

METRONET

Motion

Resumed from 1 November on the following motion moved by Hon Alanna Clohesy (Parliamentary Secretary) —

That this house congratulates the McGowan government on its Metronet policy and notes the benefits Western Australia will derive, including the jobs to be created, from this transport and planning initiative.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [1.04 pm]: As promised last Wednesday, we resume this debate on this very worthy motion put forward by Hon Alanna Clohesy. Of course, it is a very important motion for the future of the state of Western Australia, and states —

That this house congratulates the McGowan government on its Metronet policy and notes the benefits Western Australia will derive, including the jobs to be created, from this transport and planning initiative.

As I said last Wednesday, the key word in that motion is “initiative” because it has been a while—since 2008—that we have seen a government in Western Australia that has had initiative. I am proud to say that this government has initiative. The initiative is Metronet—a public transport policy that will take Western Australia into the twenty-first century and rival us, as I suggested last week, with the likes of cities such as New York, Paris and London. It is important that the house debate this important initiative. It will be one of the larger infrastructure projects completed in Western Australia. It will create thousands of jobs.

I note even in the planning of Metronet —

Hon Simon O'Brien: Where is it in the budget?

Hon DARREN WEST: This is the difference between the progressive side of politics and the conservative side of politics: we acknowledge that this is a long-term project. We acknowledge that this project will take a lot of planning.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is only one person who has the call and that is Hon Darren West. Everyone else can listen in silence.

Hon DARREN WEST: Thank you, Madam President. We acknowledge that this project will take a lot of planning. We need to get this right. We are openly saying that for the first tranche of Metronet there will be a Yanchep extension, the Forrestfield–Airport Link and the Ellenbrook line. They are all in the early stages and are all being planned. I can tell members that thousands of jobs will be created out of this and that the public of Western Australia support this initiative. They want Metronet.

Several members interjected.

Hon DARREN WEST: The Forrestfield link is a part of Metronet. It has always been part of it. It is in the East Metropolitan Region, Hon Donna Faragher’s electorate. Of course, we are all delighted that the government is building the Forrestfield–Airport Link through to the airport, through Forrestfield and High Wycombe. I note that even the opposition is excited about the prospect of that line opening.

Hon Donna Faragher: We started it.

Hon DARREN WEST: Maybe members opposite support Metronet just a little bit more than they thought. I look forward to supportive comments from members on the opposition benches about this great infrastructure project.

I can tell members that even in the planning stages of the Metronet project, over 50 jobs already exist. That is before we really get the project work underway. There are 50 people working on the planning and scoping of the Metronet project, determining the route from Morley to Ellenbrook—working all that detail out so that when the funding comes online, the project is ready to go. This will be a very well planned and meticulously organised project. Unlike some of the infrastructure projects built by the previous government, this project will be meticulously planned, as we saw with the Mandurah line, which was led by Hon Alannah MacTiernan in her former role as Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. That line came in on time and under budget. Therein lies the difference between when we managed major projects and the former Liberal–National government managed them. A topical one today is the Perth Children’s Hospital; what a debacle. Even the stadium completion was over budget and late. Although we acknowledge some infrastructure projects were built under the previous government, they were not planned and built meticulously as this project will be.

For members who were not here, last week I touched on the fact that it was not lost on me or other members in the house that the regional member, the president of Country Labor, our regional arm of WA Labor, is selling up the benefits of Metronet. As I pointed out last week, it also has several benefits for regional people. The end of the Yanchep extension is about only 20 kilometres from the Agricultural Region. The Mandurah line, as the name suggests, goes to Mandurah, which, according to the Western Australian Electoral Commission, is a regional centre. Metronet is spreading into the regions for use by regional people in the regional areas. It is also used by

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our children when they come to high school and university in Perth. In my case, my mother is retired and uses public transport regularly. Metronet will be of enormous benefit to regional people. It will ease congestion, and that will be a benefit to regional people who travel to Perth. Members may be surprised at how many regional people travel to Perth. We often see country numberplates when we are driving around in the metro area. A lot of regional people come to Perth because major sporting and art events occur here.

I spoke briefly on the Court government's crazy decision to close the Fremantle line and how the incoming Labor government reversed that decision and reopened the Freo line. We are committed to rail. I do not think anyone can dispute that and I do not think that opposition members could claim that they are more committed to rail than Labor is. They believe in road projects. Under the previous Barnett Liberal–National government, we saw the closure of around 700 kilometres of railway line. Those 700 kilometres of railway line were of enormous economic benefit to my electorate, the Agricultural Region, and they were used to move grain. Every year we manage to produce more grain off that same land. We saw the closure of the tier 3 lines. The previous government opened about 13 kilometres of line and closed about 700 kilometres of line.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: It was 14.5 kilometres.

Hon DARREN WEST: It was 14.5 kilometres. I thank Hon Alanna Clohesy for helping me with her worthy motion. The previous government closed vast distances of tier 3 railway lines. It was put on display for all to see. The previous government not only closed the tier 3 lines against the wishes of the voters in the area, the grains industry and everyone who lives in that eastern wheatbelt region, but also kept kidding us that it would keep them open or reopen them when there was no intention to do so. While I think of it, I have my little train that I am going to pop up here so that everyone can see him. That is a depiction that we circulated.

Several members interjected.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: That is what trains looked like when members opposite last built them!

Hon DARREN WEST: I was looking for a witty response and the minister has given it to me. That is the last train that the Liberals built in Western Australia! It is a topical issue in the Agricultural Region, but I will be serious for a moment. The single biggest issue that came to me during the last term of government was the imminent closure and then closure of the tier 3 lines and the hope that the communities were given that somehow the National Party might step in and save the day. Of course, we know that that does not happen, and the lines closed in late 2014.

Hon Rick Mazza: Are you going to fix it? Are you going to fix the tier 3?

Hon DARREN WEST: Leave that to me. This is about Metronet, but I have touched on tier 3 and I have something to say. In the last month that the tier 3 lines that the Liberal–National government closed were in operation, they carried a record tonnage. That tells us that there really was not too much wrong with the lines. They were still capable of carrying more grain in a month than they ever carried at any time in their history. I am looking at former Minister for Transport Hon Simon O'Brien. There is not much wrong with the lines. Under the Richard Court government, we saw the lease of these lines to a consortium, Genesee & Wyoming Australia and Wesfarmers Limited, which was then taken over. Once we lease them out and the lease can be sold, we lose control of who operates the line. We ended up with Babcock and Brown Infrastructure for a while and then eventually with Brookfield Rail. Then the Economics and Industry Standing Committee in the previous Parliament discovered an extraordinary alteration to the lease. The Legislative Assembly committee was chaired by a government member.

The variation took away the "use it or lose it" clauses in the lease and allowed the closure of 700 kilometres of railway line. I find it extraordinary that a state government would lease out the rail network and then allow a part of it not to be used when the asset is owned by the taxpayers of Western Australia. I argued against the closure of those lines. I certainly would have argued against that decision had it not been made in secret. Enormous efforts were made to keep that revelation from the public. I certainly would have argued against that change to the "use it or lose it" clauses because I think they were an important part of the lease. If we are going to lease out a monopoly state-owned asset, we certainly do not want a free-for-all so that companies can open and close sections of the line as they see fit, because the public owns and paid for those lines and wants to use them.

The Liberal–National government took about a million tonnes of grain a year off the railway network and put it onto the road network. The former Liberal–National government held this curious belief that the road network was up to the task of moving that grain. Clearly, the people who believed that had not driven in the eastern wheatbelt. Clearly, the people who believed that the road network could carry a million tonnes of grain a year had never been on those narrow, winding and often tree-lined roads in the eastern wheatbelt. But I have, and that road network was never designed for the task that the Barnett Liberal–National government asked of it. Statistically, they are the most dangerous roads in Australia. Those roads have a fatality rate of about 49 per 100 000 people. This figure is from before the previous government closed the railway lines and put on thousands of extra truck movements. The road toll of 49 deaths per 100 000 people is higher than the national road toll of either Kenya or Uganda. For

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a government of the people, for the people and by the people to close the railway network in an area that boasted those sorry road statistics was extraordinary at best and showed contempt for the electorate.

