

TRANSPORT PLANNING — GOVERNMENT ELECTION COMMITMENTS

Matter of Public Interest

THE SPEAKER (Mr M.W. Sutherland) informed the Assembly that he was in receipt within the prescribed time of a letter from the Leader of the Opposition seeking to debate a matter of public interest.

[In compliance with standing orders, at least five members rose in their places.]

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition) [3.07 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the Barnett government for its failure to implement a functional and cohesive transport plan resulting in increased congestion, broken major transport election commitments, higher charges and confusion in the community from the numerous transport thought bubbles from the Ministers for Transport.

If there is one area in which this government has failed comprehensively over the last five and a half years, it is the area of transport, in particular public transport. It is a policy area of government that has been littered with broken promises, failures to deliver and so many thought bubbles that we will go through a few, but I think we saw evidence during question time of some of those thought bubbles. We heard evidence from the Minister for Transport about the major story that the government campaigned on on Sunday, and now it is backing off and the minister is saying that he is surprised that the story was out there. That just goes to show once again that this government does not have a plan for transport in Western Australia and it does not stand behind what it commits to. Is it any wonder when we have had three Ministers for Transport in the past five and a half years? In the previous seven and a half years, there was one Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, and that government succeeded —

Mr P. Abetz: Nothing happened!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Thank you, member for Mandurah and member for Southern River!

Mr M. McGOWAN: It was a foolish and stupid interjection. In the previous seven and a half years, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure doubled the size of the metropolitan rail network and doubled the rolling stock in this city. That is what that Minister for Planning and Infrastructure achieved. In the last five and a half years, we have had three Ministers for Transport and huge disruption in the transport portfolio, and all we get are comments, thought bubbles, re-announcements and a denial of the problem. The evidence of that was there on Sunday, when the current Minister for Transport was out there saying —

I wouldn't call it a congestion crisis.

That is what he had to say on Sunday. The Western Australian Minister for Transport surely can see the massive expansion in the number of cars on our roads, and he lives in an area that adjoins the freeway, yet he says that there is no congestion crisis. Well, I will give him a tip: where I live, and in the other outer metropolitan areas in the south, north and east, there is a congestion crisis. There is a congestion crisis in Western Australia, and the minister has no plan to fix it; all he has is re-announcement after re-announcement and broken promises.

The Committee for Perth this month released a report titled "The Rising Cost of Living in Perth". The report reveals that the average commuter travelling to the city from the outer suburbs spends 19 days every year getting to work—19 days of their lives, sitting in their motor vehicle. That is 19 lots of 24 hours spent sitting in their motor vehicles every year. The report shows that the peak journey delays in Perth are worse than those in New York or Chicago. Get that—in New York and Chicago, the peak journey delays are less severe than they are in Perth! The well-researched report states that this is leading to —

... long term serious health and social problems from premature death, to obesity, mental health issues and family problems.

That is what this government has presided over, and it has no plan to deal with it. All we have is broken promises.

Let us go to the second point of the motion, which refers to high charges. In a week's time, for the first time ever, there will be universal charging for people to park at our train stations. The Premier mentioned seniors. Seniors who currently have free transport within certain hours will now be required to pay for it. People who ride motorbikes will be required to pay for parking. The average family will be hit with another \$500 bill per annum; that is an extra \$500 per annum for all those hundreds of thousands of Western Australian families who are already dealing with the congestion crisis.

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In addition to this massive increase in parking charges and the increase in public transport fares that we have already seen in the budget, we have a series of broken promises. There was the MAX light rail promise—the fundamental promise upon which the government was elected—and it is gone. Then there was the airport rail line promise, which the former Minister for Transport said before the election was fully funded and fully costed. It has now been delayed and the government is looking at four different routes for the airport rail line. On 29 March 2014, the current Minister for Transport said that the government was in the process of working out the best possible route for the airport rail line, and that he hoped to be able to announce more in about two months' time. Well, that was three months ago. Where is the plan for the airport rail? There is no plan. The government is making it up as it goes along and it has not properly planned for the congestion crisis—which it denies exists—confronting this city.

Then there are the regions, particularly the wheatbelt of Western Australia. I refer to the issue raised by the member for Collie–Preston during question time. In the week leading up to the last state election there was a wraparound cover advertisement in the *Farm Weekly* of 7 March 2013, paid for by the Liberal Party, titled “Liberals support a viable Tier 3”, and it featured a photo of the Premier with some Liberal candidates. The Premier was quoted as saying that the Liberal Party had already committed to keeping all tier 3 lines open until October 2013, and that by that time there would be a clear picture of the state of the tracks, the volume of grain carried on the lines, and the condition of the roads in the area. He said that the Liberals would then be able to decide which lines needed to stay open, and would commit to adequate funding to maintain them. However, now the story from the Minister for Transport is, “Oh, it's all just a commercial matter; nothing to do with us.” Well, why was this promise out there? Why did the Liberal Party mislead people before the last state election? Why did the Liberal Party lie to people before the last state election? That is what the government did—it lied to people before the state election in an effort to secure their votes. Instead, in one week's time, 500 kilometres of tier 3 rail will close, which comes on top of the 200 kilometres of tier 3 rail that has already been closed. That will mean tens of thousands of extra truck movements on our roads, both in the metropolitan area and in the wheatbelt. That is a fact; that is what that will mean—another failure by the government. When this minister was asked about this a few weeks ago —

Mr D.C. Nalder: That's not a fact.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Is the minister saying they are not closing? There will be all these extra truck movements; somehow the wheat is just going to get to the port without the trains.

Ms R. Saffioti: The wheat's going to carpool.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, the wheat is going to carpool!

