge built on a completely different alignment is less feasible as it could only be achieved with considerable property impacts on both sides of the river and major changes to Brisbane's existing road network.

What could a new bridge cost?

$102 million to keep the current structure safe and operational until construction can begin.

$740 million to decommission the Story Bridge.

$8.5 billion to build a new bridge.

$9.3 billion estimated total cost to replace the Story Bridge with a new bridge.

What is the expected economic impact of a new bridge?

$7 billion additional expected cost to the local economy, as a result of losing the cross-river link during construction and 100,000 vehicles being diverted to other already congested river crossings in Brisbane every day.

Timing and Brisbane 2032

Timing presents a major constraint in the lead-up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Current estimates suggest it would take at least 2 years for planning including approvals, funding and procurement, followed by more than 2 years to deconstruct the existing bridge and then an additional 6 years to construct a new one. This means a new bridge could not be delivered before 2032.

With the Story Bridge expected to play a major role as both a cross-river transport link and a defining city landmark during the Games, Brisbane will need to retain this vital connection throughout the entire preparation and event period. Consequently, any work towards a replacement bridge could not occur until after 2032.

What happens if we delay?

Delaying the Story Bridge renewal will result in progressive load restrictions from 2036 and ultimately the decommissioning of the structure without a replacement in 2046. This would create far-reaching economic and transport impacts for Brisbane and beyond.

The economic cost of removing one of Brisbane's key transport links is estimated to exceed $6 billion and the bridge would still require almost $1 billion to decommission safely. For these reasons, this option has been ruled out.

Without renewal

Trucks, buses, and other heavy vehicles will be unable to use the bridge within 10 years.

Potential for earlier level of service restrictions and higher-cost reactive works without priority interventions.

The closure of the bridge will result in city-wide traffic increases and significantly longer travel times.

Brisbane's icon would ultimately be decommissioned and deconstructed from as soon as 2046.

A direct cross-river route for emergency vehicles will no longer be available, dramatically affecting fire, ambulance, police and other emergency service response times.

The overall cost to the city is estimated to be in excess of $6.39 billion.

Road congestion levels in 2024 (with Story Bridge)

As Brisbane grows, demand on the city's river-crossings continues to increase, with some key connections already nearing their practical capacity.

Bridge	Daily vehicles	2024 congestion (with Story Bridge)	2046 congestion (Story Bridge closed)
Story Bridge	100,000+		–
Captain Cook Bridge	110,000+		
Gateway Bridge (toll)	130,000+		
William Jolly Bridge	25,000+		
Go Between Bridge (toll)	10,000+		
Clem 7 (toll)	32,000+		

Road congestion levels in 2046 (Story Bridge closed)

If we don't renew the Story Bridge, traffic will divert to other bridges and major crossings, increasing congestion on Brisbane's road network and reliance on toll roads.

The cost of inaction

We cannot afford to let the Story Bridge slip into a state of disrepair and ultimately be decommissioned.

If the bridge is not renewed, the economic assessment indicates a cost to Brisbane of approximately $6.39 billion, driven overwhelmingly by increased congestion, travel time delays, vehicle operating costs and public transport inefficiencies across the network.

These impacts are compounded by other cost factors including the estimated $100+ million for ongoing maintenance and life extension costs prior to closure, the cost of deconstruction and other unfunded regulatory risks, such as potential obligations to subsidise tolls on alternative river crossings.

Full service maintained

No reduction in level of service.

Now to 2036

Service restrictions begin

Heavy vehicles and buses removed.

2036

Full closure and decommissioning

Bridge fully closed and decommissioned.

2046

Closure impacts continue and worsen

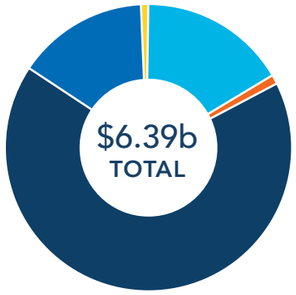
2046 to 2055

Reduced productivity, higher transport costs and travel delays would impact South East Queensland's economy and competitiveness.

Medium and heavy commercial vehicle impacts reflect longer routes, detours and higher operating costs.

Widespread traffic disruption and longer travel times increase pressures across our transport network.

The economic cost of the problem by mode



Public transport	$1.06b
Active transport	$1.6m
Cars and light commercial vehicles	$4.37b
Medium and heavy commercial vehicles	$0.96b
Safety	$3.6m

What does renewal involve?

The proposed Story Bridge renewal roadmap is a comprehensive long-term program that covers restoration, reinforcement, replacement and renewal. It will ensure the city's greatest icon remains safe and reliable for another 100 years.