Those lines have been closed for a good period. Extraordinarily, the decision about whether they will reopen or remain closed has been taken away from the government by the previous government. We now have to work with private operators that use those lines to see whether there is a way forward. I am confident that there is a way forward and that as it becomes more and more apparent that the roads are going to require more in maintenance than the cost of reopening the rail, there will be a way forward. Rail is more efficient. It uses less fuel. It is better for the environment; it creates less carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases. It is more sustainable in the long term. But, most importantly, it is the transport mode of choice for the grains industry and the communities along those lines that—I will just let members in on a little secret—are not too happy that the Liberal–National government closed the lines.

A lot of articles from around that time in 2014 are about this issue. One is from the *Central Midlands and Coastal Advocate*, which is not in the area directly affected by the closure. The story by David Charlesworth is titled “Protest over rail lines” and states —

GRAIN producers and members of regional communities Marched on Parliament House on Tuesday to present the government with recommendations about the closure of the Tier 3 freight rail lines.

WAFarmers president Dale Park and WRRRA chairman Greg Richards joined supporters on the steps of Parliament House at 12.30pm to deliver their message to Premier Colin Barnett and Transport Minister Dean Nalder.

“It has been more than one month since the Economics and Industry Standing Committee tabled its report into the management of the state’s grain freight network and the government has so far failed to adequately respond ...

Not only did the previous government make a bad decision, it did not even want to talk about it. It did not take any notice of those peak lobby groups or act in their or the state’s best interests. Another article by the award-winning journalist Rueben Hale from the *Countryman* of Thursday, 15 January 2015 states —

Point of Order

Hon SIMON O’BRIEN: I hope the clock has been stopped because he has only 10 minutes to go. Clearly, my point of order is relevance. We are hearing of stories about rural freight lines in the *Countryman* from years ago. Madam President, the opposition is quite happy to debate that if that is what you want to allow as relevant to this motion. But I thought that we were talking about Metronet policy, its benefits and how wonderful this government is. Frankly, we have heard two-thirds of diddly squat because the member is rabbiting on about other things. Would you please ask him to be relevant or, if we have licence to canvass this, I will give him the response that he needs about his rewriting of history.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I note what you say. I must admit that I missed that last bit but I heard the honourable member reference the motion earlier on.

Hon Simon O’Brien: That was half an hour ago.

The PRESIDENT: Not that long ago. I am sure that he is bringing the debate back to the subject we are dealing with and he will focus now on Metronet.

Debate Resumed

Hon DARREN WEST: I guess in my enthusiasm for regional issues I will, from time to time, stray onto those. I will refer back to Metronet. I was trying to make the point—I stand by it—that Labor is the party of rail and rail services. The coalition parties are against rail and rail services. I know that it is a bit of a touchy subject for the honourable member, but I was using the reference to tier 3 rail lines to highlight that fact. Before I revert to Metronet, there is one final point that, with your indulgence, Madam President, I would like to make to highlight the hypocrisy on the subject of rail and rail services of the now opposition when it was in government. The article I referred to in the *Countryman* suggested that after the event, in January 2015, the Nationals backed a tier 3 deal. It stated —

The ... Nationals have flagged their support for a multi-million dollar ... deal that could see vital Tier 3 grain lines reopened.

The National Party closed the Tier 3 lines in government and is now trying to have a bit each way with the electorate. It has suddenly worked out after the event that the Western Australian community supports rail, rail services and rail projects. That is what Metronet is; it is an outstanding infrastructure rail project initiative, the

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likes of which we have not seen in the state for many years. It is a comprehensive plan that will make access to passenger rail services much easier for everybody and make it available to communities that have been screaming out for rail services for many years. The people of Ellenbrook were promised a rail service in 2008 by the coalition when it came into government. Clearly, that was just a load of hot air. It was a pre-election sweetener to win the electorates in that area. The previous government had no intention of ever delivering on that project. I think the coalition did well to sell that to the people for a couple of elections, but when the people realised that it was not at all genuine, the coalition got hammered at the ballot box. One thing that people do not like is being lied to by their government in the knowledge that there was never an intention to carry out that policy. One of the largest electoral swings in the recent election was in the seat of Swan Hills. That swing was added to because WA Labor stood Jessica Shaw, who was one of the most outstanding candidates in that election. Jessica Shaw has a Master of Law from Cambridge University and is very well versed in the oil and gas industry in Western Australia. She is an outstanding person and an outstanding candidate. The electorate savaged the Liberal–National coalition in that seat with a swing of about 18 per cent. With such an emphatic win, I do not think that seat could be considered marginal any more.

The previous government broke a promise to deliver a rail service to deliver a rail service to Ellenbrook; there was never an intention to build one. Premier Barnett was finally forced to admit that the previous government had looked at light rail, buses and rail and it was not going to give Ellenbrook anything. After eight years of promises he finally conceded that there was never ever a desire by the Liberal–National government to deliver those rail services to Ellenbrook. Now there is a desire by the McGowan Labor government to deliver those services to Ellenbrook and they will be delivered to Ellenbrook. Work on that project has begun. We will identify a route and the final costs and that project will become a reality under Labor just like the Joondalup line, which is now making its way to Yanchep, did under Labor; just like the Fremantle line reopened under Labor; and just like the Mandurah line opened under Labor.

The National Party is getting good at little fear campaigns such as whipping the electorate into hysteria over boarding school allowance cuts and the south west helicopter—that one has aged well! There was no money in the budget for the helicopter under the previous government for fiscal year 2018–19. The latest campaign involves the car park at Mandurah rail station. The Nationals are saying that we cannot have things in the region because Labor is building a car park at Mandurah railway station. The National Party seems to have forgotten that Mandurah is a regional electorate. Labor is now being criticised for two things. First, we are being criticised for taking money out of the regions, which we are not; we are putting more money into the regions than the previous government did. Second, we are being criticised for building a car park in Mandurah—a regional centre—so that people can use the train and have somewhere to park their car. Hon Colin de Grussa cannot walk both sides of the street on this.

Hon Colin de Grussa: All those people who aren't getting age-appropriate housing now—are they going to catch a train to Perth?

Hon DARREN WEST: There will be age-appropriate housing. There might even be some in the regional centre of Mandurah. There have always been age-appropriate housing projects built, pre and post—royalties for regions, and there will be age-appropriate housing projects built in regional Western Australia under this government. We have announced a \$22 million contestable fund to have that age-appropriate housing built.

For members of the National Party, it is very much do as I say, not as I do. They should try to walk on one side of the street. At all times they walk on both sides of the street. They cannot walk both sides of the street; they need to pick a side. Labor is being criticised for taking money out of the regions and criticised for spending money in the regions. What should we do? I think regional people, especially in Mandurah, appreciate that project. I am sure that they appreciate that project. I know that regional people appreciate all Labor policies. If we look at the two houses of Parliament, we will see that there are 34 elected regional members. Of those, the Greens, One Nation and the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party have five elected members, the Liberals have seven members and the National Party has nine members.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: And most of them are “MetroNats”!

Hon DARREN WEST: That is right. We will talk about that again, minister.

WA Labor has 13 members. It has the most regional members of any political party in this Parliament. They did not get there just by accident. Clearly, the voters in regional Western Australia preferred and voted for their country Labor candidate over the Liberals, the Nationals and the minor parties. That is clearly on display for all to see.

Hon Simon O'Brien: What a very discerning electorate!

Hon DARREN WEST: The honourable member is not only questioning their judgement, but also insulting their intelligence. The fact that only seven out of 34 Liberals got up is something that perhaps he should think about, not mock. I hope that the Liberal and National Parties keep on with their regional policies, because I think it is

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fantastic that regional Western Australians are embracing Labor in the regions in a way that they have not done for a very long time. Regional Western Australia turned to Labor to provide jobs, manage the economy better and deliver on major infrastructure projects. That is what we are doing. One of those infrastructure projects, the cornerstone infrastructure project in Western Australia that will benefit the metropolitan area and the regions, is Metronet. I am very proud to be part of the McGowan government that is delivering this important piece of infrastructure that will serve the whole state and benefit us and make Perth a modern city with a world-class public transport facility and infrastructure that we can all use. I look forward to being on the early trains as they roll to Ellenbrook, Yanchep, Byford, Forrestfield and other places.