There will be thousands of extra truck movements on our roads. There is a bumper harvest this year, and that is what it will mean—thousands of extra truck movements. When the minister was asked about this the other week, his answer, even though the Premier was there, was, “That's not my promise.” Let me tell the minister: this is his promise; this is the government's promise; the Premier is the minister's Premier, and it is his promise. He can say that he supports tier 3, but he is not doing anything and he is not delivering on his commitment.

Then we come to the thought bubbles, such as the carpooling announcement we heard the other day, which took the minister by surprise—even though he was the one making the announcement! We also had the freeway on-ramp traffic lights thought bubble, which is a doozy. An article in *The West Australian* from 12 January 2012 reports the minister's predecessor as saying that traffic lights would soon be installed on some freeway on-ramps. Another article was published in *The West Australian* on 1 August 2013 about installing traffic lights for freeway on-ramps; another article about traffic lights on on-ramps in *The Sunday Times* on 6 October 2013; and again in *The West Australian* on 11 October 2013, an article that refers to “Introducing traffic signals on freeway on-ramps”. Yet again, on 29 March 2014, there was another article in *The West Australian* about the sequencing of traffic lights on major arterial roads unlocking the city's transport woes. Over and over again the minister comments on issues to give the impression that something is going to happen, yet nothing ever does. We have had the carpooling thought bubble and the freeway on-ramps traffic lights thought bubble; five separate announcements, and nothing has happened. There were massive announcements around the MAX light rail, many of them publicly funded before the last state election, and nothing has happened. We were supposed to see a plan for the airport rail line a month ago, yet we still have four separate routes under consideration. We have seen the tier 3 rail lines close, and tens of thousands of extra truck movements on our roads, despite the government's promises; and then we heard the minister saying that there is no congestion crisis. Well, there is a congestion crisis, and people around our suburbs see it every single day. Nothing the government has done has made it better; instead, it has actively made it worse with its broken promises to the people of this state. Western Australians need a real plan to deal with this, to get people out of their motor vehicles, to give them alternative options, to enhance cycling in our state, and to make sure we have fewer trucks on our roads, because this is a

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significant problem affecting quality of life and the economy of this state. Thus far, all we have had from the minister and his predecessors are thought bubbles.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan) [3.20 pm]: To say the very least, transport is not the Liberal Party's strong suit. Year after year we have seen broken promises, bad plans and increased congestion.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Swan Hills!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will tell the member for Swan Hills what we did in our term; I thank the member for Swan Hills very much for that.

Over the past 30 years we have seen a litany of broken promises: the Ellenbrook promise, the Currambine promise and the Greenwood station promise. Bad planning, and then no delivery.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I turn to the Mandurah rail line.

Mr F.A. Alban interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Swan Hills, I call you to order now for the second time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Whenever we talk about the Mandurah rail line the Deputy Premier jumps up and says, "Remember, we promised the Mandurah rail line." Remember he always says that. I looked again to make sure I was across exactly what rail line the Liberal Party was committed to. Remember, it was the Kenwick deviation that now would be simply unworkable. There would be absolutely no capacity on the Armadale line; there would be more carriages than time needed to get those carriages down the line. There would have been a longer travelling time, and, basically, a dysfunctional, chaotic system. That is what the Liberal Party planned and that is what it promised.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Liberal Party would have broken promises, member for Swan Hills.

I am glad the member for Swan Hills asked what we did, because I also refreshed my memory on what we did in six years. Let us go through it. There was 81.5 kilometres of new rail track: 72 kilometres to Mandurah, four kilometres to Clarkson, and 3.4 kilometres from Kenwick to Thornlie. Fifteen new train stations were built, and thousands upon thousands of new car bays. In six years, what has this Liberal Party delivered?

Dr K.D. Hames interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Health, I call you to order for the first time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: In six years what has this Liberal Party delivered? It is still laying that 7.5 kilometres of train track! Good on it! Good on it for having a go and building 7.5 kilometres of train track.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Forrestfield, I think we have had enough interjections for a short while; I call you to order for the first time. There is plenty of time to talk on this.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: So 7.5 kilometres—good on it for having a go and laying a bit of track—compared with 82 kilometres in six years. The Liberal Party is asking what we do. Of course, we did it debt free—another key point!

Let us go through what the Liberal Party has done since being elected in 2008. I turn to the draft master plan. Remember that? This is another great glossy brochure that this government produced on planning and transport—its master plan. I will outline the three priority projects. The introduction of light rail, the development of bus rapid transit services and the extension of the rail line to Yanchep were the government's priority projects. Back in 2011 these were the three priority projects. The Liberal Party went out there to say just why these three were so important. It said it needed to build an extension to Yanchep then to ensure that it got its planning right for liveability in the future. That is why it was important to build it then. It promised light rail, and, of course, the bus rapid transit service to Ellenbrook.

What happened in 2012? In August the government announced that the bus rapid transit system was on its way and that it had started all the detailed planning work.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Which Minister for Transport was that?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That was, as I recall it, the member for Vasse.

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But it was on its way. All this planning was being undertaken, as was the concept work, and it was on its way.

In September 2012 the government announced the Metro Area Express light rail. Remember, it announced the Bigger Picture campaign—MAX light rail was coming. What was the line? “Go and buy property in Mirrabooka”, the Premier said. The government was committing to MAX light rail. Remember the costing of it? “North of \$1 billion.”

