

LNP jumps aboard rail plan

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A map of the proposed Petrie to Kippa-Ring rail link. Photo: Queensland Government

The Liberal National Party overnight promised \$750 million towards the \$1.15 billion Petrie to Kippa Ring rail line in a bid to neutralise Prime Minister Julia Gillard's promise that Labor would build the long-awaited 12.6 kilometre rail line to Redcliffe.

That effectively means bayside commuters will get a new rail line by 2016 regardless of which party wins the federal election on August 21.

It also re-opens the fight among the two major parties for Southeast Queensland's three bayside marginal seats, Petrie (ALP), Longman (ALP) and Dickson (LNP).

Prime Minister Julia Gillard set the cat among the pigeons yesterday, announcing a re-elected Labor government would tip \$742 million into a plan involving three levels of government to build the rail line with six new stations at a cost of \$1.15 billion.

The much-promised project would be well received in three marginal seats the rail line would run through; Dickson, held marginally by the LNP's Peter Dutton (0.08 per cent) and Labor's Petrie (4.2 per cent) and Longman (1.9 per cent), held by Yvette D'Arth and Jon Sullivan.

Anna Bligh's Labor Queensland Government promised \$300 million and the Moreton Bay Regional Council will fund \$105 million.

A joint statement from Opposition Leader Tony Abbott and Shadow Transport spokesman Warren Truss's promising to build the rail line put the issue back on a level-playing field.

"A Coalition government will deliver the Moreton Bay Rail Link," the statement said.

"A Coalition government will invest \$750 million towards major construction works on this project.

"This funding will be made available from AusLink 3, commencing in 2014-15."

The timing of the Coalition's funding is the same as the promise yesterday by Ms Gillard, using new funding from Auslink 3, but after the 2013 federal election.