I will make one final point that has just come to me. One of the first jobs I had as an elected government member was to save the rail transport service, the *AvonLink*, that goes to Toodyay and Northam, which would have been closed by now under the coalition. It would have joined the tier 3 rail, the Fremantle line and all those projects on the scrap heap because there was no money to fund that project after 30 June 2017. We were able to negotiate an arrangement with TransWA and put the funding of the *AvonLink* back into the Public Transport Authority where it belongs so that that rail service can continue.

I support Metronet. I think that deep down the opposition supports Metronet too. We look forward to opposition members' supportive comments about what a great project this is and what great benefits it will bring to all Western Australians.

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan) [1.32 pm]: I have to say one thing about Hon Darren West: he is nothing but consistent. He is always consistently off topic. Of the 45 minutes he spoke, I think during maybe five or 10 of them he actually mentioned Metronet. Anyway, there we go—consistency is his forte.

A couple of opposition members will be saying a few words on this motion, but I indicate that for my part I will not be speaking for terribly long. I do so for a couple of reasons. First and foremost, I do not intend to do high-fives with the government and congratulate it on its policy, because that is what the motion is about. For members' benefit again, it states —

That this house congratulates the McGowan government on its Metronet policy and notes the benefits Western Australia will derive, including the jobs to be created, from this transport and planning initiative.

As I say, I do not intend to give high-fives to a government that has actually not yet delivered one inch of rail, except—Hon Darren West mentioned this one—of course, the Forrestfield–Airport Link. As a member for East Metropolitan Region, I have identified in this place on more than one occasion that, in fact, the Forrestfield–Airport Link commenced under our government. It actually commenced under the former Liberal–National government, with funding support from the commonwealth Liberal government.

Hon Sue Ellery: Which you announced after we announced Metronet in 2013.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: It is all very well to have a bit of banter across the chamber, but the fact is —

Hon Sue Ellery: Well, the facts are the facts.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: The facts are, Leader of the House, that the money came from the former Liberal government, the current federal Liberal government and —

Hon Sue Ellery: And you took our policy, so good on you.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: The now government has put absolutely no new money or additional funding into the Forrestfield–Airport Link, but, apparently, it is its Metronet centrepiece.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Yes, because it was in our policy in 2013.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: And yet —

Several members interjected.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Members can yell all they like, but the simple fact is that it started under —

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Under your government, you did seven kilometres!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Settle down!

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Not very productive.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Settle down!

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: I know, darling.

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Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Darling? Did you call me “darling”, did you? Darling!

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Hon Donna Faragher has the call. You can address your comments to the Chair and just ignore any other noises in the chamber.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I will do that, Madam President, but given that I was referred to as “darling” by the minister, I would suggest that if someone on this side of the house said that to a member on that side of the house, they would be calling points of order and that sort of thing. I indicate that I am certainly no darling of the Minister for Regional Development.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: I meant sunshine.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Right! We will get back on topic.

The PRESIDENT: Good.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT: I would hate to see you distracted.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: As I have said, re-badging a Liberal initiative and making it its own is what the government has done with the Forrestfield–Airport Link project. I agree that, as a member for East Metro Region, I am going to be very pleased when that project is completed. It is an absolutely fantastic project. I am sure I am going to get an invite to the opening; I am sure I am going to get it! I will be there. I will be able to cut the ribbon. But, anyhow, I reiterate: the government can re-badge it all it likes, but the Forrestfield–Airport Link commenced under our government.

The debate has been interesting. A couple of speeches have already been made, and no doubt we will get a few more from members on the other side, but we on this side of the house are very interested to hear what members on the other side have to say about this policy. We will be collating all the self-congratulatory speeches and reflecting on them in a couple of years’ time when, quite inevitably, they will be shown up for not being able to deliver all they have promised. I am sure that members on the other side will disagree with me on that, but the proof of the pudding is always in the eating. When we look at the government and this motion, we see that it is asking us to congratulate it for the “vibe”, like in the movie *The Castle*. It is the vibe of the thing. That is what it wants us to congratulate—not actually delivering, but it is the thought; it is the policy. It is *The Castle* all over again.

The budget papers tabled earlier this year show what this government is all about. It has not been able to adequately fund a number of projects it announced before and during the election campaign on Metronet and in other areas as well. I want to give a couple of examples. A lot has been said about the Morley–Ellenbrook line. According to the now government, when it announced that policy, construction on the Metronet Morley–Ellenbrook line would commence in 2019. Do we see that in the forward estimates? No, we do not. The 2017–18 budget papers have no funding allocated to the construction for that section of line in any year—I repeat: in any year. The government indicated that construction would commence in 2019. If it was so sure about the figures it released prior to and during the election, that money should have been reflected, at the very least, in the forward estimates, but it was not—broken promise number one.

Then there is the removal of four dangerous level crossings. On 15 February 2017, the then opposition released a press statement, which is titled “Metronet plan includes solution to WA’s most risky road”. It outlines the Labor Party’s commitment to Denny Avenue in Kelmscott. I acknowledge that that is in the budget and I think that is a very good thing. The press statement reads —

As part of WA Labor’s long term program to remove dangerous level crossings along the Armadale, Midland and Fremantle rail lines, METRONET stage 1 will include four level crossing removal projects:

- Denny avenue in Kelmscott;
- Caledonian Avenue in Maylands;

One that I cross regularly —

- Oats Street in Victoria Park; and
- Wharf Street in Queens Park.

The removal of the four dangerous level crossings was to be delivered as part of Metronet stage 1. Do we see funding for the removal of the crossings in this year’s budget? No, we do not. Again, the 2017 budget papers provide funding for only the Denny Avenue crossing in Kelmscott. No funding has been allocated for

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Caledonian Avenue, Oats Street and Wharf Street. The Labor Party noted that it was planning the project, but there is no physical money for the removal of those crossings.

I turn to the Midland train station project, which I touched on last week in my contribution to the debate on the tabled papers. Given that we are talking about Metronet, for the purpose of this debate I will reflect on my comments of last week because I think it is important. It was with a lot of fanfare that the member for Midland and the then opposition announced that they would commit \$79 million to this project. I refer to an article that appeared in *Echo News*, which reads —

The Midland train station and bus port will be relocated east, towards Cale Street, with construction —
I emphasise the word “construction” —

starting in the first term of a McGowan Labor government at a cost of \$79 million.

It is pretty clear that the Labor Party would commit \$79 million in funding because that is what it expected the project would cost. What do we see in this year’s budget? We see an allocation of \$28 million towards the project. I must admit that I took it that the majority of the \$28 million, albeit it was for planning, would go towards the Midland train station relocation. However, when I asked for clarification about the \$28 million during the budget estimates process, it came as somewhat of a surprise to me to learn that in fact only \$2 million of the \$28 million has been allocated to the relocation and that is for planning. No money has been set aside for the construction phase of the project. There is clearly no business case and no construction timetable—there is absolutely nothing. It is quite clear to me and the opposition that when the Labor Party was in opposition, it plucked figures from the air. Again, I will refer to the *Hansard* of the budget estimates process, which reflects that. I asked the minister and his officer very clearly why funding had not been allocated in the budget. The minister’s response was —

It is not reflected because the planning has not been completed yet.

I asked whether the then opposition’s figures were incorrect or whether they had been made up. The minister responded —

Those figures that were used in the then opposition’s documents were the best available information that was gleaned from a range of things, including former Treasury briefings or former budget estimates hearings such as this. So they were the best available information at the time. This project —

This is the most important part —

has not been properly funded yet, and until we know what it is going to cost we cannot tell you exactly what the figure will be at the end of the day.

I asked —

So the minister therefore cannot tell me when construction is going to commence?

And Minister Dawson responded —

No; my advice is that we cannot tell you that at this stage.

The Labor Party made it very clear during the election campaign that it would cost \$79 million and that it would start in the first term of a Labor government, yet the minister representing the Minister for Transport in this place categorically said in estimates that the government could not tell us how much it would cost and when construction would commence. That is just unacceptable.