Then, of course, we had the election in 2013. The government said it had the Ellenbrook bus rapid transit planned and ready. It had the media statements ready, it had the maps ready, it had the animation ready, it had the plastic signage to wrap up buses all ready, and then one day before it was meant to announce it, it pulled this priority project that it did all this modelling on. In August 2012 the government said it was going to carry 6 300 passengers a day; it did all this modelling and then it pulled it. The member for Southern River asked what we did for Southern River, apart from a couple of rail lines. How about the Thornlie to Canning Vale section? The member for Southern River has promised that, as I understand it, a couple of times. Where is it?

Mr P. Abetz: I have never promised it; I said I would fight for it.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: He will fight for it! The member for Southern River has not done very well. If he is fighting for it, he has not done very well. The government was planning to do it, and then it pulled it at the last minute.

What did the Liberal Party go to the election with? Two big promises: MAX light rail and the airport rail line.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Fully funded and fully costed.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Fully funded and fully costed.

What has happened since then to these two centrepieces of the Liberal Party’s election campaign that were fully funded and fully costed? MAX light rail has absolutely gone, despite pamphlets being delivered to every letterbox in Morley that read that commuters would be catching MAX light rail in 2018. The airport rail line has been deferred to 2020, I think was the latest—am I right? The government is still looking at four different routes. In six years, there has been absolute chaos, dysfunction and no delivery.

We thought maybe this new minister could provide some clearer direction and clearer management, but, as the Leader of the Opposition outlined, the thought bubble policies have continued. When the minister cancelled the MAX light rail and was explaining why, he said, “It doesn’t matter because there’s a green CAT bus that goes into Victoria Park.”

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Which was news to me!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That was news to the member for Victoria Park; he was out there looking for the green CAT bus.

The Minister for Transport went out and talked about congestion. In late March he said, “Get used to congestion. I used to live in Sydney and there is congestion all the time. Get used to it.” Then a couple of weeks later someone would have said, “Look, congestion is a big issue, minister; you’d better get on to it.” The transport minister then unveiled an ambitious vision to battle congestion. One week he says, “Get over congestion and get used to it”, and a couple of weeks later, “I have this visionary plan.” Of course, there was the carpooling idea. The minister is saying today that it is a great idea. As I recall, last night on Channel 10 he said his research in Jakarta showed that it was a bit problematic because people were sitting on the side of the expressways waiting for a lift. It is all over the place. What happened during the estimates hearings was a classic. Given that the government has made all these announcements on the bus rapid transit service, I asked: what is the forecasted BRT patronage? The government came back and said it is still working that out. The government announced it in 2011 and 2012, but it is still working on it. I remember the dorothy dixer asked by the member for Swan Hills about Gnangara Road. When the member for Swan Hills bowled up a dorothy, I thought, “Here we go; he is asking about Gnangara Road—one of the worst roads in the whole metropolitan area that urgently needs fixing.” There was a dorothy, and the minister wanted to kick the Labor Party a bit. I then asked a key supplementary question, “When is the minister going to do it?” He said, “I don’t know; I have to refer to my officials.” Members opposite asked about Gnangara Road by way of a dorothy dix question. Then, when we asked when the government would do the work, the minister said, “I’m going to refer to my officials because it’s a bit complicated.”

Now in the local paper we see that there is a red-tape roadblock; the minister is saying that significant work needs to be undertaken before the Gnangara Road duplication can be completed. As I said, it is absolute chaos and non-delivery. In eight years, if all the government has to show is 7.5 kilometres of train track on greenfields—basically, what should be a stock standard, everyday sort of delivery—honestly, the minister will be entirely embarrassed at the time of the election. I know that the member for Forrestfield is sitting there

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thinking, “I’ve got a rail line to the airport”, but, honestly, I do not think there will be a track laid. It has been an absolute abysmal failure again and again, with broken promises, chaotic planning and non-delivery.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston) [3.31 pm]: Following on from the member for West Swan, yes, I really think that the term “chaos” is an understatement because we do not have planning. Rail is being shut down and there are more trucks on the roads, yet at the same time the roads have not been upgraded to take these extra trucks with extra loads. I see the minister nodding his head, but I want him to do something about it; I really do.

Members talked about the extra wheat coming down through the Coalfields highway. Already two million tonnes are in the bins waiting to be carted before the harvest—not during the harvest, but before—and that is starting to come down now. Extra work needs to be done because the government will have the rail lines shut for the next harvest, which is really dangerous for the people who are on the roads out there. At the same time, school buses will be on those routes. I was sitting at the front when the National Party leadership group was out there and said that there was a school bus and a truck alongside each other, and on country roads there is only about 30 centimetres between vehicles. That is the National Party’s heartland that it has let down. The government does not have a policy; it does not have any idea about what it will do and it has not put aside funding to do it.

Further to that, the government will not listen to the communities until it gets a kicking. It is no different from what I now see on the Coalfields highway; work that should have been done five years ago is being done now. Did or did the government not get letters from the Shire of Collie to say it wants a speed reduction in the middle of town because there will be an increase in the number of trucks going through it? A wheat truck will be going through town every three and a half minutes, yet the minister has not helped that shire one bit by saying, “Yes, we will agree to a speed reduction from 50 kilometres an hour to 40 kilometres an hour because schoolkids cross that road.” It is a very important matter. Then members should take a look further west because Main Roads has just written a letter to the shire this week that states it will not implement a speed reduction because there will be no overall increase in truck traffic if it is measured at the Worsley turn-off. That turn-off is 12 kilometres past Collie, down the road, and is where the trucks turn around. Of course, there will not be an increase in truck traffic down there because the Worsley project has finished, but there will be an increase in truck traffic through the centre of town. Some really urgent works need to be carried out there and a simple solution would be to change the speed limit, but the minister will not help those people. Main Roads has identified \$65 million worth of work to be done and what do we have in the budget? A miserable \$6 million! It is absolutely not enough to make that road safe. As those trucks come down the Arthur River road or the Coalfields highway or across the Balingup road from Kojonup, they will feed on to those slow hills that have no passing lanes. I know what is going to happen: it will be irresponsible for someone to pass there, but they will, because they will be caught behind the trucks on the road. Then there will be an accident because someone will try to pass a road train when someone else is coming the other way, and bang! That is what will happen. We have seen it in wheatbelt towns previously; we have seen it around the place.