Steel repairs and coating	• Repair and strengthen steel elements • Remove the original lead-based primer • Apply new protective coatings
Concrete repairs and coating	• Repair and protect concrete piers, abutments, balustrades, and other elements • Strengthening of concrete elements
Safety, lighting and bridge services	• Renew lighting, electrical and security services • Fire hydrant upgrades
Safe access and work platforms	• Upgrade gantries, work platforms and access ways to allow safe access for workers and inspections
Footpath replacement	• Concrete footpath deck slab replacement • Renew balustrades and safety elements
Road deck replacement	• Replace concrete road decking • Upgrade guardrails • Replace bearings that support bridge movement • Waterproofing and resurfacing

Extends the life by 100 years

Ensures the Story Bridge continues to safely connect Brisbane for another 100 years.

Maintains a vital transport connection

Supports active transport, private vehicles, public transport and freight movement.

Protects heritage and identity

Preserves the iconic Story Bridge as a Queensland Heritage Register listed landmark and Brisbane icon.

Improves safety and sustainability

Upgrades infrastructure, reduces environmental risks and improves whole-of-life value.

Our proposal for renewal

The scale and complexity of the Story Bridge renewal works means the program will need to be delivered in a number of packages over a 20-year period.

**Timing is indicative only subject to funding, approvals, further planning and scheduling.*

	Package	Overview	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045
Stage 1	1	Major waterproofing and resurfacing of the southern approach and main bridge span. Priority defect works, minor concrete repairs, joint repairs, bearing maintenance, static line replacement and maintenance access repairs.	Q4 2026 - Q3 2031																			
	2	Specialist strengthening works for the concrete beam and slab diaphragm for the southern approach.		Q4 2027 - Q4 2029																		
	3	Remaining pre-Games works across the full bridge span, including steel strengthening and repairs, painting of steel and concrete elements, electrical upgrades, strengthening concrete girders, concrete pier repairs, installation of new gantry systems and other access upgrades.		Q4 2027 - 2034																		
Future stages	4	Main bridge span and footpath works, including below bridge steel strengthening, repairs and repainting, footpath deck replacement and main span steel balustrade restoration.								2033 - 2036												
	5	Concrete works including northern abutment concrete restoration, concrete column wall remediation works and concrete balustrade replacement.									2034 - 2037											
	6	Concrete and coating works including roadway deck slab replacement, guardrail upgrades, Baildon Street stair replacement and southern approach steel balustrade restoration.												2037 - 2044								

As part of this package, some works may be delivered post-Games from 2032 to 2034

Next steps

Council will continue discussions with the Queensland Government and the Australian Government to reach an agreement on a sustainable and mutually beneficial funding solution. At the same time, we will progress procurement activities to ensure the renewal program maintains momentum and can be successfully achieved by the proposed dates.

The next steps are:

- support Infrastructure Australia's evaluation of the business case
- undertake market sounding and finalise the procurement and contract models for Stage 1
- progress design development for Stage 1
- commence procurement in early 2027.

Getting ready for the Games

The Story Bridge will play a major role during the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, acting as the key southern gateway to the Victoria Park precinct and the city centre. It will serve as a vital link between competition venues, accommodation sites, tourist and visitor destinations, while also acting as the centrepiece for lighting and fireworks displays.

With this in mind, pre-2032 work will focus on the critical renewal activities needed to present the bridge at its very best. These works will also manage longer-term asset risk, maximise value for money and mitigate the level of service impacts ahead of this global event.

The expected cost of these pre-2032 works is estimated to be $1.35 billion.

Pre-2032 renewal priorities

- Targeted structural works to renew the bridge's strength, including upgrades to key concrete and steel elements.
- New and improved access systems to enable safe, efficient inspection and future works.
- Replacement of end-of-life lighting to enhance the bridge's appearance and civic presence.
- Major renewal of the main span, including removal of the original lead-based primer and application of a new protective coating.
- Modernisation of safety, security and essential operational systems (fire, electrical, lighting).
- Comprehensive life-extension of critical bridge components to ensure long-term performance.

The benefits of renewal

The Story Bridge is not only a critical cross-river corridor, it's a defining element of Brisbane's identity, a focal point for tourism and local events, and a strategically important asset in the South East Queensland and national transport networks.

Renewing the Story Bridge will ensure that over 100,000 people can continue to cross the river every day, keeping Brisbane moving. It will protect a heritage landmark that defines the city's skyline and avoid permanent disruptions to the traffic network.

When the Story Bridge was built, it created hundreds of jobs for Brisbane. Its renewal will deliver similar benefits, supporting a 20-year pipeline of construction, engineering and service industry work, while creating apprenticeships and upskilling opportunities.

Renewal will keep this vital river crossing open, support economic growth and ensure the bridge continues to deliver value for money for Queenslanders.

Reliable connectivity

Maintains a cross-river connection for daily commuters, freight, buses, emergency services, pedestrians and cyclists.

Heritage conservation

Conserves one of Queensland's most significant structures by preserving its unique engineering character and historical importance.

100 more years

Extends the life of the bridge, reduces the risk of restrictions or unplanned closures and improves long-term reliability.

Economic resilience

Protects business productivity across the city and on a national scale by supporting the efficient movement of people and freight.

2032 and beyond

Supports successful delivery of the Games while leaving a lasting transport, economic and civic legacy.