Those are a couple of examples primarily within the East Metropolitan Region, which is already revealing flaws in the Metronet policy. As I indicated before, a couple of my colleagues will offer a few observations in their contribution to this motion. The simple fact is that the government cannot give out glossy documents and rebadge projects and expect the people to believe it when its budget comes out and a number of projects that were promised, and promised to be delivered early, such as part of stage 1 Metronet, will not be delivered. It is quite clear to the opposition that Labor substantially underestimated and understated the true cost of the total Metronet plan. It refused to get it appropriately costed by Treasury. It is quite clear to me—Midland station is an example of this—that its figures were patchy at best.

I indicate to the house that the opposition does not intend to congratulate this government as the motion suggests on its Metronet policy. The government will have to provide more than words and a policy that states that it will do this and it will do that; it actually has to deliver on its promises. Apart from the Forrestfield–Airport Link project, which was funded by the former Liberal government and the federal Liberal government and commenced under the former Liberal government, we need to see more from this government. We will be watching very closely

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and I absolutely reckon that in a couple of years' time, we will be able to re-read a number of speeches in this house and reflect on the fact that many more projects have not been delivered.

HON TIM CLIFFORD (East Metropolitan) [1.46 pm]: I rise today in support of the motion. It is quite good to stand in this place and support a pro-rail policy, given that under the two terms of the previous government I was actively involved in campaigns promoting more integrated rail system across the metropolitan region of Perth. It is especially relevant to getting people around the east metro in particular as we see with the Forrestfield–Airport Link and the Thornlie line extension. I know that that is heading out towards the Cockburn way but at least it will keep people moving.

I go back to when my real passion for rail in WA began, which is the light rail system that we have been advocating for since 2007. Under the hung Parliament of the Gilliard government, the Greens negotiated \$ 500 million for a light rail system in WA. That was supported by the Barnett government in 2010 and we applauded that. But the dark shadow of the Abbott government loomed in the distance on the horizon and unfortunately that program sunk and the money was rolled into the doomed Roe 8 project with no business plan to back it up. A light rail system would have integrated the city and would have got people moving, particularly low-income earners in the far regions of outer metropolitan area, such as Armadale, and people in Burns Beach in the north. We have a stretched city and we need to get people moving but unfortunately after cooperation between the federal government and the Barnett government, the Roe 8 project was forced onto the community. That project would not have done much apart from destroy wetlands and go against the wishes of the broader community. It is sad. I have spoken to people over the past few years and people not only oppose the Roe 8 project for environmental reasons, but people who travel around the world have seen other systems that are in place and have seen what we could have had and what has gone, unfortunately.

We are also really lucky. Melbourne, for instance, has an integrated tram system that gets people around the city. It has brought communities together and there is broad support from the community. These days if we ask the public whether they support a rail system, the overwhelming response is yes. In the past, the Perth to Fremantle line, not to mention other projects, was in danger of being scrapped. The broader community is left dumbfounded because whereas there was a push against rail over the previous eight years from the state government, we now have broad support and commonsense in the acknowledgment that the government does play a part in getting people moving.

We have broad support for a public transport system, but we have an issue with getting people onto the public transport system, because there is a decline in usage. I guess that comes with the hardship people are feeling about the decline in the state's economy. It is getting tougher to get around the city. I know that because I speak to students. My dad lives just off the Seaforth train station in Gosnells. He is on the pension now but for a long period it was difficult for him to be on a low income and travel into the city and then go from the city to wherever he had to go for a doctor's appointment or to pick up some goods. He had to pay up to \$8 a day, which might not seem much to people in here, but it is a lot of money if people are travelling three or four times a week. It adds up very fast, especially for people on a pension or a low income. That is a real deterrent to getting people onto the rail system. It is worth noting that we should be looking at ways to encourage people to get onto the system. That requires having unified support across all parties for a good integrated rail system and a good public transport system more broadly. We should look at fees and ask what are the barriers to getting people onto the rail system.

People now are experiencing not only energy poverty but transport poverty. They are not willing to fork out the change that they have been putting away for months just to go from A to B. They are looking at other methods to get on. That is why people are risking getting on the train system and risking getting caught because they cannot afford to pay the fines. A number of people also go through the court system because they have issues with paying not only their parking fines but also their rail fines. A number of times I have been on the Perth to Armadale line and have seen a student picked up for not paying their fare. They say that they are on Centrelink benefits, they are studying and they still have four units to do, they can work only eight hours a week, which barely pays the bills, and they must decide whether to pay their power bill or top-up their SmartRider. That is the choice that people have to make every day. That is something that needs to be considered when structuring the fees to make our public transport system more accessible. I think we need to make the public transport system more bike friendly for the bike lovers out there. We need to look at what we have compared with other rail networks around the world with regard to having dedicated spaces on a rail network so that people who want to cycle around the city can take their bicycle on the train.

That ties into how we plan our cities. If we consider the light rail network in Melbourne or on the Gold Coast, for example, it is clear that whenever light rail is implemented, developers, communities and councils plan their cities and structure the housing. Specifically when considering low-income earners and where they live, and the low socioeconomic areas of our city, one aspect of breaking the cycle of poverty is getting people closer to the rail system and closer to those bus networks and making places more accessible. Instead of opening up vast areas of

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land north of the city as the developers are pushing, we need to be part of that conversation and ask if they have considered developing some of the areas around our rail network. I know that they might not make the vast amounts of cash that they would have by opening up thousands of square kilometres north of the city and selling off small lots for pretty expensive prices just to make the profit margins, but they could be good citizens in our community and work with the government to ensure we get our infill up to standard, because we are far away from where our infill needs to be. I was at a planning seminar a couple of years ago and people there talked about how we are very far off where we need to be in relation to infill. One of the issues we have with infill not meeting our target is that we do not have that incentive to get places built around the rail network as well as the businesses. As soon as we put in the light rail system and extend the rail network, people and businesses will be looking to build their infrastructure around those areas.

There is a profound disappointment coming from a lot of people in the outer metropolitan areas and from a lot of councils I have spoken to about our transport system. A huge number of people are moving into the outer region, and an ever-increasing number of people are moving from country areas to the outer metropolitan areas of our city. The expenditure for these councils seems to be going up and the population seems to be going up, yet the revenue base is pretty much either stagnant or going into reverse. We need to look at providing these services to those outer metro regions. We need a good integrated network around the city and we also need to bridge that divide between city and country areas. A lot of debate here goes from country to city, but what is the city and what is the country? Kilometres of suburbia leads out into the hills and to the Byford area in the south where there are new developments in place with thousands of people moving into those areas, so we really need to rethink where we put the infrastructure and the rail system.

In closing, I support the motion. I think we need to do better. We need to be more ambitious. I will continue to advocate for light rail because unless we get the system in the city and get it moving, we will be a less desirable location for some of the people who want to move to our city and we will be hindering ourselves with regard to things like economic growth and social cohesion if we do not have this network.

HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan) [1.59 pm]: I rise also to make some brief remarks about this motion as put. It will be no surprise to members opposite that I am not going to join them in their orgy of self-congratulation, which is all this is. There is nothing at all innovative in the design of the system and nothing transformative in the function of the policy. It is purely a branding exercise; that is all it is. Forgive me for not patting the Labor government on the back for using this as one of its election-branding exercises.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon TJORN SIBMA: But I will say this: I think this is an issue worth returning to probably more frequently than my friend, Hon Donna Faragher, suggested. I think we should come back to this every six months. Let us just plot the progress of the delivery. After eight months, not much has been delivered. If we were to believe the Labor rhetoric, Metronet would be up there with the Colossus of Rhodes and the Great Pyramid of Giza, but it is not that. It is not fantastic, it is not wonderful, it is not transformative, it is not innovative and the Labor government cannot afford to deliver it. This is where the policy is tested.