There are works to be done before the minister even approves these projects, but in the meantime, he should keep the rail lines open until those works are done. That is the best I can ask for. We really do not need all that traffic coming straight over at one time. People will be lost, not going where they probably should be. They will be mixed up; they will drop their trailers at the wrong spot when they have to decouple to get through other towns. One small road train bay at Bunbury is not good enough. The minister needs to spend the money on roads where it should be spent and to leave the rail open until he has done that job.

MR D.C. NALDER (Alfred Cove — Minister for Transport) [3.35 pm]: I have really been looking forward to this debate; it is really interesting. I struggled to think about where I could start, but first I will acknowledge and thank the member for Mirrabooka for acknowledging that I am in step with my community. The debate has been really interesting and I will start by just responding to a few points that have been raised.

The first point is about Labor’s rail fail. In the last election, its only solution was about public transport on rail. There are a couple of things that I think are important that Labor members fail to understand, which probably shows a level of incompetence on the other side. Currently, 40 per cent of all registered vehicles are commercial. If we are to focus only on rail and public transport as the solution to take, as this city doubles and trebles, we will face a situation in which more than 100 per cent of today’s vehicles will be commercial. Labor members say there is congestion today. However, if we build only public transport for private usage, we will block the roads with commercial usage and not allow anybody any ability to drive on the roads.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan!

Mr D.C. NALDER: We have always said that this requires a multifaceted approach. We need to consider not only public transport, but also roads and cyclepaths. We need a balance between private and commercial usage.

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Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members for Warnbro, West Swan and Bassendean, I do not want to hear from you again.

Mr D.C. NALDER: Another thing I have talked about in the last three months is that we need to deliver for today and plan for tomorrow. I will come back to exactly what we are doing at the moment because the list is huge. An enormous number of projects are underway. Just touching on the Labor Party's rail fail project at the last election, it was a \$5 billion rail project that would have had people waiting for two to three times longer. It was going to be half an hour between each train service because Labor did not plan to put additional carriages on.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The Labor Party talked about —

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, I asked you not to interject again. I call you to order for the second time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The Labor opposition talked about its plan being well thought through, but it did not actually consider how it would shift the rail from Fremantle around, which at this point is only for freight and goes in one direction. Labor members did not really think through the airport solution they had, which actually, by the way, did not make it to the airport! They talked about a solution. When we looked at our options for the route, I wanted to consider the Labor Party's route, just in case it was a better alternative. If it was better, I would, cap in hand, acknowledge that, but it was not a better alternative. When we considered that route, it was found to be more expensive and it also meant a 50 per cent longer travel time. It did not meet the hurdles; we have thrown it out. It is not even part of the project, because it simply does not work and it did not deliver people to the airport. The Labor Party's airport solution did not actually go to the airport! I would think that that would be a fundamental thing in putting a railway line out to the airport. Opposition members talked about planning, but they have exhibited gross vandalism on planning for the Fremantle eastern bypass. They sold off for housing the land that was there to remove traffic—to shift traffic and freight away from the Fremantle port. A government just does not do that sort of thing if it is thinking long term about transport requirements. The Labor Party has been responsible for that!

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Kwinana!

Mr D.C. NALDER: I have talked about the notion of needing to deliver today and plan for tomorrow; I will touch on that. I have also talked about the need for the infrastructure that we are putting in, but we also need to use our existing infrastructure in a smarter way. We are running trials. The Leader of the Opposition asked where the stop-light sequencing trials are. I can tell him that it happened last year on Canning Highway and we have two other programs happening on Orrong Road and Stirling Highway. The Leader of the Opposition asked about where the trials are and when we will do them, and I can answer that we are actually doing them.

Opposition members asked what the government is doing in public transport. Let me just touch on what we are doing in public transport. We are delivering 22 three-car rail sets; they are rolling out every two months. The government has also extended the line to Butler, which will carry another 4 000 people a day out that way, and it has brought it in ahead of time and on budget.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, have you got a problem?

Mr D.C. NALDER: Since this government came to power, it has added 11.3 million kilometres of bus service area, and it has increased by 22 per cent the number of bus kilometres travelled in the metropolitan area. What did the Labor Party do in that time? It did nowhere near that. The Labor Party talks about public transport.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, I call you to order for the first time. You are quite at liberty to put your name down to speak.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The opposition talks about delivering the Mandurah rail line. Everyone knows that the Liberal Party started that. Opposition members claim that they finished that, but it is not even finished. The government has had to retrospectively now put in car parking, and the opposition is complaining about the government charging \$2 an hour for car parking when it was not going to have it in the first place.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, I call you to order now for the second time.

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Mr D.C. NALDER: Next month, the government will start work on the Aubin Grove train station. The opposition talks about what the government is doing in public transport—it is finishing the work that the former Labor government failed to complete. The Aubin Grove train station, with 2 000 car bays and a new station, will be finished by the end of 2016. The government is doing an enormous amount of work.

