

LLOYD STREET, MIDLAND — EXTENSION

292. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Planning:

I am proud to be part of a government—members opposite will be happy with this one and I think that the member for Midland will love it as well!—that is reversing the neglect of Midland and the eastern region that we saw under the previous government.

Several members interjected.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Now, this is a bit ad lib, but it may well be that the former government put the money aside and forgot where it put it. So far, the Liberal–National government has delivered on the Reid Highway extension and started work on an overpass at the junction of Roe and Great Eastern Highways.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Swan Hills, take a seat, please.

Point of Order

Mr T.G. STEPHENS: It does seem that government members have lost the science behind asking questions.

The SPEAKER: I need to hear the point of order.

Mr T.G. STEPHENS: The point of order is that he has not asked a question and he is about a minute into it.

The SPEAKER: Members, there is no point of order. Member for Swan Hills, please ask the question.

Mr T.G. Stephens: I did not think that there would be!

Debate Resumed

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Will the minister please inform the house of the latest action by this government to deliver on yet another strategically significant project for the region in the form of the extension of Lloyd Street? It is the extension that all members opposite appear to have forgotten about!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister?

Mr B.S. Wyatt: He cares about your question!

Mr J.H.D. DAY replied:

Mr Speaker, I thought that there was more to come because, indeed, the story is long and positive!

Lloyd Street in Midland, and the need for that particular important regional road to be extended southwards through to the Great Eastern Highway Bypass, has been very much on the minds of the local community for some time. Indeed, some funds were allocated by the previous state government and, to a certain extent, by the City of Swan and, also, by the federal government for those works to be undertaken; that is, for the southern extension of Lloyd Street. However, this government has identified—on the advice of the Department of Planning and with the agreement of the City of Swan—that the construction of an underpass under the main east–west freight rail line at Lloyd Street needs to be undertaken first so that the level crossing can be removed and so that the obstacles to the free flow of road traffic can be removed, bearing in mind that it is expected that there will be about 25 000 cars a day on that road by the end of next year, particularly when the southern extension of Lloyd Street is constructed.

The other important point, of course, is that the Midland health campus will be constructed on the large area of land adjacent to that site. The particular rail crossing is just to the north east of the Midland health campus site. Once the Midland health campus is completed, that underpass will be needed for emergency vehicles in particular to be able to access and to move freely between the north and the south side of the railway line. That is clearly not possible when there is a delay caused by a 1.8-kilometre freight train.

I am pleased that the government has addressed this issue and that cabinet has made the decision to support the construction of a rail underpass at the earliest possible opportunity, and certainly by the time the health campus is completed. I hope it will be constructed well before the health campus is completed. In relation to the funding —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Is it in the forward estimates?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I am pleased that the member for Midland has suddenly woken up to the fact that this issue concerns her electorate!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, members!

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Indeed, the funds are available. Cabinet has supported an additional allocation of \$4.5 million from the metropolitan region improvement fund by the WA Planning Commission to be added to the previously available \$23 million. From memory, I think \$6 million was from the state. The state will now contribute \$10.5 million; the City of Swan, \$2 million; and the commonwealth government, \$15 million. I point out that this is a government that actually considers issues. This has been quite a complex and involved issue to deal with. But we have considered it and have made a decision, and, subject to the commonwealth government agreeing—I certainly hope it will; it will be getting representations very soon from the City of Swan—the construction of the underpass can go ahead, and the funds are there.

The other important decision that was made by cabinet at the meeting last week was to agree to the transfer of the land that has been under the management of the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority for the livestock saleyards. I commend the Minister for Agriculture and Food, and others, for the role they have played in getting new saleyards constructed at Muchea. That action has actually been initiated and completed in this term of government. Now that the saleyards at Midland are obviously no longer needed for that purpose, the land can be transferred to the Midland Redevelopment Authority. The MRA will now have the responsibility for remediating the land, given there is a significant degree of contamination on the site, and for developing the site for the provision of additional light industrial and commercial facilities in that area. That will create a very important enterprise park precinct that will add to economic opportunity and employment in the Midland area.

Two very important decisions were agreed to by cabinet last week for the Midland region.