I want to very briefly refer to the extension of the rail line to Yanchep. Labor went to the election with a \$386 million costing for the Yanchep rail line extension, yet in the budget papers that cost has ballooned to \$520 million, with contingency put outside the estimates. There has been no explanation for that. That is an increase of nearly 50 per cent, when this is still a desktop exercise and not an inch of rail has been built. The government has not built an inch of rail.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Seriously! We have been in government for only —

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Welcome to government, minister! The minister might forget which chamber she is in, but in this one she actually has to deliver and she is not delivering.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, members! Minister for Regional Development, when the Chair is calling the house to order, the minister will cease interjecting.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: There has been no explanation for that cost escalation.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: A snail could have done better than your mob.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: That is an apt metaphor to use, former Minister for Transport.

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When we inquired in estimates about that cost escalation, there was effectively no answer given, The response was that there was a change in parameters. I think it is worthwhile interrogating why there has been a 50 per cent increase.

Hon Alanna Clohesy interjected.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Did the Labor Party go to the election with all the costings? Is that what the member is suggesting? Is the member suggesting that Labor did not get its numbers right? That is probably because they were not subjected to Treasury scrutiny before they were put in. That is very, very naughty!

Hon Samantha Rowe: Did you just say “naughty”?

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Hon Alanna Clohesy called a colleague “darling” and I called the Labor Party “naughty”; it seems to be open slather today. Hon Darren West brought out his old train set. This is the anything-goes motion, so I thought I would go with how it is rolling. The contribution given by the member for comic relief on that part of the Labor bench where careers go to die has pretty much set the standard for debate on this motion and I just thought I would participate in the spirit in which it has been delivered.

There is no explanation for that cost escalation before any additional track of rail has even been laid—before the government has even got started. There is nothing there. There are plenty of unknown contingencies. I want to refer to this mysterious Labor concept of value capture in which developers will buy into the rhetoric and the dream and will be happy to cough up to \$100 million in cash or in kind—it is indeterminate—to subsidise the cost of the rollout of the line to Yanchep.

Hon Darren West: It is in the seat of Pearce.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I know where it is; I know very much where it is.

There is absolutely no contingency provided for if that \$100 million of value capture is not committed by industry. When I put that to Mr Kannis, who is now the project director for Metronet at the Public Transport Authority, his view was that the developers will see it and will want to contribute. Forgive me for not taking such a charitable view of the likely contribution the government will get from industry. The real world does not work that way. The government might think it does, but it does not. Now that the government has set the parameters for when it wants to deliver this extension, guess who has the leverage in negotiations? It is not the government; it does not have a hope.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Recycled views from a recycled member; I am not really that interested.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: You think that me actually having experience doing a job is a bad thing. I think that is the problem with your side of the house.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: No.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: Forgive me, but it is a bit of a track record versus no record.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Not yet, but I promise to invite the member to the opening when inevitably we open these stations. I will put her in the VIP section, because I understand her passion.

What is important about this policy is the delivery, and the government is nowhere near clear to delivering it. The government cannot cost it and it cannot account for blowouts. How is the government going to build three stations simultaneously and take value capture from developers when each has their own interest in not seeing stations all built at once, but in a sequence? From this, I will refer to previous experience too, because I have worked for a land developer in the northern corridor. I know exactly what the calculations are. Some time has gone past, but I know exactly what the strategy is and I tell the government what, it is getting played off a break. The government cannot deliver that extension in the time frame it has set itself with the cost it has set itself. If this comes in under \$800 million, I will write the government a note of congratulation, but until that point, and we might be a long way off that point, we are going to hold the government accountable for what it delivers.

I want to close by saying that I will take advice from the honourable member opposite. I know that she has experience—she does. But I will not take the assurances provided from the current Minister of Transport—I will not do that—because I doubt that the transport ministry has seen more a details-light minister in the last 10 years than the incumbent in that position today. I refer members to last week’s so-called reform of the on-demand service industry. There is no regulation, no legislation and the minister has not gone out to defend it. She has not even sent out a parliamentary secretary to defend it. She sent out the poor underemployed, but talented, member for Armadale, who for whatever reason cannot crack the A team of the Labor cabinet. I can find plenty of opportunities to move him in and move others out, but it would disrupt the factional balance. Forgive me, but because the

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Minister of Transport is so details-light on this so-called reform, I will not take her word for the costs and the scheduling as they apply to Metronet. It is worth scrutinising. I will refer to another issue under the minister's suite of responsibilities. Like many other members, today I took a briefing on the e-conveyancing regulations. It is impossible to get a straight answer about the kinds of risks that that system, which the minister is overseeing, will impose. I do not think she understands what she is doing. I know that she does not understand what she is doing with the reform of the taxi industry and I have absolutely no faith —

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: You had eight and a half years and you did nothing.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Forgive me, member, I have been here for only eight months. The member can judge me on my record in eight years' time, but not before that time.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, members.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I think that level of charity is something that even the member can deliver on.

I do not support this motion. I will not participate in this orgy of self-congratulation, of Labor slaps on the back: "Aren't we wonderful." I will judge the government on its performance, and I know its performance is pretty ordinary. I look forward to future opportunities.

HON PIERRE YANG (South Metropolitan) [2.09 pm]: The motion before us congratulates the McGowan Labor government for its great policy of Metronet and the benefits that Western Australians will see in the investment in railway infrastructure, and, more importantly, jobs for Western Australians. Why would people support Metronet? Why was the Labor Party elected on 11 March 2017? A major reason people voted for the Labor Party is that Metronet is a good policy that will deliver for Western Australians and people living in the Perth metropolitan region. We have 2.1 million people living in the greater Perth region, and public transport is a major part of people getting to work, going home, going to events, and taking their family out on the weekend to visit parks, the CBD for shopping, or other activities. In my time as a student and as a lawyer, I used public transport as much as I could. I was lucky to live in a suburb that is well connected to train and bus services. It was so much easier for me to hop onto a bus after I left home and get off at the bus stop about two or three minutes away from my work. It was very convenient. I did not have to worry about parking, petrol or congestion on the way to work or at the end of the day on the way home. My children also very much enjoy bus and train rides on the weekend. They insist on getting onto a train so that they can go to the city or to Scitech; it is their preferred method of transport. I enjoy the time with them on the train. I do not have to worry about traffic conditions and bumping into traffic in front of me.

I have been living in Australia since 1998. I spent the first bit of my time in Australia in Sydney and came to Perth in 2000. I saw the public transport systems in Sydney and in Perth. As an international student, I did not have a car and I used public transport quite a lot. When I first came to Perth, I lived in Osborne Park and I visited my cousin who lived in Belmont. I would jump onto a bus, go to Glendalough station and take the train to Belmont. It was always a good ride. More importantly, as a student with no motor vehicle of my own, that was the way that I moved around. The differences that I observed between the public transport systems in Sydney and Perth back in the days were that the trains in Sydney were a lot bigger; they were double-storey trains that carried a lot of people. The ones in Perth were a bit smaller, but were more comfortable and modern. In 1999 and 2000, the trains in Sydney were gradually being phased out for new modern cars, but Perth already had the newer ones. I was very pleased to use the trains when I first came to Perth. I also used the bus system. The frequency of buses in Sydney was a lot higher. In Perth, especially on a weekend, a person may have to wait for half an hour to an hour for a bus. I am sure that these days the system and the frequency is a lot better.

Another major advantage Perth has is the ticket system. When I came to Perth in 2000, I noticed that when I bought a ticket, it was valid for one and a half hours, whereas in Sydney when I bought a normal ticket, it was valid either for a single trip or a return trip. There was no time limit on either tickets. If a person got on the wrong train or got off at the wrong station and if they went out of the station gate, their ticket was gone and so was the money that they had spent. In Perth, if a person went to a wrong station, so long as it was in the time limit, they were fine. I was very impressed. What I was more impressed by was that after the 2001 state election, I realised that the ticket became valid for two hours instead of one and a half. I now realise that in 1997, the Court Liberal government reduced the time validity of the tickets by 30 minutes and in 2001 the Gallop Labor government reinstated the 30 minutes that were cut. I thought that was very good initiative. For a student with limited income, that half an hour gave me a lot, and that would be true for a lot of people who were on a lower income. That was a helping hand by a government that cared about people.