Now let me talk about roads, and come back to the member for Collie–Preston’s comments, because this is fascinating. He talks about what this government needs to do for the Coalfields highway, but he should look at what this government will have done in two terms of government.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Collie–Preston, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: By the end of this term of government, which makes it two terms of government, the Coalfields highway will have been 50–50—that is, for 50 per cent of the time there has been a Liberal government and for 50 per cent of the time there has been a Labor government. Guess what percentage of funding has gone into the Coalfields highway under both governments? It has been 100 per cent under the Liberal Party and zero per cent under the Labor Party.

Mr M.P. Murray: Has the member for Murray–Wellington spoken to you about that highway? No!

The SPEAKER: Member for Collie–Preston, thank you for that addition. I call you to order for the second time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The member for Collie–Preston can get up and criticise, but his side has spent zero on that highway. In fact, the shadow minister —

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Collie–Preston to order for the third time.

Mr M.J. Cowper interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Murray–Wellington, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The member for Collie–Preston can get up and criticise, but his government failed to spend a cent, and that was after a report by the former Court government in the late 1990s. That government spent \$20 million on the Coalfields highway and left an additional \$20 million, which the Labor Party then removed. The former Labor government did not spend a cent on the Coalfields highway, even though it was already identified as an issue. By the end of this term of government, this government will have spent over \$70 million on that highway while the former Labor government spent zero. The opposition criticises the government for what it is supposedly doing for the Coalfields highway, but I know that the member for Collie–Preston was not able to influence his side to do anything. It has been an absolute disgrace.

In the area of additional road funding, what has the government been doing for congestion? It has been widening the Kwinana Freeway from Leach Highway to Roe Highway, and a tender has gone out to widen it through to Armadale Road. The government has also been carrying out work to widen the Mitchell Freeway from the city to Hutton Street. We know that. The government has widened Great Eastern Highway. While that was happening, a lot of people complained about the added congestion on that road, but everyone now knows that it was a fantastic job. The government is spending \$1 billion out at the Gateway WA project.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The \$1 billion Gateway WA project at the airport and Kewdale is the largest Main Roads project ever undertaken in this state, and it has been done by this government. It is a \$1 billion project, and the sums on the project are phenomenal. It is coming in ahead of budget and ahead of time, and this government is delivering it. That has meant that the government has been able to transfer \$45 million from that project to a black spot on the corner of Berkshire Road and Roe Highway. The government was criticised because I delayed putting in lights because there was a chance that I would be able to do a full grade separation, but I am glad that I waited.

Mr N.W. Morton: It is a great outcome.

Mr D.C. NALDER: Although I was getting harassed by the member for Forrestfield, I concentrated on making sure that this government delivered a far better outcome for the community in Forrestfield.

We have talked about the Graham Farmer Freeway. The shadow Minister for Transport at that time criticised it and said that it would add no value. Everybody now knows and acknowledges that that was a fantastic initiative and that traffic is flowing far better now on the Graham Farmer Freeway.

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We talked about the \$1 billion Gateway WA project, which is actually being replicated two more times. At the end of this year, the government will commence the NorthLink WA project, which will see grade separations around Collier Road, Benara Road, Morley Road and Reid Highway. It will be a dual road.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: This road will be a dual road all the way through to Ellenbrook, and then it will be a single lane all the way through—it will be like a freeway all the way through to Muchea. That project will start at the end of this year. Another announcement that has the support of the federal government, which has been fantastic in its support, and is being worked through is the freight link that will improve transport through to the port. The opposition cannot now say that the government is not considering and planning. This project is around freight movement on that road. This project will shift heavy vehicles off highways and get them onto a freight link. That is exactly what the state needs as it continues to grow, and the government is setting that up and thinking for the future. It is wrong to say that the government is not planning and not doing anything. The government currently has underway \$5 billion worth of projects, and it has more in the pipeline. This government is doing so much.

There is so much going on with roads, but what about cycle paths? The opposition talks about rail—that is all it has got—but I have already said that if we think of only rail, we will not actually deliver. We need to consider all forms and modes of transport. The government has allocated \$47 million for a bicycle network plan. In addition to work done, every time the government builds a major highway or rail extension, it builds cycle paths as an alternative mode of transport, and it provides infrastructure at the stations so that people can choose that as an alternative mode of transport. The government is taking these things into consideration. When the government is planning—this is where it gets really interesting; I talked about this when I first came here and I have said that I would like to start thinking about the future—part of the commitment of this government is to start decentralising agencies out of the city.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The government is still doing that. A far better outcome for the state was that the Department of Commerce, which the government had flagged as moving to Stirling, went to Cannington, and the government put the Department of Transport's 6 000-square-metre centre out there. The government is also still committed to exploring different options for future decentralisation. This is what the government is going to do, and it is continuing to work through it.

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Fremantle, I call you to order for the first time. I have been pretty lenient on you. I do not want to hear any more interjections, thank you.

Mr D.C. NALDER: We have talked about the requirement for infrastructure, but the existing infrastructure needs to be utilised in a smarter way than it has been utilised in the past. This is where we talk about ideas. I am encouraging in the department ideas that can be trialled. I do not think there is anything wrong with that. In fact, we have not done enough of it. I tell members now that some of these trials are up and running. There is a merger trial underway on three on-ramps on the Kwinana Freeway. Cameras have been located in those spots to record how the traffic merged before the trial and how it merges during the trial. We are adopting a merger process that has been recently adopted in Victoria, and we are looking at that as part of a trial. We have to try these things. If we do not try anything, we will always get what we have always had.

