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Residents issue road ultimatum

A MEETING of residents has issued an ultimatum to state and federal governments to investigate a new road from Cairns to the Tablelands that bypasses the Kuranda Range by the end of November.

"This meeting instructs the state government to investigate ... an adequate road access to Cairns that bypasses the Kuranda Range before 30 November 2021," the resolution said after the meeting held by the Kuranda Range Bypass Road Committee at Mareeba on Tuesday night.

Committee chairman Ken Harley said the resolution was unanimous among the meeting's 153 people.

"That's for the geologists and surveyors and environmental people to get in there and start an investigation (by that date)," he said.

Mr Harley said the meeting was attended by Shane Knuth and four councillors from the Mareeba Shire Council and Tablelands Regional Council, but Kennedy MP Bob Katter and Leichhardt MP Warren Entsch tendered apologies due to being in parliament.

He said a meeting was planned for June 28 in Cairns which would hopefully be attended by more politicians.

Meeting chairman Joe Moro said the meeting provided "good discussion" and a number of solutions to the problem.

"The (bypass) road that's been proposed by Ken is really just one of the options. There will be an investigation," Mr Moro said.

Opposition transport and main roads spokesman Steve Minnikin said while the construction of new infrastructure between Mareeba and Cairns was "certainly worthy", there should be a focus on fixing the current Barron River bridge.

"If the existing bridge was fixed, then absolutely be concentrating on other alternatives, but when you've got an existing bridge that is not fit for purpose I think that's what the focus should be," he said. "You can't just keep building new things and ignoring the maintenance of the existing things."

Mr Minnikin urged the state government to "get on with" fixing the issue which was causing a headache for local commuters.

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