Queenslander!

Protects an iconic landmark that defines Brisbane's national identity and international image, which supports tourism and events.

Measuring the economic benefits

Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) compares a project's economic benefits to its costs. A BCR above 1 indicates the benefits outweigh the investment. For Story Bridge renewal, the BCR under a 7% central discount rate is:

- 1.41 based on core transport and quantified economic benefits
- 2.03 when wider economic, tourism, commercial, heritage and civic benefits are included.

This equates to $1.41 to $2.03 in benefits for every dollar invested.

Given the renewal will be delivered over 20 years and provide benefits for generations, the business case also assessed a 4% discount rate, commonly used for long-life infrastructure. Under this scenario, the BCR increases to:

- 4.05 for the core analysis
- 5.64 including wider benefits.

In short, the Story Bridge renewal is expected to deliver benefits that significantly exceed its costs while preserving a critical transport link and iconic Brisbane landmark for future generations.

A major investment for a major asset

The total cost of the full Story Bridge Renewal Program, spread over a 20-year period, is expected to be in the order of $3.6 billion.

The number reflects the complex nature of major heritage infrastructure projects and reflects the full, all-inclusive cost of delivering the project, including base costs (the cost to deliver the renewal based on today's scope and prices), risk, contingency and escalation (future cost increases). The estimate is based on a staged approach that balances engineering needs, heritage considerations and the practical realities of delivering work on a live transport asset.

Council has already agreed to contribute $135 million towards the estimated cost of renewal works required by 2032. Given the scale, cost and regional significance of the project, we will continue to work closely with both the Queensland Government and the Australian Government to secure a shared solution and long-term funding partnership for the Story Bridge renewal.

Total cost of a staged renewal is
$3.6 billion

The cost to deliver critical pre-Games renewal is
$1.35 billion

The remaining renewal activity following the Games will cost
$2.2 billion

The renewal will be delivered over a sustained investment period of
20 years

Similar projects that have received funding

There are several recent examples of federally funded transport asset renewal and restoration projects. Much like the Story Bridge renewal, these projects are focused on ageing asset renewal and replacement, where co-funding is the norm.

There are further examples of co-funded projects where end-of-life infrastructure assets are being replaced, and numerous examples of major road projects that have secured a funding contribution from the Australian Government.

Project	State	Capital Cost	Federal	State	Local	Description
			Funding split			
Commonwealth Avenue Bridge Upgrade	ACT	$1.37b	100	0	-	Renewal of ageing bridge infrastructure.
New Richmond Bridge and Traffic Improvements - Stage 2	NSW	Pending	86	14	0	Road upgrade and construction of a new bridge to replace an existing bridge with flood resilience issues.
Bruce Highway South Corridor Program: Bracken Ridge to Anzac Avenue	QLD	$4.68b	80	20	0	Major program of road works with a funding gap of $2.44b for future stages.
Bruce Highway Upgrade: Goorganga Floodplain Upgrade	QLD	$470m	80	20	0	Major road project aiming to improve flood resilience, safety and connectivity of an existing asset facing maintenance issues and recurring closures.
Rockhampton Ring Road	QLD	$1.98b	71	29	0	Part of the Bruce Highway Upgrade Program, delivering flood resilience, safety improvements and congestion reduction.
Bridgewater Bridge	TAS	$786m	80	20	0	A new 1.2km 4-lane bridge replacing an ageing lift-span bridge (built in 1946) to improve freight reliability, safety and network efficiency.

A shared funding pathway for renewal

The future of the Story Bridge depends on sustained investment from all levels of government. The scope of work required is extensive, complex and cannot be funded by Council alone.

Given the scale, cost and regional significance of the works, the renewal of the bridge is a shared problem requiring a shared solution that can only be delivered through a partnership between all 3 levels of government.

For that reason, we are working closely with both the Queensland Government and the Australian Government to deliver the best possible solution.

Renewal timeline

Mid-2026

- Council funding commitment

Mid-to-late 2026

- Finalise business case
- Independent review of business case
- Business Case Progress Report released

Late 2026

- Design and procurement
- Business case submitted to Infrastructure Australia for national evaluation
- Funding request submitted to Australian Government

May 2027

- Australian Government budget announced

June 2027

- Queensland Government budget announced

Late 2027 to 2032

- Stage 1 renewal works commence

Late 2032 and beyond

- Ongoing program of renewal works

A good story needs a sequel

Restoring the Story Bridge is an opportunity to preserve an iconic landmark, protect a vital transport link and deliver long-term value through a staged, collaborative program of works.

This renewal project will deliver benefits well beyond Brisbane. The consequences of inaction would be felt across the Queensland network, and the economic impact felt nationally.

The journey will require support across a wide range of stakeholders including government, suppliers, businesses and the people of Brisbane.

Council will continue to keep the community fully informed as we progress the renewal project and collaborate with all levels of government to secure the funding, procurement and delivery necessary to ensure the next 100 years of the Story Bridge.

Dedicated to a better Brisbane

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