What else has the government been doing for smarter roads? We have talked about sequencing, which is now on three highways. Travel times are going to improve. It has improved travel time on Canning Highway by six minutes with an eight per cent inflow—and there are a number of others. We need to think smarter not only in that area, but also in the public transport area. The government has introduced the 900 series buses. The bus rapid transit solution coming in from Morley is in place. Since that four-minute interval has been in place, there has been a 24 per cent increase in bus patronage. The government has also announced that this program will be rolled out to Scarborough Beach Road and the government wants to continue to expand that.

We have also announced that we have gone out to tender for GPS trackers on buses. This will be a smarter solution so we can assist people to understand. The Labor government has failed to understand its failures from the past. We know why people sometimes have a tendency not to catch a bus. It is because they do not know when the next one will arrive. It is never easy for people. We want to provide applications so they can track real-time where the next bus is. All of these things will contribute to a better public transport solution. This is part of being innovative and thinking outside the square and not just relying solely on infrastructure. I will conclude because I know a lot of members would like to speak.

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MR J. NORBERGER (Joondalup) [3.51 pm]: Where do I start? This matter of public interest is unbelievable. First and foremost, my suggestion to members opposite is that when they choose the wording of an MPI, they should try to choose some wording that they can defend. To accuse us of not having a functional and cohesive transport plan is a joke. It is unbelievable. Our government has funded record investment in a comprehensive, multifaceted and cohesive range of transport infrastructure. We have already heard from the Minister for Transport that unlike those opposite who focus only on rail, we do not focus on just one form of public transport; we focus on the overall picture.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, you are on two calls.

Mr J. NORBERGER: Let us look at the northern suburbs, of which Joondalup is obviously a central part. This government chose to widen the Mitchell Freeway from Hepburn Avenue to Hodges Drive. That has made a significant difference and we have received great feedback from that. This government is extending Mitchell Freeway from Burns Beach Road through to Hester Avenue. This government is investing \$46 million in the Edgewater multistorey car park and has already introduced over 4 800 new parking bays. We have introduced more buses and more bus service kilometres. We have introduced more railcars, more bike lockers and more bike networks. Let us compare that with what members opposite have done. I hate to burst their bubble and bring them back to reality—they are living in a thought bubble and harp on about it; we heard the member for West Swan rattling off a list of distinction for all the new train stations and all the new rail kilometres the Labor government built—but we need to get people to the train stations. They forgot one critical thing when they built all these wonderful train stations—car parking. They all live in some utopian world in which people will ride their bikes to the train stations or they will frolic and skip. They will make their way to the train station any which way except by car. When this government came in, all the train stations were well and truly lacking in investment in train station parking, which we have since addressed.

I have mentioned the Edgewater multistorey car park. When I was campaigning for the seat of Joondalup, I was approached by members of the community saying that they needed more car parking at Edgewater. I campaigned for that, I fought for that and I got a commitment for that. The then member for Joondalup did not for one minute believe that Edgewater needed more parking. He was adamant that all that was needed were buses to go to Edgewater train station. Forget the people who may want to do some shopping or visit a friend on their way home. For them, buses are not the most suitable outcome. There was no extra parking under Labor.

The minister has been accused of having thought bubbles. These so-called thought bubbles are a minister engaging in open and frank dialogue with the people of Perth and exploring every opportunity. To the disappointment of members opposite, the minister is not subscribing to the hysteria and misplaced panic of those opposite. We will address the growing needs of this state but we will do so in a methodical and well thought out way. We will take the public with us in that discussion.

It was quite interesting listening to the Leader of the Opposition basically complaining that we had a front-page article in *The Sunday Times*. How dare we engage in a discussion with the population of Perth about some of the ways that we can address the transport problems! I do not know why the Leader of the Opposition was upset. He had his own front-page article in Saturday's *West Weekend* entitled "Labor Pains". Clearly, some very insolent Labor members wanted some fresh ideas. They wanted to have a frank and open discussion about the future of the Labor Party but the union overlords did not like that. They quickly labelled that. There were some thought bubbles right there that the Labor Party did not like. If the opposition keeps putting down all these fresh ideas and refuses to look at the fact that it needs to reform its own party, it will keep losing more marginal seats. Its members will be able to make use of these carpool lanes when they come in. The entire Labor Party will be able to carpool to Parliament.

Mr P. Papalia: When are we supposed to laugh?

Mr J. NORBERGER: It is at the member's own choosing.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr J. NORBERGER: The last thought bubble that came from members opposite, as we all know very well, was Metronet. That was not a thought bubble as much as it was a fantasy bubble. It was never going to happen. The opposition could not even cost it properly. We have come to expect that whatever the Labor government's budget is, it will be grossly inflated. We just have to look at Perth Arena, which was going to cost \$150 million and came in at \$548 million—a 265 per cent increase. It is a new record for a party to blow out its own budget before it gets into government and before it starts laying the first bit of track. The opposition budgeted Metronet at \$3.8 billion, Treasury came back at \$5.2 billion and the Public Transport Authority said that it would need to upgrade the Bayswater to city line to make it feasible and that it should come in at \$6.4 billion. That is 68 per

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cent higher than budgeted, and the ALP had not even got into office. Thank God! No wonder the PTA was shaking in its boots.

All I can say is that this government stands on its record in addressing the transport needs of this state. We are looking at not just one area in an insular way; we are looking at road, rail, buses and all the infrastructure required to go with it, including bike networks. Those opposite can go on living in their utopian world. I would like to see how they all get along with that. Everyone will catch the train, including the B-double trains. I will let other members on this side talk about their electorates. All I can say to those opposite is: please put a bit more thought into MPIs.