The other difference I spotted was that Sydney, a big city, has circle routes, whereas Perth has a radial route. Perth station went out on the Joondalup line—we did not have the Clarkson extension yet—Midland line, Armadale line

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and Fremantle line. If a person lives at one end of the city in Fremantle and they want to go to Armadale, they have to travel all the way to the city and all the way to Armadale on the train. That was the difference that I noted. In Sydney, there were also interconnections and trains that connected stations along the way that were further apart, rather than having a person travel all the way from one end of the city to the central station and going to another destination. A person can shorten their time and get to their destination a lot quicker.

I mentioned that 2.1 million people live in the greater Perth region. Hon Darren West mentioned that quite a bit of the greater Perth metropolitan region is now touching on the agricultural region and the south west region; Perth is growing. How are we going to deal with traffic congestion issues? How are we going to encourage people to use public transport and encourage people to use trains? During the last eight and a half years of the Liberal government, a major transport issue for me was the closing of Riverside Drive. Elizabeth Quay, a project the former government undertook, was built; however, by having this project, the state essentially cut off one of the major traffic arteries for people travelling from the south eastern part of the city to its western part. Traffic was diverted from the Riverside Drive route to the city centre or the tunnel. That caused more time delays and more congestion.

I learnt today, from an interview by Geoff Hutchison with the former Premier, Colin Barnett, on 720 ABC Perth, that the project was initiated and implemented without consultation. That was one of my many concerns about the former Liberal–National government. The creation of that traffic artery caused more traffic congestion.

Hon Simon O'Brien: What traffic artery was that?

Hon PIERRE YANG: Riverside Drive linking up to Mounts Bay Road.

Several months ago, I had a conversation with an engineer. He suggested that a potential solution to that situation would have been to sink the road while the project was being constructed so that traffic would not be disrupted. That would also have been a lot cheaper. It is obviously too late to do that now. It would cost a hell of a lot more if we tried to dig a tunnel under a project that is underway. In any event, that is history. We cannot do much about it. We need to look to the future and how we can help the people of Western Australia by ensuring there is less traffic congestion when they go to work and go home.

The solution is to improve our public transport system. We need to encourage more people to use public transport, both rail and bus, for their daily activities. The more convenient we can make public transport, the more people will use it. However, there is a continuing decline in the number of people who are using public transport. We need to reverse that trend. Metronet will help us do that. Metronet is an integrated transport system. It will be for the long-term benefit of the state. Stage 1 of Metronet will deliver 70 kilometres of new passenger rail, with up to 18 new stations.

One of the important projects in stage 1 is the Forrestfield–Airport Link, which was mentioned by Hon Donna Faragher. I am not disputing who did what, but this is part of the Labor government's Metronet policy. Another project is the Yanchep rail extension. Closer to me, there is the Thornlie–Cockburn link. Those are very good projects that are being delivered by the Labor government. Other projects are the Morley–Ellenbrook line; the removal of level crossings at Denny Avenue, Caledonian Avenue, Oats Street and Wharf Street; the relocation of Midland Station; the new Karnup station on the Mandurah line; and a new multistorey car park at Mandurah Station.

An amount of \$1.34 billion has been allocated in the 2017–18 budget for these projects. Over the life of the Metronet project, thousands of jobs will be created for Western Australians. When we expend public money, we need to get the biggest bang for our buck that we can. On the one hand, we will get a state-of-the-art project that will help people with their daily lives and transport needs. On the other hand, we will create jobs for Western Australians. I am very glad that is being done by this Labor government. Labor has a history of supporting public transport and supporting rail. I will not mention the 1979 closure of the Fremantle line and the reopening of that line in 1983.

Hon Simon O'Brien interjected.

Hon PIERRE YANG: I think 1983 was a very good year! I was born in that year, by the way!

In the last eight and a half years under the Liberal–National government, a mere seven kilometres of rail was delivered. During the seven years that the Labor Party was in government, it delivered 80 kilometres of rail—namely, the Perth–Mandurah line, the Thornlie line, and the Clarkson extension. These projects were done under the stewardship of Minister Alannah MacTiernan. Minister, it is a great honour to serve with you in this house.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Thank you.

Hon PIERRE YANG: When I was a youngster, I used to listen to the news and hear these projects announced and implemented, and I looked up to the minister. I am now sitting in the same house as the minister, and I have to say it is a great honour.

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Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Thank you.

Hon PIERRE YANG: I would also like to thank Hon Alanna Clohesy for moving this very important motion. I congratulate the McGowan Labor government for taking swift action to implement and fulfil the promises that the Labor Party has made to the people of Western Australia.

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [2.26 pm]: I rise to add to the comments that have been made by my colleague Hon Tim Clifford, and to make some additional observations. I note from the outset that the motion uses the word “congratulates” and goes on to refer to the McGowan government’s Metronet policy. I suspect that is a bit of a poke in the eye for members opposite. If we are to start congratulating a party for its policies, I would like to point out that the Greens have a range of amazing policies, and the house can feel free to congratulate us as well for having those policies.

Hon Darren West: What is your Metronet policy?

Hon ALISON XAMON: I will get to that, member. What we should do is talk about what will be delivered and what will happen. We all go into elections with policies. Some policies are better than others. However, congratulations are probably in order only when a policy has been delivered. Nevertheless, the Greens are very supportive of the Metronet policy, not least because it is very similar to the Greens’ policy “Transit City: A WA2.0 project”, which has been in development since 2007. That policy is not just about heavy rail; it is also about, as has been pointed out by my colleague Hon Tim Clifford, the use of light rail and bus systems. The Greens have always recognised and had as the core of our policies that public transport needs to be integrated with planning for the future of Perth. We have long been advocating for this at both the federal and state level. We recognise that Metronet will fix some of the connectivity issues across Perth. However, that will need to be supported by a fast and effective bus and light rail system, as per the Greens’ Transit City policy.

One of the key things that Metronet can do is support infill and transit-oriented development. Metronet focuses on the suburbs that are currently poorly served by public transport, probably for good reason, because we are talking about areas that have long been neglected around public transport. However, I need to point out that Metronet can be envisaged as also a transformative project that will provide our city with a public transport network that will make it easier to navigate our sprawling suburbs and relieve congestion. Metronet could also—this is what I wish to speak about—provide reasons to build infill development and build up the secondary centres within our centre. The area to the north of Claisebrook train station is a classic example of where we want to make sure that the government gets planning right to maximise the opportunities that would be available for policies such as Metronet. I believe that area would provide an absolutely great opportunity if the planning was done properly. That area could model what an infill development based around public transport could, and I think should, be. A train station is already in the area—Claisebrook train station—and there are two if we also count East Perth train station, which was recently upgraded to facilitate access to Perth Arena. It is at the northern edge of this area. There is already —

Hon Simon O'Brien: Who upgraded that? Was it a Metronet project?

Hon ALISON XAMON: No, I do not believe it was a Metronet project; I believe it was part of the Perth Stadium project. I think it was a really good train station to be upgraded. I was there in the last couple of days; it is looking pretty impressive.

Hon Simon O'Brien: How did you come to be there?

Hon ALISON XAMON: I live around there. A massive drawcard exists in that area, which includes nib Stadium; members may remember it as the old Perth Oval. The area is walking distance to both the WACA and the new Perth Stadium. Even better, a local community is supporting the development of mixed-use residential, commercial and light industrial development in the area. The local council planning scheme for the area is still waiting for formal sign-off by the Minister for Planning. The plan is for a very vibrant diversity of accommodation and business in a mixed residential–commercial setting. For the purpose of today’s motion, it is important to note that the Claisebrook Collective, which is a collection of all these entities, has worked really hard to demonstrate the economic, social and cultural benefits of ensuring that this area is turned into a genuine transit-oriented development. It also recognises that even if the government allows that area only to increase in density to the equivalent Mt Lawley and Highgate areas, we will already have an incredibly vibrant precinct. However, there is scope to increase the density even further, particularly so because it is near two railway stations.

Currently, there are two reasons the development is not going ahead, despite this enormous groundswell of support from a wide variety of stakeholders, and they are effectively the Hanson and Holcim concrete batching plants. We need to recognise that this is an absolutely prime area for infill to demonstrate the sorts of things that Metronet stations can and will provide if the government also gets right the planning around them. Instead, a number of approved development applications have stalled because they are waiting for the concrete plants to move, which they were meant to have done by 17 October, which has just gone. I have said before that the arguments for the

concrete plants to stay in the area are weak. They really need to go; there is no requirement for them to be there. The owners of the plants are refusing to move them, which keeps holding up the process and runs contrary to the town's planning scheme and the development of an area that could and should demonstrate the value-adding of urban infill.