MR N.W. MORTON (Forrestfield) [3.57 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution to this matter of public interest that we are debating today. I am astonished by this motion that we are spending time debating. This MPI is from an opposition that thought three lanes in the Northbridge tunnel could not be done. We even had Hon Ken Travers in the other place, the shadow Minister for Transport, saying that it is a bad decision and that the government needs to rethink it. I would hate to see what those opposite discuss in their caucus meetings but they must still think the earth is flat. News flash, members: the earth is round and three lanes in the tunnel can be done. We on this side will continue to look at smart solutions within the existing network. That is just good management and good government.

We have all heard the figures that about a thousand people are moving to Perth every week. This puts pressure on our infrastructure and the services the government provides, and that is why we are investing heavily. The minister and my colleagues have outlined the things in transport that we are investing in around Perth and Western Australia. In my electorate, we see the \$1 billion Gateway WA project. In fact, I drove through the project works yesterday. Every time I drive through this project, new bits are visible. Constituents contact my office weekly saying that they are amazed by the speed of the project. We hear that it is ahead of time and, of course, under budget. That is good project management.

I turn to the Roe Highway–Berkshire Road intersection. I guess I have to thank the Leader of the Opposition because the phone in my office has not stopped with constituents ringing to thank me for the fact that this government has come up with a fantastic solution to that intersection, which has been a bugbear in my community for a number of years. The Leader of the Opposition can throw mud and play his gutter politics like he does and try to get a one-liner on the front page of my local newspaper, which is fine because, as I said, it has linked my name to the project delivery. My constituents do not mind. It was such a low priority for the Labor government when it was in power and it cared so little for the constituents of Forrestfield. The former government shone a light on government spending in the East Metropolitan Region so sincerely that it did nothing for the people of my electorate, nothing for this black spot intersection and nothing during the time it was in government. Shame on Labor and shame on the opposition! This government is delivering the solution for that intersection, and I can tell members that my constituents are over the moon that this project is being delivered and we are getting not only the four-way controlled intersection, but also a full interchange. I thank the minister for his work on this project. I took great delight in directing, and it was wonderful to direct, mail to my 4 500 Forrestfield residents last week to tell them exactly what transport infrastructure solutions the government is delivering in the East Metropolitan Region.

In the final part of my contribution today I want to talk about the \$2 billion Forrestfield–airport link, which will be delivered by this government. It is a game changer for the people in the east and for the Forrestfield electorate. It will take 20 minutes to get to the CBD from Forrestfield. Constituents in other electorates take such things for granted, but it is not so in my electorate. The link will ease congestion, it will have the appropriate number of car bays to handle the traffic and it will give the east the connectivity that it deserves.

I have just outlined, very briefly, more than \$3 billion of spending that this Liberal–National government is delivering to the East Metropolitan Region. Labor took the East Metropolitan Region for granted and did nothing for it. This Liberal–National government, this Premier and this cabinet are delivering for the people of Western Australia.

MR F.A. ALBAN (Swan Hills) [4.03 pm]: What a silly, silly matter of public interest motion. Members opposite do not go down that road. They have tried to rewrite history because the word “nothing” comes up very often in my neck of the woods. Members opposite are trying to rewrite history and I have some of their history right here.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: The member for Mandurah needs to cling to that railway line because at least it means he can say that he got something in two terms of a Labor government. What did the other electorates get? They got

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nothing. Members opposite keep talking about infrastructure. I can tell them a very quick story about my neck of the woods, because I do not have a lot of time. Heading north there is the Great Eastern Highway interchange with an overpass. Did Labor do that? No.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Willagee, thank you for that contribution. I call you to order for the first time. Put your name down to speak if you want to speak.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Did Labor do the Great Northern Highway interchange? No! This document is interesting because it states, “Labor—delivering”, which makes us think that Labor was going to do something. Now here is some truth! It states —

\$1.6 million works program in the Upper Swan Primary School

Did Labor do that? No, because I happened to have my face all over the local paper and it was the first project that I cut my teeth on. Did Labor install the set of lights halfway up Great Northern Highway where it intersects with West Swan Road?

Government members: No!

Mr F.A. ALBAN: The member for West Swan says that we did nothing for Gngangara Road. I can tell members who did nothing for Gngangara Road; that bunch opposite did nothing. Member for West Swan, who built the roundabout at the intersection of West Swan Road and Gngangara Road? Was it the Labor government? No, it did not do it; we did.

Several members interjected.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: When Labor built Pinaster Parade for the great people of Ellenbrook, it meant that Ellenbrook had only one road in; it was the only access. Ellenbrook was the only settlement on earth to be built with only one access road. Who improved the roundabout and installed lights at the only other entrance to Ellenbrook at Drumpellier Drive; was it the Labor government?

Government members: No!

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Heading further westwards, did the Labor government install the lights at the intersection of Beechboro Road North and Gngangara Road, which are due to be opened next week?

Government members: No!

Mr F.A. ALBAN: As we head south on the famous Lord Street to Reid Highway—I am not sure whether Labor is claiming fame for this—there is a fairly major entry to my electorate at the intersection of Lord Street and Reid Highway, which the minister mentioned recently. Did Labor build that intersection? It has only just been opened, so Labor could not have built it.

Labor is famous for public transport! What kind of buses were in Ellenbrook when we came to government? They were Renaults and about 20 years old. They had no air-conditioning and mums with prams and pensioners who needed to be looked after could not get on the bus. We have the most comprehensive bus service in the metropolitan area. The Premier is looking at me saying that we had better cut off Swan Hills and give it to Labor just in case! On top of getting the buses for Ellenbrook, we managed to also get buses for Aveley. Did Labor do that? No, it did not.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! The member for Willagee may be going by train, so quieten down.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: The Labor Party again promised a train to Ellenbrook and it did those circles—ring-a-ring o’roses, a pocket full of posies—to transport the people of Ellenbrook around on its Metronet. We are building the Perth–Darwin highway for them. I understand that everyone now supports the Perth–Darwin highway. Did Labor have anything in the budget for the highway? Is the member for West Swan going to claim that was a Labor commitment? No, the Perth–Darwin highway is not its project. I ask the member to please not put her big mug on that when the photos come out, because that is what she does to all the other projects in Ellenbrook.

Also, Reid Highway was extended through Middle Swan and because it happened three four years ago, we have all forgotten about it.

Mr I.M. Britza: Not you.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: I nearly did.

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park) [4.10 pm]: Can I move that the member for Swan Hills have another 10 minutes?

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The SPEAKER: Sorry, you cannot, member.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Well done, member for Swan Hills! What a transformation we have had today from government members, including our spanking new Minister for Transport. I like that we have a completely different system. It would have been good, Minister for Transport, provided that the government was elected a year ago. Unfortunately for the government, it was elected back in 2008. I like the change in the government in less than a year. Less than a year ago, the then Minister for Transport, the member for Vasse, justified these massive projects and said that we are spending on transformational transport projects, yet today the Minister for Transport said that the government is doing a merger trial. Things in this government have certainly changed. I like how the member for Joondalup accused us of not costing our projects, bearing in mind that we are still waiting on the government's fully funded and fully costed promises to be fulfilled. The member for Forrestfield is always entertaining. In his recent media performance he is pictured with a staff member at the proposed site of the Forrestfield train station. The member for Forrestfield cannot get actual constituents because he has lied to them.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member for Victoria Park accused the member for Forrestfield of lying.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I withdraw that, member for Forrestfield.

Debate Resumed

Mr B.S. WYATT: The problem is that the Liberal Party lied to them and the member is endorsing that lie. Government members are all endorsing that lie. The reality is that the Minister for Transport said that Labor "did not think through the plan".

The SPEAKER: You are starting to sail very close to the wind about endorsing lies and whatnot. Mind your language, please.

Mr B.S. WYATT: As I was saying, Mr Speaker, the Minister for Transport critiqued Metronet. The one project the government spent more time, effort and money on analysing was Metronet, not its own fully funded, fully costed election promise, which has had four different versions now! The member for Forrestfield can go tell his constituents that. He critiques Labor for not having done the work or thinking through its plan. Let me take members back to what the member for Vasse, the former Minister for Transport, said when Liberal members announced Metro Area Express. Remember that announcement? The former Treasurer; Minister for Transport went on ABC radio on 3 September 2012 and was asked what it was going to cost. After all that work, all that thinking and all the effort that went into MAX, this is what the Treasurer said —

I think it will be over a billion dollars or at least a billion dollars or more than a billion dollars ...

That is what the former Treasurer said! That was his answer. The Premier rushed out MAX because there were some TV ads rolling. I have never seen policy announced as a result of a looming advertising campaign. That was the reality with that. The Premier said, "I give people the tip—come buy property up here!" The former transport minister then promised \$100 million for the Busselton airport. Imagine their surprise when the aviation strategy came out a few months later and did not even mention the word "Busselton". Time and again the Liberal Party goes out and treats transport like it treats the economy—it is relevant only for the moment it is saying anything. It has never actually developed a functional and cohesive transport plan—never. That is why it has the \$100 million Busselton airport, MAX and the airport rail line. I give the member for Swan Hills the tip: the reason the word "nothing" comes up in his neck of the woods is that he is talking about the Ellenbrook rail line—nothing! If the Liberal Party wants to treat transport like a thought bubble—just like it treats the finances—we will continue to have these debates.

[Member's time expired.]

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Ms J.M. Freeman) casting her vote with the ayes, with the following result —

Ayes (18)

Dr A.D. Buti
Mr R.H. Cook
Ms J.M. Freeman
Mr W.J. Johnston
Mr D.J. Kelly

Mr M. McGowan
Ms S.F. McGurk
Mr M.P. Murray
Mr P. Papalia
Mr J.R. Quigley

Ms M.M. Quirk
Mrs M.H. Roberts
Ms R. Saffioti
Mr C.J. Tallentire
Mr P.C. Tinley

Mr P.B. Watson
Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr D.A. Templeman (*Teller*)

Extract from *Hansard*
[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 24 June 2014]
p4440g-4452a

Speaker; Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Mick Murray; Mr Dean Nalder; Mr Jan Norberger; Mr Nathan Morton; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Colin Barnett

Noes (34)

Mr P. Abetz
Mr F.A. Alban
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr I.C. Blayney
Mr I.M. Britza
Mr T.R. Buswell
Mr V.A. Catania
Mr M.J. Cowper
Ms M.J. Davies

Mr J.H.D. Day
Ms W.M. Duncan
Ms E. Evangel
Mr J.M. Francis
Mrs G.J. Godfrey
Mr B.J. Grylls
Dr K.D. Hames
Mrs L.M. Harvey
Mr C.D. Hatton

Mr A.P. Jacob
Dr G.G. Jacobs
Mr R.F. Johnson
Mr S.K. L'Estrange
Mr R.S. Love
Mr W.R. Marmion
Ms A.R. Mitchell
Mr N.W. Morton
Dr M.D. Nahan

Mr D.C. Nalder
Mr J. Norberger
Mr D.T. Redman
Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr M.H. Taylor
Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr J.E. McGrath (*Teller*)

Pairs

Ms L.L. Baker
Ms J. Farrer
Mr F.M. Logan

Mr A. Krsticevic
Mr G.M. Castrilli
Mr P.T. Miles

Question thus negatived.