I really want to say that it is not enough to simply look at developing Metronet—developing heavy rail—in isolation. The government should really make sure that the various planning schemes around these corridors are consistent and maximise the opportunities to create transit-oriented developments, particularly where the communities are demanding and screaming out for them. We do not have to wait for Metronet to start implementing transit-oriented developments and urban infill, although that is something that absolutely needs to be created for the future, because we can start to do it now. We can start doing it in Claisebrook. My very strong message to the government is that if it has a vision for how Metronet could potentially transform the city, it has an opportunity to demonstrate that right now with the full backing of the community, businesses, developers, residents and the local council in the area. It is very rare to get that sort of consensus. We need the government to commit to signing off on the City of Vincent's town planning scheme, as it is written without any amendment, and to finally move the concrete plants to a more sensible area of the city.

I am glad that Metronet is a policy on this government's agenda. It is almost as good as the Greens' "Transit City: A WA2.0 Project". There is still more to go to ensure a clear vision beyond simply heavy rail and that we will have the collection of light rail and appropriate rapid bus services. Stuff can still be done right now by this government—in fact, it could be done this week, if need be—to make it very clear that this is a holistic vision that the government is prepared to commit to. The government can start by signing off on town planning scheme 2 and allowing the Claisebrook community to be its first flagship opportunity for a transit-oriented development. If government members want to give Metronet the credit, they can knock their socks off. I do not really care as long as we finally get the plan signed off as is.

HON MARTIN PRITCHARD (North Metropolitan) [2.36 pm]: I am quite pleased to rise to support this motion. I note that it mentions the government's vision for Metronet. It does not criticise any other party that might have good ideas and for that reason I am very pleased to support it. I will make only a brief contribution. Hon Tim Clifford picked up on many of the points that I wanted to raise, so I hope I will not recount them all again.

I have lived in the northern suburbs for all my adult life and much of my childhood, so I am very excited about the extension of the rail line to Yanchep. In my youth, Yanchep was one of those places to which people would travel for a weekend away. It was considered to be a long way away, and I have quite happy memories of visiting Atlantis Marine Park and such there. Now, of course, it is considered part of the metropolitan area, and we will eventually have housing almost up to Yanchep. With that sort of extent of housing up that way, we need to look at how we will cope now and into the future. Obviously, there are a lot of challenges. A vision such as Metronet is something to work towards and hopefully gain support for to try to deal with some of the issues that we will have in the future. The plan is to extend the rail line to Yanchep. My understanding is that Yanchep is touted to be sort of a second city in Western Australia. It is far enough away to be a hub in its own right, and hopefully it will turn into a jobs hub as well. Hopefully, it will start to attract people who are not just travelling south in the am and north in the pm to return home; it will divert some of the traffic to travel north in the am and south in the pm. I think that is desperately needed in the northern suburbs. Again, I reiterate that I have lived in the northern suburbs all my life. I lived up that way before the freeway went anywhere near where it does now. As I said, I am very excited about that aspect of Metronet. It is worth \$520 million and is the sort of infrastructure that we should be planning to spend money on. There are other examples of infrastructure that have been invested in over recent years that I have not been so supportive of, but this is the sort of infrastructure that I am very supportive of.

It is also important to make sure that we put in this infrastructure as part of the planning for that area. We need to put in the infrastructure and have the precincts built around the stations and such. All that sort of planning needs to be put into place now, prior to it being built out. I had occasion to visit some friends in Ellenbrook recently and whenever I drive through Ellenbrook, I think, "Gee, if some planning had actually gone into that place prior to it getting as big as it did, it would've made for better lives for the people living there." Ellenbrook is a lovely place, can I say. It has some lovely areas to visit and is, I think, a great place to live, but if we had our time over again, we would have planned it differently. Part of that would be to make sure that we had the transport infrastructure in place before it grew as large as it has.

In that regard, something that will assist in improving the transport infrastructure we want is the concept of value capture. The government has to be innovative in the way it does things. It cannot just throw up its hands and say, "We've had a bad set of books given to us so this isn't going to be done." We are going to have to think of ways of getting things done, and obviously this is one way of doing it. I do not think there is any problem at all with developers putting their hand in their pocket and supporting these types of plans into the future.

I have noticed that there is a lot of politics around this issue. The opposition is trying to suggest that we are getting to the stage where we have been in government for seven months, so we should have fixed everything by now.

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That leads to a question in my mind: when will the Barnett government be excused from blame for the books it left us? The answer I have is never. It will never be excused. It was based on a gamble that the former government could convince the federal government to change the way the GST was put together and it lost that gamble, and this state will be paying for that for a long, long time. It is up to the McGowan government to put the state on a path to try to resolve that. We are going to have to find ways of putting in place the transport infrastructure that needs to be put in place. We cannot—although we probably will—just rely on blaming the previous government for leaving us no money to put this sort of infrastructure in place. I think the opposition needs to pull back on that particular line. Although I am sure that eventually it will get a grip, it is not a line that it can run seven months into a new government. I state again: I do not think the Barnett government will ever be excused for the way in which it dealt with the books of the Western Australian people.

In the debate up until now, both sides have said, “We built, we paid for and we did this.” Actually, the people who paid for it are our constituents. Whether we represent them now or the opposition gets an opportunity to represent them again at some time in the future, it is actually their money, not ours, so any credit we might take should be for the planning, the vision and the ways in which we get things done, using our constituents’ money. Hopefully, if the GST issue is resolved at some point in the future, we might have a bit more money to do these things.

In the meantime, value capture is one of those —

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Martin Aldridge): Order, members! There are a number of audible conversations happening in the chamber, to the point where I am finding it difficult to concentrate on Hon Martin Pritchard. Could we all please pay attention to the member on his feet.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: Thank you, Mr Acting President.

We are going to have to be innovative to ensure that we get some of these things done in the future.

When I look at the reasons behind the distress with regard to Ellenbrook, I always try to remember what it was like to have to scrape a quid together. I think I have been in that situation for the majority of my life. I was listening to the radio on the way in this morning and heard about a guy who bought a \$1 000 car. It was one of those programs in which people can ring in and talk to consumer affairs about issues to do with, for example, buying a \$1 000 car. The guy had bought the car and it did not work; it was not roadworthy and he wanted to find out whether he could get his money back and such. That led me to think that many of the people in Ellenbrook moved out to that area to access home and package deals and pursue the great Australian dream of owning their own home, but it would be foolish to think that they all have a quid. Many of them probably struggle and are the sort of people who will go out and buy a \$1 000 or \$2 000 car if they have to, and one of the issues with Ellenbrook is that they have to do that because there are no alternatives. Their transport needs have not been looked after by governments of either persuasion. We need to put in place a feasibility study to work out how to fix that; that would be a good thing. I am not going to comment on the previous government, but it has to be fixed. The people in Ellenbrook cannot be left without any transport alternatives. At the moment, their only transport alternative seems to be the cost of a car.

As I said, I am reasonably comfortable now and I think most people in this chamber would be in the same boat, but I still remember—I think I mentioned this in my inaugural speech—going to the Bankcard machine, as they were known in the very beginning, and moving money about so I could actually draw out \$20. I have been in that situation, and there are many people in Ellenbrook and around that area who are in the same boat and we need to look after them. I hope Metronet will fulfil all those dreams and I hope other members in the chamber will support good plans that fix those sorts of problems.

There is one other thing I would like to touch on, if I may. There are many aspects of transport that need to be looked into. The train lines are obviously going to carry the most people and I think most people now accept the concept of catching a bus to a train line and then coming in on the train. That sort of infrastructure needs to be improved. If it is improved, it will take pressure off the freeways. As I have mentioned before in this place, the things that happen on freeways are quite fascinating to look at. There have been some small, effective changes, such as merging lanes, that have improved our freeways, but my research shows that it does not matter how good we make freeways because the better we make them, the more people who will use them. We will never get to a stage whereby we will get rid of freeway congestion altogether. We need to have a mixture of all forms of transport—the best freeway system; the best railway system; the best light rail system, if that eventuates; and the best bus system—so that people can move around the city. I am most excited about the Yanchep line. If we can build another hub, another area to which people travel for work and which draws people in a different direction at the appropriate times of day, it will create a more liveable city. I just wanted to touch on those things.

One other thing I saw in the papers was the introduction of the automated train control system. That is very exciting and the money that has been put into it has been well spent. If it lives up to the goal of improving travel times by 150 per cent, that would be an extremely good thing, particularly on the northern line at peak times. We have built longer trains, which is one way of fixing it, but shorter travelling times into Perth would be a great thing, which would improve the line.

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As I said, we need an integrated vision for transport into the future. This motion is not about condemning previous governments; it is about congratulating the McGowan government on its vision for Metronet. I think it is a good vision and I have not seen anything that suggests that it will not work. I will be doing everything that I can to support it and I encourage everybody in the chamber to be of a like mind.

HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [2.51 pm]: I am happy to rise this afternoon to support my colleague, Hon Alanna Clohesy, on bringing this motion to the house that supports the McGowan government's plan to roll out our Metronet policy. We have heard a number of people across the chamber make contributions. Some of them have been interesting. Some of them, not all of them, have been a little bit overexcited. I want to touch on some comments that were made —

Hon Donna Faragher: It was still better than Hon Darren West's.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: I was not talking about Hon Darren West.

Hon Peter Collier: He is always very excitable.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Of course. What is not to be excited about? We are in Parliament debating very interesting topics and issues as always.

I want to comment on remarks made by Hon Tjorn Sibma, who, unfortunately, is not in the chamber due to urgent parliamentary business. He made some comments about our Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti. He said that she was not across the detail. I refute that. Our Minister for Transport is one of those ministers who is 100 per cent across her portfolio. In rolling out this Metronet plan, she has done an outstanding job with what is a massive portfolio. I want to congratulate her publicly for what she has been able to do in the limited time that we have been in government.

I also want to touch on the great projects that we are rolling out in the East Metropolitan Region. My colleagues in East Metro, Hon Alanna Clohesy and Hon Donna Faragher, have touched on some different projects in the East Metro region such as the Forrestfield–Airport Link and the Belmont link. I forgot to mention my other East Metro colleague, who also rose today to make some comments, Tim Clifford —

Hon Peter Collier: Honourable!

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: I am sorry—Hon Tim Clifford, obviously. He made some very sound comments. I want to echo some of those as well. Hon Donna Faragher made comment that the previous government has ownership over the Forrestfield train link. I do not think that is correct.

Hon Donna Faragher interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Hon Donna Faragher had her turn.

We went to the election in 2013 with a comprehensive transport policy, which was Metronet. Members opposite got into government in 2013—I congratulate them for that—and had some ideas about what they should do with public transport. I need to put on the record that we are the ones who came up with the public transport plan. Members opposite may have started it, but where did they get the ideas from? They were from our very comprehensive 2013 plan.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: I think it was about sandbagging the seat of Forrestfield, really.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Maybe it was. That is all I want to say on those issues.

Hon Donna Faragher interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Hon Donna Faragher and I will have to agree to disagree on this issue.

The other point I wanted to touch on was the Belmont train station and the name of that station, which has been quite an issue for residents in the local area. I am pleased that the Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti, has opened up a survey so that locals can have their say on what the train station should be named. That is a great initiative and is welcomed by me and the member for Belmont, Cassie Rowe. People have contacted us who were pretty upset that the previous government named the station Belmont train station, because it is located in Redcliffe. This is a great way for local residents to go online and vote for what they want the train station to be called. It is really simple and I think it is a great initiative. I am pleased that the minister has decided to do that. I fully support everyone in the area making sure that they have their say before the vote closes on 19 November.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [2.56 pm]: I am delighted to try to resuscitate this quite unnecessary motion, which has attracted some support from the Labor benches but not enough to sustain it. Maybe I can help by saying that the government's proposal, its transport plan, has merit. I find it regrettable that we still seem to be unable to develop the maturity in this state whereby plans of necessity, plans of this type, can endure over successive governments and changes of government. That is what we need. We saw another illustration of that today with the discussion of the Forrestfield rail route—who owns it, who does not own it and all that. The government has to put a Metronet badge on it and say that Labor is exclusively responsible for everything that

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ever happens with the railway and so on. Some members need to develop a bit more awareness about how this sort of policy is formed. All too often, it is taken over by petty politics. I have expressed my observations about that as recently as yesterday when I spoke about similar matters in my budget reply speech so I do not intend to go over that again.

It is true that we need a blueprint for government. I will tell members when the Forrestfield line was identified as a future public transport infrastructure need and was first consolidated in a planning document. Other people might have mooted it at any stage and people in the Public Transport Authority or some other planning agency might have said that in due course we would probably need a rail line out there, but it became official and took final shape in a document that was prepared for me when I was Minister for Transport in about 2010. That was part of a process involving some people I had asked to prepare a paper to form a blueprint for public transport needs in the short, medium and longer term over the next 50 years. It was chaired by Stuart Hicks, a chap who has been a loyal servant to both sides of government over the years.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Hear, hear. I agree with that.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Yes, that is right. I do not think there was a hell of a lot of enthusiasm for it in the government that I inhabited, which I think is quite regrettable, but it was a genuine attempt to try to develop a blueprint. Ultimately, it was put out in some form by a subsequent minister who I do not think got it, and that is regrettable. My intention had always been not to put a political party's badge on the paper, but to put it out as a discussion document for the whole community and for all stakeholders to contemplate and possibly for political parties to try to develop some joint ownership of. There was a range of shopping lists and timetables for short, medium and long-term projects within the document. It takes years and years to get, for example, sources of funding from maybe the feds or wherever for medium to long-term projects. That did not happen, because someone else wanted to do something else with it; they wanted to make it a political thing, and I think that is regrettable. That is a criticism of my own party and those responsible at the time. It is also a criticism of the party that is in government now, because it cannot help doing the same thing. I think that idea is regrettable for the people of Western Australia. The Forrestfield rail link was most definitely part of that plan. I know that because when Troy Buswell was away from the campaign for a few days in 2013, they asked me to step in and take a bunch of journos around to look at different infrastructure projects, and I had to pretend that that one was a bit more important than some of the projects that I would have prioritised if I had still been in the job. But that is the sort of gymnastic ability, Hon Martin Pritchard, that one has to develop in this place.

It has been interesting to observe members on the other side of the chamber in the debate on this motion thus far climbing the greasy pole and having to move these pointless, senseless motions that no-one outside this chamber ever listens to, congratulating themselves and noting the benefits that Western Australia will derive and the jobs that will be created. Okay; the government builds something, and there will be a workforce on it. Let us call that "Jobs being created for Western Australia!" For heaven's sake, are we ever going to get past that? Apparently not. I must admit that I was touched by Hon Pierre Yang's declared undying devotion for the former Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. It was very touching; I am sure the minister was moved by it, too.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: I'm waiting for people on your side to get up and talk about your stellar performance as Minister for Transport.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: As ever, the minister is too gracious.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: I'm sure that they are very keen to do it. I'm sure there's heaps over there who want to do that, and they will do it. We're not stopping them.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: The minister should sit tight, and we will give her heaps. We will probably continue to do it from now until doomsday, because that is the nature of the beast we are riding.

Anyway, I am trying to help the government out now, because it cannot muster up enough support to fill in the time available to it to brag about its own policy—none of the government members wants to get up!

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: I think we've had quite a few up, actually.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: We have had several contribute briefly. One or two government members mentioned Metronet, but the only thing of substance I heard was about what name to give a station in Redcliffe. I reckon, and I do not need to consult that widely, we should give full marks to the government for consulting with the public to work out that possibly the Redcliffe station ought to be called Redcliffe! It would be a major thing to work that out. I can hardly wait to see all Hon Samantha Rowe's constituents in Belmont ring up and say, "No, we vote for Belmont." I do not know what the member will do in that situation, but it is something we will look forward to.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.